

**RESEARCHING BEHAVIOUR :
A Q METHODOLOGICAL
EXPLORATION OF THE
POSITION OF THE YOUNG
PERSON AS RESEARCHER**

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ABSTRACT

Although a developing theme, research has under-represented children's voices and much of the literature relating to children and young people's emotional and behavioural difficulties is written from adult perspectives. This study began with my interest in exploring the effective engagement of professionals with 'hard to reach' children and young people. Just as much of the research around children and young people and their behaviour has not included the accounts or voices of the youngsters themselves, Q Methodology has generally been under-used with children and young people. Thus, I was interested in using Q methodology in order to explore the viewpoints of children, so as to understand better, how practitioners might engage more effectively as helpers and how appropriate approaches might be located within a suitable model of change. After enlisting the help of young people in the project, my work with them led to my problematising the term 'co-researcher', developing into my concern to understand the experience of young people who are thus engaged. As a researcher-practitioner I am interested in finding and developing methods that effectively engage children and young people and searching for methodologies that are ethically sound and enable children young people's voice to be articulated and heard. This study explores young people's viewpoints concerning the benefits gained from working on a research project with an adult and the experience of young people and adults regarding this topic. Three key themes are discussed in relation to the literature (power, voice and relationships) and implications for young researchers, participation and practice are explored. Future studies are indicated, notably in relation to explorations of learning.

Chapter 1 **INTRODUCTION**

Behavior is a difficult subject matter, not because it is inaccessible, but because it is extremely complex. Since it is a process, rather than a thing, it cannot be held still for observation. It is changing, fluid, evanescent, and for this reason it makes great technical demands upon the ingenuity and energy of the scientist. (Skinner, 1953, p15)

What this thesis is about

Dunleavy (2003, p22) talks about the dinner party challenge, where, if asked, one has a small window of about two minutes 'to convince your normally sceptical inquisitor that you know what you are doing and that it is a worthwhile thing to be at'. About my research, I usually say something like this. Although in the last decade or so it has become more common to find 'children's voice' addressed in professional practice and in the literature, an adult perspective continues to inform much of the literature relating to children and young people's emotional and behavioural difficulties. As an academic and as a practising Educational Psychologist (EP), a theme developing in much of my recent work concerns the effective engagement of professionals with 'hard to reach' children and young people and I hoped to explore the accounts or voices of youngsters excluded from school, by using Q Methodology. My expectation was that this would provide a greater understanding of how helpers might work within a model of change so as to engage and design interventions more effectively. By working with young people as 'co-researchers' a growing interest in 'problematizing' this term led to a desire to explore its meaning by exploring how young people and adults view the experience of working together on research projects. I wanted to know about the nature of this kind of participation and which relational features are viewed as key to such a venture. I came to see that, in relation to doctoral work, size does matter and so decided to focus only on young people and adults working together on research projects. From a search of the literature this seemed to be an area where the voice of young people involved as 'co-researchers' was noticeably absent.

Young people's behaviour-an early focus for the study

Brimming with enthusiasm and good-will, you find yourself confronted with a sullen and resentful teenager who does not know why he has been dragged away from his mates to talk to someone whose job title contains an unreasonably large number of syllables. No, he does not have any problems, or if he does they are everyone else's fault. No, he does not see why he should stop doing what he is doing or start doing what he is not doing. Why? Because, he does not care. Does he want to see you again? Not particularly. As your heart sinks the awkward silences grow longer. When you slink out at the end you ruefully wonder what psychological nuggets you will be able to share with an already sceptical school senior management team, itching to exclude.

Pitchford, (2010, p308)

Educational Psychology is a helping profession and the desire to help is a key construct that serves to define *my* interpretation of my professional role. As a helper working with children and young people, amongst many other lessons, I learned with experience not to ask young people about possible reasons for their behaviour. Often the response is silence, a grunt, or at best, 'I dunno' or 'whatever'! Yet, after more than 20 years as a practitioner, asking a young person to account for their behaviour, became one of the initial key questions for another position that I occupy, that of researcher.

I was motivated further by continued exploration of the effective engagement of professionals with 'hard to reach' children and young people. My use of this term assumes that not only children, young people and families, but also professionals, can become 'hard to reach'. Rather than a state, 'hard to reach' is thought of as a process and thus, one which can be reconsidered, by suggesting that children, young people and families can become easier to reach by professionals who might find ways of becoming more available or accessible (see Hughes, 2007a).

Whilst still considering ideas to pursue for a suitable thesis, I came across Q methodology (hereafter referred to as Q). Having found this poorly understood tool developed in the 1930s, which has much to offer contemporary social constructionist inquiry, I could not then leave it alone! 'Q methodology employs a particular form of multivariate analysis, in order to identify and describe the different 'stories' that can be told about a particular topic or issue' (Stainton Rogers *et al* 1995, p248).

The steps in a typical Q study, involve developing research questions and the concourse (what might be said about the topic in question at a given cultural time and place). Next, efforts are devoted to generating a smaller set of items (Q set or Q sample) selected from the larger concourse; selecting a P set (a participant group), 'treated as strategic 'sites', from which a limited independent variety of subjective viewpoints can be heard' (Stenner *et al*, 2008, p221); Q sorting; Q data analysis; factor estimation and factor interpretation.

Initially, the Q sorting method led to an interest in card-sorting. I started to employ card sorts in my practice as a way of presenting questionnaires in order to attempt to engage more effectively with young people and in another aspect of my professional work where I was using Motivational Interviewing, an approach that has been used increasingly by Educational Psychologists (EPs, see Hughes and Booth, 2009). Those using Motivational Interviewing aim in part to listen actively, increase feelings of self-efficacy and work more collaboratively with young people. My interest in processes of therapeutic change, was fuelled further by coming across work related to Perceptual Control Theory (PCT; Powers, 1995) and the Method of Levels (Carey *et al*, 2007).

I was curious about Q's potential to explore the Trans-Theoretical Model (TTM; Prochaska, 1979, Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982, Prochaska *et al* 1994)-to see how closely the model matched people's lived experience of change. I was also interested in exploring the fit between the six stage (Trans-Theoretical) model of change and what children and young people say about their behaviour.

In considering a research area, I felt drawn to something that could be applied and so started to think about some kind of tool that might be used after a child or young person had been excluded, to understand their view of their behaviour, in order to try and identify appropriate interventions and thus prevent further exclusion. As Q methodology uses Q sorting which involves people deciding where to place items on a grid according to (for instance) how much they agree or disagree with each item, this struck me as a novel and potentially engaging way of working with young people.

Thus, I was interested in using Q in order to explore the viewpoints of young people, so as to understand better, how practitioners might engage more effectively as helpers and how appropriate approaches might be located within a suitable model of change. In this sense, my title relates to young people's behaviour being researched-the initial context for this study.

The behaviour of young researchers-the final focus

At this point, the core of the work was initially conceptualised in relation to three research questions concerning young people's views about their behaviour.

Thus, from the perspective of children and young people:

- 1) What is said about behaviour?
- 2) How do young people excluded from school *account for* their behaviour?
- 3) How could young people change their behaviour?

Over time, I became intrigued by the idea of involving young people as 'co-researchers' in one part of the project. I began working with 'co-researchers' in order to develop materials so as to gather statements for a Q set and started to consider their position. My intention has been to use ethical methods and methodology in order to attempt to reduce the power differential between a young person as research participant and my position as researcher (one reason for recruiting young people as 'co-researchers').

During discussion, a colleague¹ asked if I had ‘theorised the position of the co-researcher’ and as I read the literature, I became fascinated with how I might go about doing this in what was clearly an unresearched area, with little discussion or questioning of assumptions related to the term ‘co-researcher’.

Thus, this project set out to explore young people’s voice in relation to behaviour, both in relation to the young person as researcher (their ‘*researching* behaviour’) and the behaviour of young people in school (researching their *behaviour*).

Voice

Voice is an important theme running through this work. Just as much of the literature relating to children and young people’s emotional and behavioural difficulties is written from an adult perspective, academics have a dominant voice when accounts of research between them and young people are produced. Although the ‘voice of the child’ has increasingly been a developing theme in the literature (Clough, 1998; Davies, 2005; Fielding & Rudduck, 2002; Hart, 2002; Hinton *et al* 2008 and Tisdall, *et al*, 2008) and in government (Brownlie, 2009; DfCSF, 2008; DfES, 2003a), children and young people’s views are still too rarely heard. ‘The more we talk about children, the less likely children themselves seem to be part of these dialogues’ (Wyness, 2000, p29). This study set out to address this in relation to raising the voice of the young researcher.

Riikonen and Smith (1997, p7) describe their attempt to avoid ‘being monological’ as they develop ‘different styles’ polyvocally. Initially I tried to adopt a similar approach in this thesis with asides, jokes and a greater use of footnotes, so as to explore or represent a range of voices-me the researcher, the practitioner, the academic... Quite quickly I decided that such an approach did not really add anything that was particularly useful and if anything, tended to distract. If different voices are discerned in this, the final product, then it has been as a result of something between accident and design. For instance, I

¹ Peter Hannon, then Head of School of Education, in conversation 30/9/2008.

have deliberately used the 'first person', conveying a 'personal' view, wherever it has seemed to be appropriate. A more detached voice seems to creep in to the literature review, perhaps as I attempt to write about the views of others and represent their voice, adopting a more 'third person' style in the process. The chapters which report the results do so in something of a mix between my view and that of the participants whose views are related to a factor, borne of the necessity to say what *I* think about what *they* think. I use a personal style once more in Chapter 6 which starts with an explication of my own viewpoint before exploring a number of implications. I hope that the result chimes with my comments urging caution against 'one-size-fits-all' type solutions and represents a range of my voices.

Aims

One of my aims was to further my understanding and use of Q methodology and to contribute to the small number of Q studies with children and young people. When I began, I knew of no Q studies that had explored the behaviour of pupils in schools in the way that I hoped to.

Although there are some exceptions, where occasional oblique references such as the need to 'evaluate the experience of implementing participatory research' (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth and New South Wales Commission for Children and Young People, 2008, p2) are made, I know of no work which has explored the position of the young 'co-researcher' in the way that this study does.

Once I had become immersed in exploring the position of the young 'co-researcher', I added a fourth question:

What is the role or position of the young person who works together with an adult on a research project?

This became the primary research question and was eventually sub-divided into:

- a) What do young people hope to gain from working with adults on research projects?
- b) What is the experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?
- c) What is the adult experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?

Rationale for the literature review

This study is influenced and informed by a number of large areas of the literature and it would be impossible to offer an exhaustive review of these. I also believe that it is unnecessary. In some parts of the literature review (Chapter 2) only a brief overview is provided, although I offer a general consideration of participation, informed by the literature to provide a context for a more thorough review of young people working jointly with adult researchers.

When the results are discussed in Chapter 6, pertinent and relevant aspects of the literature are then looked at in more detail. This approach provides an economy and a sharper focus than would otherwise be the case as relevant and pertinent evidence will be linked directly to the factors or viewpoints that emerge from the research. In short, I shall explore what young people and adults involved as researchers say and then look for other research that provides some context for these voices. In this way I am taking a lead from an aspect of qualitative research (notably in Grounded Theory) whereby sometimes, methodology is first discussed in detail before the results and literature are discussed jointly. Charmaz (2008, p107) refers to consulting the literature in your field and comparing 'how and where your work fits in with it' and weaving the literature explicitly into the work, advice that I have attempted to heed. I believe that this fits well with research such as this, which is exploratory or abductive in essence, where ideas are not being 'tested'. This is not to suggest that I have cherry-picked evidence to support my case in an unbalanced way, but rather that I critically appraise and match my findings against some of the key elements of the literature so as to find a location for my contribution. In this

way I contextualise the field, providing greater focus and detail when the results are discussed.

Story-telling

The concepts and questions that are central in our final report are different from those with which we started. We know that this is the history of many other research projects, although usually an unwritten history.

(Acker *et al*, 1983, p430)

The final story then, relates to a study that did not explore the viewpoints of young people excluded from school. This was not a decision that I took lightly and was informed by a number of factors. I had wanted to deal with the 'co-researcher' enquiry and then move on to what I had regarded as the 'meat' of my work-the views of young people excluded from school. However, the more that I worked at it, the bigger the 'initial' part of the study became. I was unwilling to see that size was a problem here, but eventually came to realise that in order to warrant and justify all of the claims that I would need to make, I had to stop viewing my project as two halves and instead see them each as wholes and decide which of them I would tackle. The 'co-researcher' part had a more well-defined boundary, it more clearly had the potential to offer a different and original contribution to the field. However, it had been conceived as an interesting diversion, was taking me away from what I had 'really' been interested in and offered much less satisfaction to the practitioner 'in me' and the potential for improving my practice with 'hard to reach' young people. It took some time to reconcile these competing emotional pulls but eventually I became more in tune with the idea that I was engaged in an 'apprentice piece'² so that, to some extent, it was more important to satisfy the academic demands of Doctoral work than those relating to my own emotions.

The idea of trying to tell a good story became important to me. Stainton Rogers (2006) draws on Schutz's work to argue that human science can only proceed if humans have a stake in the topic of investigation, making them the researchers

² Personal communication with Wendy Stainton-Rogers 2007

as well as the objects of research, a stance that she describes as social constructionism. She refers to Haraway's work which describes science developing from complex processes of 'historically specific storytelling practices', stating that what matters is 'who can tell the best stories-the most convincing accounts of what is going on and why' (Stainton Rogers, 2006, p78). Of course, in addition I must be concerned to also tell a story that is convincing.

Outro

This chapter sets the scene for the study that follows. The context for the study has been outlined, explaining that the final topic grew from a different line of enquiry. My personal motivation is also given. The initial set of three research questions have been described so as to provide a context for and frame, what eventually became the focus of this work. Without it, the study would not begin to make sense and a key part of the story would be missing as it was this that my 'co-researchers' engaged with. The primary research questions are given:

What is the role or position of the young person who works together with an adult on a research project?

a) What do young people hope to gain from working with adults on research projects?

b) What is the experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?

c) What is the adult experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?

The next section provides more context by discussing some of the literature pertinent to the enquiry, discussing definitions and the significance of young people's participation (in education generally and specifically in relation to research), issues related to power and voice, before moving to literature that is directly concerned with young researchers.

When reading, one is often struck by new ideas, the second time around a text. In a similar sense, writing can also be revisited several (or many) times and

thus can be experienced as unfinished as there is always more that can be said. One's response to text, both as reader, but particularly as writer, requires judgement about when to finish, knowing when to stop.

Many would rate John Coltrane as one of, if not the greatest saxophone player who ever lived. In his biography of Miles Davis, Ian Carr (1999) refers to Jimmy Cobb's description of Coltrane's 'incredible chops'.

'Miles used to say, 'Man, look, why don't you play twenty-seven choruses instead of twenty-eight?'Coltrane would say, 'I get involved in this thing and I don't know how to stop'. On one occasion when Coltrane said he didn't know how to stop, Miles said, 'Try taking the saxophone out of your mouth'.³

Thus, instead of attempting to solo on all of the material that I have covered, I have taken Miles' advice.

³ Quoted by Art Farmer, Melody maker, 25 March 1960

Chapter 2 **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Introduction

Earlier, in Chapter 1 where I introduced my main themes, I explained the origins of this study and charted how it evolved into an exploration of views regarding young people as researchers.

This chapter will focus on the research question concerning the position of the young researcher, in order to identify some of the key influences from the relevant literature that have shaped the development of my study. The review addresses definitions and the significance of young people's participation (in education generally and specifically in relation to research), issues related to power and voice, then moves to consider literature directly concerned with young researchers.

Although the studies that I have consulted address issues of the participation of adults as well as young people, such a decision to include these without critical differentiation can be defended with reference to Prout *et al's* (2006) questioning of the assumption that the participation of adults and children is in principle, different. They argue for an approach that is 'analytically symmetrical' (Prout *et al*, 2006, p95) where insights from the participation of adults are used to inform understandings of children's participation. Similarly, I have consulted the literature widely and when appropriate, have decided not to discriminate between, for instance, the benefits of participation and the benefits of engaging as a young researcher, so as to ultimately gain insights about the position of young researchers.

Although there are some exceptions, much of the research around children and young people and their behaviour has not included the accounts or voices of children or young people themselves (Fleming & Hudson, 2009). One reason for including young people's voice is given by Ravet (2007b). Echoing research conducted by Jean Rudduck and others involved in the '*Students as Researchers*' initiative, her conclusion that there may be benefit in involving pupils, teachers and parents in collaborative efforts to approach disengaged

classroom behaviour suggests that a sense that their views are important, could help disengaged young people to re-engage. Whilst this discusses young people's behaviour, for me, it seems to have also sown some seeds in relation to participation more generally, providing therefore a stimulus for examining young people's engagement in research.

Closer to the topic investigated here, Bishop notes that 'it is rare that projects include the step of asking participants to evaluate the actual process of the research that they participated in', (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth and New South Wales Commission for Children and Young People (2008, p28) so that, for instance, knowledge about the benefits of young people's participation in research is related to the projections of adults rather than being rooted in children and young people's experience of research. Q study 1 addresses this very issue whilst the other two studies reported in Chapter 5 were designed so as to address the more general issue of young researcher's voices being under-represented.

On young people

Where possible the term young person/people has been used throughout. Fielding and Bragg (2003) note that schools differ in their use of pupil, student and children. Researchers are alike in this regard, with Tisdall *et al* (2009) for instance opting for children instead of what they see as the 'more cumbersome children and young people' (Tisdall *et al*, 2009, px). I have used the term young people as I feel that this more accurately describes most of the participants that I worked with. At times I have used other terms when referring to the work of others so as to not distort the meaning of these writers. The terms 'children' and 'child' are often used to refer to those aged 11 years and under with those aged from 12 to 17 years inclusive referred to as 'young people'. Barker and Weller (2003) however, suggest that much research uses the term child for someone below the age of 16. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) refers to all those under 18 years as children. With writers such as Nespor using the term 'kids' it is clear that terms in this area are used inconsistently.

Participation and young people

'While the limitations of participatory methods are often discussed, a host of important questions surrounding the precise nature, politics and ethical status of participation remain largely unasked and unanswered'. (Hinton *et al* 2008, p281)

Introduction

Participation forms an important contextual backdrop for young people as researchers, as often they are doing research activities which have been initiated or suggested by adults and go on to complete them *with* adults or at least where adults adopt some kind of role in the activity. By exploring different views in the literature about the general participation of children and young people, it is hoped that this will inform our understanding of their participation in research.

In an earlier survey I noted that it is only relatively recently that children have had rights, let alone a voice (Hughes, 2007b). Although concerned with welfare the Declaration of Geneva in 1924 did not accord children rights. Although there remained an emphasis on welfare, the United Nations declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959, where principles concerning children's protection and well-being were agreed by most countries in the world, did represent a large forward step.

Over time, 'policy-makers, practitioners and researchers have become increasingly aware of the "voice of the child" and increasingly, legislation and Service expectations reflect this' (Hughes, 2007b, p33).

The theme of Special Educational Needs and children and young people's voice was taken up by the original and revised Code of Practice (DfE 1994; DfES, 2001a) where the more direct involvement of children in their education and the requirement that schools ascertained pupil's views, was sought and supported by a toolkit (DfES, 2001b).

Learning to listen stated that ‘the best government services are already engaging effectively with children and young people’ (DfES, 2001c p1) and this guidance from the Children and Young People’s Unit promoted the idea of children and young people’s active involvement leading to better services and core principles for this. Following this, work led by the Children and Young People’s Participation Team was published (DfES, 2002; DfES, 2003a) as well as feedback from ‘the Ministerial Listening Tour’ (National Centre for Social Research, 2003). Restating the principles of participation, providing examples of putting them into practice, defining it and presenting the benefits, was covered in ‘Working together: Giving children and young people a say’ (DfES, 2003b). Other documents followed (DfES, 2003c, 2003d, 2003e, 2003f, Kirby *et al*, 2003a, 2003b,) in what Lewis (2004), described as a ‘torrent’.

More recently ‘Considering pupil’s views’ (DfCSF, 2010) referred to the positive impact of young people’s active participation, aiming to consult on proposed regulations for governing bodies to consider the invited views of pupils.

Although it does not include the word ‘participation’ in Article 12 and only twice (non-specifically) elsewhere, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, United Nations, 1989) is credited by a number of writers (Coad & Lewis, 2004; Hinton, 2008; Hinton *et al*, 2008; Hill *et al*, 2004; James & James, 2008; Kellett, 2005a; Kirby *et al*, 2003b and Sinclair, 2004) as influencing the growing interest in participation over the last 20 years. Skinner *et al* (2007) describe the Children Act 2004 as providing the ‘legislative driver’ for the participation of young people. Kellett (2010) also points to the influence of recognising children as product users and as social actors.

In a useful overview of some of the key issues in participation, Hinton (2008) comments that whether children should participate moved quickly to questions of ‘how and for what purpose they should participate’ (Hinton, 2008, p285). Later sections of this chapter will address both of these questions with respect to young researchers. Next however, we discuss the nature of participation.

Meanings and models-what is young people's participation?

As might be expected there are a number of definitions, stemming from work, according to Hinton (2008) begun in the 1990s. However, Gregory (2000) argues that largely there has been a failure to explain what participation is and what it is for, whilst Thomas and Percy-Smith (2010, p1) write that participation is a field 'in search of definition' and that coherent and credible theory is lacking and outstripped by practice.

Some of the confusion no doubt relates to the tendency to sometimes use participation, involvement and consultation interchangeably (Howard *et al*, 2002; Hill, 2006) with Sinclair (2004, p108) adding, that as a term, participation is used to 'describe a great variety of activities, taking place in very different circumstances'. Remaining at a simple level then, the following continuum (Fig 2.1 drawing on the work of Sinclair, 2004) captures some of the issues relating to participation:



Fig 2.1 A continuum for participation

Regarding it as a citizen's fundamental right and vital to building democracy, Hart describes participation as 'the process of sharing decisions which affect one's life and the life of the community in which one lives' (Hart, 1992, p5). Hart's (1992) Ladder of Participation (see Figure 2.2 below) is well known and consists of eight rungs starting with manipulation, leading to levels that represent increased shared decision-making between children and adults. This kind of model can imply that the intention should be to get to the top, but Hart (1997) himself (and see Pridmore, 1998), comments that the key principle is to avoid working at the lowest levels of non-participation and that projects where children are functioning at level eight are not necessarily superior to those at a

lower level. Revisiting his model, Hart (2008) comments that it related to only a narrow range of participation (programmes and projects), that a scaffold might have been a more appropriate description in illustrating degrees of participation and that the intention had not been to use it for evaluative purposes.

The model is more of a tool for enabling adults to increase their awareness of tokenistic behaviour so that opportunities for the empowerment of young people might be maximised. Hart was keen not to simply encourage ‘children’s power’ and stated that his goal was to avoid a situation where children are operating independently within their community so that they retain the option to collaborate with adults as they see fit.

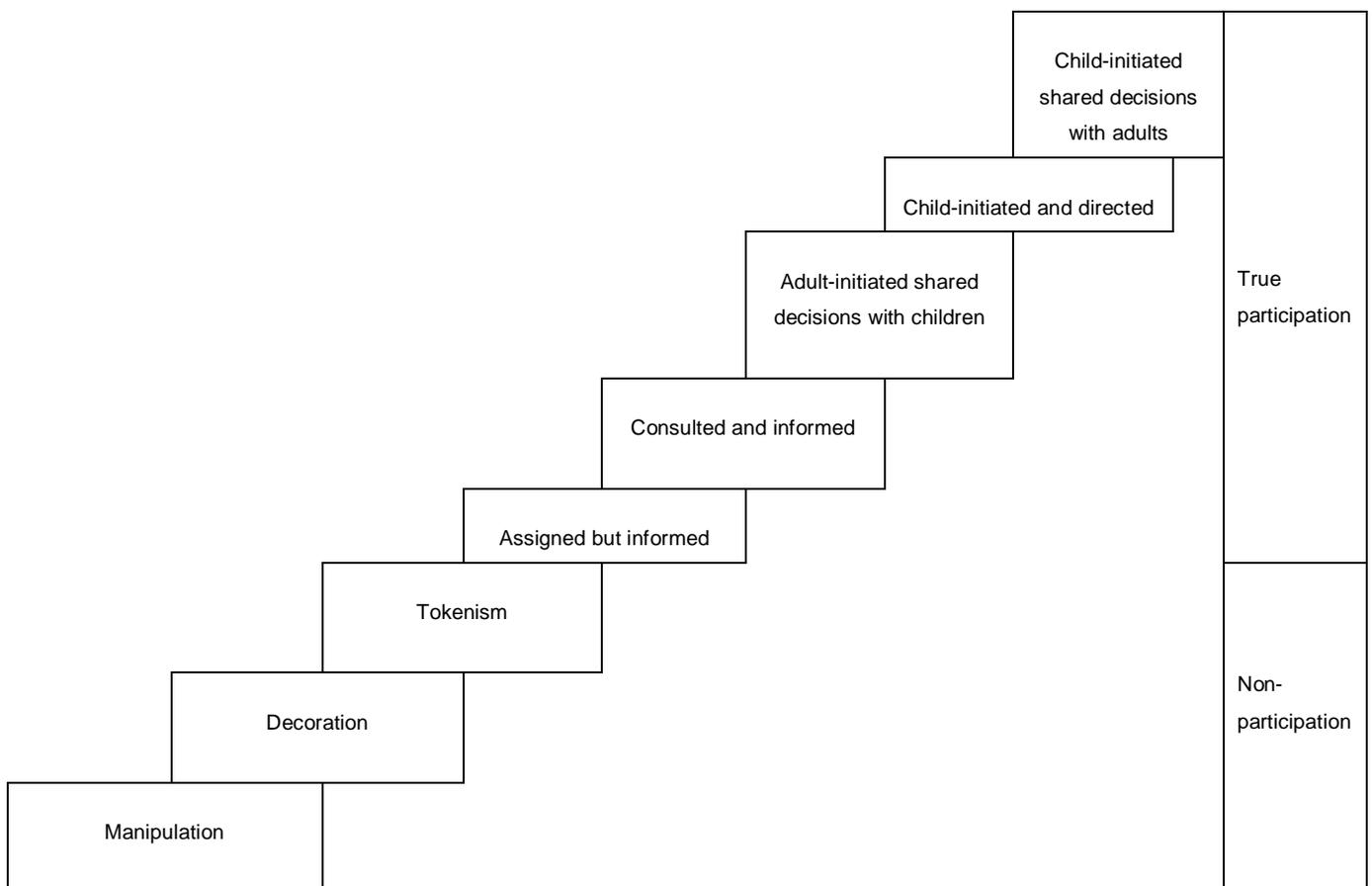


Fig 2.2 Hart’s (1992) ladder of participation

Table 2.1 follows Sinclair and Franklin in bringing together Hart’s model with three others so as to indicate similarities and contrasts.

Arnstein (1969)	Thoburn, Lewis Shemmings (1995)	Hart (1997)	Flutter and Rudduck 2004
Citizen control	Delegated power Involvement in service Design	Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults (adults are attuned to young people's interests and give life to their project).	Pupils and teachers jointly initiate enquiry, pupils play active role in decision-making, together with teachers they plan action in the light of data and review impact of the intervention
Delegated power		Child-initiated and directed (Child-conceived and implemented project, adults understand the value of not interfering or directing.)	
Partnership	Partnership Participation	Adult-initiated, shared decisions with adults (Project started by adults, share the decisions with young people.)	Pupils involved in enquiry and have an active role in decision-making, there will be feedback and discussion with pupils regarding findings drawn from data
Placation	Involvement Consultation	Consulted and informed (designed and run by adults, children understand the process and their opinions are treated seriously).	Teachers initiate enquiry and interpret data, pupils have a role in decision-making, there is likely to be some feedback regarding findings drawn from data
Consultation	Keeping fully informed	Assigned but informed (Children understand the project's intentions, volunteer once project is explained, know who made decisions concerning their involvement and have a meaningful role).	
Informing		Tokenism (Young people are asked to say what they think about an issue but are not sufficiently prepared, have little or no choice about the way they express those views or the scope of the ideas they can express.)	
Therapy	Placation	Decoration (Young people take part in an event, but they do not really understand the issues. Children are used to support an adult cause.)	Pupils are source of data, teachers respond to data but pupils not involved in discussion of findings, there may be no feedback to pupils, teachers act on the data
Manipulation	Manipulation	Manipulation (Could be misguided rather than directly manipulative. Young people do or say what adults suggest they do, but have no real understanding of the issues, or young people are consulted but are given no feedback.)	No element of pupil participation in school

Table 2.1 Hart's model and three others, adapted from Sinclair and Franklin (2000). (Text in brackets adapted from Hart, 1992)

Arnstein's (1969) model was related to citizen participation and a concern that it should involve a redistribution of power. Shier (2001) considers the levels of participation with reference to interaction between children and adults, whereby (becoming increasingly involved in decision-making) the levels are:

- Children are listened to;
- Children are supported in expressing their views;
- Children's views are taken into account;
- Children are involved in decision making processes; and
- Children share power and responsibility for decision making

Shier does not include a level where decisions are made by children independently of adults and there is no equivalent to the three lowest levels of Hart's model which means that his model does not fit neatly with Hart's.

The model offered by Treseder (1997) uses Hart's first five levels as degrees of participation but treats them as equal but different types of good practice where the most appropriate form is chosen to suit a particular environment.

Franklin (1997, p53) changes the top rungs of Hart's ladder, placing 'children in charge' at the top, followed by 'children lead, adults help' and then 'joint decision'. She also adds 'adults rule' and 'adults rule kindly' as two rungs below Hart's 'manipulation'. Thomas (2007, p205) describes Franklin's ladder as running 'the whole gamut from complete lack of power to complete power on the part of children' arguably making it closer to the original and more radical purpose of Arnstein.

Ackerman *et al* (2003) include as an Appendix, Reddy and Ratna's 'Scenarios of Adult-Children Engagement', offered as an alternative to a ladder with levels, which they see as an unhelpful sequence. In this model, emphasis is placed on what adults 'do' or believe in terms of a continuum of involvement, ranging from adults actively resisting children's participation through to adults and children developing partnership processes which are jointly initiated and directed, with different roles, based on mutual consent.

Francis and Lorenzo (2002) offer a different framework and describe seven realms for describing participation projects. The romantic realm involves children planning and deciding their own future often without adults and is credited with leading to many of the rights related movements. The institutionalisation realm involves children within boundaries set by adults and the proactive realm engages children and adults planning and designing together.

Lansdown (2001) provides a useful discussion of the importance of participation and in describing the characteristics of effective and genuine participation, includes aspects of the project (relevance, can make a difference, clear goals agreed with children), values (honesty, equal respect, shared decision-making) and methodology (clear purpose, involvement of children as early as possible, training). (Lansdown, 2001, p11).

In a definition reported by Chawla (2001) emphasis is given to participation as a process where young people engage around life condition issues with respect for dignity so as to achieve shared goals so that the young person has a sense of being useful in a community. Chawla (2001) also describes different forms of participation, some of which overlap with the frameworks above, but also including prescribed participation where a child feels an obligation to become involved.

When the Welsh Assembly Government held a competition in 2005 asking young people to sum up the meaning of participation the winning entry was, 'Participation means that it is my right to be involved in making decisions, planning and reviewing an action that might affect me. Having a voice, having a choice' (Daniels, 2010).

McNeish (1999) discusses the range of contexts for young people's participation in terms of individual decision-making, service development and provision, communities and influencing policy.

Cairns (2006) offers two categories for initiatives designed to engage children and young people-those where opportunities are created for young people to participate on their own behalf (participative democracy) and those working with small groups said to represent a wider population (representative democracy). Of

the latter, Cairns describes any claim to collective representation as empty, where, for instance, school councils are dominated by the cleverest, most adult-accepted children and young people. In contrast he regards participative democracy as being most likely to promote children and young people's rights and their citizenship where such processes need to be 'widespread, right across the interface between the adult world and the world of children and young people' (Cairns, 2006, p231). Such a distinction should be recalled when later, (Chapter 6) questions from Fielding are raised provoking thoughts of ways in which adults 'police' young people's voice.

To return briefly to power, the National Children's Bureau defines participation as 'the means, by which CYP influence decisions that bring about change in them, others, their services and their communities' (Shaw *et al*, 2011, p4). Does this mean that if change does not result that young people have *not* been participating?

In this section then, I have explored some of the complexity related to participation, stemming from different terms, models and purposes. Next I consider different claims for why participation might be significant.

What significance is attached to the participation of young people?

The review above ends by indicating that, whilst there appears to be a strong theme in the literature that participation is a 'good thing', this is an over-simplification. One might be tended to conclude instead, that young people have a voice when adults allow them to. The benefits of participation are also questioned by researchers such as Percy-Smith (2005, 2007) who is critical of the impact that participation is having on young people's lives. In what ways then, can participation be said to be significant?

Reasons for encouraging the participation of children are summarised by Sinclair and Franklin (2000) in terms of rights, fulfilling legal responsibility, to improve services and decision-making, to enhance democratic processes and children's skills, to listen to children so as to better protect them and to enhance their self esteem and empower. To these, Kirby *et al* (2003b) add citizenship and social inclusion (where participation is seen as contributing to inclusion, community

relationships and feeling) and personal and social development.

Bäckman and Trafford's (2007) reasons for advocating democratic school governance overlap to some extent with those supporting participation, claiming that it improves discipline, enhances learning and reduces conflict.

Rudduck and Flutter (2000) offer something of a manifesto when they state that looking at schools from the perspective, views and experiences of the pupil, not only creates a 'new order of experience for them as active participants' (p75), but manages school improvement.

May (2004) refers to the benefits of participation including improvements in self-perception, work ethos and achievement in school. Fielding and Rudduck (2002) also stress a greater sense of student membership and more positive feelings about school as well as a greater sense of agency, where students realise they can have an impact on school issues that matter to them. Subramaniam and Moncloa (2010) refer to the improvements that youth can make to programmes which involve them, as well as the potential for them to grow into adults 'more likely to be civically involved and philanthropically inclined' (Subramaniam & Moncloa 2010, p27). They note that the literature indicates (which their research with young people themselves broadly supports) that the 'promising practices' that young people emphasise include positive adult and peer relationships; safe and emotionally respectful voices in which to voice their opinions; skills building and relevant learning and programme impact beyond themselves (Subramaniam & Moncloa 2010, p28).

In defining them as being more than usually student participative, Hannam (2001) developed criteria for 12 schools, where students worked collaboratively with their peers and adults to identify problems, needs and tasks within the school or community and to find shared ways of addressing them. Hannam reports that 'the overall rate of permanent exclusions from the 12 schools was significantly lower than for 'schools in similar circumstances'' (Hannam, 2001, p9) thus emphasising another reason for participation.

Writers such as Prilleltensky *et al* (2001) make links between power and control,

health and wellness which thus manifests strong justification for encouraging young people's participation, where greater involvement is more likely to lead to improved psychological health.

Discussing the Australian youth advisory group, 'Young People Big Voice', two key factors identified by the young people are recognition and transformation, where participation is valued when it is respectful, when views are taken seriously and a difference is made (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth and New South Wales Commission for Children and Young People, 2008). Whilst adding to an understanding of what participation means from the perspective of the young person, in due course I shall show that such features are also valued by some young researchers.

Power and participation

`the biggest ethical challenge for researchers working with children....is the disparities in power and status between adults and children' (Morrow & Richards, 1996, p. 98).

Some authors refer to the struggle involved in handing decision-making and power over to children (Cox & Robinson-Pant, 2008) and Thomas and O'Kane (1998a) point to the qualifications in the UNCRC regarding maturity and age allowing children and young people's views to be disregarded-they have rights but adults know best.

Gregory (2000) is one of a number of writers who see participation as a political act. She, and Gallagher (2008b) argue that understanding how power operates in practices that promote or inhibit, what it is and how it can be analysed, is key to understanding participation.

Hill *et al* (2004) comment that whilst power is so prevalent a part of the participation discourse, less often are there considerations of what it means and how it operates. Considering power as a variable, 'seen positively, as the ability or capacity to act', the idea of power as a zero-sum game where losers and winners fight over a finite amount is countered, instead allowing us to understand how

power is dispersed throughout society with benefits and costs shared by many (Hill et al, 2004, p89; Fleming & Ward, 2004, p163). This stresses the importance, not of who has it, but how power operates.

Rather than seeing power as a commodity that can be handed over, Foucault (1976) stresses the way in which power circulates, net-like, where individuals continually exercise and undergo its influence.

Gallagher (2008a) is described by Hinton *et al* (2008, p283) as developing an 'emancipatory view of power- one that avoids blaming adults for oppressing children by recognising the processes and relations of power'. Gallagher (2008a, p397) adopts Foucault's idea that power 'is understood as something that is exercised, not possessed' and turns attention to 'powers' which are dispersed in diverse forms of participation, encouraging us to examine how power is exercised- what power 'does'-and the effects of participation initiatives. Kesby (2005) discusses ideas which position participation as a 'tyranny', arguing similarly, for those involved, to work with power and to not just resist it. He does not dispute that participation can offer a radical alternative but does challenge the notion that power can be circumvented by participation (Kesby, 2007).

Approaching participation from such a perspective, is, according to Gallagher, more useful than assuming that power is given by adults (those who have it) so as to 'empower' children, a perspective involving the perception of power as 'evil' that he describes as problematic (Gallagher, 2008b). Stating that 'power manifests its purposes in its effects' (2008a, p403), rather than supposing it is exercised with conscious intention, Gallagher cautions against the move that this might imply to measuring impact and outcomes, instead advocating an approach which is more interpretive. In this way he claims to counter a view of participation as 'the key to true democracy' and narratives which conclude that participation is often ineffective and tokenistic, suggesting instead that Foucault provides an alternative encouraging us to engage in the 'messy, fraught and ambiguous processes of children's participation' (Gallagher, 2008a, p404).

Young people's Voice

Ravet (2007a) describes the shift in voice research from information-gathering and regarding children as objects to a focus on empowerment with children as subjects, summarising neatly an important trend in this area.

Carrington *et al* (2009) credit Rudduck's international influence with pioneering 'student voice' in the UK. Fielding is also a key contributor to this area and together (Fielding & Rudduck, 2002) they have discussed some of the dangers of work related to voice. The assumption for instance, that giving people opportunities to narrate their lives will lead to voice, agency or transformation. Views can be accommodated so that challenging ideas are changed so as to preserve the prevailing orthodoxy. They also discuss the linking of student voice to the inspection process where students talk about their teachers rather than with them, which removes voice as a strategy for creating more democratic communities of learning.

May (2004) reminds us that those seeking the views of others have the greatest ability to regulate the way in which this is done and again in 2005 she points out that government documents, such as those relating to the special educational needs Code of Practice and ECM did little to encourage young people to participate on their own terms.

Some writers contest whether voice can be achieved at all, Alcoff, for instance stating that from a feminist perspective, 'speaking for others is arrogant, vain, unethical and politically illegitimate' (Alcoff, 1991, p6). Alcoff describes privileged authors speaking on behalf of the oppressed being criticised by members of such groups and asks if it is ever valid to speak for others unlike or less privileged than oneself and under what conditions this might be done, concluding that the researcher needs to ask if their involvement will lead to empowerment. If, as Alcoff argues, the researcher engages in the act of representation and so participates in the construction of subject-position, this focuses on the need to find a methodology which deals with data respectfully and holistically, that avoids breaking down the other into parts more easily digested by the prevailing majority.

Curtis *et al* (2004) give a useful account of some issues concerning research with young people described as 'hard to reach' for whom traditional, interview-based research is not so appropriate as it might be compared with those who communicate well in English, where interviews are easier. They assert that it is the voices of the more able communicators that are more likely to be heard in the research literature. This provides a different focus on unheard voices and the importance of silence, reminding me to remain aware of the moral crusade linked to the participation (and young researcher) movement, with, for example, Lewis (2010) questioning child voice as a 'good thing'

James argues that 'giving voice to children is not simply or only about letting children speak' (James 2007, p262) but also about children's perspectives helping us to better understand the social world. She discusses the rhetoric about 'giving voice to children' and problems related to authenticity (translation, interpretation and mediation), the use to which voice is put, a glossing over of multivocality and the nature of young people's participation in research, including as coresearchers.

Again, the literature reveals a more nuanced understanding of young people's voice posing questions about how adults might exercise power and control, all of which contrasts with government policy designed to promote the benefits of participation and land more votes (see Coad & Lewis, 2004). Having provided a context, our consideration of the participation of children and young people now serves as a platform for a better understanding of young people positioned as researchers.

Working with children and young people as 'co-researchers'

Introduction

'The 1990s witnessed the development of new ways of working with children within the new social studies of childhood, repositioning children's voices at the centre of the research process'. Barker and Weller (2003, p35)

For more than a decade there has been a developing interest in research projects which involve adults and young people working together which Brownlie *et al* (2006) describe as 'reflected in a linguistic shift from talking about 'research on' to

research with' and now, increasingly, to 'research by' children and young people' (Brownlie *et al* 2006, p6). For many this theme is located within 'Participation' and has a strong emancipatory intent. However, inevitably there are a range of views on this matter, with Birbeck and Drummond (2007) for instance, claiming that the principle outlined in article 12 'has not greatly influenced research pertaining to children' and that 'research with children tends to be a process that is devised by adults, applied to children with results interpreted by adults, generalised and presented as a theory of childhood' (Birbeck & Drummond, 2007, p22).

Atweh *et al* (1998) trace the earliest published accounts of young researchers to studies from the 1980s but Rudduck, along with others such as Fielding and Flutter, are strongly associated with voice and 'students as researchers'. Fielding has long promoted student participation and was closely associated with a Students as Researchers project at an upper school in Bedfordshire (Fielding & Bragg, 2003). He contrasts this transformative approach, emancipatory both in terms of outcome and process, with the 'unwitting manipulation' that can accompany student consultation (Fielding, 2001b, p123).

Nespor (1998) suggests that children's understanding of research has been a component of even young children's lives and Alderson (2001) regards research as an everyday activity for children's life in school. I return to this idea in the discussion (Chapter 6) when I draw a parallel between research and learning, considering how education might be.

A number of terms exist for research which involves young people, including participatory research, participatory youth research, participatory action research (PAR), peer research, Participatory Appraisal (PA), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), collaborative research, Social Action Research, students as action researchers (SAR) and educative research (Atweh *et al* 1998; Fleming *et al* 2009; Hart, 1992; Jurrius, 2006; Percy-Smith, 2007).

A later section explores a number of issues pertinent to understanding the position of the young researcher organised under each of the research questions. Firstly however, I begin by examining how young people are positioned as subjects in

research.

What is the subject position of children in research?

‘Young people....are typically positioned as both dependent, vulnerable receivers of care and education, and sometimes ‘agentic’ subjects with distinct voices’. (Komulainen, 2007, p13).

We have all been children, we know what it was like. But, ‘the way in which researchers conceive childhood will shape the research in which they engage. Indeed, the extent to which researchers embrace or reject the idea of children as ‘different’ shapes the nature of their research’. (Harden *et al*, 2000, para. 1.1). Considering the subject position of children and young people in research is important as the issues that it raises may help us to understand better the position of young people who engage in research.

Birbeck and Drummond (2007) draw on research that raises concerns about children’s unreliable memories, their suggestibility and assumed egocentricity.

Some of the literature explores beliefs about how trustworthy children are believed to be. Coad and Lewis (2004, p28) give an example of a sceptical legal perspective from the 1980s that questioned children’s observational powers, their being prone to make believe, their egocentrism, immaturity and therefore suggestibility and a limited sense of duty to speak truthfully. Such claims might lead adults to place limitations on young researchers, if, for instance, it was felt that they were less capable. This position is challenged by researchers who have set out to recognise children’s competencies to ‘help adults reflect on the limitations of their understanding of children’s lives’ (Clarke & Moss, 2001, p6) as opposed to assuming that the answers are already known.

Lahman (2008) discusses children in research as being different, unfamiliar or ‘othered’ and encourages researchers to find ways of addressing the marginalisation that this can lead to. Lahman asserts that one way of including the other is to engage in research that is participatory.

The subject position of children in research has been part of the focus of the new sociology of childhood/childhood studies where, for instance, the term 'childhood' and 'children' as a homogenous group have been contested. One aim of this project was to personify the child so as to restore 'their conscious humanity' (James, 1993, p31). James *et al* (1998) offers a typology whereby children are described as 'developing', 'tribal', 'adult' and the 'social child'. The 'social' child is seen as having the competence and similar status to adult research subjects- different but not inferior to adults. James *et al* (1998) develop these four 'types' whereby the 'social child' is replaced by the minority group child, where children are seen as 'competent participants in a shared, but adult-centred world', (James *et al* 1998, p184). The 'socially constructed child' views childhood as varying historically and culturally, children not inadequate or undeveloped, but shaped by structural forces, with agency to shape their own cultures. Of related relevance here is Burman's deconstruction of developmental psychology, 'driven by the demand to produce technologies of measurement' (Burman, 2008, p4) with an often underlying 'scientific demand for control' (Burman, 2008, p5). Burman describes the work of developmental psychology relating to children's needs, based on a deficit model (compared with the adults that they are to become), contrasted with childhood studies (eg James *et al*) which focuses on children's rights and competencies.

Punch (2003) favours an approach which takes children's views seriously, focusing on their being rather than their becoming and emphasises the structural approaches of the social structural child and socially constructed child and their empirical or politicised versions, the minority group child and tribal child respectively. Here, attention is drawn to children as social actors and power differences between children and adults as opposed to a child's developmental age and stage. Wyness encourages us to rethink 'the ontological status of children as citizens rather than trainees' (Wyness, 2000, p129). Such approaches challenge those that are more traditional psychological and developmental where the concern is more about what children are not or what they might become (Pole *et al*, 1999). The tension created by this dichotomy is eased by 'twin-referencing' whereby a child passes through transiently 'en-route to adulthood' *as well as* occupying a 'more enduring mode of identification' (James & James, 2004, p40). Uprichard

(2008) also avoids homogenising and reducing the complexity of childhood by considering two discourses together, regarding children as both being and becoming. She emphasises the importance of achieving a 'working balance between the temporal constructs of 'being' and 'becoming' without diminishing the humanity or the personhood of every human being, child or adult' (Uprichard, 2008, p309), a point I return to in the discussion chapter.

Barker and Weller (2003) argue that there are similarities to research with other excluded or traditionally silenced groups (ethnic minorities, disabled, women), in that a key feature of the new social studies of childhood is advocacy.

Ethical issues aside, Brownlie *et al* (2006) caution against viewing children (as research subjects and as researchers) as being so different or special in some way and state that rather than inherent differences, it is adults' preconceptions of children and where children are positioned structurally which distinguish between children and adults. Christensen and James also avoid what they describe as an artificial boundary between research with adults and children referring to the 'lazy assumption that unique methods for researching children are needed' (Christensen & James, 2008, pxv).

What do young people hope to gain from working with adults on research projects?

Worrall and Naylor (2004, p1) found that 'The majority of students saw the process of being selected and trained to carry out research as a positive experience and emphasised their delight at being chosen to carry out such a demanding task'.

Clacherty and Kistner (2001) make a case for participatory research as a therapeutic process. The Table below shows a range of (illustrative rather than exhaustive) views found in the literature, regarding benefits (Table 2.2), although it should be noted that it is not always clear when the benefit is reported by the young person as opposed to when it is attributed to the young person by an adult.

		Authors												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Reported benefits														
To learning (including classroom)	Acquiring and applying research skills to subject learning				√									
	Applying literacy and numeracy skills to real life issues								√					
	Enhancing self confidence in presentations				√									
	Development of transferable study skills: organisation, management, analysis and evaluation.						√						√	
	Sharpening of critical thinking skills.						√					√		
	Emergence of independent learning.						√							
	Original and valued contribution to knowledge						√							
	Development of greater class cohesion								√					
	Working and learning as a team			√	√									
	Skills (group work, speaking, listening, building relationships, interpersonal communication, non-judgemental understanding,)		√	√				√	√		√	√	√	√
	Development of computer technology and presentation skills								√					
	Co-operation within mixed ability groups								√					
	Knowledge (research methodology, decision-making structures)		√											√
	Learn actively about services, citizenship and gain a variety of skills.					√								

		Authors												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Reported benefits														
	Enthusiasm for learning and problem-solving								√					
Personal organisation	Learning how to manage time effectively				√									
	Planning							√						
	Running events							√						
Communication	Sharing ideas and tasks				√									
	More effective communication.						√							
	Public speaking			√				√						
Personal development	Social (networking, meeting people, making friends, having fun)	√	√					√				√	√	
	Get to meet new people – both adults and peers - which can be an enjoyable experience.					√								
	Recognition eg through authoring or co-authoring research reports		√											√
	Heightened ethical awareness.							√						
	Enhanced problem solving ability.							√						
	Gain recognition for their contribution (sometimes including payment).	√				√							√	
	Gain an experience which may be life enhancing: helping with personal development, including increased confidence, self-esteem, and the belief that their views matter and can effect change.		√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
	Development of empathetic awareness towards the needs of other pupils			√					√					
	Changing things for the better	√												√
	Negotiating							√						
	Dealing with the media							√						

		Authors												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Reported benefits														
	Add to their CVs for future employment					√							√	
Community connectedness	Local ownership of the research		√											
	Knowledge (understanding of people and community issues)													
	Be actively involved in issues affecting their own and their peers' lives.					√				√			√	√
	Take up opportunities to contribute to their communities and services.					√							√	
	Increased participation in other aspects affecting their childhoods.						√							
	Increased social responsibility and civic leadership			√										
Other?	Had something to do	√												
	Could focus on others, forgot about themselves	√												
	Challenged the poor perception of young people	√												

Key:	5 Kirby (2004, p8)	10 Laws & Mann (2004, p10)
1 Broad (1999), p8)	6 Kellett (2005b, p15)	11 Fielding & Bragg (2003, p15)
2 Kirby (1999, p15)	7 Skinner <i>et al</i> (2007)	12 Shaw <i>et al</i> (2011)
3 London <i>et al</i> (2003) [cited in Flores (2008, p10)]	8 Burton <i>et al</i> (2010, p101)	13 PEAR (2010)
4 Worrall & Naylor (2004, p1)	9 Kellett (2010, p197)	

Table 2.2 Benefits reported in the literature regarding young people as researchers

What do adults hope to gain by involving young people as researchers?

In describing the move from research about or on children, to research with and for children, in addition to their repositioning as subjects, Gallacher and Gallagher write that, as far as many are concerned, 'children should be engaged as participants in the research process, if not as researchers in themselves' (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008, p500).

Although we are less concerned here with the gains that *adults* hope for by engaging young people as researchers, it is worth noting that there are a number of them.

Much of the literature concerning work with young researchers draws on the UNCRC as a rights-based model. Young people have a right to research issues which are of concern to them and so in turn, a right to be helped by adults so as to achieve this. Grover (2004) claims that the status of children as individuals with rights is enhanced when they are allowed to be active participants in the research process and 'heard in their authentic voice' (Grover, 2004, p90). Grover stresses the need for young people to speak from their own perspective as collaborators so that young people can tell the stories of their experiences as lived which strengthens the research process and increases its relevance.

A number of writers give very positive accounts of young people involved as researchers. West (1996) reports that young interviewees enjoyed working with young interviewers, that they raised issues that adults could not, and brought fresh perceptions to the research. Involved with a project called 'Students as researchers' Crane (2001) argues that it 'revolutionised school-based research (Crane, 2001, p54) whilst Harding (2001) maintained that it helped him to stay at school, deepening his educational engagement.

Fielding and Bragg (2003) report that when pupils were engaged as classroom researchers, benefits for teachers were in terms of professional development, the experience gained from working with students in a different way and seeing changes in and forming different relationships with students.

Other reasons for involving young people as researchers with adults include assumed benefits both to the research itself as well as for the young people (Thomson, 2007, Shaw *et al* 2011). Atweh and Burton (1995) are amongst several writers stressing the empowerment possibilities for students as researchers.

Davis (2009, p156) offers a number of reasons for involving children in research:

- Pedagogical benefits (children learn from the experience)
- Political potential (opportunity to change social policy and exercise rights)
- Epistemological (improved understanding and better research)
- Children as consumers (better services result)
- Protectionist (respectful dialogue promotes child protection)

Nespor (1998, p370) asserts that enlisting 'kids' as researchers or in projects of their own design helps to explore the meaning of the process of research, which challenges the 'practice of reconstructing their experiences within the disciplinary and discursive concerns of adults (or more precisely, adults from the particular class, gender, and ethnic factions that dominate the disciplines and professions shaping kids' lives).

In addition to the approach which recognises young people as social actors, Coad and Lewis (2004) also describe a more cynical view which positions children and young people as social capital, a future set of voters perhaps, so that far from trying to empower young people, this generational perspective has adults setting out to control them.

Fleming (2010, p4) suggests that involving young people serves to challenge academics on the purpose and principles of their research and to encourage thought on how change might result.

What are the benefits to research?

A number of writers stress ways in which involving young people as researchers can be beneficial to the research. Young people can identify research questions and issues that adult researchers might miss, help to clarify the language used for

their peers, enable adult researchers to gain greater insight into youth issues, learn new research skills and remain aware of the perspectives of young people (Kirby, 2004). Young people may be able to obtain relevant data from their peers, more easily than adults can (Kellett, 2010; Kirby, 2004; Flores, 2008), facilitated by closer intimacy and greater understanding between the researched and the researcher (Alderson, 2001). Mahon *et al* (1996) suggest that young researchers are less likely to be perceived as experts and so more likely to receive 'public' or acceptable accounts and to reduce the problem of adult authority.

Some (eg Brownlie *et al*, 2006) make a case for better research on account of work that is more grounded and richer with respect to the perspectives and experiences of young people. Smith *et al* (2002) refer to the insider perspective. In contrast to adults translating the words of students into adult versions, Mitra (2001) reports that the original meaning was more likely to be retained when students themselves interpreted data. Broad (1999) believes that his research was enhanced in terms of reliability and relevance, with young people reporting that participants had been able to be more truthful compared with a professional researcher and that they had been able to include subject areas and nuances to the interview schedule which otherwise may have remained hidden. Presentations involving the young people were regarded as being more persuasive and Kellett (2010) sees this as an important vehicle for child voice. Smith *et al* (2002) refer to the trend for participative approaches to be described as leading to improvements in the value and quality of the research.

Personally, my experience has included adding 'fun' as an ingredient (echoed by Broad, 1999, Chawla & Johnson, 2004). It has provided me with an audience to articulate my ideas to. I have planned with a higher level of detail than I might otherwise have done and experienced a different sense of accountability, where my research has been more grounded in a community of pupils and teachers.

What is the experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?

Christensen and Prout (2002) argue that the social position of the young person in research requires critical appreciation but Brownlie (2009) echoes a number of writers when she comments that little has been published on the perspectives of young researchers, although there are some exceptions. Goto *et al* (2008, p302) were motivated by concern regarding 'how PAR actually operates' and used Q with young researchers and project managers to identify three viewpoints. Bucknall's thesis set out to 'explore the experiences of children as researchers in English primary schools' (Bucknall, 2009, p17). Bevins and Thompson (2009) were concerned with the benefits and the nature of Secondary school students' participation as researchers in collaborative research with adults. The present study set out to explore this area.

What is the adult experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?

To some extent responses to this question are littered throughout this review, although they tend to be oblique and indirect. For instance, different adult experiences might be contained in the work of Flutter and Rudduck (2004) who describe a participation ladder as follows:

- 0 pupils not consulted
- 1 listening to pupils
- 2 pupils as active participants
- 3 pupils as researchers
- 4 pupils as fully-active and co-researchers

In order to explore the idea of a continuum Hart's model is mapped against a more recent publication (Fleming & Hudson, 2009) in the following Table (Table 2.3).

Envisaging young people's participation in research as a continuum may well incur criticism similar to that levelled at Hart so that working at the top levels is assumed to be 'better'. One way of countering this would be to examine the nature of the

research activity, discuss with young people an appropriate role and perhaps embrace Franks' idea of pockets of participation where there is participative ownership of facets of the project 'so that participants become stakeholders in the research rather than owners of it in total' (Franks, 2011, p18). This echoes comments by Davis who writes that a single perfect way of involving children in research does not exist and rather than regarding participation as a 'moral imperative' ... 'it might be more helpful to see it as an approach that can be applied to research in many different ways, depending on the context' (Davis, 2009, p166). Kirby (2004) also suggests that it is the situation that determines whether young people are involved all the way through or for a few stages only.

Hart's stages (1997) Fleming and Hudson (2009)		Explanation	Equivalent of YP researcher role
Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults	User or young people led research	Young people have the ideas, set up the project, and invite adults to join them in making decisions	Research team or Research Community (RC) involving active collaboration amongst equal partners with a BIG VOICE
Youth-initiated and directed		Young people have the initial idea and decide how the project is to be carried out. Adults are available but do not take charge.	
Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people	Collaboration	Adults have the initial idea but young people are involved in every step of the planning and implementation. Their views are not only considered but they are also involved in making the decisions.	Pupils involved as co-researchers, under some type of specified supervision yet with a more equal role, some power, tasks, responsibilities and a moderate voice. Often involved at all stages.
Consulted and informed	Consultation	The project is designed and run by adults, but young people are consulted. They have a full understanding of the process and their opinions are taken seriously.	Participant researchers who are pupil data collectors, might be consulted but are not really big players. Might be used at the start of research but depending on the study design, at other stages too.
Assigned but informed		Adults decide on the project but young people volunteer for it. Young people understand the project and know who decided they should be involved and why. Adults respect their views.	
Tokenism	Tokenism	Young people are asked to say what they think about an issue but have little or no choice about the way they express those views or the scope of the ideas they can express.	Pupils are passive subjects of adult researcher-research organised by adults. Adults make a symbolic effort, paying lip service to young people's involvement.

Hart's stages (1997) Fleming and Hudson (2009)		Explanation	Equivalent of YP researcher role
Decoration		Young people take part in an event, but they do not really understand the issues.	Active adult researcher or principal investigator (traditional work)
Manipulation		Young people do or say what adults suggest they do, but have no real understanding of the issues, OR young people are asked what they think, adults use some of the ideas but do not tell them what influence they have on the final decision	

Table 2.3 Ladder of young people's participation as researchers (with acknowledgement to Mike Pomerantz for discussion of right hand column)

What might young people who work with adults on research be called?

This question also helps us to understand the experience of adults working in this area. The stimulus for this study in relation to theorising the role of the young researcher began with efforts directed at problematising the term 'co-researcher' as this suggested an equality between adults and young people which may not exist in practice. A number of writers have used this term including Campbell and Trotter (2007), Coad and Lewis (2004), Czymoniewicz-Klippel, M. T. (2009), Maxwell (2006), May (2005) and Smith *et al* (2002). Working Together (DfCSF, 2008) states that children and young people can work independently or as co-researchers. Other terms have included:

- Respondents, actors (Hill *et al*, 2004, p86)
- Fellow human beings (Christensen, 2004)
- Young researchers (Brownlie, 2009)
- Collaborators (Grover, 2004)
- Expert witness (Rudduck & Flutter, 2000)
- Student researchers (Kirby, 2001)
- Action researchers (Atweh *et al*, 1998, Cox & Robinson-Pant, 2008)
- Little sociologists (*me-psychologists?*) in disguise (Brownlie, 2009)
- Peer researchers (Broad, 1999; Fleming *et al*, 2009)
- Social actors (Mason & Hood, 2011)

We might also consider subjects, equal participants, advisors and peer interviewers.

It's the relationship, stupid

As participation is not a free floating concept and has got to be *done with* something or someone, before concluding I should like to end this chapter by looking at relational aspects, which have been emphasised by a number of writers in relation to participation. This may also help us to explore the second and third research questions.

We have seen already that the two top rungs of Hart's (1992) ladder relate to shared participative decision-making between adults and young people and that Shier also stresses the importance of participation between both parties. In critiquing definitions of exclusion and the idea that participatory projects can challenge it, Davis (2007) concludes by emphasising the importance of dialogue and relationships between adults, children and young people. Kirby (2004) stresses the importance of the environment, culture and relationships in ensuring that young people gain a positive experience whilst Sabo (2001) reports what young people say regarding the opportunity that participation provides in developing different and new types of relationships. Hinton refers to the way in which different opinions and fierce debate over power tended to marginalise 'the role of relationships' (Hinton, 2008, p287). Percy-Smith (2006, p154) notes that when the participation of young people takes place apart from adults, in groups, it 'reinforces their separation from adults in the everyday spaces of their communities' and he argues that attention should be paid to the joint participation of adults and young people in order to enhance the benefits and impact for young people. In what he describes as an alternative approach to participation Percy-Smith (2006, p168) centralises a 'communicative action space' where relationships between adults and young people are characterised by reciprocity, mutual respect and flexibility, where adults are in the role of a 'a co-inquiring or interpretive learner *with* the young person' collaborating so that knowledge gained makes sense to the lives of both parties. In this model, power is seen as something to be negotiated and emphasis is given to the broader and more systemic contexts in which young people participate, with adults, in interaction, participating *together*. Percy-Smith pursues the idea that partnership with adults is needed for effective participation in his 2007 paper.

Prout and Tisdall (2006) discuss limits of theorising children's participation and its isolation from more general discussions of participative democracy. They reflect on the contributions of a number of writers who discuss the relational theme of participation, emphasising 'the importance of mutual interdependence and inter-subjective understanding' (Prout & Tisdall, 2006, p243) which might occur between children and their parents, professional adults and children and between child peers. Shifting attention to children in relation to others suggests that 'children's

participation cannot be understood outside of the set of relationships that constitute all the actors' (Prout & Tisdall, 2006, p243). This is coupled with an understanding of power seen not as a zero-sum game with a fixed amount of power (Foucault, 1982), winners and losers, but power conceived of as productive and cumulative where the quantity depends on the players' tactics and strategies. Power and relationality combine when child-adult relationships present outcomes of benefit to both groups where children and adults may each increase their power.

Prout and Tisdall conclude that in order to understand future developments in practice and policy, linked to power, it will be important to focus on a view of children that is relational.

Conclusions

One aim for this chapter has been to lead us towards an area, posed as a question by Warren (2000): 'when we ask children to participate as 'researchers' rather than as the objects of classroom investigations, what is the character of this social identity we ask children to take on?'

A broad context of participation and how it relates to young people, has been provided before discussing young people as 'co-researchers'. In so doing, we should now be more aware of Brownlie's comments that some of the arising tensions and strong feelings which participation can provoke (children as becoming or being, voice, power) enable questions to be asked 'about how young researchers might help us to think differently about these wider debates' (Brownlie, 2009, p704).

The next chapter describes the approach used to represent young people's and adult's voices in relation to the key research question concerning the role or position of the young person who works together with an adult on a research project-the methodology. As I have separated methodology and method you may wish to jump ahead to Chapter 4 if Q is relatively unfamiliar, so that you gain an understanding of how it works procedurally, before returning to the more methodological issues covered in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3 **METHODOLOGY**

Overview

This chapter begins by considering how the research questions might be best addressed given my emphasis on exploring young people's voices using approaches that are ethically sound. After drawing up a methodological specification I describe key elements of Q methodology, including material designed to provide insight to those for whom Q has been until now uncharted territory taking in philosophical considerations along the way.

Stainton Rogers writes that before embarking upon doctoral study, 'it is crucial that you have some idea of what you are doing and why-the assumptions and judgements you are making. Otherwise, you run the risk of what Curt (1994) calls the "got-a-brand-new-hammer, what-can-I-bang-in?" approach to research' (Stainton Rogers, W. 2006, p76). For the purpose of my story, this section aims to justify the methodological choice and the decision-making that followed my choice of topic.

Remember that the primary research question was concerned with the role or position of the young person who works together with an adult on a research project, broken down into questions about young people's views about benefits and their experience of working with adults on research projects. I was also keen to learn about the adult experience of young people who work with adults on research projects. In addition to Q being well-suited to exploring my research questions, my interest in satisfying certain ethical principles applied to understanding young people's participation and their voices in relation to the topic in question led to my justification for using Q methodology, now described.

Approach to ethics

An ongoing process

As a researcher-practitioner, one way in which I have attempted to address issues relating to regulation and resistance (Billington, 2007) in a research context has been to find and develop methods which effectively engage children and young

people and search for methodologies which are ethically sound and enable children and young people's voice to be articulated and heard.

Even if ethics exist, universal agreement amongst researchers regarding what ethics are and agreed guidelines resulting from this, does not, as evidenced by Powell and Smith (2006). Dahlberg and Moss (2005) draw on Bauman's argument that ethics do exist, but without a code that can provide answers, forcing us to recognise this and to live with the resulting difficulties.

Gallagher (2009) makes a similar point when he writes that 'ethics may be better thought of as practical wisdom shaped through an ongoing process of critical reflection, rather than a set of universal prescriptions for action' (Gallagher, 2009, p11). Parker describes Badiou's concern that 'appeals to ethics do not usually open up thinking about what an ethical course of action might be', (Parker, 2005a, p236). In respect of Western thought, Levinas described the 'will to know', using 'grasping' as a metaphor whereby 'a form of transparent understanding... reduces the unknown to the known', (cited in Dahlberg & Moss, 2005. p.77), expressing a kind of violence which involves reducing the alterity of the other into the knowing subject, or in this case, the researcher. Levinas proposed the 'ethics of an encounter' that requires respect for the other and an emphasis on relationship.

In contrast perhaps, to a box-ticking exercise, Parker (2005b) encourages a focus on ethics *throughout* research (the space between anticipation and reflection) suggesting that the researcher should focus on conduct and therefore how relationships, or perhaps ethical encounters, are managed. Christensen and Prout (2002) discuss ethical symmetry emphasising 'dialogue with children throughout the research process' (2002, p478). Renold *et al* (2008) explore the notion of 'becoming participant' where consent is 'always-in-process and unfinished' (2008, p427) as opposed to something that is taken, with 'non-ambiguous permission' and as a 'singular practice' (2008, 429).

Consent

Lewis (2005) refers to a continuum from informed consent, through assent (seen by some as a substitute for consent, where a child assents to a parent's consent)

to failure to object (sometimes referred to as passive consent).

Even when detailed information is given, studies have illustrated children's difficulties in understanding their rights (Hurley & Underwood, 2002) and Corrigan (2003) discusses the concept of 'empty ethics', emphasising the power differential between (in her case) doctor and patient, which can also be applied to (potentially powerful, knowledgeable researcher) and children and young people (as subject, researched).

If participants are aged 18, taking consent directly from them seems less complicated than with younger participants, described in the 'Guidelines for minimum standards of ethical approval in psychological research' (BPS, 2004) as vulnerable, requiring permission to be obtained from the Head Teacher and teacher responsible for the children where parents or guardians should have the right to withdraw their children from the study if they so choose. By providing information to a school or adult working with the young people, passive consent might be gained by assuming that *no* response gives the researcher the go ahead.

The guidelines also state that 'Where they are competent to give it, informed consent should also be obtained from the children themselves' (BPS, 2004, p8). Thus, passive consent is premised on the assumption that sufficient information has been provided enabling the young person to make an informed decision in conjunction with their parents or carers. This raises some tensions for this study that need resolving.

Consistent with linking one's conduct and one's ethical commitment, I have been keen to identify a methodology which does not treat children and young people as subjects or attempt to unwittingly suppress voices at the margins but instead attempts to hear a range of children and young people's voices.

Reducing power differentials

Ravet (2007b, p338) notes that 'relationships between adults and children carry an implicit and unavoidable power differential'. In the present study, I aimed to reduce the potential harm stemming from this in a number of ways. Given that 'the

imposition of adult viewpoints upon children is often subtle, implicit and taken for granted' (Ravet, 2007b, p337), I was aiming in my initial project to work with young people as 'co-researchers' in order to obtain statements which the 'co-researchers' obtained from other young people in a form of words close to those used by the young people themselves.

I was keen to go beyond the notion of using method to transfer information from a research participant's head into my own, as if I was emptying a vessel. If I was serious about voice, then I needed to explore and understand approaches that facilitate co-construction between researcher and researched. Q Methodology seemed well-suited to this, serving as an example of what Ravet (2007b) refers to as an ethical methodology.

Specification for a methodology

Methodology provides justification for the methods of a research project where methods (the techniques, tools and procedures; Schwandt, 2001) are the ways in which evidence is gathered. Methods can be thought of as research action. In the simplest terms, methodology justifies method, which produces data and analyses (Carter & Little, 2007).

For Kaplan, the aim of methodology is 'to describe and analyse . . . methods, throwing light on their limitations and resources, clarifying their presuppositions and consequences . . . to help us to understand, in the broadest possible terms, not the products of scientific inquiry but the process itself' (Kaplan, 1964).

A methodology aims to enable the researcher to engage in systematic data reduction. It should aim to illuminate something of significance. The results from a methodology should be able to be judged, depending on whether general rules or laws are being sought, (nomothetic knowledge), or meaning-making amongst an individual or small group is being explored (ideographic), focusing on 'understanding the individual as a unique, complex entity' (Ponterotto, 2005, p128).

Methodology should consider sensitivity to context, should demonstrate commitment to rigour, should be transparent and coherent and facilitate impact and importance (Yardley, 2000).

Whilst a researcher's positionality cannot be avoided and in the sense that one is aiming to keep it in check, methodology 'should avoid imposing the researcher's view of the world on the people being researched. This issue has been obscured by the qualitative/quantitative debate with which it has been linked', (Kitzinger 1984, p64). On this point, Q can be seen as a 'mixed method'-a blend of the qualitative and quantitative, referred to as 'Qualiquantology'-a 'monstrous new word' for a discomfiting hybrid (Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 2004). Offered as a 'functional critical device', Stenner and Stainton Rogers aim to cause discomfort or to perturbate in numerous ways, so that incessant wriggling might make space for the different (Curt, 1999, p153), so as to critically challenge the orthodoxy.

Kitzinger adds:

Both approaches (qualitative and quantitative) run the risk of imposing the researchers constructions on the participants – quantitative through the a priori imposition of structure and meaning through the operational definition and qualitative research through the a posteriori imposition of structure through categorisation.

(Kitzinger 1984, p64)

This indicates the need for a methodology that as far as possible, respects the participants' viewpoints. 'It should use the language and constructs the participants use and the shape or structure of the findings should reflect the shape and structure of participants' views' (Bradley, 2007, p66). This is an important point, echoed again by Kitzinger (1999) and particularly by Punch (2002) who warns researchers against imposing their own views and interpretations and 'to enable the research subjects to express their perceptions freely' (Punch, 2002, p324).

To summarise then, I was seeking a methodological approach which

- does not treat children and young people as subjects

- does not attempt to unwittingly suppress voices at the margins
- attempts to hear a range of voices
- maximises the participation of young people who had worked as 'co-researchers'
- avoids a situation that potentially undermines any confidence and independence gained from working in that role
- enables young people to feel that they are taken seriously
- reduces complex data
- illuminates something of significance
- explores meaning amongst a cohort of people interested in the topic of young researchers
- avoids imposing the adult researcher's view of the world on the people being researched
- respects participants' viewpoints

Aiming to protect pupils from the excesses of adult power, I was keen to reduce:

- The discontinuity between young people's everyday experience and participation in research by giving it meaning;
- The grasping (by using methodology which satisfies ethical principles regarding voice);
- The negative aspects of the research encounter (using novel methods);
- The confusion/uncertainty regarding informed consent (or increase the young person's understanding of what they are agreeing to), and
- The potential for things going wrong/participants being hurt (by considering how to carefully articulate the project to young people).

I shall now describe Q methodology before returning to these issues in order to assess Q's suitability for the project. For the newcomer to Q, the short section that now follows, provides a brief introductory overview.

Q in brief

Q methodology is unusual in a number of respects. In general terms, it is both quantitative and qualitative and although it is more than 75 years old, few have heard of it. Three features in particular can be said to characterise Q methodology.

William Stephenson developed Q at a time when factor analysis was being used (by Spearman, for example) to explore correlations between test scores across populations of people. Individual differences related to intelligence, for instance were measured. Factor analysis enables comparison of weight, height and other human traits to be achieved so that assertions about a population might be made. Conclusions might include the idea, for instance, that in a population, very tall people also tend to weigh more. Any differences between variables relate to the whole population. In contrast, Stephenson sought the views of people and then applied factor analysis to their responses. In so doing he was able to explore subjective opinions in relation to a topic. This approach then, emphasises individuals measuring rather than being measured. People are correlated instead of tests.

Contrasted with conventional factor analysis then, in Q, people are the variables as opposed to test scores which provides an understanding of differences between individuals themselves rather than between the variables associated with them. This means that firstly, data has to be gathered in an appropriate form that allows this kind of by-person analysis, namely in the form of the first unusual characteristic of Q, the Q sort.

The Q sort is a method that requires a participant to sort items according to some kind of criterion, such as the degree to which they agree or disagree with, like or dislike an item. Items can be anything that can be sorted but are usually statements written on cards. Items are placed in a position on a grid consisting of columns of different heights, which in total, describe the shape of a normal distribution curve (the outer columns are shorter than the middle columns). It makes no difference where in a column an item is placed, but moving an item to the right or left is determined by how much a participant agrees or disagrees (for

instance) with an item. When asking participants to sort items, there is an important distinction between valence and salience. Items are not simply ranked from right to left in descending order of value to the sorter. Instead, when the Q sort is completed, the items are arranged so that they spread out from the middle column to the left and right hand outermost columns with increasing salience. The outer columns thus contain items, about which the participant feels most strongly in contrast to the middle column, where 'neutral' items are placed, or those that the participant is not particularly bothered either way about.

The second unusual or characteristic feature is Q factor analysis. This involves Q sorts being compared with each other so that similarities and differences lead to the identification of factors. Each Q factor represents a pattern of sorting which forms the basis of a participant's subjectivity or their viewpoint. In Q, a factor represents a particular level of statistical correlation for the assertion to be made that, although the participants providing Q sorts for it differed in certain respects in relation to the way that they sorted the items, their Q sorts were similar enough for them to subscribe to a pattern. This pattern is called a Q factor.

A third unusual aspect of Q is the interpretation of the Q factors. Each of the patterns are scrutinised so as to search for descriptions which enable the factors to be expressed. Such expression can be regarded as a viewpoint which articulates the strongest areas of agreement and disagreement when compared with, or relative to, the other viewpoints.

Q Methodology

William Stephenson

William Stephenson gained PhDs in Physics and Psychology and those who write about him make frequent reference to this, as does Stephenson himself. A contemporary of Cyril Burt, Cattell and Spearman, Stephenson introduced the idea of deploying factor analytic techniques for a radically different purpose, in a letter to *Nature*, published in 1935. R methodology, so called because it derives from correlational studies (Pearson's r) of interactions among traits as variables, is distinguished from Q methodology, which searches for correlations between

people across a sample of variables. Spearman and Burt were using factor analysis to look for 'g'-a model that Stephenson rejected. Spearman gave tests and factor analysed test scores, whereas Stephenson asked people to express views and applied factor analysis to their responses in order to explore the structure of subjective opinions around a topic. Stephenson emphasised people measuring rather than people being measured-he was correlating persons (or the behaviour of people) instead of tests. Although to describe Q as inverted factor analysis is not completely accurate, it does emphasise Q applying persons to a sample of statements instead of tests being applied to a sample of people, so that individuals, or rather their sorting behaviour is compared and correlated rather than their measurements-in Q, people are variables rather than the test items (Brown, 1980; Shemmings, 2006). Another kind of inversion is an emphasis on diversity in a subject area as opposed to a search for consensual understandings as well as Q's interest in the articulated shared understandings of people rather than the people themselves.

There appear to be trans-Atlantic differences in the philosophical justification or rationale for Q as well as in the degree to which the Stephenson flame is kept alive. Two of the Brits for instance described appropriating Q for their own devices, portraying themselves 'more as upstarts who have stolen the family silver to fund their own devious plans, than fine scions in the family tradition' (Stainton Rogers & Stainton Rogers, 1990). Stainton Rogers (1997/1998, p20) discusses a paradigm which is discursive and narrative, is sceptical of intrapsychic essences, part of what he refers to as the critical forum, with Q being used to analyse patterns.

In contrast perhaps is the American Steve Brown (1997), one of a number of writers who demonstrate a reverence for Stephenson, describing him as 'ahead of his time.... not the muddled thinker that his critics pictured him to be' (p21), praising him for his perseverance in the light of strong opposition and wishing for him to be 'restored to his proper place in the history of the human sciences' (p22). In contrast to basing Q on social constructionism, Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers (1990) saw the American version more as a way of viewing Q factors as 'self-referential attitudes or subjective viewpoints' (p1) so that a completed Q sort represents a reified and personalised subjectivity.

Practice (the method of Q sorting)

Q-Methodology focuses on the 'subjective dimension of any issue towards which different points-of-view can be expressed' (Stenner, 2006). Stenner goes on to describe that typically, a participant sample (the P set), sorts a sample of items (the Q set) into a subjectively meaningful pattern (the Q sort). Resulting Q sorts are factor analysed by-person (Q-analysis), yielding a set of factors whose interpretation reveals a set of points-of-view (the F set).

Since Q is interested in the nature of and extent to which segments of subjectivity (Brown, 1993) exist (revealed by factor analysis) and how similar or dissimilar they are, 'the issue of large numbers, so fundamental to most social research, is rendered relatively unimportant. In principle as well as practice, single cases can be the focus of significant research' (Brown, 1993, p94). There is an emphasis on quality rather than quantity.

The Q-user aims for the concourse to contain (as far as possible), a diverse range of statements, all that people might possibly say about the topic being investigated. Rather than conceptualising the self as an inner state of consciousness, according to some, Q examines subjective opinions, seeking their form and structure so as to interpret their meaning. Participants in a Q study behaviourally define their points of view via the Q sort, so that the researcher's view follows from the subjects' (participants') operations. A group of participants sort a sample of items according to the degree to which they agree with statements (for instance). A typical arrangement is shown below in Figure 3.1 below.

A *concourse* can be thought of as the flow 'of ideas and opinions around the topic under consideration', (Bradley, 2007). Brown refers to concourse as 'the flow of communicability' (Brown, 1993, p94). Stenner describes it as the 'field of the sayable' (Stenner, 2006).

Nightingale and Cromby state that 'through enculturation, children come to organise their perceptions and activities consonant with whatever notions of self are locally legitimated and available' (2002, p706) and this seems very close to Stephenson's concourse theory in Q.



Figure 3.1 A typical arrangement for a Q sort

The concourse is then reduced to a manageable number of statements that can be *sorted*. These statements become the *Q set* or *Q sample*. Here, the goal is to provide a ‘miniature’ (Brown, 1993, p99) representing the comprehensiveness of the concourse-similar to the process in survey research. By including statements directly from the community under investigation and from other sources where their voices are represented, one can produce a Quasi-naturalistic Q sample (McKeown & Thomas, 1988). McKeown and Thomas also distinguish between structured and unstructured Q samples. Unstructured samples are chosen ‘without undue effort made to ensure coverage of all possible sub-issues’ (McKeown & Thomas, 1988, p28).

The *condition of instruction* directs the participant to sort the statements, where ‘all the statements of the Q set *must* represent possible responses to that question’ (Watts & Stenner, 2005, p75). The post-sort interview enables a participant to

elaborate their point of view by talking about where and why they placed statements.

Representation (what do you think of your behaviour?)	Understanding (how do you explain your behaviour?)	Policy (what could help you to change your behaviour?)
I'm not disruptive	My behaviour is worse in lessons where I find the work more difficult	I know that it is up to me to change my behaviour
Everybody messes about	I'm not sure I can cope with being around lots of kids	Teachers can help me to behave better
I'm quite happy with my behaviour	Other pupils want to copy my work	I have friends of my age who help my behaviour to improve
I need to stay out of trouble	My behaviour is better if I feel that my teachers like me	I need to argue and back chat less
My behaviour gets in the way of my learning	Classwork is too difficult	Some of the things I do keep me out of trouble

Table 3.1 Three types of statements

Curt noted (1994, p120), that 'in simple, practical terms, people find it easier and more meaningful to consider propositions in relation to one another if they are all either to do with re-presentation or understanding or conduct/policy' and Stainton-Rogers, R., (1995, p185) stated that these three types of statements 'should not be mixed in a pack which seeks to address just one of these'. I produced the Table above (Table 3.1) in order to attempt to separate these three types of statements at the time that I was still intending to explore views of behaviour.

Other considerations include a need to ensure that statements are worded as clearly as possible and Oppenheim's (1992) advice on questionnaire design is helpful here suggesting:

- editing statements to improve intelligibility and reduce ambiguity (avoid double-barrelled questions, double negatives)
- editing to make sure that each statement used contains a single idea, is not too long
- removing obvious duplications
- where possible choosing phrasing that sounds naturalistic rather than formal.

The Q sort experience

In November 2005, John Bradley's presentation of his research into the views of young people on going to University (Bradley, 2005) inspired me to start using card sorts (as opposed to Q sorts) with children and young people. At this stage, without wishing to engage Q methodology, I designed and presented tasks to young people that required them to sort cards. I started to explore the response of children and young people to completing a questionnaire, compared with responding to the same items, presented as a card sort activity. One boy, for instance, told me that a questionnaire felt more like he was 'not welcome...like you've done something wrong'. I liked the feel of a card sort and as an EP, its potential for engaging children and young people in a very different way to an interview. I became interested in developing a card sort activity as a way of trying to determine which stage on the six stage model (Prochaska *et al*, 1994) a youngster might be situated. As a potential area of enquiry, I found this satisfying in the way that it might inform practice by developing an assessment tool as well as by understanding better how what children and young people say about their behaviour, might be understood and used to engage them effectively in considering change.

I created an opportunity to complete a Q study with all members of the Educational Psychology Service in the Local Authority (LA) in which I work-my first experience of completing a Q sort which I found instructive. I noted that I 'felt I knew when I

had completion' and that there was a process of continual comparison. Some of the statements provoked quite deep reflection and I realised, at first hand, that the wording of the statements was crucial. I found myself identifying a theme and then clustering associated statements. Other colleagues' comments led me to think that doing a Q sort was not something that could be done passively if one wished to preserve one's integrity. Some colleagues felt constrained by the shape of the grid, although, like me, one EP said, 'feels like I've finished....it matters where it goes' (with respect to placing the statements on the grid).

My daughter⁴ completed a Q sort shortly before her 16th birthday and wrote the following:

The Q sort would be good for people that don't like to talk about themselves or find it difficult. Also it's easier than writing down information about how you're feeling because the thoughts are there. And because they are thoughts that relate to the person but aren't actually volunteered by that person, that makes it easier for the person to describe how they are feeling but not feel as if they are giving too much away or finding it difficult.

From the Q-Method list, a thread (September 2007) developed around the theme that Q sorting is a valuable exercise in itself. One contributor wrote about having used Q to identify what was important in an after school education programme, stating,

In the discussion ... each of us spent lots of energy championing our own causes - and very little energy listening to the arguments of others, but in the sort activity we were forced to read and think about the points that everyone else brought up. Almost to a person, the comments afterwards were along the lines of 'what ever statement I was reading at the time seemed the most important to me'. Only through the Q sort activity did we really listen to each other

(Downing Wilson, D. 19/09/2007, 00:02:07).

⁴ The ethics of involving my own children are referred to later in chapter 4

Brown's response to the Q-list described the procedure as one that forces the Q sorter to take various perspectives as 'value clarification through representative exposure' (see Brown, 1994). A number of contributors commented on the value of Q sorting in making personal views and beliefs more explicit to the Q sorter and using the method at planning and training events.

Theory

Q Methodology (Brown, 1993) 'is a set of procedures, theory, and philosophy supporting the study of the same kind of subjectivity that is the focal point of much qualitative research'. So as to reduce data, Q uses factor analysis, 'a variety of statistical techniques whose common objective is to represent a set of variables in terms of a smaller number of hypothetical variables' (Kim & Mueller, 1978, p9). Q emerged from 1930s psychometrics and 'few statistical procedures can be more daunting than factor analysis, but in Q methodology there is little more reason to understand the mathematics involved than there is to understand mechanics in order to drive a car' (Brown, 1993, p110). Brown again, refers to hearing a statistician describe factor analysis as 'that branch of multivariate analysis in which the researcher grasps the data by the throat and screams 'speak to me' and in Q methodology this is not all that far fetched' (Brown, 1993, p123). Space does not permit further discussion of factor analysis but if required, guidance can be found elsewhere (Kerlinger, 1964, Child, 1990, Watts & Stenner, 2012)

Analysis

PQMethod is free to download⁵ so as to analyse Q sort data and was used in Q studies 1, 2 and 3 (Chapters 5a, 5b and 5c) in order to extract and rotate factors so that they could then be interpreted.

After entering the Q sorts into PQMethod, factor extraction involves 'the identification of distinct regularities or 'patterns of similarity' in the Q sort configurations' (Watts and Stenner, in 2012, p139). Centroid analysis searches for the first shared pattern in the data which becomes 'factor 1'.

⁵(<http://www.lrz.de/~schmolck/qmethod/downpqx.htm>)

Following this process, a measure is then provided which tells us the extent to which each individual Q sort can be said to *exemplify* (or is typical of) the Factor 1 pattern. This measure is known as a *factor loading* or *factor saturation* and it is expressed in the form of a correlation coefficient' Watts and Stenner (2012, p139).

Centroid factor analysis (favoured by the Q community) was used each time to extract factors in this study. Brown (1980) describes indeterminacy as the uniqueness of the Centroid method, freeing up the researcher to follow theory led inclinations. Fuller explanations for choosing the Centroid method exist elsewhere (Brown, 1980; Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Having extracted the factors, the Varimax procedure can be used to rotate the factors (Watts & Stenner, 2012; Watts & Stenner, 2005). Watts and Stenner write that the criticism that Q users might level at Varimax's arrival at 'the most mathematically (not necessarily the most theoretically) informative solution', is countered by the reliability and simplicity offered by the Varimax procedure, serving the researcher well in revealing the range of viewpoints favoured by the participants (Watts & Stenner, 2005, p.81). Brown and Robyn (2004) note that 'Although Stephenson placed a high value on theoretical rotation, this procedure is rarely used, even among those individuals who frequently employ Q methodology and openly espouse its principles (p.105)'.

Positioning Q within a philosophical rationale

Q and social constructionism

Stephenson (1953) and others following in his wake write frequently about statements in the Q sort being self-referential (eg Brown, 1997, McKeown & Thomas, 1988, Webler *et al* 2009) and Q as 'a method designed to study 'subjectivity' in a systematic fashion' (Watts, personal communication, 2008). This can become confusing, particularly if there is talk of 'measuring' subjectivity. 'Q

Methodology yields clear results via factor analysis yet makes no claim to be measuring anything' (Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 2004, p103).⁶

As I wish my methodology to explore different voices I need to be careful not to stray inadvertently into a social psychology focused upon the individual in society and talk of subjectivity could easily divert my attention.

One view of subjectivity is as 'a convenient fiction, a device, no more, for making thinking easier' and factor analysis 'as a convenient technique for gaining access to the way ideas, arguments, explanations, and representations may be 'knowledged into being' ' (Stainton Rogers, 1997, p11). This pragmatic approach is exemplified further by Curt thus: 'what we were looking for as a method was the 'opposite' of correlating 'traits', something which correlated whole structures of readings (eg about people) in order to disclose how they 'shake out' into sets of very similar accounts, ie, shared stories' (Curt, 1994, 119-120).

Rather than conceptualising the self as an inner state of consciousness, although statements might be described as 'self-referent' their origin is found in the oral public culture in which a person lives. Because of this each culture, subculture or counterculture contains all possible responses for a person reacting within that culture. While there are many possible responses to a given public issue, there are only a few highly significant possibilities at issue-which exist within the culture. There are probably only a limited number of views/opinions about any topic about which there is a concourse. So, as these are part of social life, it is perhaps unsurprising that an endless number of operant factors are *not* identified as there is a 'basic principle that whilst variety is to be expected in human social and economic life, such variety will be limited in scope by various constraints' (Stenner *et al* , 2008, p221). Stenner and Stainton Rogers, (1998) discuss this more fully:

...what we have called, for ease, constructionism, is more properly known as social constructionism. It is precisely the expectation that `cultural

⁶ This is a relief as during the presentation of my research proposal to the Sheffield EdD community, whilst still struggling to articulate my ideas concerning Q I suggested that 'Q measures subjectivity' to which came the response 'so if you can measure it, is it still subjectivity?'

systems and the language, social rules and practices which such systems involve' create a finite set of conditions... that renders the approach suited to pattern analytics of the kind typified by Q methodology.

(Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 1998, p73)

Watts demonstrates how social constructionism can be used to make 'sense of studies in the Q methodological tradition' (Watts, 2009 p29) and sets out to avoid separation between the personal and the social and in order to capture both the constructivist and constructionist understandings that Q can support. Smith, (2001), claims similarly that Q rejects the dualism of mind-body, an unmeasurable internal state and an external behaviour subject.

Burr points out that social constructionism has different forms and likens a paradigm to a family where:

Members of the same family differ in the family characteristics that they share. There is no one characteristic borne by all members of a family, but there are enough recurrent features shared amongst different family members to identify the people as basically belonging to the same family group.

(Burr, 2003, p2)

This quote is interesting for its parallels to describing a factor resulting from the analysis of Q sorts. Whilst participants loading on a factor might share characteristics with those loading on a different factor, the analyst is interested in the degree to which different Q sorts are (statistically) similar-the degree to which the family (or factor) characteristics are significant.

...the target of a Q study is less the 'psychological world' of the participants than the *cultural manifold* of possible or potential orientations which structure or pattern that world. ...therefore the objective of a Q methodological study is not to make claims about the individuals in one's sample but to identify and describe the manifold of positions that are *culturally available* in a given temporal and spatial location.

(Stenner *et al*, 2008, p222).

'In Q methodology this entails the expectation that one will not find infinite variety in viewpoint, but a circumscribed range, and the aim is to identify and describe that range' (Stenner *et al*, 2008, p221). Q is interested in the flow of ideas-patterns of opinion and in minority voices rather than quantification. Thus, Q is well suited to the type of enquiry of this study.

Q as a discourse analytic

Obtaining a view is closely related to hearing a voice and Ware (2004, p176) turns to the thesaurus, likening a view to an 'opinion, belief, standpoint, notion, idea', contrasting it to a choice, preference or expression of like or dislike. Such thinking links to discourse.

Q has been described as a form of Discourse Analysis (Stainton Rogers, 1997) or where Discourse Analysis is seen as a framework used by social constructionists (Brown, 2007b) to interpret Q factors. A Q study (where, for instance, statements are drawn from the concourse) is seen as a genuine representation of the discourse that exists in the wider population, where the units of analysis are not individuals, but discourses. De Graaf (2003) writes that Q 'gives researchers the opportunity to reconstruct the discourses in their own words using only those spoken by individuals involved in the discourse' (De Graaf, 2003, p92). This helps to address the concern that Billig expresses about social psychologists who take 'fictional things to be more real than the things that ordinary people recognise in the social world' (Billig, 2011, p15) and enables my discussion to remain 'populated'.

In 'Stories of Childhood', Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers (1992), seek a multiplicity of texts, referred to as critical polytextualism (Curt, 1994, Watts, 2002) where any topic of significance has a number of subject positions. There is also overlap with positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990, Harre & Moghaddam, 2003) 'which is concerned with revealing the explicit and implicit patterns of reasoning that are realised in the ways that people act towards others' (Harre *et al*, 2009). With positions defined as, 'patterns of beliefs in the members of a relatively coherent speech community' (Harre & Moghaddam, 2003, p4), the similarity to factors revealed by Q (viewpoints) is striking.

My research position

There are many positions which one might occupy (Nightingale & Cromby, 2002) and as a researcher I might range from asserting that an external world exists independently of my representation of it (realism), to the (anti-realist) belief that there are no grounds for postulating or investigating a reality independent of me as the knower.

For many purposes, not least in order to get through each day, there is a certain amount of 'reality' shared with others in my life, which I am ready to accept. This position of 'me-in-the-world' stands apart however, from 'me-as-researcher' where I am drawn to the idea that there are knowledges, as opposed to knowledge. Of relevance here is Liebrucks (2001) who comments that social constructionists do not declare that *everything* is socially constructed, that the concept is applied only to 'two specific classes of objects, namely scientific discourses and material arrangements in laboratories' (Liebrucks 2001, p372).

Willig writes that 'human experience...is mediated historically, culturally and linguistically' (Willig, 2001, p7), where perception and experience are regarded as a 'specific reading of these conditions'. For Willig, social constructionism 'problematizes given constructs such as psychological variables; it questions their validity and it is concerned with exploring the various ways in which they are 'made real' ' (Willig, 2001, p8). Resonant to this study is Willig's point that

research from a social constructionist perspective is concerned with identifying the various ways of constructing social reality that are available in a culture, to explore the conditions of their use and to trace their implications for human experience and social practice (Willig, 2001, p7).

Thus, the 'choices' available to individuals in society (for constructing a social reality), are added to by individuals adopting a particular position or narrative and giving it voice, but also pre-exist individuals, summed up as '*The world always precedes my world*' (Watts, 2002). Watts explains that the world of these varied narrative positions determines our experience of the world offering us points-of-view (viewpoints) about any number of topics that are culturally represented.

However, an individual is not bounded by these viewpoints but 'free' to move their position thereby gaining new perspectives. This helps us to understand that again, the focus here is not on the individual but on the discursive manifold that remains unchanged by an individual's movement.

In short then, at an ontological level, I can accept a world that has external reality but only know about the world of language that forms ideas, views and concepts about the social and material world. I can attempt to understand or make meaning around the concepts related to this world and the accounts that human beings give or construct in their attempts to make sense of themselves and each other and their behaviour. Such accounts or voices are 'multiple truths in social situations' (Wellington, 2000, p71) and by raising them in this study I hope to enable young researchers to be seen and thought about differently.

Q's task in this study then, is to explore and identify the different narrative positions related to the topic of young researchers-'the *position* they are taking up within the conceptual space' (Watts, 2009, p40).

An abductive research strategy

'When you run into something interesting , drop everything else and study it' (Skinner, 1956, p223).

Blaikie (2000) discusses the logic behind different research designs-induction, deduction, and, less well known, abduction. Induction is bottom-up and involves making observations and collecting data so as to generalise to propositions or laws. Deduction (a top down approach) starts with a theory and then gathers data in order to support or test it.

Drawing on the work of the American Philosopher, Charles Peirce, Blaikie claims that the abductive research strategy attempts to go beyond merely establishing relationships or patterns in social life by finding out the meanings or motives that 'people give to the actions that lead to such patterns' and elevating these to 'the central place in social theory and research' (Blaikie, 2000, p115). An abductive

research strategy assumes epistemologically, that social scientific knowledge is derived from

everyday concepts and meanings, from socially constructed mutual knowledge. The social researcher enters the everyday social world in order to grasp these socially constructed meanings. At one level, the accounts of a social world produced by the social scientist are redescriptions in social scientific language of the social actors' everyday accounts.

(Blaikie, 2000, p116).

Haig (2005) describes abduction as providing a broader account of scientific method, than either deduction or induction and identifies exploratory factor analysis (and therefore Q methodology) as an abductive method of theory generation enabling the researcher to 'hypothesise the existence of entities previously unknown' (Haig, 2005, p378).

Brown (2004) describes the way in which scientists develop skills for making intelligent judgements (which are guided by an accumulation of impressions), employing intuition, tacit knowledge, guesses and hunches, (not unlike the logic in practice used by Sherlock Holmes-see Shank, 2001). In one sense, the abductive scientist examines an impression, perhaps a footprint in clay, and asks, 'what's made this?' Thus, abduction is also associated with the inference to the best explanation, which involves 'accepting a theory when it is judged to provide a better explanation of the evidence than its rivals do' (Haig, 2005, p381). Abductive reasoning involves reasoning backwards from consequent to antecedent, using insight and is related to creative and aesthetic aspects, such as playing with thoughts, daydreaming and contemplation-described by Peirce as 'musement'. Gladwell's book 'Blink' deals with the phenomenon of making snap judgements-'knowing' something without knowing why-'gut reactions', described by Brown (2007a) as skating close to Peirce's concept of abduction.

Abductive reasoning can also be found in many detective stories and from Summerscale, for example, we learn that 'the word 'clue' derives from 'clew', meaning a ball of thread or yarn' such as the one used by Theseus so as to find his way out of the labyrinth (Summerscale, 2008, p68). In a similar way a mystery or a

research story may be said to unravel by the use of sagacity—a term that in England in the 1850s meant intuition (Summerscale, 2008, p96).

More specifically, abduction is also important in relation to factor rotation and factor interpretation (Brown, 1980).

My research journey has felt serendipitous. I have followed up hunches and potential leads by having conversations with a variety of people over a wide range of topics. For me, as a method, serendipity ('the faculty of making happy and unexpected discoveries by accident'; The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary) seems close in meaning to abduction, which feels as though it legitimises my approach.

On Method (and the young person)

I find much of the literature potentially confusing on this point as many authors tend to use the terms method and methodology interchangeably, a point echoed by Carter and Little (2007) and Blaikie, (2000, p8) who describes such practice as 'unfortunate and undesirable'. Blaikie distinguishes between methods as 'the techniques or procedures used to collect and analyse data' and methodology as 'discussions of how research is done, or should be done , and ... the critical analysis of methods of research' (Blaikie, 2000, p8).

An important consideration, concerns the position of the child or young person as participant. If they agree to be part of a project, then I believe that the interface between the research and the child or young person's views and opinions is the method (see also Bessell, 2008). This suggests that the researcher's conduct, which is linked closely to ethics and methodology, is most likely to be experienced by the child or young person through the researcher's method. Once method has been used, methodology is employed and I would argue that it is at this point that voice is formed.

Thus, choosing effective methods is crucial here. Stainton Rogers (1991) is critical of methods such as questionnaires with limited range questions, making the

concepts deployed predetermined where analysis is more likely to tell us something about the researcher who constructed the questionnaire, rather than the social world being investigated. Kvale (2006) discusses the power asymmetries of the interview, for instance by pointing to power differences which can serve to challenge the notion of the interview as warm, caring, equal and emancipatory. Galasinski and Kozłowska (2010, p272) note that questionnaires are criticised 'for reproducing the researcher's view of the world' and Brown makes a similar point when he considers social science scales and how, an observer (or researcher) imposes his or her will on reality, 'by defining ahead of time, what a response is to mean' (Brown, 1980, p3).

Question-answer feedback routines can reflect an unequal power relationship between a young person and an adult and we need to be mindful of the tendency for young people to be biased towards agreeing with what is put to them (Lewis, 2005) and their willingness to answer very odd questions, the increased likelihood of them trying to answer questions requiring yes or no responses, their increased acceptance of incorrect information given to them by an adult (as opposed to a child) and their ability, as young as three, to deceive adults (see Greene & Hill, 2005, p9,10). Such considerations clearly raise complex ethical and methodological issues.

Punch (2002) argues that from the perspective of research, children are not different to adults although there is a difference in the perceptions of children and their marginalised position. She describes as paradoxical, the stance of some researchers, located within the new sociology of childhood, who emphasise the need for adapted research methods that suit children in innovative ways, whilst also emphasising their competence, asking, 'if children are competent social actors, why are special 'child-friendly' methods needed to communicate with them'? (Punch, 2002, p321).

To cut to the chase here, it seems important to adapt research methods to the participants who, it is hoped, will engage with them, be they very young children or much older people. Although Punch reminds us that treating children in a similar way to adults might lead to researchers failing to address power imbalances, this

charge could be made of any kind of research which does not adequately consider ethical issues and the position of any participant. Ethical issues and for instance, different challenges in gaining informed consent from children and young people compared with adults are discussed by Punch who warns against ensuring that such considerations do not lead researchers to disregard others including building rapport, not imposing one's own interpretations, being aware of the research context and establishing clear questions. Punch asserts (correctly I believe) that 'Such dilemmas need to be considered when doing research either with adults or children', (Punch, 2002, p323) before proceeding to outline ways in which power and generational issues (the position of children in society) and adult views regarding children's competencies can influence the way in which researchers might regard working with children as different. Fraser (2004) echoes this with the observation that rather than being child-friendly, research techniques should be 'participant-friendly'.

Is Q fit for purpose?

To recap, I am keen to adopt a research position that sees children and young people as diverse and individuals with unique experiences, capable negotiators of reality, who construct different realities and live within multiple realities, able to weave stories to create order out of chaos and make sense of their world moment by moment, (Stainton Rogers, 1991). An approach in which I attempted to create a 'climate of perturbation', instead of pursuing 'psychology's 'wild goose chase' after nomothetic knowledge' (Stainton Rogers, 1997) seemed well-suited to my desire to problematise the term 'co-researcher'. In addition to assuming that knowledge is constructed and multiple, constructionist epistemology also views knowledge as a means of exercising power. If children and young people can engage in research (and create knowledge), then this is one way in which they can gain power (as an alternative to it being grasped from them).

At an epistemological level, I can find out about the world of language by employing (ethical) methodologies which I can attempt to use in ways which address the ever-present potential power differences between researcher and researched, particularly pertinent when exploring the world of the child and young person.

Earlier in this chapter, I listed a number of criteria for a methodological approach. I wanted to hear a range of voices, reduce complex data and illuminate something of significance related to what being a young researcher means. Q gives voice to all participants (including the marginalised) and remains close to the experiences of the disempowered (Brown, 2006). Although 'the external view of the scientist is involved (it cannot be avoided)' (McKeown, 1990) I wished to minimise this and avoid imposing the researcher's view of the world on the people being researched, respecting participant's viewpoints.

In the following chapter I demonstrate how I avoided treating children and young people as subjects and sought ways to maximise the participation of young people who had worked as researchers by taking them seriously, without undermining any confidence and independence that they might have gained from working in that role. I wished to avoid 'grasping' (by using methodology which satisfies ethical principles regarding voice). Barker and Weller (2003) comment that children might find questionnaires and other more 'traditional' methods inappropriate, intimidating or boring. Whilst Q might be cognitively challenging for some, it is a novel activity which many participants seem to enjoy and by employing novel methods I hoped to reduce any negative aspects of the research encounter. Fitting comfortably within a social constructionist paradigm, Q serves the purpose of this study, to help problematise the meaning of 'co-researcher' and to explore different ways in which the experience of young researchers is constructed.

Chapter 4 **PROCEDURES**

Introduction

The context for and overview of this study was provided in the introduction. The literature review gave further background on relevant aspects before focusing more sharply on young people as researchers. The previous chapter dealt with methodological issues where a distinction was made between methodology and method. So as to maintain the emphasis on the difference between these two terms, this chapter reports on the how, what, where and when and with whom-in short, the methods or procedures. I have explained that my starting point was a study related to exploring the views of young people concerning behaviour.

Unclear at the time, the benefit of hindsight now indicates that my activity 'in the field' might usefully be described as three phases although this would suggest that each followed the preceding phase in temporal order, which was not necessarily the case. I began by building a concourse of statements related to what might be said about behaviour in school and my three initial research questions. I then started to work with young people whom I regarded as 'co-researchers'. As I became curious about their role I then started to explore how I might better understand the role of the 'co-researcher'. One example of overlap between phases was that I took some of the activities that the 'co-researchers' and I had developed (a Phase 2 activity) to a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU, a Phase 1 activity) that I had links with. Thus, 'type' of activity might substitute for 'phase' if further clarification is required.

Phase 1-activity aimed at researching young people's behaviour in school

Initially, my study was aiming to research behaviour by exploring young people's voices concerning their behaviour in school. I wanted the words of young people to be used as the basis for statements for use in a Q set. I also decided to recruit young people as 'co-researchers' (see Phase 2) in the hope that they might design activities with me that could then be used to generate potential statements.

A discourse related to what might be said about behaviour in school was developed by searching the literature for verbatim comments from young people, by generating statements in response to the literature, from EP reports and comments from my colleagues in the LA, from the teachers at the PRU and from the work conducted by the 'co-researchers'. The intention was to then split the statements into three sets corresponding to the three research questions, so that each statement matched the associated condition of instruction.

Phase 2-activity with 'co-researchers'

Introduction

Early on, I talked with a friend of my daughter who was then aged 17 and had been trained in work with children around the issues of sexual health. She was enthusiastic about the prospect of working with me in some capacity and although, for ethical reasons, (and her competing demands or indolence) she did not become involved, the encounter did lead me to pursue the idea further.

This was an interesting and fruitful area to explore in more depth. In a variety of ways, I wished to collect authentic and representative statements from young people, some of whom experienced emotional and behavioural school-based difficulties. It might be argued, that comments made by one young person to another are more likely to be 'natural' than if they were obtained in some kind of encounter with me and we saw earlier how some of the literature supports this idea (Grover, 2004). Harden *et al* (2000) discuss the role of the adult researcher and whether or not it is meaningful for adults to adopt the role of 'least adult' or 'friend', opting instead to minimise power differentials by encouraging children to be interviewees.

Joseph Rowntree/Save the Children (2000) have produced some useful materials aimed at those training young people for this purpose and Kirby (1999, 2004) and Kellett (2005b) also write helpfully about enabling young people to design and conduct research. A range of other materials, including some very useful guides to involving young people in research, were consulted (Bennett *et al*, 2009; Chick & Inch, 2007; Fielding & Rudduck, 2002; Gallagher, 2005; Jones, 2004; Lewis &

Porter, 2004; Skinner *et al*, 2007; Smith *et al*, 2002). Some of these ideas were used in order to recruit young people as 'co-researchers'.

I approached Psychology teachers in two local Secondary schools (Sec1 and Sec2) in order to identify a group of A Level Psychology students who might be interested in working with me. Both of these schools were easy to reach and had healthy cohorts of A level Psychology students.

In the initial study, I wanted young people in Key Stage 3 (KS3) who had been permanently excluded to sort statements all of which said something about behaviour. I was keen to base the statements for the Q sorting on what young people themselves would say. I intended that 'co-researchers' would work with a range of pupils in KS3, to run activities, all of which were designed to obtain or 'harvest' the statements. I hoped to train, support and supervise the 'co-researchers', so that they felt fully prepared for this role. Training was designed to include the use of appropriate language, research skills and procedures necessary to this project, consent, coping with the disclosure of sensitive information and upset, confidentiality and safety, including the option of working in pairs, using identity cards and having mobile phone contacts so as to fine tune final arrangements and check in once activities had been completed. Having obtained statements for the concourse (a 'complete' set of all that can be said about, in this case, behaviour in school), I was then to reduce the statements to a Q set-a smaller more manageable number of statements which could be sorted. Thus, a number of different ideas were all aimed at generating statements to build an 'authentic' concourse.

Description of work with 'co-researchers'

I identified an A level Psychology teacher in Sec1 and met with her in the summer term to share details of my project. I was hoping to articulate some of the benefits to young people who might take part and become 'co-researchers' so that a 'win-win' situation might be established. She seemed interested in the idea of a 'real-life' researcher working with her students. She explained that the school was looking for opportunities to extend students and the project seemed appealing in this way also. She suggested that upper sixth formers would be most suited as

they were 'known' and 'capable'. We agreed that I would start working with students in the following Autumn term but we aimed for a briefing session with potential students later in the summer term. After evidencing my CRB check and ethics approval letter (Appendix 1a and 1b) and gaining agreement from the Head Teacher, I prepared an information sheet for potential 'co-researchers' (Appendix 2) and planned an introductory session in order to provide these student researchers with further relevant details (Appendix 3), answer any questions and gain their participation. In order to develop a situation where there were mutual gains I planned to explain the assumed benefits to me as a researcher and to the research and share some ideas regarding benefits to young people (Appendix 4). I had looked at details of the A level Psychology course, noting content such as research methods and hoped that the activities that we might engage in could provide data that they might be able to use in practical course work. However, the course changed so that this was no longer a requirement.

We arranged for me to meet with some of the Sixth Form students about six weeks after meeting with the teacher. On the day scheduled for the afternoon meeting, the teacher telephoned me in the morning informing me that only about 10 or 12 students might turn up and did I wish to continue? I decided to go ahead and was then surprised to find that only three students attended the meeting. In spite of this I noted at the time that it was a useful session that encouraged me to understand which aspects to 'tune up'. For instance I realised that I needed to be clearer about the decisions that I had already made and would continue to take sole responsibility for, in contrast to those that were genuinely to be made together.

Prior to a series of meetings with some Sixth Form students in the Autumn term, I explored other materials relating to supporting and training young researchers (Sharpe *et al*, 2008 and particularly useful, the iNet/SSAT materials), adapting them for use with the students. I shared these with the teacher discussing my outline plan one week before meeting with the students. As well as seeking reassurance that I was pitching at the right level, I was aware of trying to engage her effectively so that she might exercise her gatekeeping role and encourage more students to get involved.

Five students attended the initial meeting of a series. Attendance varied across the meetings which presented some challenges regarding ethics and judging how well-prepared the students were in terms of their own skills and confidence and how able they were to deal with possible safeguarding issues concerning the younger pupils they were to work with. I referred to my research ethics application form and used Appendix 3 as a framework for the session, referring to Appendix 2 to explain my study. I gave some examples of statements about behaviour and how they related to my three research questions. After discussing possible benefits using Appendix 4 the students used a flower diagram (after Wood *et al*, 2002) to consider the costs and benefits of becoming involved in the project. I had tried to find a more 'young person friendly' image (such as a mobile phone) but in the event they had no difficulty in labelling the petals of the flower with advantages and the thorns with disadvantages. I distributed materials for a Q sort (Appendix 5-7) related to possible benefits, an interesting exploration in its own right as well as a good opportunity to demonstrate my method. At my prompting, the students gave feedback on the activity. Some thought that there were too many statements, that some were similar and so could have been merged. Some suggested that as they were all 'positive' it was difficult to disagree with them. The comment was also made that it might have worked better as a 'social' activity, completed in small groups so as to promote discussion.

The session ended with using a diamond ranking exercise (after O'Kane, 2008) to explore the research skills felt to be important to the project. I had hoped that this exercise might help identify the areas needing particular attention. I used Appendix 8 to encourage the students to place statements according to how confident they felt about the skill and how important it seemed to be for supporting the project. Figure 4.1 shows a smaller version of the arrangement with a few examples. Some of the statements were taken from Worrall (2000) which I then supplemented.

As groups of students had completed this exercise, the results were difficult to interpret and I decided to develop a plan (Appendix 9) and address any necessary skill deficits as they became apparent. The students agreed that a plan would be useful and I gave them labels to place in sequential order so as to establish a

framework (see Table 4.1) helping the group to develop a shared sense of the project and the order in which individual tasks needed to be completed.



Figure 4.1 Diamond ranking exercise showing the placement of a few statements as examples

For some of the tasks smaller sub-groups of students worked together. For example a group of three developed a code of conduct using Appendix 10 and then 11 once sufficient discussion had enabled agreement across the whole group to be reached. Scenarios were discussed (Appendix 12) so as to refine the code of conduct further. I shared Appendix 13 with the students so as to provide another perspective on the planning and as a potential script that students could use in order to describe the purpose of the project and associated activity to the younger students. I collected a number of resource materials (such as those in the Appendices) and put them on a CD for use with a computer, and paper resources in a project book, left with the teacher to look after, for access by the students.

Position	Research act
1	Aims of the project Timeline/plan
2	Outline of ethics Research question Getting relevant permissions Who is leading research and why
3	How the sample will be chosen
4	Sample of people to be used
5	Writing questionnaires, interview questions etc Research methods
6	Doing the research
7	Results (focus group, interviews etc)
8	Analysis of results
9	Conclusions
10	Evaluation
11	Presenting findings
12	Recommendations Audience for report/presentation Agreeing next steps/action as a result of research

Table 4.1 The agreed position of different parts of the research process (1 indicates completion before 2 etc...)

At this point in the project I ruptured my Achilles tendon and was unable to visit Sec1 for a few weeks. Although I contacted the teacher to explain and expressed confidence about the good start that we had made and the students' ability to work successfully without me, the teacher cancelled the session that had been arranged and no further progress was made until I resumed working with them. When we did meet again after a few weeks absence, I presented some images that I hoped would provoke or elicit statements about behaviour. Here I was influenced by researchers such as Kodadek and Feeg (2002) who have used vignettes to stimulate discussion, described as being 'valuable to the researcher, enabling the discussion to move from a more abstract to focused level and providing opportunities for participants to be more reflective of their wider and personal experience' (France *et al*, 2000, p 153). We discussed how the materials might be used with groups of younger students and some of the students searched for other images so as to supplement the collection. Discussion had identified issues regarding control for the Sec1 students which meant that working with small groups of KS3 pupils possibly withdrawn from a classroom was likely to be easier. I shared

focus group guidelines (Appendix 14) with the students, which I had developed during the earlier pilot project. We worked on guidance for running a focus group (Appendix 15) as well as the group activity (Appendix 16). I edited these documents so as to provide the students with a script that they could use with small groups of younger students (Appendix 17). The younger students were given Appendix 18 as instructions for the activity and Appendix 19 to accompany the images. Agony aunt letters (Appendix 20) were also developed as a further stimulus for the KS3 pupils. An evaluation form was developed (using some ideas from Chick & Inch, 2007) for the KS3 pupils to complete (Appendix 21). After discussion with the students, we developed a letter for parents of KS3 pupils (see Appendix 22). We explored using a video tent so as to record stories about the behaviour of pupils in KS3 and developed consent forms and procedures for governing this activity but did not use this activity. The students organised which teachers to approach in order to gain access to pupils in KS3 and ran the activities over the next few weeks. I remained in contact with them via the teacher and met up a few times to collect statements and replenish materials. This process yielded some of the statements listed in Appendix 23.

In planning for and preparing to meet with the Sec1 students, I found it useful to consult Alderson and Morrow's (2004) 10 topics in ethical research and frameworks such as those described by Schenk and Williamson (2005).

As a practitioner and researcher with children, my work is subject to Codes of Ethical conduct for the profession as well as Professional Practice Guidelines (eg of the Division of Educational and Child Psychology and the Association of Educational Psychologists). I took care to ensure that young people and other participants consented to work on activities relating to the study and were aware that they could leave at any time. At each meeting consent was referred to and I used phrases such as 'if you should choose to take part in the study...' Similar considerations were afforded my own children who helped me at certain points in the study. One of my children had asked me about my doctoral work and offered her views about the statements that I was developing for the Q set. As she therefore knew something about the topic, it was a natural step for her to be

offered an opportunity to be a participant in Q study 2, which she accepted. My 14 year old son also helped me with phrasing of items for the Q set.

'Adults generally have authority over children. This may result in children finding it difficult to disagree or do or say things they fear may be unacceptable' (Thorsen & Størksen, 2010, p9). In my position as father to my children, my experience is that they have not had too much trouble with this! In my parenting I seek their opinion over any number of things and whilst (in general) they would be pleased to please me they are not at all reticent about offering a negative view or declining an invitation. Whilst it is difficult in the context of family life and home, to separate my positions as father, partner, wage-earner, researcher... I am clear that my children were not coerced into taking part in the study, were not harmed in the process and, as they had seen me stuck at a desk for many long hours, had a fairly informed view of my work. My daughter took part in the study, my son declined. I emailed my daughter along with the other young participants and, as with the others, did not issue a reminder when a response was not forthcoming, although it would have been easy to have appealed to her good nature. In considering the ethics of involving my own children in the study I have thought more than once about the more general issue of the ethics of undertaking a doctorate in the first place, in so far as the effect that this has on family life.

Barker and Weller (2003) report in their study, that many children chose to use their real names or nicknames as they felt that they would be taken more seriously than had a pseudonym been used. In a study that she was involved with, Grinyer (2002) notes that three-quarters of respondents chose for their real names to be used and she discusses striking a balance between protecting identity and the loss of ownership associated with using a pseudonym given by the researcher. Wiles *et al* (2008) comment that increasingly there is a trend for (particularly young) participants to choose to have their real names used rather than be anonymised. It felt important with both my child and adult participants, to give them a choice over using a pseudonym or their real first name.

Consent was discussed at various times with the students and after I judged that we knew each other sufficiently and they had a good understanding of the project I

invited them to complete consent forms (Appendix 24), encouraging them to discuss this with adults at home but assuming that they were able to give consent in their own right.

My work with students in Sec2 followed a similar pattern although was quicker as I was able to put to good use the experience and learning gained from working in Sec1. I used similar materials (eg Appendix 8-10) to those used with the Sec1 students and they also completed the Q sort designed to explore the benefits to 'co-researchers' giving me a total P set at this point of 15 for this exploration. Materials used previously in Sec1 were tailored to Sec2. I also developed a checklist to support the Sec2 students (Appendix 25). Similar to those reported by Harden *et al* (what if they don't say anything, what if they just walk off when I'm talking, Harden *et al*, 2000, 3.8), some of the students asked illuminating questions including:

What should we do if they want to be social?

What if someone wants to leave and everyone follows?

What if someone doesn't want to do the activity?

Nespor (1998) writes that it is as if some researchers are encouraged to adopt a marginal role, specifying only vague goals with the intention that children's understanding of the research process is incomplete, so as to obtain better data. I was also reminded of the work of Roberts (2000, p232) who described a 'traditional research manual approach' whereby the sharing of opinions, values and beliefs is discouraged by, for instance, the researcher not sharing with the interviewee, their values or beliefs and laughing off any requests to this effect by stating that the researcher's job is not to have opinions but to seek them. In order to discourage this, I did my best to answer in an honest and straightforward manner, using the student's questions as a launchpad for discussion and a prompt to refine the materials for the students to use. For instance, one such discussion emphasised the tension between encouraging participation whilst respecting a participant's right to remain silent. As well as wishing to engage the student's question I was also hoping to model an interactional style in which the researcher's position is not aloof or distant from that of the participants.

Ethics were discussed with the Sec1 and Sec2 students so that they were prepared for their work with the younger students. It was helpful to borrow from other researchers, so for instance, in relation to safeguarding, I suggested a form of words similar to those used by Roberts (2000, p237):

Sometimes a person might talk about a situation where they have been harmed by someone. If this happens, I may need to talk to someone else, especially if it is something awful which is still happening to you, or if the person who harmed you may still be hurting someone else. I would want to be able to agree with you what should be done, and who should be told.

When I analysed the results for the 15 participants who had completed the Q sort concerning benefits, it appeared that more significant results might be obtained by extending the P set. I contacted the two Secondary schools again and arranged to visit for a second round, administering nine more sorts in Sec1 and five more in Sec2 bringing the P set to a total of 29.

Phase 3-activity aimed at exploring the position of young people as 'co-researchers'

As my contact with the young people developed I collected a number of doubts. I had wanted to find ways of equalising the power relationship between me as researcher and the young people who would be completing the Q sorts, but these principles applied also to my 'co-researchers'. I had tried to be clear about the parameters regarding which decisions were available to the 'co-researchers' (ie not determined by me), but even so I worried about the degree to which I might be paying lip-service to this. What sense of ownership did they have? Was I manipulating them into feeling that they were 'co-researchers' and not just dogsbodies? This was brought into sharper relief when I was asked if I had 'theorised the position of the 'co-researcher'. My doubts grew and now included my uncertainty about whether or not 'co-researcher' was the most appropriate term for their role.

To get a better understanding I used Hart's ideas and attempted to produce a ladder of participation with respect to young people participating in research with adults (see Table 2.3 in Chapter 2). I started writing to adults whose work I had read in order to ask if they knew of any work theorising the position of the 'co-researcher'. This also enabled me to gauge their interest in becoming involved in my work. I started a list of potential people (my P set, young people and academics) who would be willing and able to complete a Q sort activity designed to explore the views of young people and adults, concerning the role of young people involved in research with adults. I developed a concourse based on the literature and on my thoughts in response to reading and thinking about it and the practical experience that I had gained with the two groups of young people that I had worked with. I also followed a lead to contact two teachers who were involved with youngsters in research communities which had been established in two different Secondary schools in the same Local Authority. They looked at a list of statements and showed them to the young people in the research communities for further comment. I was also stimulated by the reflections of a young researcher (Cole, 2008), conversations with Peter Hannon and with colleagues associated with research communities.

Developing my Q set so as to explore the position of the 'co-researcher'

A set of items (Q set) was generated from the concourse. A Q set, consists typically of between 40 and 80 items (Watts & Stenner 2005; Stenner *et al*, 2008) and I developed a set of 59. Having read a number of different Q studies, my observation is that so often, this kind of 'one-liner' is all that is said about the way in which statements are crafted in studies using Q methodology. In contrast, I should like to give a fuller description of the process that I adopted (further details can be found in Appendix 26).

Three main phases of activity led to the development of the final Q set. In phase 1, reflecting on the role of young people involved in research with adults and from reading literature in the area led to a concourse of 130 statements (see appendix 27). Statements were then grouped together on the basis of emergent categories.

Considering the condition of instruction at this point, enabled a smaller number of categories to 'drive' pertinent statements. For instance, some of the categories (such as support and training, constraints and difficulties) seemed to be more closely related to a different research question, such as 'why aren't young people involved in research with adults more often?' 'Role, the young person's degree of involvement, voice, power/empowerment and influence', emerged as a general heading which captured the type of statements that I was hoping to identify (again, see Appendix 27).

An editing process then involved collapsing related or similar statements so that the concourse was reduced to a potential Q set of just over 40 statements.

During this phase I also started to clarify the condition of instruction for the Q sort, focusing on young people's and academics' experience of research and I designed a 'stem' sentence which could be completed by each of the statements:

In my experience, young people working with adults on research.....

In phase 2, more statements were added after further reading and again reduced, resulting in 75 statements as potential Q set items. I realised that some of the items could be considered outside of the Q sort, which led to the development of the 'additional information' questionnaire (see Appendix 40). The second phase, led to 56 cards which were reworded so as to simplify where necessary.

The third phase followed some work with students in Sec2 (encouraging them to reflect on the process that they had engaged in so as to generate statements related to this), a meeting of and correspondence with experts (all of whom had worked with young researchers), further reading of relevant literature, making further additions to the concourse and more editing. The headings again helped to focus on whether or not a statement was to be included.

Thus the process involved developing the concourse, scrutinising it at various points, with particular perspectives during each pass (such as searching for duplication, matching between the stem sentence and statements and reducing the

assumed level of cognitive challenge) so as to generally improve the wording of each statement.

During the final stages I developed an increased sense of saturation, where finding 'new' statements became increasingly rare, eventually arriving at 59 statements.

Determining the P set

A participant group (P set) was developed. Most Q studies choose between about 20 and 80 participants who are 'strategically (theoretically) sampled' so that there are enough in the P set to 'capture' available points of view on the issue. The aim here 'is *not* to estimate population statistics but to access diversity of point-of-view. Hence random samples are not relevant'. Participants are regarded as 'carriers of culture' (Stenner, 2006).

Determining my P set clarified that there seemed to be benefits to defining two distinct P sets-young people who had worked as researchers and adults who had a view about young researchers because they had either written about them or worked with them, or both. I emailed a number of academics whose work I'd read (Appendix 28) and contacted other adults who worked in this way.

I approached 38 academics and 26 of them agreed to take part. (10 declined and two agreed but failed to return the materials). To give an indication of their relative 'stature' in the field, the researchers who agreed are (in total) associated with approximately 50 of the referenced journal articles or books that I have included in this thesis. I also contacted 12 other adults working with young researchers in some capacity and eight of these agreed. (Of the other four, one declined and three failed to return.)

Some of the academics worked with young researchers leading to my eventually meeting some of these young people in order to arrange to do the Q sorting with them. Some I travelled to whilst others lived close to my University which made it convenient to meet in my office. For instance, I met a young person aged 17 who was a member of the UK Youth Parliament and had worked with a University

centre training young researchers. After sending him a leaflet, encouraging him to discuss it further at home if he chose to I invited him to my office where he completed the Q sort, accompanied by a friend. My contact with adults who were not academics but worked with young researchers also identified other adults with a viewpoint as well as some other young participants. I developed a leaflet to explain the project (Appendix 34) and often sent this as an attachment once I had established that sufficient interest warranted this. Again, my own children were helpful in suggesting more 'child-friendly' wording. The process of snowballing was facilitated further by emailing sections of my University and the child participation network (CHILDPARTICIPATIONNETWORK@JISCMAIL.AC.UK). A number of respondents agreed to take part or made suggestions for other avenues for me to explore.

My youngest participants were aged 13. Dowds (2008) points out that in Scotland, the age of 12 is considered as a benchmark for capacity. Davey (2010, p9) writes that the Gillick case (Gillick v West Norfolk and Wisbech Area Health Authority and the Department of Health and Social Security, 1985) 'established a basic principle that as children mature and acquire understanding of the consequences of their decisions they should have increased autonomy in decision-making'. I wished to maximise the participation of young people under the age of 18, respecting their position by assuming that they were mature and competent enough to have worked as researchers and avoid a situation that potentially undermined any confidence and independence that they might have gained from occupying that role.

The Q sorting

The way that my P set developed meant that I was able to meet face to face with some participants whilst this was not possible for others. For instance, in addition to adults from various regions of the United Kingdom (Scotland and other regions too far from home to make it viable for me to travel to) some others were based in North and South America, the Netherlands, Australia and Austria. Thus, these sorts were completed 'remotely'. I sent the materials (Appendices 35-42) as email attachments with instructions. The instructions were:

- 1 Read and complete the final consent document
- 2 Print or read the instructions
- 3 Print and cut out the 59 statements to make cards
- 4 You can print, cut out and make the number card line if it helps you to make the grid.
- 5 Do the sort and enter the numbers of the statements in the correct place on the grid
- 6 Read and complete the additional info document
- 7 If you wish to make any additional comments on individual statements, use this booklet
- 8 Read the checklist
- 9 Return to me at Sheffield University (by post or by email)

The materials (Appendices 35-42) were developed over time and took account of feedback from young people, including my own children.

After receiving the materials as attachments, some of the adults replied with regret saying that they would not be able to find the time to do the activity. So as to retain the adult in the P set by reducing the workload involved in cutting out the statements, I offered to make sets of materials and send them by post, a strategy which was successful with a number of adults. Some adults offered to complete a sort with young people they had a working relationship with and one offered to complete the activity with their daughter who had been a young researcher. This meant that some of the young people also completed sorts remotely. Appendix 43 shows the breakdown of both P sets. 28 of the sorts (41%) were completed remotely whilst 48 (59%) were completed face to face. 24 (70%) of the adult sorts were completed remotely, whilst four (12%) of the sorts completed by young people were remote. The Table below (4.2) shows the breakdown here as well as the gender balance and amount of experience (defined by the participant).

When I met face to face with a participant I adopted a similar approach each time by explaining the consent forms that they signed and then the instructions (see Appendix 36). Some of the participants said nothing during the sort, whilst others asked questions about some of the statements and/or commented as the sort

proceeded. I did not encourage or discourage such behaviour, but tried to note what had been said. The time taken to complete the sort varied from between 30 and 65 minutes. Once the sort was completed I asked the participant about what they had done and recorded their responses on the record sheet. The participant then completed the 'additional information' (Appendix 40), generally writing their own answers by hand. I looked at what had been written in order to check that I could read it accurately and in order to ask for further clarification should this be necessary. The face to face post-sort interview was valuable but not always possible. Some of the remote sorters did record their thoughts on the process on the record sheet, but it was not possible to explore the participant's rationale for arranging the items, stressed as an advantage by writers such as Gallagher and Porock (2010).

		Young people	Adults	Totals
Male	<i>Low</i>	8	1	9
	<i>Medium</i>	7	5	12
	<i>High</i>	2	9	11
Female	<i>Low</i>	9	4	13
	<i>Medium</i>	3	8	11
	<i>High</i>	4	6	10
		33	33	66

Table 4.2 Gender balance and amount of experience of young and adult participants

(Note: One of the young people's Q sorts was completed by a group where experience was not indicated. One adult participant did not identify themselves and so remains 'unknown'.

Remote sorts followed the same instructions and presumably a similar procedure, although of course the participant completed all documents on their own. As soon as possible after completing the face to face sorts or receiving the remote sorts by post or email, I added comments to the summary sheets which I kept. This way if I needed to seek clarification from a participant there was a greater chance of their memory being relatively recent.

The grid that I used was indicated by the shape shown on the record sheet (Appendix 39) and the number line (Appendix 38). The number line was an idea that I took from Amanda Wolf (A. Wolf, personal communication, 28 January 2010).

Chapter summary

A number of different methods were used in this project to engage young people in part of my initial enquiry. By working with 'co-researchers' on a 'real' project I was able to immerse myself in the communication surrounding this topic. Through regular visits, conversations, being open to 'co-researchers' observations and comments and striving for critical reflection I constructed a concourse and then Q-set which aimed to represent the 'co-researcher' experience. The results from using two different Q sets are discussed in the results chapter that now follows.

Chapter 5a **RESULTS-initial work and benefits to young people of working as young researchers (Q study 1)**

Introduction to the results

So far, I have given a context by describing an initial enquiry that set out to explore the viewpoints of young people regarding their behaviour. I worked with some young people, described at this time as 'co-researchers' until my interest was captured by the idea of understanding their position and how I might go about doing this. Chapter 2 provided a contextual backdrop whereby the position of the young researcher in the literature was embedded within the discourse concerning participation. The methodological position that I have adopted is described in Chapter 3, where Q is advanced as being eminently suited to exploring different viewpoints that might exist in this area. So as to emphasise the points made regarding methodology and method, Chapter 4 details the procedures which were followed, so that again, the reader can gain an understanding of how my project unfolded and the actions that I took.

The preceding chapter also served as an example of a project involving young researchers and also enables the reader to consider the ways in which the project may have had meaning for the young participants before they completed the Q sort concerning young people as researchers. The young people used activities with other young people in KS3 enabling me to complete a small scale evaluation of the activities used by the 'co-researchers' in Sec1 and Sec2. This is not reported here owing to constraints of space, but can be found in the Appendix (Appendix 44).

This chapter reports the results from the sections of the project that explored the position of young people as 'co-researchers' and begins by discussing the results reported in sections 5a, 5b and 5c.

- Study (5a1) analyses the young people's perceptions of the costs and benefits of working as a 'co-researcher' by using the flower diagram.
- The first Q sort also relates to benefits and is reported as Q study 1 (5a2).

In order to enable the reader to take a breath, the rest of the results section is subdivided into two more parts where:

- Q study 2 (5b) concerns the viewpoints of young people, analysed as a group (or cohort), whilst
- Q study 3 (5c) treats the adults as a group so as to explore their viewpoints of young people's experiences as researchers.

Q study 1 is primarily concerned with this research question:

a) What do young people hope to gain from working with adults on research projects?

Q study 2 with:

b) What is the experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?

And Q study 3 with:

c) What is the adult experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?

As the picture builds up, similarities and contrasts between the viewpoints found across the three Q studies are considered along with links to the relevant literature. Thus, discussion of the results flows throughout this chapter, followed then by a more general discussion in Chapter 6 which revisits some of the themes raised.

5a1: Sec1 and Sec2 students use of the flower activity

An image of a flower had been used to encourage students to consider the costs and benefits of becoming involved in the project and 13 responses were collected (five from Sec1 and eight from Sec2). Individual statements were grouped together under emerging categories, shown as Appendix 46. My analysis indicates that students saw the advantages of becoming involved in terms of novelty (assuming it would be fun or interesting and an opportunity which might provide a different kind of experience); helpfulness (regarding coursework, adding to a CV and broadening interests) and skill development (social and interpersonal and research methods).

Two responses indicated to me that helping others (me) was a consideration. Disadvantages were in terms of the time and effort it might take, the stress that it might cause and difficulties related to travel and making arrangements.

5a2 Q Study 1: Sec1 and Sec2 students, benefits Q sort

Introduction

Twenty-nine participants took part in this study as shown below (Table 5a.1). The data was tagged so as to indicate the school (Sec1 or Sec2) and whether male or female (see Appendix 47). All participants were A level students, mostly sharing the fact that they were studying Psychology.

	Males	Females	Totals for each school
Sec1	9	5	14
Sec2	6	9	15
	15	14	29

Table 5a.1. Distribution of participants across two secondary schools.

The data thus obtained was then subjected to Q factor analysis using PQMethod and each resulting factor was interpreted.

As indicated earlier (Chapter 3), Centroid factor analysis was used to extract factors before using Varimax to rotate the factors. This led to a solution with a number of the participants loading on five factors. This was followed up with some hand rotation in order to maximise the number of participants loading on a factor. This approach led to more participants loading on a factor, making 22 in all. The factor matrix indicating the factors that the participants loaded on is shown in Appendix 47.

Watts (2002, chapter 2, p20) considered it 'necessary to prefer solutions which maximised both the amount of variance explained by the extracted factors and also the number of participants achieving significant factor loadings' and to some extent, I have followed his lead and the guidance of Brown (1980) and Watts and Stenner (2012). All five factors had Eigenvalues greater than 1.00 (the Kaiser-Guttman Criterion, often used to determine factor significance-see Brown, 1980)

and the five factors explained 46% of the variance, accounting for 22 of the 29 participants. Two or more sorts loaded significantly on each factor (in the unrotated matrix). PCA analysis was used to produce a scree plot, although this indicated fewer than three factors. Five factors were kept however as they looked to be the most interesting and maximised the number of participants loading on a factor combined with the level of variance.

Of the seven that remained, two participants (15 and 19) loaded significantly on more than one of the factors. A participant loading of 0.376 reached significance at $p < 0.01$ in the study. This was raised to 0.45 ($p < 0.05 = 0.286$). One participant (22) was split between two factors at $p < 0.05$ and two participants (2 and 12) loaded at $p < 0.05$. One participant loaded at $p < 0.05$ on the bipolar factor of Factor 3 and leaving the final participant (18) who did not load on any factor. The results as described are shown in Table 5a.2 below.

Factor Number	Q sort Numbers	Total	Cum. Total
1	2, 10, 13, 17, 21, 27, 28, 29	8	8
2	1, 7, 9, 12, 20, 23	6	14
3	3, 6, 8, 11, 26	5	19
4	4, 5, 24, 25	4	23
5	14, 16	2	25
Confounded	15, 19, 22	3	28
Non-Significant	18	1	29

Table 5a.2 Distribution of young people's loadings, benefits study (**bold** indicates loading at 0.45 or above). The five factor solution accounts for 22 of the 29 study Q sorts. Seven Q sorts exemplify Factor 1 (F1), five exemplify Factor 2 (F2), and so on. Three sorts are confounded where a participant loads on more than one factor. Participant 26 loads negatively on F3 ($p < 0.05$).

Using the weighted averages of all of the participants loading on a factor, a single Q sort exemplifying each factor was produced so that it could then be interpreted.

Factor interpretation

Watts and Stenner (2012) write that 'If there's one thing missing from the Q methodological literature it is a fully-blown discussion of factor interpretation'-a point which they have rectified dutifully. The guidance that they offer is straightforward and logical and has been followed here. I shall describe my approach to exploring F1 and its subsequent interpretation, giving examples, so as to illustrate the procedure followed for each of the following factors.

PQMethod provides a large amount of analytic data, some of which is not particularly important (Steve Brown refers to this level of data as a 'way-station'-the means by which the analysis can proceed to the next step). I began by consulting the Factor Q sort values for each statement, reproduced here as Table 5a.3 below. This is a very useful Table as it indicates the position that each statement would be placed in on the grid used by individuals to complete the sort. Remember that the grid (Appendix 7) had 11 columns and were numbered from -5 to +5 (a device removed from the substantive Q studies 5B and 5C). For instance, in the sort arranged to represent F1, statement one would be positioned in column +1, statement two in column +1 and so on and so forth. For each of the five factors, I recreated the sort by positioning each of the statements to make the correct grid shape. The complete arrangement for F1 can be seen in Appendix 48, where the numbers indicate the numbers used to identify the statements in Appendix 6.

Appendix 49 shows part of the grid only, given that, when constructed, from one side of the grid to the other measured more than one metre. We can now see the statements across the entire grid and start to understand the way in which they might relate to each other in terms of meaning and in relation to the other factors. This was facilitated further by adopting a crib sheet suggested by Watts and Stenner (2012). The crib sheet for F1 is shown in Appendix 50. Using the crib sheet, I cut and pasted statements to a draft description of F1 and edited it until I felt that I had used the data to maximum effect-done justice to it.

ITEM NUMBER AND CONTENT WORDING		FACTOR ARRAYS				
		F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
1	Working and learning as part of a team	1	3	0	-1	2
2	Acquiring and applying research skills to subject learning	1	-1	4	2	1
3	Learning organisational skills	1	0	-1	0	-4
4	Sharing ideas and tasks with others	3	1	0	-2	-2
5	Learning how to manage my time more effectively	1	-3	-1	-2	-1
6	Having my self-esteem and sense of worth raised	-5	1	-4	-4	-5
7	Increasing my confidence	-3	5	0	1	-1
8	Learning project management skills	2	1	-1	1	-2
9	Increasing my ethical awareness	-2	-1	2	1	-2
10	Sharpening my critical thinking skills	-3	-1	1	-1	1
11	Improving my problem solving ability	0	0	3	1	0
12	Becoming a more effective communicator	0	3	3	3	1
13	Becoming a more independent learner	-1	2	-1	0	-1
14	Participating more in other issues affecting young people	0	0	0	4	-2
15	Making an original and valued contribution to knowledge	-2	0	2	3	0
16	Contributing to research which is owned locally (ie completed in Sheffield)	-1	-4	-2	2	-1
17	Becoming more able to speak to people I don't know	-3	5	-1	-3	4
18	Having a stronger sense of identity	-4	-2	-3	-3	-4
19	Learning more about research methodology	1	3	5	4	3
20	Social networking	-4	-3	-3	-5	-3
21	Having an opportunity to write or co-author a research report	-2	-3	1	1	2
22	The opportunity to make more of a contribution to my community	-3	-2	-4	1	-3
23	Gaining recognition for making a contribution	-1	-2	1	0	-4
24	Active citizenship	-1	-4	-5	0	-5
25	Gaining an experience which may be life enhancing	4	4	1	5	5
26	Getting to meet new people – both adults and peers - which can be an enjoyable experience.	2	2	-2	-2	2
27	Adding to my CV-for future employment	5	4	5	5	5
28	Interviewing	-4	-5	-1	0	3
29	Learning to interact and handle new situations	2	4	1	-1	1
30	Gaining an increased social responsibility	-2	2	0	-1	-1
31	Building new relationships with peers and adults in the community which could assist future opportunities	3	2	-2	2	2
32	Exploring my identity in a new role as a researcher	-2	-2	3	-3	3
33	Learning skills in analysis	2	0	3	4	2
34	Learning skills in evaluation	2	1	4	3	4
35	Meeting people	0	1	-3	-3	4
36	Making friends	0	-4	-2	-4	0
37	Having fun	3	-1	0	-5	3
38	Being better at working in a group	1	2	1	-1	0
39	Improving my listening skills	0	-1	2	-2	-2
40	Developing my understanding in a less judgemental way	4	-3	4	1	1
41	Learning more about community issues	-1	-2	-4	-1	0
42	Understanding people better	5	3	2	0	1
43	Learning how to make decisions with others	0	1	0	2	0
44	Developing empathy for other perspectives	4	0	2	-2	0
45	Learn about social, political and cultural conditions	3	-1	-2	0	-3
46	Gaining a sense of empowerment	-5	-5	-5	-4	-2
47	Believing that my views matter and that I can effect change	-1	0	-3	3	-3

Table 5a.3 Factor Q sort values for each statement, benefits study

Note that zero (the middle column) has no special or 'mystical' significance (Watts and Stenner, 2012, p109) as its meaning is relative to the position of other placed

items. Often it might indicate a neutrality or indifference, but for a particular item it might also show that zero represents a more meaningful interpretation. A good example is statement 33 and the F2 viewpoint. As all the other factors position 33 at +2 or above, we can be more assured in claiming that, rather than feeling neutral about it, the F2 viewpoint is *not* interested in learning skills in analysis.

The distinguishing statements (Appendix 51) for each factor were also considered so that they were represented in the description. I then invented a title that seemed to relate closely to the description (sometimes described as a mnemonic). The description for F1 at this stage is shown in Appendix 52. I then looked at the record sheets for each of the participants who loaded on F1 to see if I could include any comments that would illuminate the description further. Lastly, I edited the interpretation further so as to remove or edit phrasing that strayed from the context bounded by the project. For instance, I changed 'Although they don't want to network socially....' (too attributional and going beyond the data) to 'Although they don't want to use the project to network socially....' The resulting full description of F1 is as follows. Each statement that is included is indicated by the brackets, where, for instance, (15: -2) indicates that statement 15 was positioned at column - 2 in F1.

Full interpretation of Factor 1

F1 has an Eigenvalue of 3.19 and explains 11% of the study variance. Seven participants are significantly associated with this factor, 3 males and 4 females.

'Getting on with and understanding other people'

A holder of this viewpoint does not see the benefits of their involvement as a way of making an original and valued contribution to knowledge (15: -2). They are also not particularly interested in sharpening their critical thinking skills (10: -3), increasing their ethical awareness (9: -2) or becoming a more independent learner (13: -1). They don't particularly see benefits of the project in terms of gaining recognition (23: -1) or as providing an opportunity to write or co-author a research report (21: -2) and learning more about research methodology (19: +1) is not as important to this viewpoint as it is to the others. They don't particularly wish to explore their identity in a new role as a researcher (32: -2).

They are not seeking a stronger sense of identity (18: -4) or aiming to gain a sense of empowerment (46: -5), to increase their confidence (7: -3), improve their problem-solving ability (11: 0) or to become a more effective communicator (12: 0). They don't particularly see the project as a way of making friends (36: 0). They are able to speak to people they don't know (17: -3), interviewing is not important (28: -4) and they don't want to use the project to network socially (20: -4), or identify gains in terms of meeting people (35: 0) although they believe that *'interacting with others is very important'* (participant 13). They don't see a need to raise their self-esteem and sense of worth (6: -5). Participant 29 appears to comment here when she explained that she placed *'more focus on career and widening knowledge of world/culture than social skills'* and that she *'ranked the statements on skills that could help me in the future career wise and as a person'*.

Some of the benefits to becoming involved in the project are seen by the F1 viewpoint as learning to manage time more effectively (5: +1), learning organisational (3: +1) and project management skills (8: +2), sharing ideas and tasks with others (4: +3) and working and learning as part of a team (1: +1). Participant 13 stresses the importance of enjoying being with people, which, if missing, would make the task *'hard to do'*. They identify benefits related to learning about social, political and cultural conditions (45: +3) although it is not because they wish to gain increased social responsibility (30: -2) and they are not particularly drawn by wanting to contribute more to their community (22: -3) or by the opportunity to learn more about community issues (41: -1) and active citizenship (24: -1).

More importantly, they see that this project could lead to having fun (37: +3) and recognise that they might gain an experience that may be life enhancing (25: +4) (*'help me greatly with my life in the future'*, participant 13) as well as add to their CV (27: +5). They identify the project as providing benefits in getting to meet new people – both adults and peers (26: +2) and there is also a sense in which building new relationships with peers and adults in the community could assist future opportunities (31: +3). They think that the project might enable them to be better at working in a group (38: +1) and help them to learn to interact and handle new situations (29: +2). They are keen to develop empathy for other perspectives (44:

+4) and develop a better understanding of people (42: +5) in a less judgemental way (40: +4).

By paying careful attention to the distinguishing statements and the factor Q sort values for statements sorted by consensus vs disagreement (Appendix 56), F1 can be summarised as follows. Contributing to knowledge, sharpening critical thinking skills, interviewing and learning more about research methodology are unimportant. They are not seeking to increase their confidence or to become a more effective communicator as they are able to speak to people they don't know. They are hoping to learn skills in time management and organisation. Sharing ideas with others is a benefit as is learning about social, political and cultural conditions (but not so as to gain increased social responsibility). They see that the project could be fun and enable them to meet new people. Relationships are important as they could help in the future. They are keen to develop greater (non-judgemental) understanding of people.

Remember that the condition of instruction for the participants in this study was, *'By becoming involved as a co-researcher in this project I could benefit by....'* The word 'project' referred to the specific activity that I was describing to the young people who were my participants and also the topic of young people as 'co-researchers' in more general terms. It can be quite challenging to express the interpreted viewpoint in ways which retain a freshness and immediacy which would not be achieved simply by listing all of the statements as agreed/disagreed. I leave it to the reader to decide whether or not this has been accomplished. The remaining factor interpretations now follow.

Full interpretation of Factor 2

F2 has an Eigenvalue of 3.19 and explains 11% of the study variance. Five participants are significantly associated with this factor. At least three of them are males and at least one female (one participant is unknown).

'Wanting to get out of my shell a bit more'

Holders of this viewpoint do not see benefits related to managing their time more effectively (5: -3), in improving their problem-solving ability (11: 0) or in acquiring and applying research skills to subject learning (2: -1).

Neither do they see the importance of contributing to research which is owned locally (ie completed in Sheffield) (16: -4), wish to learn skills in analysis (33: 0), to a lesser degree than other viewpoints, in evaluation (34: +1), or seek an opportunity to write or co-author a research report (21: -3), participant 12 explaining, *'I don't want to become a researcher'*.

People with this viewpoint are definitely not expecting to gain a sense of empowerment from the project (46: -5) and interviewing is of little interest to them either (28: -5). Although social networking is not particularly important (20: -3), holders of this viewpoint regard it as more important than the F1 and F4 viewpoints, but do not see the project benefitting them as a way of making friends (36: -4) or of developing their understanding in a less judgemental way (40: -3).

People holding this viewpoint see benefits in working and learning as part of a team (1: +3) and believe that involvement in the project could help them to be better at working in a group (38: +2), sharing ideas and tasks with others (4: +1), although they are also interested in becoming a more independent learner (13: +2). They see a benefit to gaining an increased social responsibility (30: +2).

In contrast with the other viewpoints, they feel that the project may contribute to their self-esteem and sense of worth being raised (6: +1) and, more than other viewpoints, benefit by having a stronger sense of identity (18: -2). Participant 7 wrote *'I'm very uncomfortable about people in general as I have autism so it would be beneficial to me to talk to new people, whether they are friendly or not'*. They see the project providing benefits in getting to meet new people – both adults and peers - which can be an enjoyable experience (26: +2) and by becoming a more effective communicator (12: +3). They recognise that building new relationships with peers and adults in the community could assist future opportunities (31: +2) and see that they could gain by meeting people (35: +1), although this prospect may not necessarily be viewed as enabling them to have fun (37: -1).

They feel a little less strongly than the other viewpoints but still agree that taking part in the project will be something they can add to their CV-for future employment (27: +4). They are expecting to benefit by becoming more able to understand (42:

+3) and speak to people they don't know (17: +5), learn to interact and handle new situations (29: +4) and increase their confidence (7: +5).

To summarise, holders of the F2 viewpoint do not wish to develop a more non-judgemental understanding of people, learn time management, analysis or evaluation skills or apply research skills to their subject learning. They do not wish to contribute to a joint report on locally owned research. They are not seeking to gain a sense of empowerment, interviewing experience or make more friends. They value working as part of a team, improving their group and independent work skills as well as gaining an increased social responsibility. They see the project as helping to raise their self-esteem and sense of worth increasing their identity. They are hoping to improve their social interaction skills and confidence.

Full interpretation of Factor 3

F3 has an Eigenvalue of 2.61 and explains 9% of the study variance. Four participants are significantly associated with this factor. At least two of them are males and one female (one participant is unknown) with participants spread across both schools (Sec1 and Sec2) from initial visits to the schools.

'I wanna be a (young) researcher'

This viewpoint does not see that the project provides any benefit in active citizenship (24: -5), as providing an opportunity to make more of a contribution to their community (22: -4), gain a sense of empowerment (46: -5) or to learn more about community issues (41: -4). Social benefits are not so important either-meeting people (35: -3) or getting to meet new people – both adults and peers - which can be an enjoyable experience (26: -2) or social networking (20: -3) or making friends (36: -2) and this viewpoint does not see the project in terms of raising self-esteem and sense of worth (6: -4). This young person does not believe strongly that their involvement would enable them to learn project management skills (8: -1), learn how to make decisions with others (43: 0) or become a more independent learner (13: -1).

In contrast to other viewpoints, the holder of this viewpoint does not see that they would particularly gain an experience which may be life enhancing (25: +1), build

new relationships with peers and adults in the community which could assist future opportunities (31: -2) or even believe that their own views matter and that they can effect change (47: -3). They are more interested than some of the other young people in gaining recognition for making a contribution (23: +1).

Compared with the others, this viewpoint agrees strongly that the project offers opportunities to learn more about research methodology (19: +5), improve their problem solving ability (11: +3), learn skills in analysis (33: +3) and evaluation (34: +4), develop their understanding in a less judgemental way (40: +4) and develop empathy for other perspectives (44: +2). Also important is increasing ethical awareness (9: +2) and sharpening critical thinking skills (10: +1). Much more importantly, this young person is keen to explore their identity in a new role as a researcher (32: +3) and agrees that getting involved means that they may have an opportunity to write or co-author a research report (21: +1). Other benefits include improving their listening skills (39: +2), becoming a more effective communicator (12: +3) and being able to acquire and apply research skills to subject learning (2: +4). Adding to their CV-for future employment (27: +5) is important for this young person who recognises the research-related gains that getting involved may provide and the possibility of making an original and valued contribution to knowledge (15: +2).

In summary, meeting people, active citizenship, contributing more to their community, gain a sense of empowerment and learning more about community issues are unimportant. They are not looking to build new relationships in the community or gain a life enhancing experience. They are keen to learn more about research (methodology, ethical awareness) and apply this to subject learning, explore their role as a researcher and improve problem-solving ability, listening skills and non-judgemental understanding.

Full interpretation of Factor 4

F4 has an Eigenvalue of 2.61 and explains 9% of the study variance. Four participants are significantly associated with this factor. They are one female and one male (two unknown).

'Young researcher' with a local community focus

Young people with this viewpoint do not see the project as providing social benefits from meeting people (35: -3) or understanding them better (42: 0), getting to meet new people – both adults and peers - which can be an enjoyable experience (26: -2) or making friends (36: -4). In fact, social networking (20: -5) and having fun (37: -5) are not benefits that they see the project providing at all. Neither do they agree that working and learning as part of a team (1: -1), being better at working in a group (38: -1), improving their listening skills (39: -2), learning to interact and handle new situations (29: -1) or sharing ideas and tasks with others (4: -2) convey benefits. Learning organisational skills (3: 0) are neither here nor there. They are not drawn by becoming more able to speak to people they don't know (17: -3), developing empathy for other perspectives (44: -2), not especially by increasing their confidence (7: +1), having their self-esteem and sense of worth raised (6: -4) or by gaining a sense of empowerment (46: -4).

Agreeing that getting involved could benefit them by learning skills in analysis (33: +4), learning project management skills (8: +2), becoming a more effective communicator (12: +3) and learning how to make decisions with others (43: +2), they see benefit in improving their problem solving ability (11: +1) and have some interest in having an opportunity to write or co-author a research report (21: +1). To some extent they agree that they could gain recognition for making a contribution (23: 0) and develop understanding in a less judgemental way (40: +1). They believe that their views matter and that they can effect change (47: +3). There is some agreement that involvement could enable them to acquire and apply research skills to subject learning (2: +2).

The holder of this viewpoint sees the project as providing an opportunity to contribute to research owned locally (ie completed in Sheffield) (16: +2) and build new relationships with peers and adults in the community which could assist future opportunities (31: +2). They recognise an opportunity to make more of a contribution to their community (22: +1), to some extent, to learn about social, political and cultural conditions (45: 0) and promote active citizenship (24: 0). This does not seem to be however, out of a sense of gaining an increased social responsibility (30: -1) from the project and learning more about community issues

(41: -1) is not agreed with as strongly as it is in F5. It is of interest that although participant 19 did not load significantly on a single factor, his highest loading was negative for F4 and he wrote, '*I felt that I least agreed with the statements that involved the community*'.

Whilst they indicate an interest in research, hoping that the project will enable them to learn more about research methodology (19: +4) for instance, holders of this viewpoint do not see benefit in simply exploring their identity in a new role as a researcher (32: -3) as they are more interested in increasing their participation in other issues affecting young people (14: +4) and in making an original and valued contribution to knowledge (15: +3). They agree strongly that they may gain a life enhancing experience (25: +5), one that could be added to their CV-for future employment (27: +5).

In respect of the project, the F4 viewpoint can be summarised as not valuing meeting or understanding people better or interacting in new situations. Having fun, team work or empathy for other perspectives are also unimportant. Getting involved could help them to learn skills in analysis and make decisions with others. They believe that their views matter and that they can effect change. The project could enable them to make an original and valued contribution to locally owned research knowledge, contribute to the community and promote active citizenship by participating in young people-related issues that could be life-enhancing.

Full interpretation of Factor 5

F5 has an Eigenvalue of 1.74 and explains 6% of the study variance. Two participants are significantly associated with this factor, one female and one male.

The 'social' researcher (using social and research skills)

More than others, holders of this viewpoint believe that the project may help them to learn more about community issues (41: 0), although they are not drawn by the project's potential to learn about social, political and cultural conditions (45: -3), participating more in other issues affecting young people (14: -2) and certainly not by the idea of active citizenship (24: -5). They do not believe that that their views particularly matter and that they can effect change (47: -3) and are not seeking to

gain recognition for making a contribution (23: -4). Although wishing to learn more about research methodology (19: +3) they are not looking for the project to provide an opportunity to increase their ethical awareness (9: -2) or to promote other areas such as organisational (3: -4) or project management skills (8: -1), improving listening skills (39: -2), improving their problem solving ability (11: 0) or becoming a more independent learner (13: -1). Neither do they see the project as a way of them having a stronger sense of identity (18: -4), increasing their confidence (7: -1) or as having their self-esteem and sense of worth raised (6: -5). Participant 14 wrote *'I'm more interested in the activity as a learning experience than gaining confidence'*.

The holder of this viewpoint sees benefits from taking part in the project in terms of getting to meet new people – both adults and peers - which can be an enjoyable experience (26: +2), meeting people (35: +4), making friends (36: 0), having fun (37: +3) and, more than factors one and four, social networking (20: -3). All in all, they have a strong sense that they could gain an experience that may be life enhancing (25: +5), one that could be added to their CV-for future employment (27: +5). Participant 14 wrote that they were *'looking to become a psychologist in the future so having some experience on my CV would be useful'* also adding that they were thinking about educational psychology. Those with a factor 5 viewpoint believe that specific research skills might be promoted, including critical thinking skills (10: +1), interviewing (28: +3) and learning skills in evaluation (34: +4). Although participant 18 did not load significantly on one factor, they were closest to this viewpoint and wrote *'I put interviewing very high as I'm hoping to do some census collecting which would require interviewing skills'*. Those with this viewpoint feel that the project could provide an opportunity to write or co-author a research report (21: +2), explore their identity in a new role as a researcher (32: +3) and, more than the other viewpoints, gain a sense of empowerment (46: -2). Given their apparent emphasis on social relations it is interesting that they do not feel drawn to opportunities to share ideas and tasks with others (4: -2) or in learning how to make decisions with others (43: 0). However, they are drawn to the idea of working and learning as part of a team (1: +2), but perhaps not because they lack group work skills (38: 0), and see the project as enabling them to become a more

effective communicator (12: +1) and being more able to speak to people they don't know (17: +4).

To summarise, the F5 viewpoint believes that the project may help them to learn more about community issues. Learning about social, political and cultural conditions, participating more in other issues affecting young people, active citizenship, gaining recognition for making a contribution, improving their organisational skills and raising their self-esteem and sense of worth are unimportant. This viewpoint values experience in interviewing, meeting people, speaking to people they don't know, making friends, having fun and they see that this could be life-enhancing, adding to their CV. They value contributing to a joint report, exploring their researcher role and gaining a sense of empowerment.

Follow up

Stainton Rogers *et al* liken the process of factor interpretation (as well as Q generally) to discourse analysis and state that the credibility of the 'reading' of a factor 'can be checked further by re-presenting a digest to the exemplifying participants for their reflexive correction' (Stainton Rogers *et al*, 1995, p 251).

I wrote to some of the participants in cases where I had contact details. This was by email and I included a summary of the five factor interpretations in a document as an attachment (Appendix 53). I removed the personal comments included from the post-sort interview notes as this could have enabled some participants to identify which interpretation was 'theirs' on this basis rather than on the strength of the interpretation alone. The email is shown as Appendix 54.

Only three participants responded, two of those identifying with the viewpoint that I had them loading on in my analysis.

Discussion of results for Q study1, benefits to young people working as young researchers

Five viewpoints were interpreted from Q study 1 :

- *'Getting on with and understanding other people'*
- *'Wanting to get out of my shell a bit more'*
- *'I wanna be a (young) researcher'*
- *'Young researcher' with a local community focus and*
- *The 'social' researcher (using social and research skills)*

The interpretation of these factors can be related to the literature, although we immediately encounter a problem, in that the literature typically approaches the topic thematically, from a third person perspective, whereas our factors are a wholistic consideration of the topic from a first person perspective (Watts and Stenner, 2012). This is evident if Table 2.2 in the literature review is consulted where a list of themes is presented. The reader might assume that all of the items might feature as benefits without understanding how they might be linked together. One example should suffice. Statement 47 (believing that my views matter and that I can effect change) relates closely to the NCB publication (PEAR, 2010) when it states that their involvement in research can enable young people to be involved in matters affecting them. In fact, this was disagreed with by all viewpoints apart from F4.

This difficulty is compounded further by the paucity of young people's accounts regarding *their* view of the benefits of becoming involved as young researchers and even where young people's voices are represented (eg PEAR, 2010) again, we only gain a list-like view as opposed to a more complex patterned viewpoint. For this reason I have chosen to focus on what I consider to be some of the key themes in the literature which the interpreted factors illuminate.

The holder of the F1 viewpoint seems to be socially skilled, someone who enjoys being with and meeting new people and can do this effectively. They use relationships to 'get on' but also so as to understand people better-something that

they are concerned with and interested in. Although they may lead to some benefits, the research elements as such, are not drivers for the F1 viewpoint.

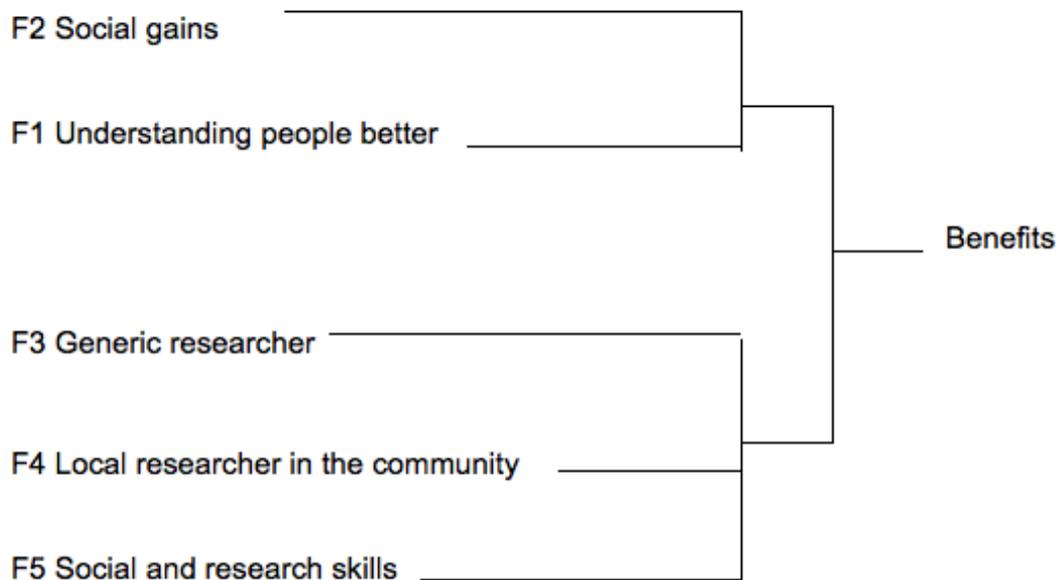


Figure 5a.1 One relationship between the five factors related to benefits (identified by Q-study 1)

Three participants loading on this factor were students not studying Psychology A level. Similarly not driven by the research elements, in direct contrast, the holder of the F2 viewpoint is someone who lacks confidence, seems to know this and would like to get involved so as to feel better about themselves and function more effectively in the social arena. In some respects, the next three viewpoints are broadly similar in that they are all concerned with a research angle-this is partly what motivates their potential involvement. F3 is keen to benefit from a focus on research, expressed as a 'generic' research viewpoint, F4 seems to be motivated by issues in the local community and contributing to local knowledge, whilst F5 is perhaps a hybrid of F1 and F3-someone who enjoys being with people and wishes to combine this interest with that of young researcher. They see the project as providing an opportunity to improve their (already good) social skills with a new identity of researcher. Figure 5a.1 illustrates one way in which the factors are related.

This is of interest as identifying gains in the literature for young people, solely in terms of research for research sake and developing skills in this area, seem to be largely absent. Even when publications which are much more focused on young people's voices are consulted, (eg, PEAR, 2010) we find that this aspect is missing, unless it is in a general sense of learning new skills and useful experience. Remember that the first research question was concerned with exploring the benefits that young people working as young researchers, hoped to gain by taking part. The factors in Q study 1 seem to indicate a broad focus on social skills and on research skills with a view to a future role or interest in becoming a researcher. These themes can be discussed more generally by using a hypothetical conceptual space diagram (Stenner *et al* 2000) as shown below in Figure 5a.2. Here we can see that factors 1, 2 and 5 are all seeking socially related

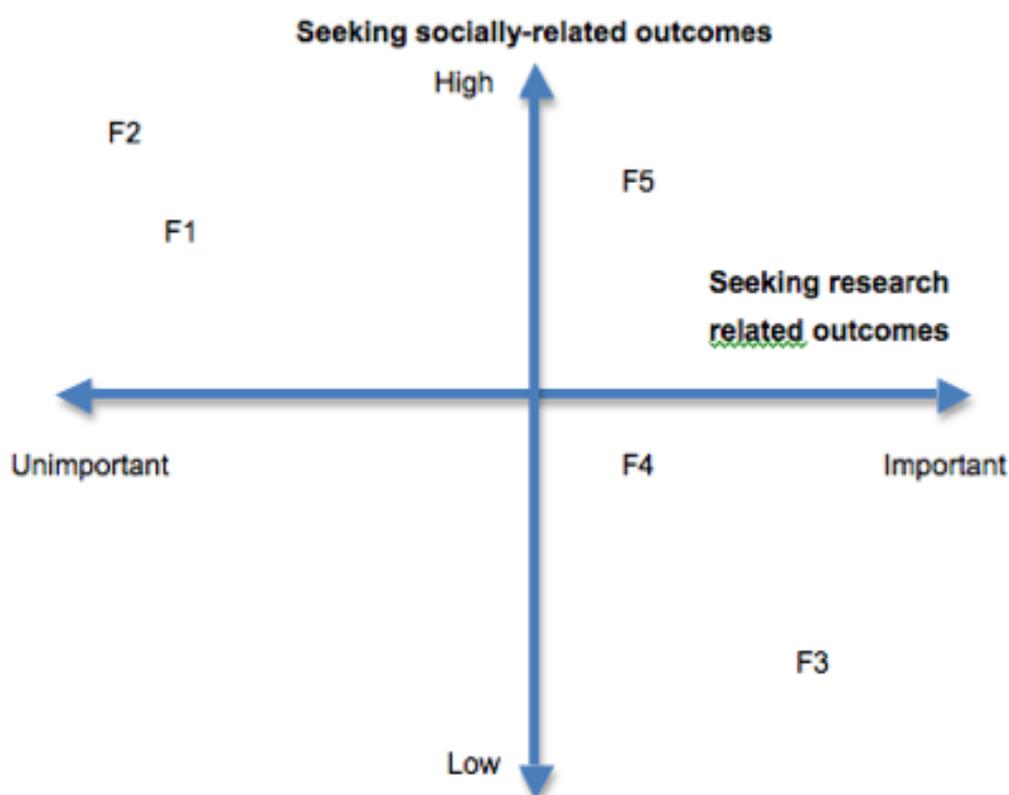


Figure 5a.2 Conceptual space diagram mapping socially and research related outcomes

gains, although these are for different reasons. F1 enjoys being with other people and has good social skills, whereas F2 finds this area of life much more

challenging but realises they would benefit from gaining social skills. F5 is placed in the top half as, like F1, they seem also to have good social skills but are seeking social gains in a broader sense-in relation to community issues. More specifically, F1, 2 and 5 all agree that they could gain by working and learning as part of a team and by meeting new people. They all disagree that they are seeking to improve their problem-solving ability.

Consulting the values for statements sorted by consensus vs. disagreement (Appendix 56) indicates some interesting differences supporting this analysis further. Becoming more able to speak to strangers (statement 17) is something that F1 can already do and so does not view this as a benefit. F5 is also good at doing this but enjoys it and would like to improve further, whilst there is a sense in which F2 knows that for them, this area is a weakness that they would like to address. F1 and F5 both identify the project as a way of having fun (37), presumably as they both identify the social aspects of it. This is not of interest to F3 who wishes to gain research-related benefits or F4 who wishes to support community issues, whilst F2 presumably sees the social aspects of the project as something of a threat-not fun. F1 wishes to understand people better, but not by using research methods (28) and F2 again, sees this as a threat-for them, talking to strangers, a challenging task. F5 values interviewing presumably as they relish using the social skills that they have as well as learning to use a research method. Developing less judgemental understanding (40) is valued by F1 presumably as it might enable them to understand and get on even better with people and by F3 as this seems to offer a 'scientific' approach to the developing young researcher. For F2 this is perhaps a higher level social skill, less important at present, than becoming more at ease with people at a more basic level. Exploring a new identity as a researcher is important to F3 and fits with their generic viewpoint but is less important to F4 who is more concerned with the possibility for research to explore or promote community aspects. F3 and F4 agree that they could learn more about research methodology, make an original contribution to the project, enabling them to gain recognition, that they could improve their problem-solving ability, apply research skills to subject learning and increase their ethical awareness and analytical skills. They disagree that benefits relate to meeting new people or in working as part of a team.

The five factors described above can be compared with the data from the flower exercise (5a1). Figure 5a.3 and 5a.4 show the data for comparison purposes with Fig 5a1.

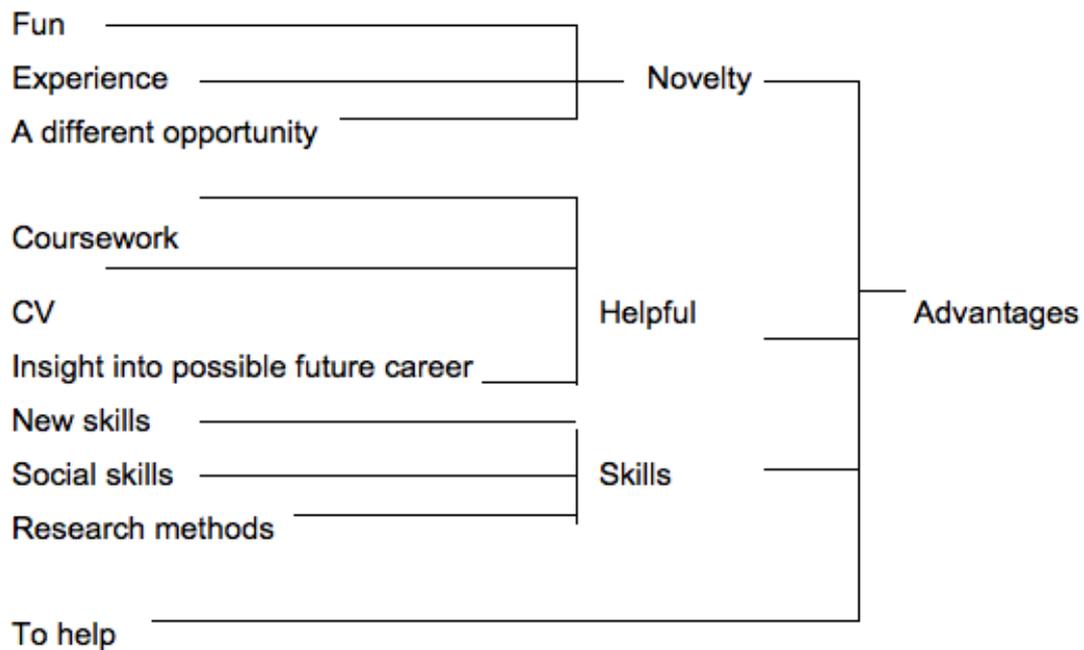


Figure 5a.3 Relationship between the themes related to advantages identified by the flower exercise

The flower exercise indicated that some of the advantages of becoming involved in the project were related to novelty. Q study 1 supports this, so that for instance, we find that having fun was identified as a benefit, but only by F1 and F5. New experiences were also identified in the Q study as benefits as we found that F1, F2, F4 and F5 valued building new relationships (item 31) and these same factors all strongly agreed that the experience might be life-enhancing (item 25). F1, F2 and F5 valued meeting new people (item 26). Exploring a new role as researcher (item 32) was valued as a benefit by F3 and F5. Learning to handle new situations (item 29) was valued by F2.

Help with coursework (item 2) was identified as a benefit by F3 particularly, although there was little support for the benefit brought by the opportunity to become a more independent learner (item 13) with the exception perhaps of F2. All

Factors valued being able to use the project to add to their CV (item 27) a benefit that is also described in the literature (PEAR, 2010).

Regarding items in the Q study related to skills at a more general level, there was higher consensus for items 34, 43, 12,11, 38, 10, 33, 5, 8, 39 and 3. This indicates that most factors felt that they could learn evaluation, communication and analysis skills, but that critical thinking, time management, listening and organisational skills were unlikely to be promoted. All factors were fairly neutral about being able to use the project to learn group work and project management skills and make decisions with others, whilst F3 stood out as valuing problem-solving ability.

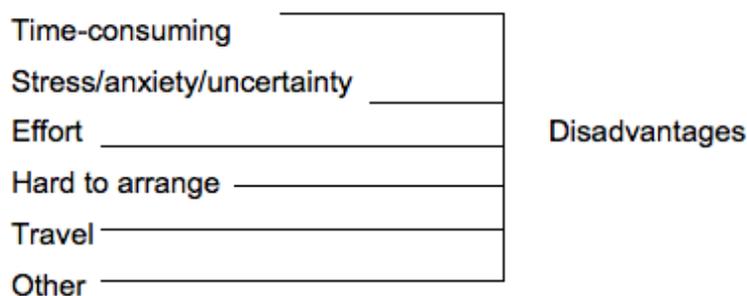
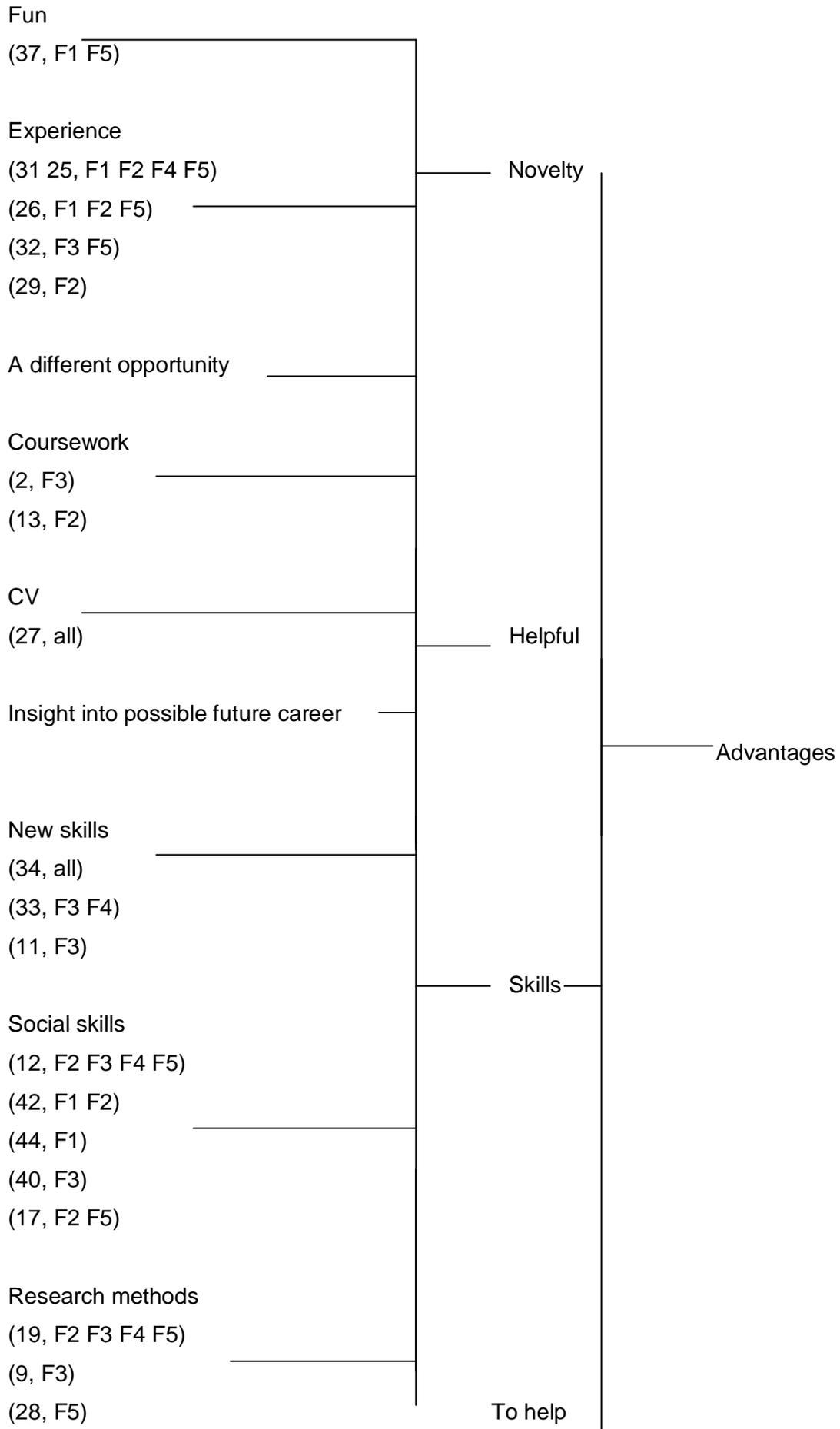


Figure 5a.4 Relationship between the themes related to disadvantages identified by the flower exercise

With respect specifically to social skills, F1 and F2 valued understanding people better (item 42), F1 valued developing empathy for other perspectives (item 44), F1 and F3 developing less judgemental understanding (item 40) whilst F2 and F5 both valued being more able to speak to strangers (item 17), for different reasons as we have argued earlier. Q study 1 did not really illuminate disadvantages.

Figure 5a.5 (below) Relationship between the themes related to advantages identified by the flower exercise and items and factors in Q study 1. (eg 37, F1 F5) indicates that having fun was valued particularly by factors one and five).



Chapter 5b **RESULTS-young people’s views of working as young researchers (Q study 2)**

Introduction

Thirty-four participants took part in this study (as shown below, Table 5b.1), which was used to explore the experience of young people who work with adults on research projects. The data was tagged so as to indicate gender, the type of setting that the young person had worked in, their age and level of experience as a young researcher (high, medium, low). Participants were drawn from a wide range- five different secondary schools based in Sheffield, Derbyshire and Lancashire, a young researcher linked to a university, students from two colleges (Sheffield and Oldham), two young advisors, three young people based in a project in Nottingham concerned with sexual health and a group of young people in Wales who completed one sort together. Each participant was invited to use their real or a made up first name so as to identify themselves. Thirty sorts were completed face to face, the remaining four ‘remotely’.

With respect to age, Brownlie *et al* (2006) note that most young researchers have been aged 14 and over. The age of the participants in this study ranged from 13 to 23 (see Appendix 55).

	Level of experience (self-defined)			
	Hi	Medium	Lo	Totals
Males	2	7	8	17
Females	4	3	9	16
	6	10	17	33

Table 5b.1. Distribution of participants who were young people.

(Note-The ‘Young Taffs’ completed their sort together as a group of two females and one male of ages 14, 15 and 20).

A process similar to that used in Q study 1 was followed. PQMethod was used to extract factors using centroid factor analysis. Varimax and hand rotation was then used so as to maximise the number of participants loading on a factor.

All factors had Eigenvalues greater than 1.00 and the four factors explained 36% of the variance, accounting for 25 of the 34 participants. Three participants (Zachary, Sarah, Md and Hass) loaded on a factor at $p < 0.05$. Two participants (Christian, Chloe) were confounded (they loaded on two factors at a significant level), whilst four (Lucy, Aaron, Zac7, Lauren) did not load significantly. A participant loading of 0.3359 (0.34) reached significance at $p < 0.01$ in the study. This was raised to 0.41 ($p < 0.05 = 0.255$). The results as described are shown in Table 5b.2 below.

Factor Number	Q sort Numbers	Participant	Total	Cum. Total
1	4, 7, 9, 14, 18, 19, 21, 22, 26, 34	Oliver, Emma ¹ , Chelsea, AAA, Nadia, Emma ³ , Sarah, Avneath, Azam, Kyle.	10	10
2	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 13, 16, 17, 24	Liz, Rhianan, Stuart, Brad, Caitlin, Sam, Harry, Zachary, LZ, Joshua	10	20
3	10	Julia	1	21
3-	31	Asha and Saira	1	22
4	8, 15, 25, 27, 29, 32	Rachael, Kerry, Charlotte, Daniel, Young Taffs, Md and Hass	6	28
Confounded	11 (2/4), 28 (1/4)	Christian, Chloe	2	30
Non-Significant	20, 23, 30, 33	Lucy, Aaron, Zac7, Lauren	4	34

Table 5b.2 Distribution of loadings for young people's viewpoints of young researchers, (**bold** indicates loading at 0.41 or above). The four factor solution accounts for 25 of the 34 Q sorts. Nine Q sorts exemplify F1, nine exemplify F2, two F3 (bipolar) and five on F4. Two sorts are confounded (the factors are indicated in brackets). Four are not significant.

All four factors had Eigenvalues greater than one and two or more sorts loaded significantly on each factor (in the unrotated matrix). The factor matrix indicating which factors the participants loaded on is shown in Appendix 57.

F3 is 'bi-polar' and Watts (2002) explains that this means 'that two 'opposed' positions are being expressed by the participants who load on this factor, each position having a 'factor exemplifying' Q sort that is the 'mirror-image' of the other'. Brown (1980, p134) suggests that bi-polar factors can demonstrate 'that the opposite of one idea may be another idea rather than a mere negation'. There is a parallel here with Personal Construct Psychology, where one tries to determine the other end of a construct by encouraging a focus on contrast (Banister and Fransella, 1980). It is better to ask 'what is not like that?' rather than 'what is the opposite?' as this second question can limit.

In Table 5b.3 the column headed 3- relates to the bi-polar factor. 3- represents the negative pole of F3. F3 had only two participants loading at 0.41 but I was interested to interpret both F3 and F3- as two participants on each of these loaded at least the $p < 0.05$ level of significance. In order to interpret this viewpoint, the signs in front of the F3 statement positions have been reversed. 3 becomes -3, -1, 1 etc. As there was only one participant holding this negative viewpoint it was tempting to slip into interpreting the actual Q sort completed by Asha and Saira, but I needed to remind myself that it was not their individual response that I was trying to understand as much as their position in opposition to the positive F3 viewpoint.

Interpreting F3- by reversing the signs for F3 to interpret F3- was preferred to creating and including F3- in the Q-analysis as Brown advises only doing this in cases where bipolar factors are 'defined by several Q sorts at both ends' (Brown, 1980, p253).

So as to interpret each viewpoint, each factor array was arranged in the grid using Table 5b.3 so as to create a single Q sort, exemplifying the factor.

ITEM NUMBER AND CONTENT WORDING	Factor arrays				
	F1	F2	F3	F3-	F4
1 took responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research	-1	-3	3	-3	-3
2 helped adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children	1	1	-1	1	1
3 were much more than just assistants to the adults	4	0	2	-2	5
4 experienced frustration over the limits which were placed on them by the adults	-3	-5	-2	2	-4
5 challenged the idea of an expert adult researcher studying young people as research 'objects'	-3	1	2	-2	-3
6 made some really important decisions	3	-1	5	-5	0
7 got hold of resources (time, money, expertise) in support of the project	-2	-2	3	-3	0
8 weren't bothered about having equal power with adults in the research – they just wanted to be able to have a say	-3	0	4	-4	-2
9 needed the adults to make sure that the project stayed on track	-4	4	0	0	-3
10 identified the benefits of the research in order to decide if the research was worthwhile	0	0	0	0	0
11 had a say in how money involved with the project was to be used	-3	-4	-4	4	-4
12 decided on research questions	0	-1	2	-2	1
13 took responsibility for data collection	2	4	-3	3	-2
14 made decisions about how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc)	-1	-3	0	0	0
15 had a say on what action was to follow from the research (eg implications for policy, things changing as a result of the research findings)	-3	-2	4	-4	-1
16 were trusted by adults	5	4	2	-2	2
17 had opportunities to express their views about the research	3	3	3	-3	1
18 identified issues and researched them, with adults in the role of research assistants	-2	-3	1	-1	2
19 were consulted about all of the key decisions	2	-3	-1	1	2
20 felt that their involvement was tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant)	-5	-4	0	0	-5
21 found that changes to the research process were made as a result of what they said	2	0	1	-1	-1
22 were involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results)	-1	-2	1	-1	0
23 found that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that the young people understood what they were being allowed to decide	-1	0	-1	1	-3
24 found that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible	-1	0	-2	2	2
25 came up with the idea for research	1	-5	-5	5	-1
26 were better than adults at getting responses from other young people	3	2	-2	2	-1
27 experienced a different way of adults and	-2	1	-3	3	4

young people learning together					
28 dealt with problems, criticisms and complaints when they arose in the project	0	-1	5	-5	-3
29 contributed to research which was just as good as research done by adults only	-2	1	-2	2	5
30 helped to produce better outcomes than work produced by adults alone	0	1	0	0	1
31 agreed with the idea of 'don't do research on us – do it <u>with</u> us'	1	3	1	-1	1
32 were regarded as the experts – they knew what young people were like	1	-2	-3	3	3
33 had an equal but different contribution to make to the research process	1	0	2	-2	4
34 found that their involvement led to them developing a greater ability to influence or act upon things (more power)	1	-1	0	0	-2
35 offered insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen	-1	-1	3	-3	0
36 found that their results were taken seriously by adult audiences once the research was completed	2	3	1	-1	-1
37 knew enough to work with adults in research in this way	-2	2	1	-1	1
38 often surprised and impressed adults	0	-1	0	0	0
39 understood what was going on	2	2	-2	2	3
40 were given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities	2	1	0	0	0
41 felt under pressure to complete the project	-4	-2	1	-1	-4
42 were respected as an equal, valid member of the team	5	3	2	-2	3
43 had a lot of responsibility	4	2	-2	2	-2
44 were able to learn how more experienced people work	-1	2	-1	1	0
45 found that the project resulted in something changing	0	-2	-1	1	-2
46 were valuable in offering and sharing new ideas	3	-1	-1	1	1
47 found that it was clear that the adults felt that they knew best	-5	-3	-2	2	-5
48 worked on issues which were of relevance to the young people themselves	3	1	3	-3	2
49 needed support from adults in order to keep taking part	-4	0	-1	1	-2
50 found that adults were willing to adopt a learner role	-1	-2	4	-4	2
51 contributed to research which was just as publishable as research done by adults only	0	1	-4	4	3
52 felt included in the process	2	5	-5	5	3
53 were protected from risks by the adults	-2	2	-3	3	-1
54 fed back the results to influential people	0	0	0	0	-2
55 felt that they were kept in the loop	0	-1	1	-1	4
56 saw a final published report of their work	-2	2	-3	3	-1
57 enjoyed their involvement with the project	4	3	-4	4	2
58 got involved for the good of the community	1	-4	1	-1	-1
59 got on well with the adults	1	5	-1	1	1

Table 5b.3 Factor Q sort values for each statement in Q study 2, young people

Factor interpretation

The crib sheet was again used so as to identify statements for each factor that appeared to be significant to understanding the viewpoint. With more statements than in the benefits study, care was taken so as to avoid being overwhelmed by the number of statements (thus compromising my ability to make sense of their pattern). I identified statements which were only placed in a position that was higher or lower than their position in the other factor arrays and identified the distinguishing statements, and, where appropriate, the degree of consensus vs disagreement so that a 'core' interpretation might serve as a foundation, before embellishing it further with other statements which seemed to relate to the core and 'hang together' with it. By considering the descending array of differences between pairs of factors I was also able to emphasise differences between factors one, two and four. (Values for F3-were not considered during this process as they had not been entered into the Q-analysis process).

Full interpretation of Factor 1

F1 has an Eigenvalue of 3.4 and explains 10% of the study variance. Nine participants are significantly associated with this factor, four males and five females. Five participants were from (different) schools, one from an organisation concerned with young people' participation, one was a young advisor, one from a group concerned with young people's sexual health and one from a sixth form college. None of the participants worked in the same establishment.

'Powerful team players-responsible, trusted, team members, keen to have and develop greater power'

The young person holding this viewpoint agrees that they came up with the idea for research (25: +1), tending to get involved for the good of the community (58: +1), working on issues which were of relevance to the young people themselves (48: +3) (Emma3-*'we know as young people what effects us'* and *'we didn't identify issues but it was an important issue. Worked out (with questionnaires etc) negatives and positives in area and how they could be improved'*). Emma1 explained that she *'got involved...to make a difference and feel passionate about an issue, to want to change it so other young people don't have to experience it'*. They tended to disagree that they got hold of resources (time, money, expertise) in

support of the project (7: -2) or had a say in how money involved with the project was to be used (11: -3). Young people with this viewpoint feel that they were better than adults at getting responses from other young people (26: +3) and helped adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children (2: +1) although they disagreed that they knew enough to work with adults in research in this way (37: -2) or that they offered insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen (35: -1). Commenting on item 26, Avneath thought that adults and young people were *'on the same level, understood each other. Adult 'stigma'-they can't relate so well (as young people can to other young people), young people more likely to tell truth to other young people)*. Young people took some responsibility for data collection (13: +2) but were not involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results) (22: -1).

They do not feel that they had a say on what action was to follow from the research (eg implications for policy, things changing as a result of the research findings) (15: -3) but did agree more that they found that the project resulted in something changing (45: 0). Chelsea commented on item 15, *'sometimes no outcomes-adults don't always let you know ...can't do research and do nothing with it...pointless'*.

Agreeing less than the F2 viewpoint with the idea of *'don't do research on us – do it with us'* (31: +1), they didn't necessarily help to challenge the idea of an expert adult researcher studying young people as research *'objects'* (5: -3) or contribute to research which was just as good as research done by adults only (29: -2) which had better outcomes than work produced by adults alone (30: 0). Young people found that their results were taken seriously by adult audiences once the research was completed (36: +2) but these were not feedback to influential people (54: 0). They tended not to make decisions about how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc) (14: -1) or see a final published report of their work (56: -2). Emma3 thought that it was *'important that young people's views are heard by key decision-makers and those who can change things'*.

Most importantly their experience was that they were trusted by adults (16: +5), respected as an equal, valid member of the team (42: +5) and enjoyed their involvement with the project (57: +4) which was not tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant) (20: -5)-they were much more than just assistants to the adults (3: +4). Emma1 commented on item 20 that *'if couldn't make a difference or inform a difference being made...pointless in the first place...wanted work done to get feedback and inform decisions being made'*. On the same item, Nadia thought that *'everyone thought that everyone's viewpoint was significant'*. Emma3 thought that *'young people are just as important as adults in research that effects them so they should be given equal status, as they may be experts in subjects'*.

They did not need to be protected from risks by the adults (53: -2). Avneath thought that they were *'not protected, put own ideas on it and taken risks ourselves'*. They got on well enough with the adults (59: +1), did not feel under pressure to complete the project (41: -4) or find that it was clear that the adults felt that they knew best (47: -5). They had opportunities to express their views about the research (17: +3), were valuable in offering and sharing new ideas (46: +3), were consulted about all of the key decisions (19: +2) made some really important decisions (6, +3) and found that changes to the research process were made as a result of what they said (21: +2). Chelsea said that she *'made the decisions...things which led to change-real-life statistics rather than government statistics, adults worked alongside young people-sometimes better to leave young people to get on with it'*. Kyle said that *'adults could be like kids and share ideas'*. However, they did not experience a different way of adults and young people learning together (27: -2) or learn how more experienced people work (44: -1).

They often surprised and impressed adults (38: 0), had a lot of responsibility (43: +4) (Nadia –*'we had most of the responsibility in choosing questions and researching'*) and were given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities (40: +2). They definitely did not need the adults to make sure that the project stayed on track (9: -4) or support from adults in order to keep taking part (49: -4) (Nadia- *'we didn't need adults to help us to keep going'*) although Emma1 thought that this was *'important in some instances, but if passionate ... and determined to do it...able to run with it if adults support'*. Interestingly, Emma3 reported *'problems*

with other young people (rather than with 'adults did this or did that...')-lack of understanding in young people team –lack of confidence and experience, particularly if the young person has spent time away from education/school, also links to enjoyment of learning, support and enthusiasm for this-(if these are lacking/absent for the young person, they may find it harder to put the necessary effort/teamwork in').

They did not find that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible (24: -1), but were bothered about having equal power with adults in the research – they didn't *just* want to be able to have a say (8: -3) and found that their involvement led to them developing a greater ability to influence or act upon things (more power) (34: +1). Sarah predicted that this would be one outcome for her.

Avneath was the second highest loader on F1 and she explained that there were no adults in her team so that everyone was valued and they worked '*off each other*'. She disagreed with item 20 as the project was '*youth led so significant and important regarding what we're doing. Got control of the process...we've filled out questionnaires and not known where they've gone...all about hitting targets-we want to make a difference, a change. Want to make a film, event...do something different...wanted to show findings in a more fun/active way.* Interestingly Avneath reported '*lots of freedom but not much adult involvement –devalues it because adults not interested*' and then talked about being really pleased and excited to talk to me about the work as I seemed interested. Avneath explained that the '*manager has status regarding gaining entry...getting in –that's the hardest thing*'. Sarah worked on the same project as Avneath and reported '*we wrote the questions. No matter how old others are-good to get other ideas (eg from adults).* Reflecting on item 9 (adults needing to keep the project on track) Sarah said '*hasn't happened so much (eg-maybe would have liked more of this)... gaining access-major thing. Did criminology degree before this-done research before but it was closely guided unlike now*'.

Emma1, the third highest loader on F1 explained that '*understanding 'could develop over a period of time....once looked at it in depth...more informing your decision....first passionate-may not understand, then develops over time'*'.

To summarise the F1 viewpoint, young people came up with the research idea. They were better at getting responses from other young people but were not sure that they knew enough to be researchers. They had little influence over how research was used and did not see that it led to things changing. They were regarded as equal team members, valued for offering new ideas and listened to when they did so. Young people had responsibility and did not need adults to keep them going. They were keen to have power.

Full interpretation of Factor 2

F2 has an Eigenvalue of 4.42 and explains 13% of the study variance. Nine participants are significantly associated with this factor, six males and three females. Six of the young people loading on F2 are connected to me, in that one is my daughter and five are from Sec2 where I implemented the second round of the initial project. One is from a secondary school, one from a sixth form college and the other a young researcher linked to a University.

'Happy assistants-happy to assist adults in their work'

Young people with the F2 viewpoint did not get involved for the good of the community (58: -4), work on issues which were of relevance to themselves (48: +1), come up with the idea for research (25: -5), decide on research questions (12: -1) or get hold of resources (time, money, expertise) in support of the project (7: -2). Brad commented that '*the research ideas were thought out well in advance before I joined the project*'. Neither did they identify issues and research them, with adults in the role of research assistants (18: -3), get consulted about all of the key decisions (19: -3) or make some really important decisions (6: -1). However, they did feel that they had had opportunities to express their views about the research (17: +3) (although (46: -1) did not feel valuable in offering and sharing new ideas) and helped to produce better outcomes than work produced by adults alone (30: +1). They felt that working on a research project had challenged the idea of an expert adult researcher studying young people as research 'objects' (5: +1). They

did not really find that adults were willing to adopt a learner role (50: -2) but disagreed that it was clear that the adults felt that they knew best (47: -3).

Young people had defined areas of responsibility, found that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that the young people understood what they were being allowed to decide (23: 0) and knew enough to work with adults in research in this way (37: +2). So, whilst they took more responsibility for data collection (13: +4) than the other viewpoints, they were not involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results) (22: -2). They did not take responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research (1: -3) and were protected from risks by the adults (53: +2). They tended to agree that they did *not* have an equal but different contribution to make to the research process (33: 0) and were not much more than just assistants to the adults (3: 0). They did not feel that they often surprised and impressed adults (38: -1). One exception was Zachary who said '*I'm good with computers, media editing-therefore 'impressed'...also recruited another young person to join*'. In spite of this, they did not experience frustration over the limits which were placed on them by the adults (4: -5), felt included in the process (52: +5), (although (55: -1) not always that they were kept in the loop), agreed with the idea of 'don't do research on us – do it with us' (31: +3) and got on really well with the adults (59: +5). LZ stressed the importance of '*good motivation, you can't work with someone you can't get on with... if they're condescending or whatever*'.

They felt that they were trusted by adults (16: +4) and were respected as equal, valid members of the team (42: +3). Harry described items 52 and 16 as the '*foundation of effective research, trust important as it was a paid post*'. Zachary explained that he had been '*trusted with computer equipment (because on-line research)-laptop 800 quid. Young People are needed (and not tokenistic)*'. Of item 42, LZ said, '*If we were not included why should we help? ...all about being treated as an equal...motivated...and enjoyed the project*'. They did not feel that their involvement was tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant) (20: -4) and enjoyed their involvement with the project (57: +3). Joshua reported that the adult '*made us feel like a real part of what he was doing and trying to achieve which helped motivate us into doing it-he went out on a limb to trust us with the use*

of Facebook... gave us no real limitations in this'. Harry reported that he continually asked himself *'how involved was I?'* LZ thought that his role in the project *'didn't feel tokenistic...you (me) had said we might get better results...therefore I felt fairly important. Results that adults would analyse-quite an important role'*.

Young people needed support from adults in order to keep taking part (49: 0) and to make sure that the project stayed on track (9: +4). Rhianan said *'once having taken part: more challenging to plan things together, not as prepared as might have been'*. They were able to learn how more experienced people work (44: +2). Brad reported that *'the project gave an 'insight' into the work of a psychologist and current research questions/ideas'* and LZ thought that he gained *'good insight into what researchers do-could help if wanted to go into that area'*.

More than the other viewpoints they found that their results were taken seriously by adult audiences once the research was completed (36: +3), but they did not make decisions about how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc) (14: -3). LZ referred to attending an award evening which he found a *'very fulfilling experience', praised alongside others who had researched a lot of their areas for years'*. Young people saw a final published report of their work (56: +2) but did not generally find that the project resulted in something changing (45: -2).

The third highest loader on F2 (Rhianan) talked about thinking about taking part: *'looks good on CV, good experience for university, taking part in a study would be good-to get idea of timescale-how long does research take?'*

Stuart reported feeling *'very involved in the project and was given the freedom to organise when and how I carried it out, this made it a very enjoyable experience as I didn't feel I was being forced or rushed to do anything. I think I was well-organised and so didn't need much support from adults other than the providing of resources'*.

Having equal power did not seem to be an issue for this viewpoint (8, 0). LZ said of item 8 *'weren't bothered...because we are students and don't know as*

much...doesn't matter as long as we can contribute...we accept that we don't know as much'.

The F2 viewpoint can be summarised as follows. Young people were not initially drawn to the research for the opportunity to work on issues important to them or their community and had very limited influence and decision-making. More than the other viewpoints, they had a narrowly defined area of responsibility that the adults were clear about, almost in the role of assistants to the adults who needed to support their continued participation in the project. They did not experience frustration about this position and felt included. The results that they contributed to were taken seriously and they saw a final report.

Full interpretation of Factor 3

F3 has an Eigenvalue of 1.36 and explains 4% of the study variance. Two participants are significantly associated with this bipolar factor, both females, one at the positive end and the other at the negative.

'Was it worth it? Worked hard, took the flak, gave the research status, doubted the outcome'.

Young people holding the F3 viewpoint got hold of resources (time, money, expertise) in support of the project (7: +3) but did not have a say in how money involved with the project was to be used (11: -4). They made some really important decisions (6: +5) and dealt with problems, criticisms and complaints when they arose in the project (28: +5). Although they did not come up with the idea for research (25: -5), they worked on issues which were of relevance to the young people themselves (48: +3), got involved for the good of the community (58: +1), decided on research questions (12: +2) and took responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research (1: +3). They were not protected from risks by the adults (53: -3). They did not take responsibility for data collection (13: -3) but were involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results) (22: +1).

Young people with the F3 viewpoint made some decisions about how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc) (14: 0)

but did not see a final published report of their work (56: -3). They disagree that they contributed to research which was just as publishable or just as good as research done by adults only (51: -4) or helped to produce better outcomes than work produced by adults alone (30: 0).

They disagreed that they enjoyed their involvement with the project (57: -4) or felt included in the process (52: -5) and more than the other viewpoints, felt under pressure to complete the project (41: +1) and felt that their involvement was more tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant) (20: 0). They did not understand what was going on (39: -2) or get on particularly well with the adults (59: -1). In spite of this, they disagreed that it was clear that the adults felt that they knew best (47: -2), they were respected as an equal, valid member of the team (42: +2) and were trusted by adults (16: +2). They experienced less (than nearly all of the other viewpoints) frustration over the limits that were placed on them by the adults (4: -2) and felt that they had an equal but different contribution to make to the research process (33: +2).

Young people felt that working on a research project had challenged the idea of an expert adult researcher studying young people as research 'objects' (5: +2).

Although they found that adults were willing to adopt a learner role (50: +4), their experience was not of a different way of adults and young people learning together (27: -3) and they did not find that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible (24: -2). They had opportunities to express their views about the research (17: +3) [even if they were not valuable in offering and sharing new ideas (46: -1)], identified issues and researched them, with adults in the role of research assistants (18: +2). They were not particularly able to learn how more experienced people work (44: -1).

They agree that they offered insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen (35: +3). However, they did not agree that they were regarded as the experts – they knew what young people were like (32: -3), that they helped adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children (2: -1) or that they were better than adults at getting responses from other young people (26: -2).

They disagree that they had a lot of responsibility (43: -2) and were given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities (40: 0). However, they weren't bothered about having equal power with adults in the research – they just wanted to be able to have a say (8: +4). They had a say on what action was to follow from the research (eg implications for policy, things changing as a result of the research findings) (15: +4).

One young woman who loaded on F3 referred to having worked on a research project, using, *'what I knew in creating research, not about the power – a lot of young people don't relate to adults-young people can relate to other young people'*.

The summary of F3 is as follows. Young people did a lot of work on the project and had a say on what action was to follow from the research but did not feel that the end product was as good as research done by adults only and did not see a final report. They agree that they offered insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen, but were not regarded as the experts, not better than adults at getting responses from other young people or helping adult researchers learn and understand about the experiences of children. They did not enjoy their (more tokenistic) involvement as much as young people with other viewpoints as in addition to the work and hassle that they dealt with, they felt less included, under pressure to complete, did not understand what was going on or get on particularly well with the adults. Although they weren't bothered about having equal power with adults in the research, their experience was not of a different way of adults and young people learning together and they did not find that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible.

Full interpretation of Factor 3-

'Easy life! Bit of power, not much responsibility, a bit of a laugh'

Young people with this viewpoint feel that they came up with the idea for research (25: +5) although they did not decide on research questions (12: -2) or work on issues of relevance to the young people themselves (48: -3).

They did not get hold of resources (time, money, expertise) in support of the project (7: -3) or deal with problems, criticisms and complaints when they arose in

the project (28: -5), although they did have a say in how money involved with the project was to be used (11: +4) so to some extent, they enjoyed power without responsibility! They disagree that they made some really important decisions (6: -5) or took responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research (1: -3), agreeing that they were protected from risks by the adults (53: +3). They did take responsibility for data collection (13: +3), tending in general, to feel that they had a lot of responsibility (43: +2) although they were not given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities (40: 0).

They disagree that they had opportunities to express their views about the research (17: -3) and that their contribution to the research process was equal but different (33: -2). They did not offer insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen (35: -3) although they were regarded as the experts – they knew what young people were like (32: +3), helped adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children (2: +1) and were better than adults at getting responses from other young people (26: +2).

Despite feeling that they were not much more than just assistants to the adults (3: -2), were not trusted by adults (16: -2), kept in the loop (55: -1), respected as an equal, valid member of the team (42: -2), and that their involvement was somewhat tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant) (20: 0), they got on well enough with the adults (59: +1), really enjoyed their involvement with the project (57: +4) and felt *very* included in the process (52: +5). They needed support from adults in order to keep taking part (49: +1) but did not feel under pressure to complete the project (41: -1). They understood what was going on (39: +2) even if they did not know enough to work with adults in research in this way (37: -1). They were able to learn how more experienced people work (44: +1) and experienced a different way of adults and young people learning together (27: +3).

They found that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that the young people understood what they were being allowed to decide (23: +1) but also that it was clear that the adults felt that they knew best (47: +2) and were unwilling to adopt a learner role (50: -4). Changes to the research process were not made as a result of what they said (21: -1).

Although young people experienced frustration over the limits placed on them by the adults (4: +2) and were bothered about having equal power with adults in the research –wanting to be able to have more than just a say (8: -4) they disagreed with the idea of ‘don’t do research on us – do it with us’ (31: -1). Interestingly, they found that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible (24: +2) and that their involvement led to them developing a greater ability to influence or act upon things (more power) (34: 0).

Although these young people did not make decisions about how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc) (14: 0), they did see a final published report of their work (56: +3) and feel that they contributed to research just as publishable (51: +4) and just as good (29: +2) as research done by adults only [even if their results were not taken seriously by adult audiences once the research was completed (36: -1)]. Whilst disagreeing that they had a say on what action was to follow from the research (eg implications for policy, things changing as a result of the research findings) (15: -4) they did find that the project resulted in something changing (45: +1).

F3- can be summarised as follows. Young people came up with the idea for the research and had some power without too much responsibility. They had limited opportunities to express their views about the research and were little more than assistants, compared with other viewpoints, less trusted, less respected and needing adult support. Limitations were made clear to them by the adults who were unwilling to adopt a learner role and knew best. Although this was frustrating the young people saw a final report that was just as publishable as work done by adults only and although they did not influence how the research was used, it did lead to something changing.

Full interpretation of Factor 4

F4 has an Eigenvalue of 3.06 and explains 9% of the study variance. Five participants are significantly associated with this factor, three females, one male and a mixed group. Two of the young people loading on F4 are from a sixth form college, one is from a secondary school, one from an organisation concerned with young people’ participation and the other a group of young people.

'Equal partners-experts who gained a sense of power-sharing with adults'

Young people holding the F4 viewpoint did not have a say in how money involved with the project was to be used (11: -4), deal with problems, criticisms and complaints when they arose in the project (28: -3) or take responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research (1: -3). Although they had opportunities to express their views about the research (17: +1), changes to the research process were *not* made as a result of what they said (21: -1). They did not particularly come up with the idea for research (25: -1) but to some extent they decided on research questions (12: +1). They did not take responsibility for data collection (13: -2) but were more involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results) (22: 0). They were respected as an equal, valid member of the team (42: +3), were consulted about all of the key decisions (19: +2), understood what was going on (39: +3) and felt strongly that they were kept in the loop (55: +4) (although Rachael commented '*didn't know what happened afterwards*'). These young people knew enough to work with adults in research in this way (37: +1) and did not need support from adults in order to keep taking part (49: -2) or to ensure that the project stayed on track (9: -3). They did not feel under pressure to complete the project (41: -4). Although they felt trusted by adults (16: +2), the young people did not have a lot of responsibility (43: -2) or opportunities to take on more (40: 0).

These young people *were* bothered about having equal power with adults in the research and didn't *just* want to be able to have a say (8: -2), disagreeing that their involvement led to them developing a greater ability to influence or act upon things (more power) (34: -2). They disagree that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that the young people understood what they were being allowed to decide (23: -3) suggesting that the adults did not make the expectations clear because they did not need to, as they viewed the young people as competent. Whatever the reason, they did not experience frustration over the limits placed on them by the adults (4: -4). Kerry said '*I chose four for the left because nobody got frustrated at all*'. Rachael's experience may have been a little different when she said '*took a lot of the lead on it and recruited other young people, had training, then trained others, did research, collaborated, did graphs, how to do*

report and recommendations...involved every step of the way, given a lot of responsibility.

More than the other viewpoints, these young people agreed that they had an equal but different contribution to make to the research process (33: +4). They did not feel that they were better than adults at getting responses from other young people (26: -1), but were regarded as the experts – they knew what young people were like (32: +3), helped adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children (2: +1) and disagreed strongly that their involvement was tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant) (20: -5) or that the adults felt that they knew best (47: -5). Commenting on item 20, Rachael said *'horrible...we were taught that's at bottom end of ladder (Hart) example of how to do politics, do team work at school but different with adults'*. To some extent they offered insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen (35: 0).

The young people contributed to research that was just as good (29: +5) and just as publishable as research done by adults only (51: +3), helping to produce better outcomes than work produced by adults alone (30: +1). Kerry thought that *'you wouldn't be able to find out what happened in school if you didn't have somebody from the school'*. Whilst they agreed that they made decisions about how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc) (14: 0), they did not find that they feedback the results to influential people (54: -2) or that their results were taken seriously by adult audiences once the research was completed (36: -1). Rachael reported *'don't get to see what happens in council-usually adult only meetings'*. They did not find that the project resulted in something changing (45: -2).

They experienced a different way of adults and young people learning together (27: +4), finding that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible (24: +2). Rachael said that this *'can happen, hard work but can happen...important it's shared'*. They agreed with the idea of *'don't do research on us – do it with us'* (31: +1) although this did not challenge the idea of an expert adult researcher studying young people as research 'objects' (5: -3). They were much more than just assistants to the adults (3: +5) and in fact, agreed

that they identified issues and researched them, with adults in the role of research assistants (18: +2) where adults were willing to adopt a learner role (50: +2).

The F4 viewpoint can be summarised as follows. Young people had limited decision-making opportunities. They were regarded as experts and did not feel that their involvement was tokenistic, where adults knew best. They were much more than assistants to the adults and at times, it seems that adults had an assistant role. Their contribution led to research that was just as good and publishable as that produced by adults working alone, although they were not involved with feeding results back at the dissemination stage. The project gave them a sense that power-sharing between adults and young people was possible and they experienced a different way of learning with adults.

Follow up

As before, I wrote to all of the participants by email and attached a summary of the factor interpretations in a document as an attachment (Appendix 61). The summary of the interpreted factor was based only on the 'significant' statements (those that were higher or lower in the array when compared with other arrays, distinguishing statements and items at the end of the statements ordered from agreement to disagreement). Five participants responded, two of those identifying with the viewpoint that I had them loading on in my analysis.

Discussion of results 5b, (Q study 2), the experience of young people working as young researchers

Five viewpoints were interpreted from Q study 2 :

- *'Powerful team players-responsible, trusted, team members, keen to have and develop greater power'*
- *'Happy assistants-happy to assist adults in their work'*
- *'Was it worth it? Worked hard, took the flak, gave the research status, doubted the outcome'*
- *'Easy life! Bit of power, not much responsibility, a bit of a laugh'*
- *'Equal partners-experts who gained a sense of power-sharing with adults'*

Six consensus statements were shared across all of the young people's factors indicating that all of the young people's viewpoints feel similarly about identifying the benefits of the research in order to decide if the research was worthwhile (10); helping adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children (2); having opportunities to express their views about the research (17); the degree to which they surprised and impressed adults (38); whether they were given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities (40) and helping to produce better outcomes than work produced by adults alone (30).



Figure 5b.1 Relationship between the factors related to young people's viewpoints (identified by Q-study 2)

We can see from the factor interpretations that F1 and F4 share some similarities in that both viewpoints position the young person as sharing power with adults and holders of the F2 viewpoint were not particularly keen to have more power than they had-all three viewpoints then connected by power. There is also a sense in which the F2 viewpoint is comfortable in their work with the adults, even if their role is a lesser one. In contrast, F3 and F3- seem somehow distanced from the adults. More specifically, F1 and F4 did not feel under pressure to complete the project (41). The diagram above (Fig 5b.1) groups together F1, F2 and F4 and F3 and F3-.

In order to explore themes within and across the factors I revisited the categories generated during the development of the Q set (Table A1 Appendix 26). These were then reformulated after consulting the headings for the topics addressed in the literature review. Statements for each of these headings were then placed under the most appropriate heading. The consensus vs disagreement Table was consulted so as to remove statements for which there was high consensus for all factors.

Heading	Statements associated with heading (nos.)
Inclusion of young people	4, 20, 25, 39, 42, 52, 55, 57
Outcomes	15, 29, 36, 45, 51, 56
Voice (listened to)	19, 21, 46,
Relationship with adults	16, 27, 44, 50, 59
Responsibility	1, 13, 28, 43,
Position of young people	2, 3, 5, 9, 18, 26, 31, 32, 35, 37, 41, 49, 53

Table 5b.4 Linking statements to headings for themes, young people’s viewpoints of young researchers

The Table above (Table 5b.4) indicates the headings and associated statements.

Inclusion of young people	Position of each statement on the grid ('score') for these 8 statements								Total 'score'
	4	20	25	39	42	52	55	57	
F1	-3	-5	1	2	5	2	0	4	22
F2	-5	-4	-5	2	3	5	-1	3	16
F3	-2	0	-5	-2	2	-5	1	-4	-11
F3-	2	0	5	2	-2	5	-1	4	11
F4	-4	-5	-1	3	3	3	4	2	23

Table 5b.5 ‘Scores’ derived from statements associated with Inclusion of young people across five viewpoints.

The heading of 'inclusion of young people' thus had eight statements all of which occupied different positions in the factor arrays for each factor. These positions (between -5 and +5) were then treated as 'scores' and an indication of how much of the inclusion theme was present in the pattern created by the eight statements in each factor. We should note here that 'score' is really shorthand for an indication of direction, referred to similarly by Stenner and Stainton-Rogers (1998) as 'comparative item rankings'. Table 5b.5 illustrates this further by showing the pattern of 'scores' for the eight statements across the four factors.

The signs on the first two statements (4, experienced frustration over the limits placed on them by the adults and 20, felt that their involvement was tokenistic) were reversed as I reasoned that young people would feel more included if they did *not* experience frustration and did *not* feel that their involvement was tokenistic (so that disagreeing with these items would indicate greater inclusion). Thus a 'score' of 22 for F1 is achieved by adding: 3+5+1+2+5+2+0+4.

Heading	Factors and 'scores'				
	F1	F2	F3	F3-	F4
Inclusion of young people	22	16	-11	11	23
Outcomes	-5	3	-5	5	3
Voice (listened to)	7	-4	-1	1	2
Relationship with adults	2	10	1	-1	9
Responsibility	5	2	3	-3	-4
Position of young people	-4	11	0	0	7

Table 5b.6 Themes and associated 'scores' for each of the factors, young people's viewpoints of young researchers

The other six items were chosen on the basis that greater inclusion might be experienced by young people if they came up with the idea for research (25), understood what was going on (39), were respected as an equal, valid member of the team (42), felt included in the process (52), kept in the loop (55) and if they enjoyed their involvement with the project (57). This process serves well enough to gain an understanding of how themes relate to one another and follows abductive

principles. Using this approach enabled me to explore the conceptual space for different areas. The Table above (5b.6) shows the 'scores' for each heading across the factors.

Diagrams were produced so as to map the relationships between inclusion and relationships with adults (Fig 5b.2), voice (Fig 5b.3), young people's position (5b.4) and responsibility (Fig 5b.5). These diagrams are shown below.

Considering the way in which the conceptual space is occupied allows us to explore a number of ideas. Figure 5b.2 for instance might suggest that relationships with adults are less important in facilitating a more inclusive experience for young people. For factors 1, 2 and 4 there is a positive relationship between the two, whereas for F3, even when there is a positive relationship, inclusion is low. F3- indicates that a poorer relationship still links to a more inclusive experience. Fig 5b.2 supports the point made earlier concerning the grouping of F1, 2 and 4 and F3 and 3- as we can see that it is F1, F2 and F4 who had positive relationships with adults *and* felt included.

Figure 5b.3 indicates that F1, F3- and F4 experienced greater inclusion and greater voice. F2 also experienced the research as inclusive even though they had less of a voice, whereas F3 experienced the work less inclusively and had a reduced voice. None of the viewpoints expressed the pattern of high voice and low inclusion suggesting that having a say might enable young people to feel more included (although an inclusive experience can still be gained if one does not have a say). F2 and F3- both disagreed that they made some really important decisions (6) or decided on research questions (12). It would appear that F2 and F3- both have a narrow or prescribed role and as they are fairly close to each other in Fig 5b.3 this tends to support the idea that having more voice leads to greater inclusion, although the converse is not necessarily the case.

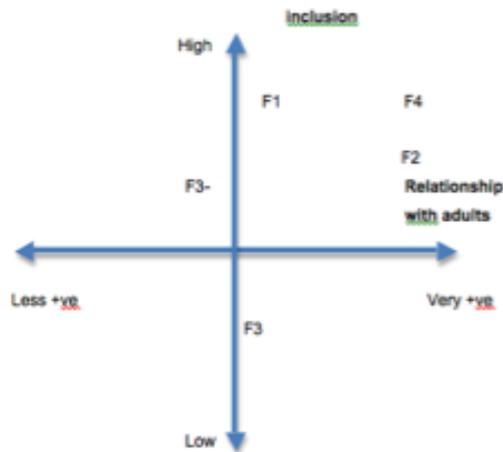


Fig 5b.2 Conceptual space indicating the location of factors according to inclusion and relationships with adults

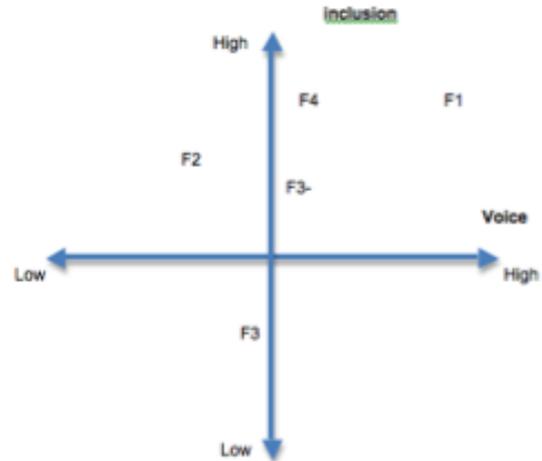


Fig 5b.3 Conceptual space indicating the location of factors according to inclusion and voice

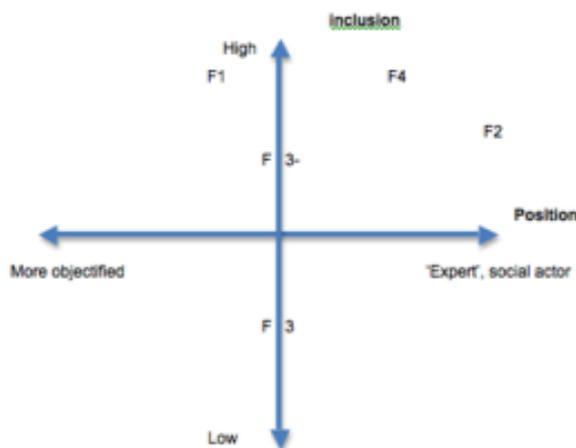


Fig 5b.4 Conceptual space indicating the location of factors according to inclusion and position

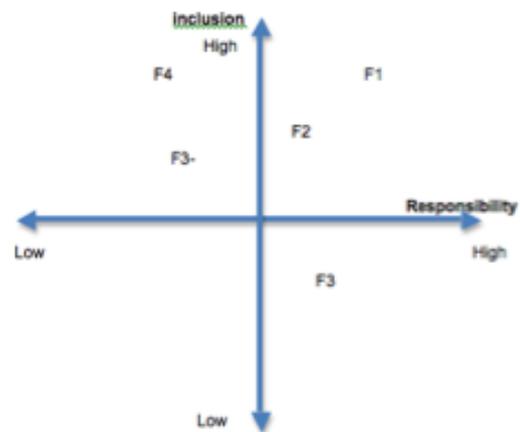


Fig 5b.5 Conceptual space indicating the location of factors according to inclusion and responsibility

Fig 5b.2-5b.5 Conceptual space diagrams mapping inclusion with relationships with adults, voice, young people's position and responsibility

The statements chosen to represent the position of young people included those related to adults being helped to learn from 'expert' young people who might help adults to interpret their lives more effectively, having independence (needing less support, knowing enough, not under pressure), being more than assistants and less of a 'research object' where research is done together rather than 'on' young

people. Figure 5b.4 indicates that F2, F4 and F3- seem to have experienced greater inclusion and were regarded more as social actors, with greater competence. None of the viewpoints had young people positioned as ‘objects’ who experienced low levels of inclusion.



Fig 5b.6 Conceptual space indicating the location of factors according to relationships with adults and outcome



Fig 5b.7 Conceptual space indicating the location of factors according to relationships with adults and voice

Fig 5b.6-5b.7 Conceptual space diagrams mapping relationships with adults, with outcome and voice

Fig 5b.5 raises questions about the relationship between feeling included and responsibility. F4 and F3- both had reduced responsibility yet experienced similar levels of inclusion to F1 and F2 who felt more responsible. In contrast, F3 had high levels of responsibility and seems to have experienced some exclusion, perhaps justified by the end to ask ‘was it worth it?’

Conceptual space diagrams were also produced so as to map the associations between relationships with adults and outcome (Fig 5b.6), and voice (5b.7). Fig 5b.6 indicates that the outcome of research conducted by adults and young people is less dependent on the relationships between them. Relationships can be very positive or only slightly so and outcomes can be very good in both situations. As might be expected, we find the F3 viewpoint (shaped to some extent by their experience of hard work and hassle) at the bottom of Fig 5b.6 close to F1, for whom outcomes generally were less good. This point accords with fieldwork

experience where sometimes outcomes are poor even when positive elements relating to the researchers might be in place. Of course, participants might have had different ideas over what constituted an outcome.

Diagram (Fig 5b.7) places voice against the relationship with adults. Here we find that no viewpoints experienced very negative relationships with adults but all varied in terms of the degree to which they felt they had a voice. F1 and F4 are at the top end of the inclusion measure in every diagram and are grouped together in the same quadrant in Fig 5b.6 which might indicate that good relationships with the adults helped to facilitate their having a voice as well as greater inclusion. Sharing some of the power, a common feature of the F1 and F4 viewpoint, may be a factor here. F2 had good relationships with the adults in their assistant role, but had less power and less of a voice.

One conclusion is to argue that when young people feel more included and enjoy positive relationships with adults, they have a greater voice and experience a greater sense of power, as exemplified by F1 and F4. When young people do not feel included, although their relationships with the adults might be positive, they tend to have reduced voice and if coupled with greater responsibility can end up frustrated as in F3. This is not necessarily 'commonsense' (or rather, might be unexpected) as from Fig 5b.4 and 5b.5 we can see that the more powerful positions ascribed to F1 and F4 were associated with greater objectification and the experience of less responsibility, respectively.

A final point to make here concerns the earlier discussion of Frank's 'pockets of participation'. Two statements in the Q set seem to relate to this idea and are included in Table 5b.7 below along with their positions in the array for each factor.

The viewpoint experiencing greatest frustration seems to be F3-. Perhaps an 'easy life' is not necessarily what they would have chosen had the project been set up differently. F4's view may be that the limitations did not need to be made clear and as they were more like equal partners, they did not experience frustration. F1 also experienced more power sharing and so presumably was not frustrated as few limits were placed on them. Those holding the F3 viewpoint may have desired

greater support from adults but were not frustrated by limits placed upon them as there were few of them. One conclusion then, is that young people don't mind having a discrete role and are not frustrated by participating in 'pockets', as long as there is facilitation to enable them to participate actively. This could involve greater trust, being able to contribute to decision-making and having more of a voice.

Statements	F1	F2	F3	F3-	F4
experienced frustration over the limits which were placed on them by the adults (4)	-3	-5	-2	2	-4
found that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that the young people understood what they were being allowed to decide (23)	-1	0	-1	1	-3

Table 5b.7 Statements related to pockets of participation, young people's viewpoints of young researchers

Discussion of factors related to benefits for young people (5a2, Q study 1) working as researchers and their viewpoints of this experience (5b, Q study 2)

The flower exercise indicated that students saw possible gains in relation to novelty, social and research skills and the help that the activity might provide in relation to coursework and adding to a CV. There is some overlap with the factors in Q study 1 which seem to indicate a broad focus on social skills and on research skills with a view to a future role or interest in becoming a researcher. Section 5a noted that research for research sake and developing research skills are not identified as gains for young people in the literature.

As some of the participants in Q study 1 also participated in Q study 2 there was an opportunity to compare the two sets of results. In themselves these were not particularly illuminating however as one participant in the first study loading on F2, loaded on F1 in the second and three participants in the first study loading on factors 1, 3 and 5 loaded in the second study on F2. However, this does enable us

to consider how young people's viewpoints might interact with one another. Imagine a young person (eg participant 6 in the benefits Q study and LZ in Q study 2) who hopes that their involvement in a research project working with adults might benefit them by gaining research skills as they want to be a young researcher (Benefits F3). They then participate in a project where the adults limit this opportunity and end up holding the happy assistant viewpoint. In this particular example, the experience does not appear to be an unhappy one as the adults are believed to have made the limitations clear and frustration is less of a feature in this viewpoint than in three of the others. A different experience might be gained however by a young person wanting to be a young researcher (Benefits F3), working on a project where they have insufficient support from adults and doubt the quality of the end product (was it worth it?) or on a project where they experience more frustration than the other four viewpoints.

Chapter 5c **RESULTS-adult's views of working as young researchers (Q Study 3)**

Introduction

This third Q study set out to explore the adult experience of young people who work with adults on research projects. Thirty-four participants took part in this study as shown below (Table 5c.1). The data was tagged so as to indicate gender, the type of setting that the adult worked in, age and level of research experience with young people (high, medium, low). Adult participants were drawn from a wide range-higher education establishments; voluntary organisations; independent researchers; Educational Psychology Services; teachers based in schools and in a sixth form college. Most were based in different parts of the United Kingdom (including Wales and Scotland), but through email contact were also recruited from the Netherlands, Austria, South and North America and Australia. Each participant was invited to use their real or a made up first name so as to identify themselves. I completed the first sort, nine were completed face to face, the remaining 24 'remotely'.

	Level of experience (self-defined)			
	Hi	Medium	Lo	Totals
Males	9	5	1	15
Females	6	8	4	18
	15	13	5	33

Table 5c.1. Distribution of adult participants.

(Note-1 adult participant did not identify themselves and so remains 'unknown')

A process similar to that followed in Q study 1 was followed. PQMethod was used to extract factors using centroid factor analysis. Varimax and hand rotation was then used so as to maximise the number of participants loading on a factor.

All factors had Eigenvalues greater than 1.00 and the three factors explained 44% of the variance, accounting for 31 of the 34 participants. Three participants (William, Maurizio and Milly) loaded significantly on more than one of the factors. A participant loading of 0.3359 (0.34) reached significance at $p < 0.01$ in the study. As

for Q study 2, this was raised to 0.41 ($p < 0.05 = 0.255$). The results as described are shown in Table 5c.2 below.

Factor Number	Q sort Numbers	Participant	Total	Cum. Total
1	2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 20, 22, 25	Helen, Florence, Suzy, NP, Rachel, Hasser, Jay, Susan, Jasmine	9	9
2	1, 5, 6, 13, 14, 17, 21, 27, 34	Martin (author), MT, Barry, Anne_01, Naomi, Sue C, Roger, Jane, ED	9	18
3	3, 11, 16, 18, 19, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33	Stuart, Emma2, Rick B, Jan, Michael, Mike, Kim, Peter, Unknown, Patrick, Ciara, JX, OB	13	31
Confounded	4 (1/2), 12 (1/2), 23 (1/3)	William, Maurizio, Milly	3	34
Non-Significant			0	34

Table 5c.2 Distribution of adult's loadings, viewpoints of young researchers (**bold** indicates loading at 0.41 or above. The three factor solution accounts for 31 of the 34 Q sorts. Nine Q sorts exemplify F1, nine exemplify F2, and 13 F3. Three sorts are confounded (the factors are indicated in brackets).

All three factors had Eigenvalues greater than one and two or more sorts loaded significantly on each factor (in the unrotated matrix).

So as to interpret each viewpoint, each factor array was arranged in the grid using Table 5c.3 so as to create a single Q sort, exemplifying the factor.

ITEM NUMBER AND CONTENT WORDING	Factor arrays		
	F1	F2	F3
1 took responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research	-3	0	-3
2 helped adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children	4	4	0
3 were much more than just assistants to the adults	2	0	4
4 experienced frustration over the limits which were placed on them by the adults	-3	-1	-4
5 challenged the idea of an expert adult researcher studying young people as research 'objects'	-2	-1	-2
6 made some really important decisions	-2	-1	3
7 got hold of resources (time, money, expertise) in support of the project	-5	-5	-3
8 weren't bothered about having equal power with adults in the research – they just wanted to be able to have a say	-1	-1	-4
9 needed the adults to make sure that the project stayed on track	3	1	-2
10 identified the benefits of the research in order to decide if the research was worthwhile	-4	0	-1
11 had a say in how money involved with the project was to be used	-4	-4	-3
12 decided on research questions	2	0	4
13 took responsibility for data collection	2	4	1
14 made decisions about how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc)	0	-1	3
15 had a say on what action was to follow from the research (eg implications for policy, things changing as a result of the research findings)	-2	-3	2
16 were trusted by adults	0	1	1
17 had opportunities to express their views about the research	1	3	4
18 identified issues and researched them, with adults in the role of research assistants	-3	-3	-1
19 were consulted about all of the key decisions	-2	-1	5
20 felt that their involvement was tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant)	-5	-3	-5
21 found that changes to the research process were made as a result of what they said	-3	1	2
22 were involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results)	1	-3	3
23 found that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that the young people understood what they were being allowed to decide	-1	1	-3
24 found that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible	0	2	2
25 came up with the idea for research	-2	-5	-1
26 were better than adults at getting responses from other young people	1	1	-1
27 experienced a different way of adults and young people learning together	0	2	0
28 dealt with problems, criticisms and complaints	-4	-2	-3

when they arose in the project			
29 contributed to research which was just as good as research done by adults only	-1	0	-2
30 helped to produce better outcomes than work produced by adults alone	1	4	1
31 agreed with the idea of 'don't do research <u>on</u> us – do it <u>with</u> us'	0	0	0
32 were regarded as the experts – they knew what young people were like	2	0	1
33 had an equal but different contribution to make to the research process	1	2	2
34 found that their involvement led to them developing a greater ability to influence or act upon things (more power)	-1	-2	0
35 offered insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen	3	3	1
36 found that their results were taken seriously by adult audiences once the research was completed	2	-2	0
37 knew enough to work with adults in research in this way	-2	1	-2
38 often surprised and impressed adults	5	2	0
39 understood what was going on	1	2	0
40 were given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities	-2	2	-1
41 felt under pressure to complete the project	0	-2	-4
42 were respected as an equal, valid member of the team	1	3	5
43 had a lot of responsibility	-1	-2	-1
44 were able to learn how more experienced people work	-1	0	-2
45 found that the project resulted in something changing	-1	-4	2
46 were valuable in offering and sharing new ideas	2	5	1
47 found that it was clear that the adults felt that they knew best	-3	-4	-5
48 worked on issues which were of relevance to the young people themselves	4	1	3
49 needed support from adults in order to keep taking part	4	3	-1
50 found that adults were willing to adopt a learner role	0	-1	1
51 contributed to research which was just as publishable as research done by adults only	0	-1	-1
52 felt included in the process	3	2	3
53 were protected from risks by the adults	2	1	-2
54 fedback the results to influential people	3	-2	2
55 felt that they were kept in the loop	0	0	0
56 saw a final published report of their work	1	-3	1
57 enjoyed their involvement with the project	5	5	2
58 got involved for the good of the community	-1	-2	-2
59 got on well with the adults	3	3	0

Table 5c.3 Factor Q sort values for each statement in Q study 3, adults

The crib sheet was again used so as to identify statements for each factor that appeared to be of significance to understanding the viewpoint. The interpretations of the three factors now follow.

Full interpretation of Factor 1

F1 has an Eigenvalue of 4.76 and explains 14% of the study variance. Nine participants are significantly associated with this factor, one male and eight females. Four participants were from Universities, two were independent researchers, two were Educational Psychologists (one a trainee) and one was a school teacher. None of the participants worked in the same establishment.

'Young people involved as 'experts' on discrete areas, led by adults'

The holder of this viewpoint believes that the adults were fairly directive as they protected the young people from risks by the adults (53: +2), were needed so as to make sure that the project stayed on track (9: +3) and needed to give support in order for the young people's continued participation (49: +4), so that, to some extent, the young people felt under pressure to complete the project (41: 0). Concerning item 53, Jay said *'CRB checks difficult (eg asylum seeker from Afghanistan)'*. Florence wrote that *'unless students are highly experienced in undertaking their own research (which is unusual) they are often being introduced to it from scratch at the instigation of others who often have time constraints, although students have always been able to opt out if they want'*. For adults with this viewpoint there was not strong agreement that the young people were able to learn how more experienced people work (44: -1). Compared with the other viewpoints, being trusted by adults was less important (16: 0) as was being respected as an equal, valid member of the team (42: +1). The F1 viewpoint feels less strongly that the young people found that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible (24: 0) or that they had an equal but different contribution to make to the research process (33: +1). Jay illuminates further: *'made me realise...they didn't have as much power...if repeated would do differently now (was my being there in focus group putting them off?) They enjoyed it and their language has improved, language barriers (needed translator) and my being there at focus group may both have served to reduce their power'*. More than the F3 viewpoint, the F1 viewpoint believes that the young

people were not bothered about having equal power with adults in the research – they just wanted to be able to have a say (8: -1), but in spite of this the F1 viewpoint feels that the young people felt included in the process (52: +3).

Adults holding this viewpoint did not think that the young people obtained resources (time, money, expertise) in support of the project (7: -5) or had a say in how money involved with the project was to be used (11: -4). Neither did they take responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research (1: -3) or identify the benefits of the research in order to decide if the research was worthwhile (10: -4). NP commented on some of the constraints of working with young researchers in a school: *'thought of one occasion (in Y8)-looked at UNICEF report, UK bottom of list-how people in year group viewed this...because it was an enquiry...a reflexive process rather than something was gonna happen...because input was limited? And because time pressures on people, this might have made an impact...good but it wasn't amazing (done in spare time-not timetabled-presentation for an assembly)'*.

Holders of this viewpoint did not believe that the young people were consulted about all of the key decisions (19: -2), made some really important decisions (6: -2) or dealt with problems, criticisms and complaints when they arose in the project (28: -4) and compared to the other viewpoints, believe that the young people had fewer opportunities to express their views about the research (17: +1), although when they did so, new ideas were valued (46: +2). Florence reported that *'Many decisions have been made already before students become involved i.e. who will be involved, areas of possible research, finance, possible changes etc.'*

Holders of this viewpoint tended to disagree that young people felt that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that the young people understood what they were being allowed to decide (23: -1). Whilst still disagreeing, they agreed more than the other viewpoints that the young people found that it was clear that the adults felt that they knew best (47: -3). They disagreed that the young people found that changes to the research process were made as a result of what they said (21: -3) or were given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities (40: -2) although they do not believe that the young

people experienced frustration over the limits placed on them by the adults (4: -3), getting on well with the adults (59: +3) and enjoying their involvement with the project (57: +5). Jay wrote that the young people had '*never done anything like it and took it seriously, some of 'em would never have dreamed of doing research*'.

Although there was not strong agreement that the young people found that the project resulted in something changing (45: -1), the end product seems to be important for the F1 viewpoint which believes that the young people feedback the results to influential people (54: +3), found that their results were taken seriously by adult audiences once the research was completed (36: +2) and contributed to research which was just as publishable as research done by adults only (51: 0), (although perhaps not as good as research done by adults only (29: -1). Referring to item 36, Jay commented, '*at presentation...room was impressed re time, hard work and enjoyment*'. In explaining why she placed items on the right hand side of the grid Sue reported that she,

chose statements related to feedback... as so often promises are made in school about what will happen as a result of the research to encourage YP to get involved and then little changes in reality unless communication is to those with greatest influence ie heads and governors.

The young people tended to see a final published report of their work (56: +1) but there was not strong agreement that the young people helped to produce better outcomes than work produced by adults alone (30: +1) or had a say on what action was to follow from the research (eg implications for policy, things changing as a result of the research findings) (15: -2). Florence commented that '*It depends on what level of publication is meant. Can be easier to publish at school level but does not always happen after final presentations have been made. It's not always budgeted for in bigger externally funded projects in the same way that HEI don't budget for time spent on producing their own publications in research bids so perhaps relies more on overstretched teachers/researchers to commit to see reports published?*' Rachel commented that '*from the studies we reviewed and the adult and young researchers we spoke to, it was clear that young researchers brought another dimension to the research and surfaced views/explanations that may not have been apparent without them. They were also often involved in*

presenting findings to policy-makers. However, at the end of the day any research is only one of the things influencing policy-makers decisions, so showing or achieving direct impact from any project, not just those involving young researchers, is very difficult. This has the potential to lead to disappointment- though the young researchers interviewed for our study seemed to enjoy taking part and value the skills gained in themselves’.

Far from seeing the young people’s involvement as tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant) (20: -5), they were much more than assistants to the adults (3: +2) and in fact were regarded as the experts – they knew what young people are like (32: +2) and helped the adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children (2: +4), offering insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen (35: +3). Commenting on item 20, Hasser wrote: ‘20 felt it was tokenistic-absolutely the contrary. They knew their involvement was significant, genuine and empowering (I put this on the extreme left because challenging tokenism is an interest of mine’).

This viewpoint believes that although they did not necessarily know enough to work with adults in research in this way (37: -2), the young people did understand what was going on (39: +1), although Jay challenges this as, for her, ‘*they probably had reduced understanding (eg 16 yr old refugee’s understanding of ‘research’, ‘focus group’, ‘interview’* ‘). Young people were better than adults at getting responses from other young people (26: +1), Jasmine commenting that, ‘*they were able to access and unlock the views of peers. I don’t think adults would have gained the same data’*.

More than the other viewpoints, the F1 viewpoint believes that the young people were working on issues of relevance to the young people themselves (48: +4), disagreeing slightly less than the other viewpoints that the young people got involved for the good of the community (58: -1). There was some agreement that they did not come up with the idea for research (25: -2). Hasser wrote that ‘*up to now I’ve always approached the children with the idea for the research. I would like to see it the other way round in the future though’*. The young people working with adults on research projects often surprised and impressed adults (38: +5), deciding

on research questions (12: +2), (Hasser: *'this has been a fundamental principle for me, going back to the late 90's'*), taking responsibility for data collection (13: +2), being involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results) (22: +1) and making decisions about how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc) (14: 0). Regarding item 22, Jasmine wrote, *'this seems to be a very important stage in terms of developing high level skills. Quite a challenging stage but an important contribution to learning'*. Hasser again: *'When children and young people present their research findings-it has to be based on their own research and their own analysis, right?'*

To summarise, this viewpoint sees that the involvement of young people in research is led by adults who hold rather than share the power, get the resources and identify the benefits of the research. These adults believe that they are needed to keep projects on track and more than the other adult viewpoints, pressurise young people to complete projects. It is less important that young people are respected as equal, valid team members and they have little chance to express their views, have limited decision-making opportunities or responsibilities and not much influence generally, although this does not seem to detract from them getting on well with the adults and enjoying the project. Young people feedback the results that audiences take seriously. Young people become involved because they know about the issues affecting them. They get more involved with discrete aspects such as deciding on research questions, data collection and analysis and in this arena the young people working with adults on research projects often surprise and impress adults.

Full interpretation of Factor 2

F2 has an Eigenvalue of 4.76 and explains 14% of the study variance. Nine participants are significantly associated with this factor, three males and six females. Seven participants were from Universities (myself included), one was a trainee Educational Psychologist and one was a school teacher. None of the participants worked in the same establishment.

'Young people have limited influence-frustrating, but leading to research benefits'

Based on their experience, the holder of the F2 viewpoint believes that the young people were less likely to work on issues which were of relevance to the young people themselves (48: +1), did not come up with the idea for research (25: -5), get involved for the good of the community (58: -2) or decide on research questions (12: 0) (ED: *'I had decided the parameters were 'where do students feel good about their learning'?*) although they did identify the benefits of the research in order to decide if the research was worthwhile (10: 0). Young people did not get hold of resources (time, money, expertise) in support of the project (7: -5) or have a say in how money involved with the project was to be used (11: -4). Jane explained that *'this initiative was taken by adults-the value/use of the resources may not have been fully 'appreciated' by young people'*, adding that young people were *'perhaps less conscious of how far it would go'*. They did take responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research (1: 0). Roger gave an example: *'a boy/girl couple wanted to interview each other which raised ethical issues, discussed and eventually they did so'*. ED commented that *'I took responsibility for initial ethics but they discussed the ethical issues involved in their researches and took them seriously. There were many conversations around ethics'*. More than the other viewpoints (although still disagreeing) young people were viewed as having dealt with problems, criticisms and complaints when they arose in the project (28: -2). They took responsibility for data collection (13: +4) but did not generally get involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results) (22: -3). Barry commented that *'Young people are often involved in things but often simply in having a say (rather than all phases of decision making cycle) and rarely have 'real' power in influencing policy/by deciding/ financial matters'*.

This adult viewpoint believes that although the young people found that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that they understood what they were being allowed to decide (23: +1), they experienced more frustration than the other viewpoints over the limits placed on them by the adults (4: -1). In this respect, ED reflected on ethical issues, commenting that (item 4) *'was a big problem for the students researching video games'*. Young people felt that their involvement was slightly more tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant) (20: -3) than the

other two adult viewpoints and felt a little less included in the process (52: +2), although they were respected as an equal, valid member of the team (42: +3). Young people had an equal but different contribution to make to the research process (33: +2). They did not usually make really important decisions (6: -1) and were not generally consulted about all of the key decisions (19: -1), ED qualifying this by stating, *'not the initial question, but otherwise, mostly'*. Although they did not particularly feel under pressure to complete the project (41: -2), adults with this viewpoint feel that the young people tended to need support from them in order to keep taking part (49: +3) and needed the adults to make sure that the project stayed on track (9: +1). ED wrote that *'I couldn't 'take the time' for ever-(lots of interesting things to think about here-whose time, what for?)* and *'they had to work to school strictures... they could have done it alone, but the school stayed in charge of their time, so in that way they 'needed' adult help'*. Regarding item 41, Jane reported: *'felt under pressure to complete the project-adults yes....young people not. This is a bit of a source of tension.'* Naomi comments: *'Wouldn't have happened without adult input-thought long and hard regarding empowerment – it was the type of school which does things to kids rather than developing independent learners, therefore hard to get them to take responsibility (eg chair meetings)'*.

Compared with other viewpoints, there is a suggestion that the F2 viewpoint believes that, perhaps to start with, the young people did not have a lot of responsibility (43: -2), but were given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities (40: +2). At odds with this (item 43) perhaps is the belief that the young people knew enough to work with adults in research in this way (37: +1) (Jane reporting that they needed *'training and mentoring'*), understood what was going on (39: +2) and were trusted by adults (16: +1), although ED commented, *'the lack of trust in schools kept impinging'*. The young people enjoyed their involvement with the project (57: +5) and got on well with the adults (59: +3).

The F2 adult viewpoint believes that the young people tended not to make decisions about how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc) (14: -1), did not see a final published report of their work (56: -3), did not feedback the results to influential people (54: -2), found that

their results were not taken seriously by adult audiences once the research was completed (36: -2) and found that the project did not result in something changing (45: -4). ED wrote that she didn't know *'how seriously it will be taken by adult audiences....the students felt positive that it would be seen by teachers and students on 'student bulletin' but its effect is unknown'*.

Jane thought that the communication of research findings were *'likely to be led (ie initiative taken) by adults and negotiated/discussed with young people'*. Roger commented that other outputs could have included *'things like displaying a poster in the town hall, young people should have been given opportunity to see the final report'*. Regarding impact, Roger said *'not likely to think about changing the world (probably no different to adults in this respect)-therefore need to engage young people regarding 'what's in it for me'*. Young people did not have a say on what action was to follow from the research (eg implications for policy, things changing as a result of the research findings) (15: -3). Naomi expressed some regrets here; *'shame that somebody didn't carry on-was fairly superficial intervention, regret not consolidating the experience... different project which impacted on senior management team'*.

The holder of this viewpoint believes that the young people were able to learn how more experienced people work (44: 0) and experienced a different way of adults and young people learning together (27: +2) but were considered more like assistants to the adults (3: 0) and found that adults were not particularly willing to adopt a learner role (50: -1) where the young people identified issues and researched them, with adults in the role of research assistants (18: -3). ED's project involved researching young people engaged in research projects and regarding item 3, she wrote: *'difficult this really-they were their own 'bosses' but in the end whose research was it? I hope it was theirs too...!'* commenting on item 50 ED wrote *'I was willing but sometimes slipped out into in charge role'*. In explaining his reasons for placing items on the right, Barry wrote: *'YP approach these types of involvement with the idea of adults as equal partners, though often not realised in practice. One of the primary benefits young people say they derive is not influencing decisions but what they learn about how things work'*.

To a small extent young people found that changes to the research process were made as a result of what they said (21: +1) and that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible (24: +2) (ED: *'24 I think we all found it was very complex!'*) although they did not find that their involvement led to them developing a greater ability to influence or act upon things (more power) (34: -2). ED wrote *'they knew where they wanted it published/seen, but looked no further to influence or power'*. This said, more than the F3 viewpoint, they weren't too bothered about having equal power with adults in the research – they just wanted to be able to have a say (8: -1). Jane wrote that *'they seemed happy it was shared or perhaps seemed to want adults to assume more role'*.

The F2 viewpoint agreed more than the others that the young people challenged the idea of an expert adult researcher studying young people as research 'objects' (5: -1). Although they were not particularly regarded as the experts on knowing what young people were like (32: 0), the young people were valuable in offering and sharing new ideas (46: +5) and had opportunities to express their views about the research (17, +3). They often surprised and impressed adults (38: +2) and helped adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children (2: +4). There was some agreement that young people were better than adults at getting responses from other young people (26: +1). ED wrote, *'we all 'got better' at this I think-they certainly learned to listen and build questions'*, although Jane commented that *'we assumed this would be the case but it hasn't worked out this way'*. The young people were seen as having offered insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen (35: +3). They contributed to research which was just as good as research done by adults only (29: 0) (Jane: *'absolutely'*), helping to produce better outcomes than work produced by adults alone (30: +4) although they were seen to contribute to research which was perhaps not just as publishable as research done by adults only (51: -1). ED asked, *'what is an outcome?! It was a great outcome that they came up with stuff and ran with it.'* Naomi commented that, for her, *'outcomes were less significant than process, therefore items like enjoyed and respected were important-very significant for them.people taking notice...more down here (on least agree side).'*

This viewpoint can be summarised as follows. Young people made a limited contribution in terms of being stakeholders, (coming up with the idea for research, deciding on research questions and working on issues relevant to them). More like assistants to the adults, they had defined areas of responsibility (data collection, sorting out ethical issues, but not data analysis) and did not really make important decisions although they were given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities as they understood what was going on and knew enough to work with adults in research in this way. This adult viewpoint believes that although the young people found that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that they understood what they were being allowed to decide, they experienced frustration over the limits placed on them by the adults and generally their involvement was seen as being slightly more tokenistic than the other two adult viewpoints. Adults saw them as equal members of the team but felt the need to support their continued participation. They had little influence over the final research product or how it was feedback and did not see a final published report of their work or find that the project resulted in something changing. However, young people were able to gain from this by experiencing a different way of learning with adults. Their ideas were valued by adults who felt that better research outcomes resulted.

Full interpretation of Factor 3

F3 has an Eigenvalue of 5.44 and explains 16% of the study variance. 13 participants are significantly associated with this factor, seven males, five females and one unknown. Six participants were from Universities, five were independent researchers, one was a college teacher/lecturer and one was unknown. Two of the participants worked in the same establishment.

'Young people as equals, sharing power, influencing change'

The holder of the F3 viewpoint feels strongly that in their experience the young people were consulted about all of the key decisions (19: +5). Young people did not get hold of resources (time, money, expertise) in support of the project (7: -3) (although they seem to be viewed as having done this more compared with the other two viewpoints) or have a say in how money involved with the project was to

be used (11: -3). Neither did they take sole responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research (1: -3) or for data collection (13: +1), but, more so than the other viewpoints they were seen as coming up with the idea for research (25: -1) (although JX reported that this was not always possible with commissioned research), deciding on research questions (12: +4) and were involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results) (22: +3). Jan said that the young people '*didn't come up with the idea for the research (it was commissioned) but they did think about the research questions*' and that young people '*didn't take responsibility but did agree with the adults what the ethical issues were and what the resulting procedures would be*'. Mike said that item 12 was important as you '*can't develop a community if questions already decided*'. The young people worked on issues of relevance to the young people themselves (48: +3), made some really important decisions (6: +3), including how research findings were communicated (through written reports, by presentations etc) (14: +3) and, had more responsibility (43: -1) than was believed by the F2 viewpoint. JX reported that '*on some projects the young people steered the method of the research*'. Jan commented, '*we weren't even there when the results were presented*'. OB commented that '*it was very important they had as much control and influence on their own research as possible : choosing a topic, how to research it and how to present their findings*'.

The adult with this viewpoint does not believe that young people needed support from adults in order to keep taking part (49: -1) or to ensure that the project stayed on track (9: -2) and certainly not that that young people felt under pressure to complete the project (41: -4) as young people were trusted by adults (16: +1), respected as equal, valid members of the team (42: +5), felt included in the process (52: +3) and were much more than just assistants to the adults (3: +4). (That said, Jan did comment that she agreed with item 9 '*as it was a complex project working across 10 sites nationally*' as did JX in relation to '*some of our young people who lived chaotic lifestyles*'). In fact, this adult viewpoint agrees more strongly than the other two that adults were willing to adopt a learner role (50: +1) and that the young people identified issues and researched them, with *adults* in the role of research assistants (18: -1).

From this viewpoint, young people had opportunities to express their views about the research (17: +4), found that changes to the research process were made as a result of what they said (21: +2) and had a say on what action was to follow from the research (eg implications for policy, things changing as a result of the research findings) (15: +2). The young people saw a final published report of their work (56: +1), feedback the results to influential people (54: +2) and found that the project resulted in something changing (45: +2). Concerning item 54, JX stated that *'when we can get hold of them they always have the opportunity to do this*. Rick B commented that the *'key aim of the research was to influence school change'* although Jan placed these items *'lower down in this case (because the relationship with the commissioner was very difficult...wouldn't publish report or put it on web-site-not open) thus placed 56 in column 8 as they did see a finished report but they couldn't show it to anybody'*.

The F3 viewpoint agrees less than F2 that young people experienced a different way of adults and young people learning together (27: 0) or that their involvement challenged the idea of an expert adult researcher studying young people as research 'objects' (5: -2) although Jan commented *'that's why we were doing this anyway (with respect to the commissioned project chosen as an example)...other young people thought that they (young researchers) were students at (name of university) and were impressed...'wow... how do I get that job'?* Regarding item 27, Jan also added that, *'young people often say to us... 'if school had been like this I might have left with some qualifications''*.

The F3 adult viewpoint believes that young people did not necessarily know enough to work with adults in research in this way (37: -2) and that the research was not particularly just as publishable as research done by adults only (51: -1) so that for this viewpoint, it is almost as if the quality of the end product is something of an irrelevance. Mike confirmed this when he said that it *'doesn't matter if published, if get an A, for the community, basically just doing it (because empowered)'*.

The F3 adult viewpoint believes that young people found that power-sharing (or democracy) between adults and young people in research was possible (24: +2)

and disagrees that young people weren't bothered about having equal power with adults in the research and just wanted to be able to have a say (8: -4). The importance of power to this viewpoint seems to suggest that some of the other issues were viewed somewhat tokenistically. Hence, young people were not viewed as being included in projects because they helped adult researchers to learn and understand about the experiences of children (2: 0) or because they were better than adults at getting responses from other young people (26: -1). Prompted by item 26, Michael said that young people '*needed training and time for this to happen*'. Similarly, there was less agreement from the F3 viewpoint, that young people offered insights that adults might have misinterpreted or not seen (35: +1). The adult holding this viewpoint disagrees with the idea that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that the young people understood what they were being allowed to decide (23: -3)-presumably as this would imply that the adults were *allowing* them to have decision-making power, a view counter to the F3 viewpoint. Michael seemed to indicate this as he spoke about the importance of transparency, being careful and honest (thus agreeing with the first part of the statement) whilst objecting to the second part, before placing item 23 at -4. Supportive of this is that the young people did not, in the eyes of the F3 adult, experience frustration over the limits placed on them by the adults (4: -4)-again, presumably because limits were *not* placed by the adults. The F3 viewpoint disagrees that young people contributed to research that was just as good as research done by adults only (29: -2). This suggests, not that the experience of joint research between adults and young people is inferior, but seems to question why it might be so-why would young people be viewed as being less than competent? As equality between adults and young people is valued, young people were not viewed as often surprising and impressing adults (38: 0), as having understood what was going on (39: 0) or as having been able to learn how more experienced people work (44: -2). Michael described item 38 (and 59) as '*patronising*'. The F3 viewpoint disagreed the most with the idea that young people found that it was clear that the adults felt that they knew best (47: -5). This viewpoint agrees less than the other viewpoints that young people were valuable in offering and sharing new ideas (46: +1) as there is a sense in which young people were more like colleagues. Hence, this viewpoint feels that young people were not protected from risks by the adults (53: -2) although an exception was described by

JX who reported that JX *'our young peer researchers were often young vulnerable people themselves therefore their safety was the most important thing. They were protected from risks by the adults'*. Young people had an equal but different contribution to make to the research process (33: +2). Jan gave an example of young people appreciating being treated differently when crossing the road and not being made to line up in twos! Michael was the highest loader on F3 and he explained that trust *'is important, but needed statements 33 and 42 to be in place first'*. For him, both of these items were concerned with *'participation/interaction – we all have something to learn from each other'*.

There is less agreement than F2 that young people helped to produce better outcomes than work produced by adults alone (30: +1), although JX reported that *'the quality of the data we got from researching other young people was better due to the young researchers involvement. Other young people are more likely to be honest with the young researchers'*. Whilst agreeing that the young people enjoyed their involvement with the project (57: +2) and got on well with the adults (59: 0) these aspects were given less emphasis than by the other two viewpoints. Thus, all of these points centre around a big issue (power) for the F3 viewpoint, supported further by strong disagreement that young people felt that their involvement was tokenistic (eg superficial, insignificant, unimportant) (20: -5) and that the young people found that their involvement led to them developing a greater ability to influence or act upon things (more power) (34: 0). Explaining the items that he placed on the right, Rick B stated *'key aim of the project was empowerment of student participants'*. Michael said that he sorted the items so that *'those on the far right concern process, then it moves to the 'backbone of what young people felt', then the 'patronising' items'*. Mike was the third highest loader on F3 and he spoke about placing items on the right, which, for him related to *'emancipation or empowerment, integrity, shared values'* and then talked about the importance of shared values over relationships between adults and young people.

This viewpoint can be summarised as follows. Young people made decisions, had responsibility and were not particularly protected from risks by the adults. They got hold of resources, identified issues, decided on research questions, analysed data and decided how research findings were communicated. They were trusted and

consulted by the adults, who included and respected them as equals (not assistants). Young people expressed views that were listened to and led to change. They had a say on what was to follow from the research and found that the project resulted in something changing. As equality between adults and young people is valued, young people were not viewed as often surprising and impressing adults or as needing support or pressure from adults in order to keep taking part or to ensure that the project stayed on track. For this viewpoint then, power-sharing is an important issue where adults placed fewer limits on the participation of the young people, treating them more as colleagues where adults did not know best and young people were not involved on a tokenistic basis or because they offered particular value by virtue of being young.

Follow up

As for the other Q studies, I wrote to all of the participants (apart from 'unknown') by email and attached a summary of the three factor interpretations in a document as an attachment (Appendix 58). The summary of the interpreted factor was again based only on the 'significant' statements. The email is shown as Appendix 59. 10 adult participants wrote back and six of them shared a view similar to my own regarding which factor they felt they loaded on. (I also identified with the factor that I loaded on).

Discussion of results 5c, (Q study 3), the experience of young people working as young researchers as viewed by adults

Three viewpoints were interpreted from Q study 3 :

- *'Young people involved as 'experts' on discrete areas, led by adults'*
- *'Young people have limited influence-frustrating, but leading to research benefits'*
- *'Young people as equals, sharing power, influencing change'*

A process similar to the one used for the young people's factors was observed in order to explore similarities and differences between the three adult factors.

Eight consensus statements were shared across all of the adult factors indicating that all of the adult's viewpoints feel similarly about the young people not having a say in how money involved with the project was to be used (11); their ability to get responses from other young people (26); the idea of don't do research on us do it with us (31); how far they were regarded as the experts who knew what young people were like (32); having an equal but different contribution to make to the research (33); the extent to which they contributed to research which was just as publishable as research done by adults (51); agreeing that young people felt included in the process (52) and how far they were kept in the loop (55).

F1 and F2 share some obvious similarities in that adults holding these viewpoints see themselves as placing limits on the activities of the young people, both agreeing that the adults were needed to keep the project on track (item 9) and to support the young people's continued participation (item 49). Young people were not consulted about key decisions (19), did not make important decisions (6) and did not have a say in the resulting action from the research (15). Adults with these viewpoints were often surprised and impressed by the young people (item 38) which poses questions about why then, were they not given greater responsibility? Adults with these two viewpoints protected the young people from risks (53) and agreed that the young people got on well with them (59). Young people seem to have been included by adults with the F1 and F2 viewpoints so as to help the adults to learn about their experiences (2) and to some extent to offer insights missed by adults (35).

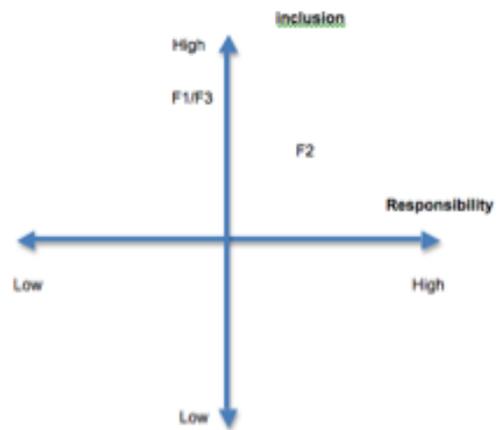
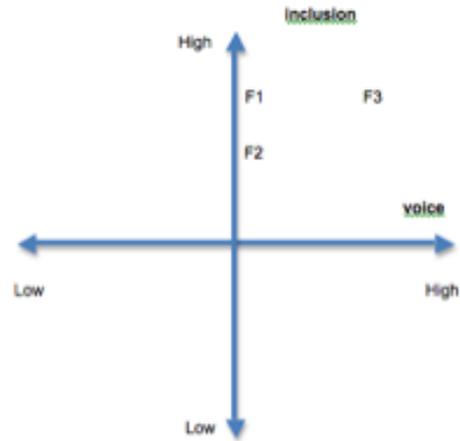
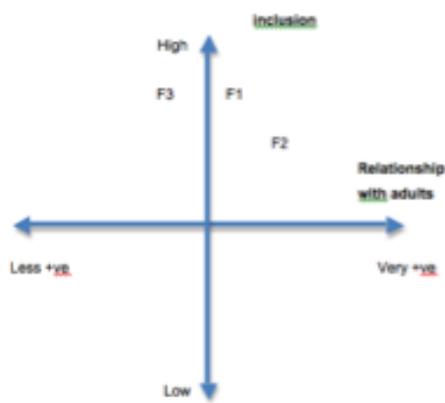
F1 and F2 differ in that the F1 viewpoint believes more strongly that young people were more likely to come up with the idea for research related to issues of relevance to them, engage in data analysis, see a published report, feedback results which were taken more seriously by adults and that the project resulted in something changing. In contrast with F1, the F2 viewpoint holds that young people were more likely to identify the benefits of the research, sort out ethical issues, had greater influence over the research process by what they said and were valued for offering new ideas, knew enough and had more opportunities to take on additional responsibilities and helped to produce better outcomes.

Table 5c.4 Some key themes and associated 'scores' for each of the factors, adult viewpoints of young researchers

Heading	Factors and 'scores'		
	F1	F2	F3
Inclusion of young people	13	9	13
Outcomes	1	-12	3
Voice (listened to)	1	1	9
Relationship with adults	2	4	-3
Responsibility	-6	0	-6
Position of young people	16	13	1

The Table above shows the 'scores' for each heading across the factors from which diagrams were again produced so as to map the relationships between inclusion and relationships with adults (Fig 5.c.1), voice (Fig 5.c.2), young people's position (Fig 5.c.3) and responsibility (Fig 5.c.4). These diagrams are shown below.

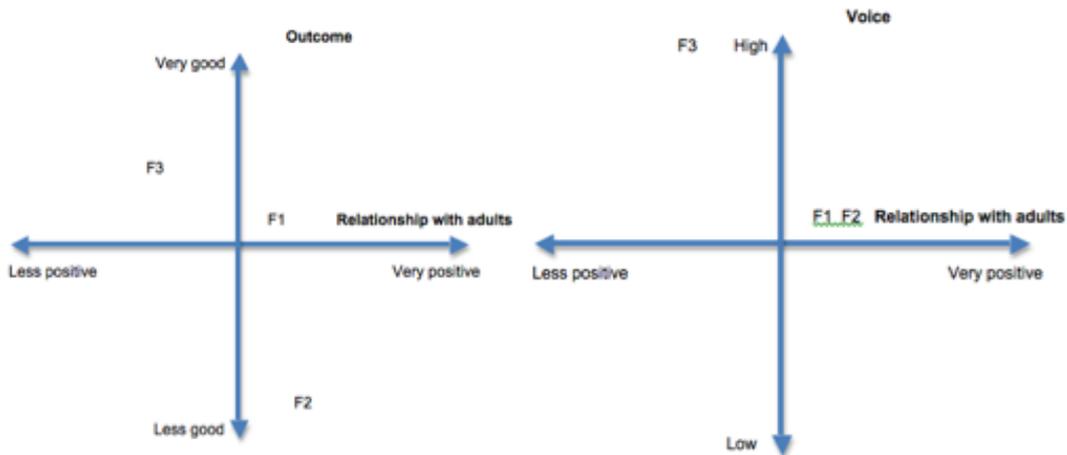
All of the adult viewpoints believe that young people experienced a high level of inclusion. F2 saw the relationships between adults and young people as being more positive than those experienced by F1 and F3 and that the young people had greater responsibility. There is an indication that F3 (where greater equality is emphasised) believes that young people had more of a voice although they regarded the relationships as less important, thought (along with F1) that young people had less responsibility and positioned them less as social actors than the other two viewpoints.



Figs 5c.1-5c.4 Conceptual space diagrams indicating the location of factors according to inclusion and other key themes

Conceptual space diagrams were also produced so as to map the associations between relationships with adults and outcome (Fig 5.c.5), and voice (5.c.6) and these are shown below.

These diagrams indicate further that for F3, not only was their relationship with the young people less important to inclusion, it was also less important in terms of outcome and young people's voice, compared with F1 and F2.



Figs 5c.5-5c.6 Conceptual space diagrams indicating the location of factors according to relationship with adults, outcome and voice

As before, we can consider Frank’s ‘pockets of participation’. The Table below indicates that adults with the F3 viewpoint believe that the young people that they worked with experienced less frustration, possibly as a result of greater power-sharing.

Statements	F1	F2	F3
experienced frustration over the limits which were placed on them by the adults (4)	-3	-1	-4
found that adults made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that the young people understood what they were being allowed to decide (23)	-1	1	-3

Table 5c.5 Statements related to pockets of participation, adult viewpoints of young researchers

This section concludes the discussion of the three adult factors. This chapter has so far explored and discussed young people’s viewpoints concerning the benefits to young people of becoming involved in research, their views regarding the experience of having participated in this way and the adult viewpoints of the same topic. We now build further on the discussion to explore similarities and contrasts between the young people and adult viewpoints for Q studies 2 and 3. Discussion

then proceeds to look further at the relevant literature relating to what has been found in the studies.

Discussion of all factors related to young people working as researchers (comparing 5b and 5c)

We have identified four factors which have been interpreted to represent five young people's viewpoints about their experience of working as young researchers and three which relate to adults' views of the same topic. Whilst claims are not being made over the extent to which these factors (or viewpoints) can be said to be generalisable, we might assume that similar viewpoints could be found in other populations who have a perspective on the topic of young researchers. Brown (1980, p121) writes that factors are 'not hypothetical entities, but operant categories that are replicable and directly observable'. Of course, we cannot assume that all factors have been found. We can however, explore some general patterns across the eight viewpoints described.

It is not possible to claim that *all* of the eight viewpoints share a belief about any of the items as the bipolar end of F3 (F3-) is either placed at zero in the factor array or takes an opposite position to F3, so that it's position is always in disagreement to the other seven viewpoints when they all agree, for instance. That said, it is possible to determine the areas of greatest agreement by consulting the factor arrays for both the young people's and adult's factors. Although this might dilute the impact of the individual nuanced factor interpretations, should comparisons be made, it is a useful process in order to make links to the literature. We find that generally, young people and adults felt that young people felt included in the process (item 52), enjoyed their involvement (57), had opportunities to express their views (17), were respected as equal team members (42), worked on issues relevant to themselves (48), helped adults to learn and understand about young people's experiences (2), had an equal but different contribution to make (33), understood what was going on (39), got on well with the adults (59) and were much more than just assistants to the adults (3). The greatest disagreement shared by most of the factors starts with adults and young people both disagreeing that young people had a say in how money was to be used (11). Adults and young

people both generally disagreed that adults felt that they knew best (47) or that young people experienced frustration by any limits placed on them by adults (4). Most of the viewpoints disagreed that young people took responsibility for sorting out ethical issues (1) or got hold of resources (7). There was also broad disagreement that young people were content to just have a say and that instead, they did in fact want equal power with adults (8). Young people were generally seen by all adult and young people viewpoints as not dealing with problems as they arose (28) and did not feel under pressure to complete the projects.

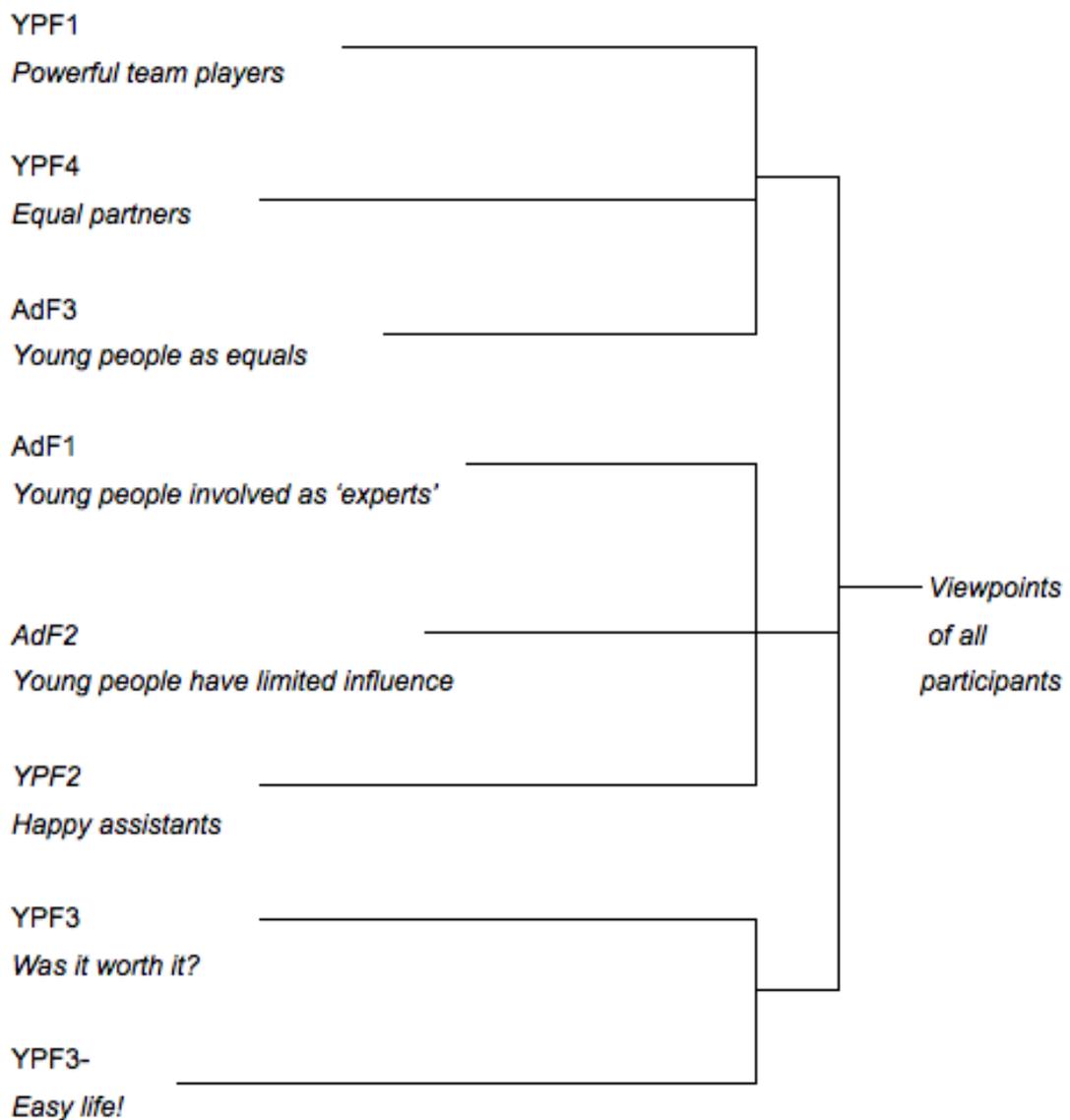


Fig 5c.7 Showing the relationships between the viewpoints found in Q study 2 and Q study 3

We can also identify similarities between the viewpoints held by young people and adults. So as to avoid confusion, the young people's viewpoints are prefixed by 'YP' and the adults by 'Ad' (Fig 5c.7).

By examining the interpretations of all of the factors resulting from the studies 5b and 5c we find that the adult F3 viewpoint (AdF3) shares some similarities to the young people's viewpoints F1 (YPF1) and F4 (YPF4), where all of these viewpoints have a sense of greater equality and sharing. YPF1 and YPF4 both have a sense that power is shared between them and the adults, also a theme in AdF3. In contrast, the AdF1 and AdF2 viewpoints share some similarity to the YPF2 viewpoint regarding the degree to which the young people are assisting adults within a prescribed role or position. The factor interpretations indicate a more limited role in YPF2, AdF1 and AdF2 where the young people had more limited influence and a narrower area of responsibility, positioned more as assistants to the adults. A third relationship seems to hold between YPF3 and YP3- viewpoints held only by the young people in this study, which positions them as distanced from the adults. The F3 and F3- viewpoint of young people has no match with any of the adult viewpoints. This is of interest. Would adults find it hard to accept that the young people they have worked with, might have felt 'dumped on' (F3) or that they had a relatively minor role (F3-)?

The differences between the young people and adult viewpoints illustrated here justify my decision to avoid interpreting factors resulting from analysis of all 68 participants as this would not have led to the emergence of such nuanced discourses as has been achieved.

Further consideration of similarities between the viewpoints of young people and adults

It was possible to consider matching viewpoints. For instance, some young people involved in the same project loaded on factors that shared similar viewpoints. All but one of the six students in Sec2 and my daughter, loaded on F2 (happy assistants). This was also close to my own viewpoint (young people have limited influence). Two of the four young people from the same organisation concerned with participation loaded on F1. Two of the three young people working in the same

sexual health project shared the F1 viewpoint. Two of the four adult researchers working in the same University loaded on F3. Four of the five young people from the sixth form college held similar views as did three of the five young people from the same secondary school. It is not surprising that people working together in the same establishment should share similar views. In addition to the young people that I worked with in Sec2 sharing a view similar to my own, I also found similar matches in four other establishments where young people worked closely with an adult on a joint project. Matches between the young people and adults are also unsurprising but of interest. This might mean for instance that discussion between people working together leads to a similar discourse being shared. When we consider this happening between young people and adults we might question how influence is distributed and ask if, to some extent, adults have in some sense, told the young people what to think. When I engaged the young people as 'co-researchers' in Sec2 I presented my project as discrete, where I had already taken a number of decisions. Does the similarity between my viewpoint and theirs mean that I 'bludgeoned' them into YPF2, or that their experience or position was actually the one that I had prescribed for them at the outset which they were comfortable in accepting?

Young researchers and inclusion

In simple terms, participation is described as contributing to the promotion of social inclusion in order to counter processes excluding people from full participation (Stevens *et al*, 1999).

My results enable some comment with respect to young people's participation in research. We can see in the viewpoints found in this study, that process is important to some. For instance, adult NP (AdF1) emphasises the importance of the research as a 'reflective process...rather than something was gonna' happen' and for Naomi (AdF2), 'outcomes were less significant than process'. Michael (AdF3) explained that he started his sort by placing items concerned with process 'on the far right'. Avneath (YPF1) reported that young people had 'control of the process'.

In general terms the results have indicated that apart from YPF3 all viewpoints believe that young people had an inclusive experience, although YPF1, YPF2 and YPF4 felt this more strongly. Relationships between inclusion and some of the other themes have already been discussed.

Young researchers and outcomes

Thomas (2007, p199) describes participation as both an outcome and a process (although Hill 2006 states that many young people expect there to be an outcome and experience disappointment when there is not).

Bucknall (2009) reported that positive experiences and outcomes for young researchers in Primary schools included enjoyment; having a say; choosing research topics; the research having a purpose; working independently of adults; choosing to work with friends and gaining skills and confidence. Negative experiences included lack of feedback after dissemination; negative reactions and exclusion of peers from the research; teachers making choices about research group membership; insufficient time for training and increased workload. Disseminating research findings was described as both a positive and negative experience.

We find that viewpoints in this study varied regarding outcomes, with AdF2, YPF1 and YPF3 generally feeling less satisfied with what was achieved by the end.

Treseder refers to 'participation as the process and empowerment as the outcome' (1997, p4). Again, this varies across the viewpoints, with only YPF1 agreeing moderately that they found that their involvement led to them developing a greater ability to influence or act upon things (more power) (34: +1).

Young researchers and decision-making

In discussing the importance of involving children in decision-making, Cashmore (2003) lists the increased likelihood of better outcomes, increased compliance and acceptance by children, treating children as people with feelings and opinions and a challenge to adults who don't always serve the best interests of children.

For Partridge (2005) it is important that assumptions firmly held by adults about

children's rights and existing power relationships, are challenged by involving young people in decision-making.

Again, this study finds a range of experience on this point with some young people experiencing greater decision-making opportunities (YPF1, YPF4) which some adults recognise (AdF3) in contrast to viewpoints where the young people make fewer decisions (YPF2, AdF1 and AdF2).

Young researchers and responsibility

More of the viewpoints seemed to view the young people as experiencing reduced responsibility. YPF1 and YPF2 seemed to associate responsibility and inclusion positively whilst YPF3 believe that even though the young people had responsibility, their experience was less inclusive. All of the viewpoints believe that the young people had more responsibility than AdF1 and AdF3 believe was the case.

Subject position of young people as researchers

Grover (2004) asserts that both young people and adults share similar problems when they are regarded as research subjects, where they rarely have opportunities to formulate research questions, research issues of interest without the support of other adults, contribute to the interpretation of data or provide personal reflections on a topic and on its policy implications.

In this study we find that the position of young people seems to some extent to be a determinant of how inclusive their experience is. YPF1 and YPF2 were the only viewpoints which felt positioned slightly less as social actors (although this did not lead to them having a less inclusive experience).

Tensions exist between self-determination and the right to be protected (Thomas & O'Kane 1998a). James and James (2008) also refer to the dissonance between children's competence, agency, participation rights on the one hand and on the other, their lack of status as citizens, their rights under the UNCRC which includes being protected and thus a dependency on adults and implied lack of competence. A resulting tension between rights and childhood studies influenced participation.

Shier (2010) notes a number of tensions between participation as social control and as empowerment, including child protection versus child empowerment.

What are the limitations to young people working as researchers?

Do young people know enough to take part as researchers? Two of the adult viewpoints (AdF1 and AdF3) felt that they didn't whilst AdF2 moderately agreed that they did. This contrasted with the young people's viewpoints where YPF1 and YPF3- disagreed with item 37 whereas the other three viewpoints agreed. There seem to be some limitations (as determined by the overall level of agreement or disagreement across the eight factors) in terms of young people not coming up with the idea for the research (25), obtaining resources (7), sorting out ethical issues (1) and deciding how money was used (11). Young people were generally regarded as equal members of the team (42). There was general agreement that young people worked on issues of relevance to them (48), were able to express their views (17) and that it was not the case that adults knew best (47).

Fraser (2004) reminds us that adults and young people are not homogenous groups so that in some situations there would be no good reason why some young people could not be equal partners in the research process. An alternative view perhaps is put by Jones (2004) who asks whether or not the democratisation of children involved as researchers is possible given their position as subordinate to adults and what gains therefore there might be for them.

Reporting on a project involving care leavers in health research Broad (1999) acknowledges some of the shortcomings in relation to training, specifically interviewing (keeping a focus, probing and debriefing) and an inadequate consideration of confidentiality. It took longer to recruit, train and supervise the young people. The young people worried about bringing up the past, leaving people (feeling the urge to phone participants afterwards to check on their welfare) and struggled with their feelings provoked by what they were told. Adults may well have wrestled with similar issues.

That there exists a question over the extent to which 'co-researchers' can be regarded as playing a full part in research is noted by Smith *et al* (2002) who

caution against assuming that participatory research is better than other approaches. They indicate some of the sometimes glossed over challenges or difficulties including permissions, payment to young people, power differentials between young people themselves, research with young people taking longer and young people perhaps being less aware of or committed to an anti-discriminatory approach and suggest that positives regarding participatory work have been overplayed. We are cautioned against simply assuming the worth of participatory research. Atweh *et al* (1998) indicate that students don't always pull with equal weight. Pole *et al* (1999) suggest that even when attempts are made to regard them as social actors and place them more centrally within the research process, children are at best participants rather than partners, on account of the conservative and narrow adult-defined terms of what constitutes knowledge and the extent to which such research practices are valued and taken seriously. We also learn of the difficulty of actually involving children in practice (Chawla & Trine Kjørholt, 1996). That young people tend to ask fewer follow up questions are more quickly satisfied with the answers they receive, less curious about responses and have difficulty in letting go of their own opinion is discussed by Jurrius (2006).

Uprichard (2010) questions the type of research with which young researchers become involved suggesting that the discrepancy between positioning them as competent social actors, yet confining their involvement only to aspects of their own lives, might be addressed by engaging them in work that goes beyond childhood.

Discussion of a limited number of themes noted in the literature now follows.

Chapter 6 **DISCUSSION**

Introduction

Earlier, in my introduction where I introduced my main themes, I explained the origins of this study. An initial enquiry was launched where the intention was to explore the viewpoints of young people whose behaviour was challenging for secondary schools. As I began to work with young people as 'co-researchers' my interest in problematising this term grew and I focused on exploring the role or position of the young person who works together with an adult on a research project. Thus, the initial study morphed into an exploration of views regarding young people as researchers.

With the project thus defined, I sub-divided the enquiry into three research questions:

- a) What do young people hope to gain from working with adults on research projects?
- b) What is the experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?
- c) What is the adult experience of young people who work with adults on research projects?

Q study 1 explored and found five viewpoints of young people concerning the gains of working on a research project as a 'co-researcher', whilst Q study 2 and 3 aimed to reveal the viewpoints of young people and adults in relation to the experience of 'co-researching', finding five and three viewpoints respectively.

This chapter builds on the discussion of the viewpoints that began in the previous chapter. The chapter is structured initially by my own viewpoint of the experience of young researchers interpreted from my own Q sort (conducted as part of Study 5c). I have chosen to focus on what I consider to be some of the key themes in the literature illuminated by the interpreted factors, exploring the participation of young researchers in greater detail by discussing power, voice and relationships with adults. The chapter extends beyond the data by considering possibilities for how young people as researchers *might* be positioned. The frameworks outlined in the

literature review are revisited and consideration is given to what the study might teach us in relation to teaching and learning, the conditions for this and implications for my practice in relation to my work as an Educational Psychologist.

My position on young researchers and discussion of some of the themes found in the literature

I was the first to complete my Q sort and I did this on February 18th 2010. This was about seven months after I had finished working with the young people in Sec2 and near enough for me to still be able to capture my memory of the experience. The results indicate that I was the highest loader on F2- '*Young people have limited influence-frustrating, but leading to research benefits*'. By recreating my individual sort I have interpreted it so as to provide a structure for the first part of the discussion. In contrast to my adopting a narrative style (Watts and Stenner, 2012) in Chapter 5, using a commentary style here, enables departure to discuss some of the key themes that I take to be both important and familiar. This approach enables me to present *my* view, position or standpoint on the topic where I still attempt to warrant claims but try to control any desire to write in a scientific style that might be wilfully (or unintentionally) obscure or dense (see Kitzinger, 1987 on textual persuasion and literary effects and Billig, 2011 on using 'ordinary language'). Through these arrangements I shall work towards explicating my own voice on the topic.

Based on my experience of my project then, young people did not come up with the idea for research (25: -5), decide on research questions (12: -5) or get involved for the good of the community (58: -3). I felt that they did identify the benefits of the research in order to decide if the research was worthwhile (10: +1) particularly as I had given them the Q set used in Q study 1 to complete. Young people did not get hold of resources (time, money, expertise) in support of the project (7: -4) or have a say in how money involved with the project was to be used (11: -4). They took some responsibility for sorting out the ethical issues in the research (1: +1) as we spent some time exploring some of these so that they would be adequately prepared. I did not feel that young people dealt with problems, criticisms and complaints when they arose in the project (28: -2). As this was the specific focus of

my engagement with them, I felt that they took responsibility for data collection (13: +4) but did not get involved at the data analysis stage (when the information collected was looked at in order to come up with results) (22: -3)-this was something I did and would not have felt able to share with them.

I was neutral about their capacity to surprise and impress me (38: 0) possibly as my beliefs lead me to find young people frequently impressive which does not come therefore as a surprise. I considered that they helped me to learn and understand about the experiences of children (2: +2). It is interesting now to look back and find that I was neutral about the idea that young people are better than adults at getting responses from other young people (26: 0) as at the time this was part of my rationale for involving young people-at least it was part of my script when articulating the project. Perhaps it slipped down the ranking in comparison with other items that I felt more strongly about, or perhaps, given my years of experience as a practitioner with young people, I felt that they were *not* actually particularly better at this than me? More likely perhaps is that I felt strongly that they helped to produce better outcomes than work produced by me alone (30: +5), so with this item placed I was happy to have my position firmly declared and did not need item 26 to support it further. I saw the young people as having offered insights that I might have misinterpreted or not seen (35: +2). I felt that they contributed to research that was just as good as research done by me working alone (29: +1) and may have interpreted this as the young people's contribution not making my research any worse. I probably felt that I would strive to make my research as good as it could be, whether or not young people were involved, ironic now as my final project would not have happened without them! I was neutral over seeing their contribution leading to work that was any more or less publishable than research done by adults only (51: 0).

I believe that I made the limitations and possibilities very clear so that they understood what they were being allowed to decide (23: +4), and that they did not experience frustration over the limits that were placed on them by me (4: -2). I assumed that the young people felt that their involvement was not particularly tokenistic (20: -1) and felt included in the process (52: +1).

Power

I thought that I may have exerted some pressure on them to complete the project (41: +1) and that they needed support from me in order to keep taking part (49: +3). I was fairly neutral about the idea that power-sharing (or democracy) between me and young people in research was possible (24: 0). I had a deadline to work to and a clear idea of how I wanted to run things, whilst being clear about the area to which they could contribute. I was a little sceptical that they would find that their involvement led to them developing a greater ability to influence or act upon things (more power) (34: -1) and felt that they might have *been* bothered about having equal power with me in the research—instead of just wanting to be able to have a say (8: -1).

For some of the young participants in the study, power was clearly important so that they were keen to seek more of it, or held the view that their experience was one of sharing it. For others they were comfortable to assist in the project, participating in pockets with specified responsibility. Some of the adult participants also regarded power as crucial, where for them, sharing it with young people was a key motivator, seemingly to satisfy a political or social justice agenda framing their interest in engaging young people's participation as researchers.

May (2005) asserts that, compared with other approaches to research, young people involved as young researchers are less prone to being guided by adults regarding what is important or relevant. Again, it was this type of assumption that I wanted to problematise. For instance, this study has found that both young people and adults differ over the amount of intervention that adults are viewed as providing. YPF2, AdF1 and AdF2 all feel that there is more adult intervention than YPF1, YPF4 and AdF3, whilst YPF3 are frustrated about the lack of adult support. Table 6.1 serves to remind the reader of the labeled viewpoints.

Stevens *et al* (1999) claim that there are two main reasons for promoting participation, to efficiently implement more effective implementations of top-down policies (saving costs, for instance) or in order to attempt to change power relations so that the most marginalised can gain greater control over their lives and their communities. This also has some resonance when considering the participation of

young people as researchers and a number of authors construct the case for involving young people as researchers in terms of power (Coad & Lewis, 2004, Grover, 2004,). Jones (2004) draws on the work of Foucault, making the point that a space for subjugated knowledge is created when the privileging of the discourses of the powerful is refused.

Label	Viewpoint
YPF1	<i>'Powerful team players-responsible, trusted, team members, keen to have and develop greater power'</i>
YPF2	<i>'Happy assistants-happy to assist adults in their work'</i>
YPF3	<i>'Was it worth it? Worked hard, took the flak, gave the research status, doubted the outcome'</i>
YPF3-	<i>'Easy life! Bit of power, not much responsibility, a bit of a laugh'</i>
YPF4	<i>'Equal partners-experts who gained a sense of power-sharing with adults'</i>
ADF1	<i>'Young people involved as 'experts' on discrete areas, led by adults'</i>
ADF2	<i>'Young people have limited influence-frustrating, but leading to research benefits'</i>
ADF3	<i>'Young people as equals, sharing power, influencing change'</i>

Table 6.1 Viewpoints from Q studies 2 and 3 and their respective labels

John (1996) stresses the importance of partnership, which leads to the researcher's role changing from information plunderer to facilitator, enabling the child to actively voice their concerns.

Mary Kellett is associated with 'Children as Researchers', (UK based), which like many of the approaches described above draws on ideas of power and emancipation, but emphasises children aged nine and above being trained to *lead*, with adults supporting (as opposed to managing) where children 'direct their own research from inception to dissemination' (Bucknall, 2009, p90). This approach might well be characterised by the title of Kellett *et al's* (2004) paper-'teach us the skills please, we'll do the rest'. Noting that the research of adults has generally constructed knowledge about children Kellett believes that 'a better understanding of children and childhood is children themselves-as active researchers' (Kellett, 2005b, p3). Kellett (2010) argues that giving children their own research voice

'unlocks' child voice and promotes democratic decision-making. In this movement, Kellett notes 'a role reversal in that the adult is acting in the role of the child's assistant' (Kellett, 2010, p198). This suggests that although more passive or non-directive, adults remain *involved*. One researcher who positions themselves closely with the children as researchers movement claims that s/he works with 'children as independent researchers and not with children on adult-led projects' or 'with adults working with children as co-researchers' (personal communication, 2011, anonymised). By claiming to work *with* young independent researchers the researcher seems to acknowledge a role for her/himself as an adult, but seems to position her/himself outside of a continuum that includes 'co-researcher'. Interestingly, s/he also notes that young researchers identify the relationships between adults and children as being of significance. (I was keen to include this adult as a participant but s/he declined).

Coad and Lewis (2004) describe participatory and emancipatory research as approaches attempting to shift the balance of power from the researcher to the researched. In order to create a greater balance between adult researchers and child participants they suggest adopting a role of naïve curiosity, accepting a child's viewpoint as being different to that of adults and reducing boredom. They refer to work (eg Alderson, 1993) which stresses informality whilst avoiding being part of the gang or 'getting down with the kids'.

Foucault's (1976) approach to knowledge/power means that work that includes young researchers can serve to position young people as competent social actors and, in terms of social justice, has the potential to challenge dominant discourses of inexperienced and incapable youth. This being the case, imagine the possibilities created by a research team of young hoodies! Although they perhaps would not make the kinds of choices that we as adults might, defining 'themselves in ways they consider fit for purpose' (Corcoran, 2011, p8) could be considered an act of enablement leading to the experience of empowerment.

Voice

I saw the young people as making an equal but different contribution to the research process (33: +2). They did not make really important decisions (6: 0) and were *not* consulted about all of the key decisions (19: -2)-again I had tried to articulate this clearly to them from the start. I hoped that the young people found that changes to the research process *were* made to the part of the research process that they had contact with, as a result of what they said to me (21: +4). My view was that the young people did not particularly challenge the idea of me as an expert adult researcher studying them as research 'objects' (5: -1). Although I did not particularly regard them as the experts on knowing what young people were like (32: 0), I saw the young people as being extremely valuable in offering and sharing new ideas (46: +5)-again, a large part of my motivation for approaching them-and I felt that I created opportunities for them to express their views about the research (17, +3).

I thought that the young people did not have a lot of responsibility (43: -3), but were given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities (40: +2). I was cautious about whether or not the young people knew enough to work with me in this way (37: 0) or understood what was going on (39: 0).

As this was not one of the pockets of their participation, I believed that the young people did not make decisions about how the research findings were communicated (14: -1) or see a final published report of their work (56: -2), although I had offered this to them as a possibility once I had completed the study. They did not feedback the results to influential people (54: -2), find that their results were taken seriously by adult audiences once the research was completed (36: -2) or that the project resulted in something changing (45: -4), as again, this was not my focus when I negotiated my involvement with them at the start. Similarly, the young people that I worked with did not have a say on what action was to follow from the research (15: -2).

When voice was regarded as a theme by linking a number of statements from the Q set, it was plotted against other themes in conceptual space (see Figs 5b.3, 5b.7, 5c.2 and 5c.6) and these were explored earlier in the discussion of Q study 2

and Q study 3. If we look at voice across both of these studies we find that viewpoints YPF1, YPF4 and AdF3 all believe that the young people had the greatest opportunity to have a voice. For all of the viewpoints apart from YPF2 and YPF3 there is a positive relationship between voice and inclusion. The position is less clear when voice is placed against relationship with adults. Here we find a positive association between the two for YPF1, YPF4, AdF1 and AdF2 but voice is still higher when the relationships are less positive (YPF3- and AdF3) and lower for YPF2 and YPF3 when relationships with adults are positive.

Willis (2003) draws on Riessman's observation that as we are unable to access the experiences of others, we cannot give voice and instead we produce ambiguous representations of it in the form of talk, text interaction and interpretation. Clough (1998) comments here that 'the research act of listening to voice must always involve the (broadly defined) processes of both mediation and translation' (p129). This has particular implications for our choice of methodology and the importance of remaining faithful to understanding and representing the patterned responses in the sorts in the way that I hope has been demonstrated.

The term 'the voice of the child' (singular) can be misleading and Davis (1998) encourages a focus on the *variety* of children's *voices*. There is also a suggestion in the term of a sense of the real and Davis again draws on work emphasising 'multiple versions of the real' where the representation of voice 'is open to multiple interpretations' (Davis, 1998, p332). This contrasts with Koumulainen's observation of 'understandings of the concept of "voice", typically as a relatively straightforward mental, verbal and rational property of the individual' (Komulainen, 2007, p13) and she argues that the truth or reality of voice is contested, instead emphasising the social nature of voices and cautioning against using the term voice in ways that are too sensationalised or simplistic. To consider what the idea of voice may comprise, she counters a 'mentalist' approach (where 'children have message-like thoughts which can be exchanged' Komulainen, 2007, p25), focusing instead on voice as point of view located within interaction and thus a relational concept, socially constructed (which, as has been shown is particularly well-suited to Q analysis and interpretation). Similarly, Thomas and O'Kane (2000) refer to the process of selection from huge amounts of talk whereby one person's story is superimposed

on that of another's.

Alcoff's provocative essay was referred to in Chapter 2 and the idea that speaking for others is an indignity or 'discursive violence' (Alcoff, 1991, p19) helps me to reflect further on my not-neutral standpoint. It has been important to create opportunities in this thesis for articulating my position elsewhere and through discussion of my viewpoint (based on my Q sort). Alcoff favours 'speaking to and with' but acknowledges that speaking *for* others is often the best option, whilst continuing to strive to minimise the danger of it by considering power relations, looking at 'where the speech goes and what it does there' (Alcoff, 1991, p26) and by limiting one's privileges as an author and claims to understand the truth.

I have demonstrated in this study, the strenuous attempts that have been made to enable the voices (raised by the interpretation of factors) to retain their holistic pattern, which has been used to respectfully write the viewpoints, potentially allowing them to speak for themselves. The results reported here then are consistent with an approach focusing on children's *voices*. There is not a one-size-fits-all solution and regarding young people's views or voices about the experience of working as a young researcher, we have seen that there at least five viewpoints. These overlap to some extent with adult viewpoints of the same topic. This leads me to propose how we might judge a project concerned with young people's voice. In contemplating what we could or should expect as minimum criteria, we might ask:

How did the project set about hearing multiple voices?

Did the methodology facilitate this?

Were silences discussed?

What opportunities were there for the participants to examine the voices that were created?

Where did the voices go?

Can the nature of the relationships between the project leader (facilitator or researcher) be determined?

What was said in the project about power?

Is it possible to determine the degree to which young people contributed to or made decisions?

Relationship with adults

I set out to respect the young people that I worked with as equal, valid team members and hoped that they felt similarly (42: +2). I hoped that from my actions, it was clear that I did not know best (47, -1). I assumed that the young people had enjoyed their involvement with the project (57: +3) and got on well with me (59: +3). I hoped that the young people felt that I trusted them (16, +1). I spent some time over all of the sessions stressing the ethical issues and so imagined that the young people might have felt 'looked after' and protected from the risks by my behaviour (53, +2).

I imagined that they experienced a different way of learning together with an adult (27, +3). I assumed that the young people were able to learn how more experienced people (me!) work (44: +1) and experienced a different way of adults and young people learning together (27: +3) where they would not particularly feel like they were my assistant (3: -1). I hoped that they would find me willing to adopt a learner role (50: +2) although I did not feel that they had identified issues and researched them, with me in the role of research assistant (18: -3). I felt that they would probably disagree with the idea of 'don't do research on us, do it *with* us (31, -3). This is of interest as for me, now, the relational aspects seem to have assumed greater importance.

Fielding (2004) imbues student voice with the potential for transforming education, where teachers and students are engaged actively in partnership. He regards students as researchers (as opposed to 'co-researchers') as having the capacity to enable adults and young people to learn from each other, with their respective roles becoming less fixed as a result. There was some support for this as YPF1, YPF3-, YPF4 and AdF2 agreed that the young people experienced a different way of adults and young people learning together (item 27) and two of the young people's viewpoints (YPF3 and YPF4) saw adults occupying the role of assistant at times (18) and (also agreed with by AdF3) being willing to adopt a learner role (50).

When the relationships with adults are less positive, the experience of young researchers, as viewed by adults and the young people themselves, is still an inclusive one, apart from the young people asking 'was it worth it?' (YPF3)

Consulting the other conceptual space diagrams that include relations with adults as a theme, we find that none of the viewpoints associated poorer relationships with negative outcomes or with reduced voice. Subramaniam and Moncloa (2010, p28) refer to a study which found that relationships were regarded by young people as being more important if their voices were heard and they were treated respectfully.

Lansdown (2006, p153) states that 'respectful and continuing adult support is essential' to participation, amplified by Prout and Tisdall (2006, p245) when they refer to the 'sustained autonomous activity by children' in most cases being an unrealistic goal requiring the continuing responsibilities of adults in participation processes.

Sinclair (2004, p106) suggests that, 'if participation is to be more meaningful to children and effective in influencing change, it is necessary to move beyond one-off or isolated participation and consider how participation becomes embedded as an integral part of our relationship with children'. 'Research with young people requires....collaboration between young people and adult researchers' (Fleming, 2010, p5) and Thomas (2007, p215) includes 'inter-generational relations' as one of a number of features that should be included in moving closer to a theory of children's participation.

More specifically, some writers have included relationality as an important aspect of research. Describing research as 'a form of engagement between adults operating from certain agencies within specific roles and children situated in particular settings and contexts' Hill (2006, p70) draws on the work of Alanen to emphasise 'the individualized intergenerational *relationships* between one or more researchers and children, while also reflecting broader *relations* between the generations'. For Alanen (2004, p6), this is nestled in the broader context whereby childhood is seen as 'the figurations of specifically *generational* relations with which children, on a daily basis, engage themselves and through participation in relations co-produce themselves as "children"'.

Nespor (1998, p383) writes that the danger of research collaborations between adults and young people,

is that they can easily turn into forms of internal colonization in which we merely train kids to formulate themselves and their problems in our terms to answer our questions. This is a special risk if we use collaborative research simply to learn more about kids instead of taking it as an opportunity to study with them the world we have in common.

She argues further (p384), that instead of finding ways to

make kids respond more like good sociological subjects or treating them as inhabitants of foreign cultures, we might look at kids and adults as living in the same world, albeit differently positioned. Research conceived as a jointed activity might be one way to explore, or forge, links between those positions.

Discussing 'ethical symmetry' which emphasises equal rights between adults and children, Christensen and Prout (2002, p484) write that, 'Research relationships always take place within social relations and cultural contexts that fundamentally form the character of the research process and its results'.

Relevant here is Percy-Smith's (2006) analysis, drawing on the work of Wildemeersch *et al* (1998) to discuss a dialogic social learning model of participation influenced by the principles of participatory practice and action research or collaborative action inquiry. He gives a good summary of Wildemeersch *et al*'s 1998 paper when he describes social learning as:

The learning through participatory systems such as groups, networks, organizations and communities, in conditions which are new, unexpected, uncertain, conflictual and hard to predict ... when solutions have to be found for unforeseen contextual problems. ... emphasis is on the optimal use of the problem-solving potential of which a group, institution or community disposes. Social learning is action- and experience-oriented, it is critically reflective, meaning that actors question

the validity of particular opinions, judgments, strategies, actions, emotions, feelings, etc. It is cooperative and communicative, which means that the dialogue between actors is crucial, continually involved in implicit or explicit processes of negotiation. (Percy-Smith, 2006, p163)

Percy-Smith then builds on these principles in order to develop a 'theory of interdependent participatory practice with young people' (Percy-Smith, 2006, p163).

The relational aspect of participation now seems fundamental to me. Participation has to be located somewhere, to take place in something, with others. Alanen's (2004) focus on relations between generations suggests that research communities, for instance, where it is common or expected that young people engage in research, would go some way to avoiding one-off more tokenistic projects. These might be located in schools, colleges or centres of research in Universities but a common thread would be ongoing activity between adults and young people over time with different cohorts.

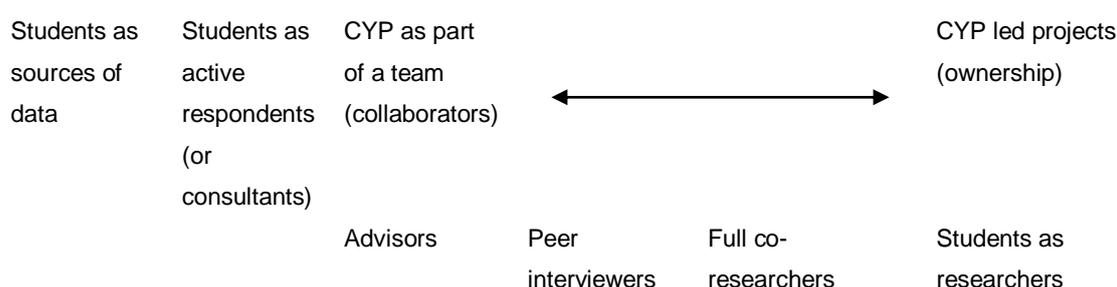
Frameworks and young researchers

Earlier I discussed different participation frameworks in order to generate ideas for a tool that might model a continuum for the involvement of young researchers. We can locate some of the viewpoints described in this study in some of these frameworks. For example, the top levels of Hart's model (p18) do not appear to be represented, whilst we can recognise that Shier's (2001) 'children share power and responsibility for decision making' fits quite well with AdF3, YPF1 and YPF4. Many of the frameworks offered in the literature refer to a level of tokenism. The results reported here indicate that in general, both young people and adults disagreed that their involvement was tokenistic (20). Perhaps, this is an indication that things have moved on in this respect?

The extent to which young people are involved as researchers, of course varies and it is possible to envisage a continuum (Fleming & Hudson, 2009) similar to the frameworks relating to participation discussed earlier and referred to by Cox and

Robinson-Pant, (2008, p465) as changing in line with particular research activities. Different roles or positions may need to be negotiated depending on a range of issues-whether or not the research is commissioned, the type of setting (school or a youth forum) or whether process or outcome is important, for instance.

Adapting two main models described by Brownlie *et al* (2006) coupled with the models of Fielding (2001b) and Shaw *et al* (2011) enables us to begin to structure a continuum:



At a lower level of a continuum perhaps, we find young people being consulted as service users. McLaughlin (2010) notes that such a trend has been developing since the 1980s. Burton *et al* (2010) state that UK legislation has increasingly encouraged service providers to hear the voice of the child and, located within the ECM framework, to enable young people to make a positive contribution. At the other end of the ladder or continuum, adults, who wish to give greater control to young people embrace participatory ideals and power sharing and engage young people as researchers. For instance Carrington *et al* (2009) describe their model as positioning young people as 'full research partners, valued for their own knowledge and skills' (p450).

Beyond this perhaps is a position adopted more closely by advocates of students as researchers. Lolichen's comments serve to represent this standpoint as well as define the type of research engaged in by young people, setting out something of a manifesto when he writes that, 'Research by children is a process whereby children themselves identify research needs, set the research framework, design the methodology, develop and administer the tools, consolidate and analyse the findings and use the information to solve their problems', (Lolichen, 2007, p140).

Against the results found in this study, such claims seem rhetorical rather than based on the actual experience.

A continuum might still imply however, that like a ladder, one position is better than another, suggesting a moral imperative to climb high, whereas the argument developing here is that relations between adults and young people might be judged differently according to a more ethical arrangement related to social justice. Avoiding a hierarchical approach is the TYPE conceptual typology of Wong *et al* (2010) that could be usefully applied to young researchers. Using an empowerment framework, it emphasises the involvement of both young people *and* adults (recognising that young people may need adults to support and guide them at times) and includes three basic types of participation-youth-driven, shared control and adult driven. The viewpoints interpreted in this study seem to support at least two of these types.

What kind of education?

At times during the life of this study, friends or colleagues have asked what it has to do with Educational Psychology. Quite a lot, I have come to realise, if researching is about finding things out and understanding them, which in turn is very much like learning. If we are interested in exploring the conditions for 'good' learning, we might take heed of the viewpoints revealed by this study. Jan loaded on AdF3 and discussed statement 27 with, *'young people often say to us...if school had been like this I might have left with some qualifications'*. Michael, also holding the AdF3 viewpoint, saw his task as *'to challenge young people, change their thinking by discussing with them,...all implies a bigger context-why are we doing research with young people, what is important about participative research? Once better informed, can act upon things and change can happen...education, enjoyment'*.

The previous chapter (5c) touched on influence and what it might mean for example, for my viewpoint to be similar to that of a young person engaged in my initial study. For me, this generates pedagogical issues over collaborative work with young people, where, as an educator I need to remain cautious about

encouraging young people to think rather than teaching them *what* to think. With young people at school, I am reminded of the need to maintain the idea that learning does not necessarily take place just because teaching has happened. With (young or younger) adults in Further and Higher Education there are links to a model of learning where for instance the curriculum might be co-constructed, called in some establishments, an 'adult learning model' (ALM).

The ALM, sometimes employing problem-based learning, shares some of the features of Inquiry or Enquiry based learning (IBL or EBL), described by Sparks and Corcoran (unpublished) as including a tutor establishing a task so as to encourage inquiry initiated by the student, developing student self-reliance, independent problem-solving and collaborative, participative learning. Crick (2009) refers to IBL as an archaeological pedagogy, in that starting with experience and observation, knowledge is reconstructed through the generation of narratives pursued by the individual learners.

As part of my work involves training students to become Educational Psychologists on a course priding itself on the ALM, I am of course keen to understand the viewpoints of our students on this particular topic as it frequently provokes a number of tensions. For instance, just as children often observe that 'adults could have given more help' (Chawla & Trine Kjørholt, 1996, p3) student EPs are sometimes frustrated that they are not more 'spoon-fed'.

In participatory research, if as Green *et al* (2001) suggest, it is the attitudes of researchers rather than the method which is the key, affecting for whom and how research is transacted, then applying this to teaching and learning implies that as educators we should pay attention to finding ways of presenting students with responsibility and positioning them as competent social actors. We should listen to them and identify their needs, support them respectfully when this is required, learn from them, determine approaches to enabling their voices to be heard and teach as the need arises.

We might start by asking learners what they see as the benefit of undertaking an educational exercise, what they hope to achieve, which processes might facilitate

the outcomes, listening to what they have to say about the experience as it unfolds, accepting that these are likely to be varied. An ethos such as this has the potential to empower all of us.

What kind of Educational Psychology?

‘(What’s So Funny ‘Bout) Peace, Love, and Understanding’?⁷

One of the attractions for me in Q is an opportunity to travel back to the early part of the 1900s, returning to a time when psychology was in its infancy, deciding whether to emulate its disciplinary cousins by becoming science, reducing humans to essential components or to follow a more holistic path where complexity is not sidestepped. Q’s advent thus places it at a fascinating historical point, well-described by Danziger (1997). Since then, the rest as they say is history, but the debate continues and, since behaviourism has released its stranglehold and there is greater interest in systemic and inter-disciplinary approaches, it has gathered pace. The challenge remains as to how Western ‘cause-and-effect’ models of human interaction might accommodate or adapt to more non-linear approaches so as to address the kind of complexity found in ‘wicked’ problems (Hughes, 2006), an example of which includes Munro’s analysis of serious case reviews (DfE, 2011). Well-documented tragedies such as Victoria Climbié have increased our awareness and concern about professional practice in safeguarding, with the Laming report pointing to some ‘sloppy and unprofessional performance’ (Laming, H. & Great Britain, 2003, p3). Munro asks, assuming that most professionals set out to do a good enough job, how is it that some situations with children can turn out so badly? Her analysis of UK child protection reforms urges us to think about why, unintentionally, well-meaning professionals get it ‘wrong’, her response to which, focuses upon a system’s rules and why compliance to them, emphasising procedures and targets, can lead to tragedies. Contrasting with a search to attribute causation to a ‘bad’ professional, Munro’s work encourages movement towards understanding the degree to which the *system* meets children’s needs and the development of a learning as opposed to a compliance culture.

⁷ Popular song released in 1974 by Nick Lowe

Whilst acknowledging its emphasis on interaction and relationships, for Lamb (1996) the shortcomings of systems theory can lead to perpetrators avoiding blame and remaining faceless. The search for blame was apparent when the journalist John Humphries (JH) interviewed Sharon Shoemith (SS, ex Director of Children's Services, Harringay) on BBC Radio Four in May 2011. Shoemith is keen to provide a context in a year in which Baby Peter and 54 other children died, pointing out the fallacy of believing that we can prevent every death.

JH: *so how much of the blame does attach to you?*

SS ...I don't do blame and this is the problem...

JH *...a child dies, you don't do blame? The nation does, the nation really wants to know, not just out of a matter of vengeance although a lot of people say well actually somebody should pay a price for this.. because if they do not accept the blame how can we stop it happening again?... if we don't know where the buck stops*

SS Blame will not produce anything productive

As stated earlier, *my* view of voice, described above, is not the final word or my definitive viewpoint as it is contextualised or shaped by the project that I set up. Another day another study, my view might be different. The degree to which (adults or) researchers can or will 'allow' (young) participant voice to be heard is also context dependent. This context is determined by methodology, methods, interpretation, relationships and power.

If voice is gifted by me as an adult/researcher, is it mine to give; who receives it and if the recipient is the young person is it the kind of present that they are happy to receive (or are they just saying thanks to be polite to the 'funny old uncle')? Such questions are not too dissimilar to those posed by Billington (2006, p8) who asks:

How do we speak of children?

How do we speak with children?

How do we write of children?

How do we listen to children

How do we listen to ourselves (when working with children)?

In similar territory, Fielding (2001a, p100) asks :

Who is allowed to speak?

To whom are they allowed to speak?

What are they allowed to speak about?

What language is encouraged/allowed?

(and, who is listening, how and why?). The discussion suggests to me that in relation to (young people and) voice, the position of the (adult or) researcher is one of midwife rather than benefactor, caretaker rather than landlord, a conduit rather than a container.

Other EPs have asked if young people have a voice that is heard and exploring decision-making, have found that young people felt that they were not always listened to, but felt more genuinely involved if teachers held positive attitudes and respected 'their viewpoints, ideas and suggestions' (Aston & Lambert, 2010, p50). James and James, (2004) note that young people describe their ideal school as 'respectful' and also discuss the importance of others listening to what they say. EPs should heed such comments and continue to find respectful ways of engaging with and listening to young people. Prilleltensky reports that emotional and physical wellness is enhanced by social support and social relationships and that good processes build 'trust, respect, control, and empowerment' (2011, p7).

In making the argument for more participatory engagement between adults and learners, Mannion goes further, arguing for an approach that is 'not about listening to pupils but about reconfiguring the relations between adults and children' (Mannion, 2010, p334). The premise that tackling 'inclusion for students has to involve inclusion for teachers' (Gunter & Thomson, 2007, p186) broadens this concept out to emphasise the importance of developing and using approaches which are shared with, rather than done to, people, of particular importance for an Educational Psychology attempting to be guided by principles of social justice, inclusion and partnership.

What might this mean for this study and for my practice? Some of the complexities, pitfalls or beartraps of voice might be reduced or even avoided if I am careful to work *with* rather than *on* people, be real about the shared areas by articulating

clearly what is jointly and what is researcher (or adult) determined, develop relationships based on trust, respect, transacted with integrity and where there is encouragement for opportunities to share power to be sought by all. Hobbs *et al* (2000) encourage EPs to shake up old habits and to work collaboratively so that desired services are created for the people who use them. I should aim to consider and be open to multiple voices so as to gain new perspective and work with young people (and adults) to help and support them to gauge the level of responsibility that they are comfortable with. I can continue to explore the implications of not regarding power as a zero sum game and regard it as something that can be shared if there exists the intent to build relationships for young people's voices to be heard. Lastly I should continue to regard young people as competent social actors, where they and I are differently positioned in the same world.

If this is a manifesto for participation, including working with young researchers (and my EP practice) then it is supported by what I have learned from this study (and maps on closely to 30 years of working with young people and adults in education as a teacher, youth worker and EP).

This manifesto points to new and potentially useful areas for me to explore, such as multivocality (Riikonen & Smith, 1997), second nature Psychology, thirdness and 'relational joint action' (Corcoran, 2009, 2011; Shotter 1995) and other ways of conceptualising the discursive space between people so that new understandings of establishing healthy and nurturing 'thinking' environments might be gained. At a practical or operational level I can continue to develop solution-focused thinking skills, (drawing on frameworks such as Milan systemic family therapy) and find examples of (for me) new approaches used by or influencing EPs.

As an antidote to emphasising what can easily become technological aspects of the work, through this discussion I have strengthened my belief in the importance of human being together ('it's the relationships stupid'). At a practical level, Prilleltensky's (2010) work is inspiring for its adherence to social justice and the role of participation and inclusion in wellness-a more convincing argument than one which emphasises rights only.

At a theoretical level, Stetsenko's work is equally valuable. One of the problems of our human tendency to see the world in binary terms (pleasure/pain; realist/relativist; Qualitative/Quantitative; process/outcome; being/becoming) is that complexity can become hidden so that we can lose a focus on other important concepts which fail to fit in with such frameworks. We have seen how tension is created when, on the one hand, young people are regarded as competent agents, but on the other require protection from adults and that some writers have attempted to resolve another related dilemma by regarding young people as being *and* becoming. Stetsenko sets out to address another of these 'casualties'- personhood. She explains that the prevailing frameworks for understanding personhood either place the individual influenced by and resisting 'powerful forces outside of one's control' or avoid 'the essence of humanness and the roots of agency' (Stetsenko, 2009, p2), neither of which 'do justice to our intuitions and experiences of either being a "person" or knowing about fellow human beings and everyday life' (p3). Instead, she constructs a framework which sees persons as 'agentive beings who develop through embeddedness in sociocultural contexts and within relations to others', coupled with an activist stance 'at the core of human nature and development' (p3) which constitutes the kind of "transformative collaborative practice" that fits well with an educational psychology based on social justice and acting (ethically) so as to change things for the better. By proposing an activist stance toward the world Stetsenko avoids the duality of being or becoming and instead grounds human Being and Becoming in transformative collaborative practice.

Towards the end of Chapter 2, I noted that participation was 'doing' and following Stetsenko (2009) and Holzman (2009) this can thus be developed as activity so that participation and young and adult researchers working together might be regarded as 'tool-and-result' allowing us to see that, dialectically, participation is both process *and* outcome. The space that is carved out between people enables activity (in this case research) to happen or be performed. Drawing on Holzman's discussion of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) we can see that if young people are to perform research they need adults or others, who can do what they can not yet do.

As we can not avoid acting, participation can thus be envisaged as the norm, not something that adults have to accommodate or 'fit in'. This kind of ontology recognises the contribution that young researchers can make to 'humanising' my practice (and the research and practice of others), whereby I/we can be one/a single person trying to use psychology to make a difference and matter in the world (Stetsenko, 2009, p9).

I/we can bolster our practice from work such as Stetsenko's but should remember to maintain balance, for instance, checking out if young people really *do* see themselves as 'collaborative change agents in the settings and contexts of their lives' (Langhout & Thomas, 2010, p61) as some would have us believe.

In this chapter, by exploring my own view of young people as researchers, I have discussed some of the key issues that I have found to be pertinent and my consideration of power, voice and relationships with adults led to a return to participation frameworks. I then used the study to explore some implications for education generally and specifically, for educational psychology. The next chapter affords critical reflection and evaluation of the study before concluding the study.

Chapter 7 **CRITICAL REFLECTION AND EVALUATION**

Introduction

This chapter provides the opportunity to consider how effectively the study has been conducted. Aspects of the design are discussed, including aspects of the Q-set and P set as well as some specific methodological points concerning Q.

Assumptions about 'co-researchers'

One of my reasons for deciding to engage sixth form students was that they were closer to the age group that I wished to gather statements from for the initial concourse. Brad reported *'I feel that young people are more likely to feel comfortable when talking to other young people as there are no age/power issues- they feel they can relate more'*. This was tested however when Rhianan said that she *'felt a bit too old'* to be similar to the young people in KS3. Rhianan added that *'other students seemed more at ease with the younger pupils, like _____ -but he's a bit more immature, a bit more like them anyway...but he put words in their mouth...we spoke about it afterwards'*. This was an interesting insight into the dynamics between the 'co-researchers' who seemed just as prone to the power differentials described as existing between young people and adults by Smith *et al* (2002) reported in Chapter 6. It would have been useful to have explored this in more detail, for instance, by including statements in the Q set that related to this area.

Limitations of the Q studies

Q study 1

The Q set for this study was designed quickly so as to give potential 'co-researchers' in Sec1 and Sec2 a first hand idea of what Q entailed (and so as to promote discussion and them moving toward making an informed decision about becoming involved in the project) and was therefore not initially intended to be used to gain results. The initial analysis then, was conducted almost 'out of interest' to see if any patterns in the data might be present and I was pleasantly surprised that such a 'rough and ready' or 'quick and dirty' set of statements were able to produce some interesting and significant results. That said, the Q set for this study would have been stronger had a number of changes been made:

- A number of items overlap (12 becoming a more effective communicator and 17 becoming more able to speak to people I don't know), as do items 20, 26 and 35 and 22 and 24 (see Appendix 6)
- Items 14 and 45 are unclear, badly worded and hard to understand. Items 2, 30, 44 and 46 could also all have been reworded for greater clarity
- A number of Items (1, 4, 15, 31 and 47) contain two ideas, making the item difficult to place
- 'Interact' in item 29 (29 learning to interact and handle new situations) seems redundant

All told, these 19 'poor' statements constitute 40% of the Q set!

Another limitation concerns the P set. The students in Sec1 and sec2 had more time to consider the project and it might be argued, had a firmer idea of what the benefits of becoming a 'co-researcher' might be as this was something that they were being asked to contemplate, to give time to. When I returned to both schools to extend the P set, the students on this latter occasion had no such considerations. I met them once only and spent a little time introducing my project, telling them about what the young people in the first round had done (flower exercise, discussed costs and benefits) and asking them then to imagine that they were considering the role of a young researcher-a much more hypothetical proposition. They were also all sixth form students hoping to go to Higher Education so that their views do not represent the range that might exist had I worked with participants from a wider age range, with different educational aspirations, from a wider range of projects.

Q study 2 and 3

Feedback from participants in these two studies was gained from the post-sort interviews or in writing, from remote sorters.

The adult NP pointed out that I '*could have asked about projects I've been involved with*' and this would have been useful as well as asking about the age group with which the adults had worked.

Some of the adults reported items as ambiguous (Roger, 33 and Jasmine, 47) and Michael commented that statement 23 contained two ideas (as did 38).

The Q set used in studies 2 and 3 could have been developed further by my following up links to different research communities involving young people and contacting them with a view to using focus groups to discuss and refine the concourse and ultimately, the Q set. However, as I continued to read relevant material in the literature, I checked off potential statements against my Q set, but did not identify any further statements.

Asking my participants about what was missing from the Q set was very interesting and by consulting the data that I collected from the record sheet I compiled a summary (Appendix 60) that indicated that some participants had no additions to make. Others made suggestions that I judged to be similar to existing statements or embellished them. Some made observations or suggestions that I felt were more appropriate to a different research question, such as what the gains or outcomes were for young people or what the obstacles were to young people's participation. Suggestions which I deemed to be of greater use included statements concerned with freedom and creativity, choice of methods, training and preparation and how far young people felt exploited or overworked (particularly interesting with regards to YPF3).

Interviewing Avneath made me realise that I could have gathered data on how closely adults had been involved with each project when she said that she would have found it useful to have had more adult help.

One of the schools (Sec6) provided interesting examples of some of the challenges of school-based research. I was careful to correct the adult who told the young people that they 'had' to take part in my activity. Participants in a Y9 group of boys seemed to struggle with the activity and these sorts had to be abandoned. Getting

as far as spreading the cards across the desk or sorted into three piles, they were more than happy to pack away when the bell went for the end of the lesson. In the lesson after this I worked with some Y8 pupils. Four of them chose to work in pairs (a group of two boys and two girls), the rest working individually. Some of the young people were late for the start of the lesson and were greeted with the threat of 'five minutes' detention. As the group got going, one girl was reprimanded by a teacher for chewing gum and was asked to remove it. Half way through the activity the two boys who were working together were taken outside to discuss some trouble with another pupil that a teacher was trying to sort out. To their credit, the boys returned and resumed the activity without too much difficulty. Later, I had to wait for a few minutes whilst the teacher talked again to the same boys at the back of the class. Again, once I had indicated that I was waiting for them to join the rest of their group, they quickly joined in.

In designing the scale used to sort the statements I removed the numbers and decided to use 'most to least agree'. Watts and Stenner (2012) guard against this stating that both ends of the scale should start with 'most'. However, I wanted to reduce the concern that some people in the pilot had about disagreeing with items and having a negative end of a scale. It made sense to enable participants to be able to agree with all of the statements if they so wished. However, this decision meant that a 'neutral' area was perhaps harder to define. Although I used most agree/least agree on the written instructions, in explaining verbally to participants, I also referred to the left side as where they should place items that they 'least agreed or disagreed with'. None of my participants seem to have had problems with this and seem to have ordered items from the ones they agree with the most down to the ones they agree with the least (i.e. disagree with), although of course, I do not know how a participant has processed this. I can only assume that the absence of complaints means that the sorting process was not particularly confusing.

I had started out wanting to explore the meaning of 'co-researcher' and one group of young researchers asking me about doing research *with* adults made me realise that I could have phrased the condition of instruction as 'in my experience when working on a research project, young people have...' as by

including a focus on 'with adults' I was perhaps constraining their reflections on their experience in a way that was unhelpful to my research question. However, some (post-hoc) justification for the phrasing of the condition of instruction is given in the section below concerning P set, with reference to young people's independence.

Tisdall *et al* (2009) discuss overlap between activities described as evaluation, consultation or research and echoed by one respondent on the Child Participation Network (to my request for more participants) is the question from Fleming and Hudson (2009, p116) concerning 'what is research?' They describe key stages including identifying topics, prioritising, designing and managing research, collecting, analysing and interpreting data and presenting, disseminating and acting on the findings (see also Sharpe, 2009). Describing the Australian 10MMM project, having identified jargon and language as a barrier to the participation of young people, researchers described research as something that you want to find out and say to others (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth and New South Wales Commission for Children and Young People, 2008, p40). It is possible that, particularly in relation to the young people, I could have done more to have established the nature of the activity that they had engaged in so that by offering a definition of research I could feel more secure in the claims made that all of the participants were sorting the Q set with an experience of research 'in mind'-it was an experience of research (rather than of having been consulted, for instance) that they were drawing upon.

The participant's views of Q sorting

Sam echoed the experience of a number of participants when he said, '*not hard...not easy...makes you think*'. Ed said, '*thanks for this opportunity it has been really interesting*'. Jay reported that it had been a '*really useful exercise, made me think 'with hindsight...how would I work on things differently?'*

Some participants made comments about the grid. For instance, in Q study 2 Oliver felt that 'the cutoff line for column 5 to column 7 ie the middle, should have been moved one space to the left, allowing for more cards to be placed in the 'most agree' category'. The Young Taffs (YTgpL1) reported that the grid made them

choose to put statements in the negative half. They felt they had more to agree with than negative/disagree. Jay found it hard to place items 'in central bit'.

Kim reported that her *'original sort was based on my experience in about 20 projects, so I was sorting based on what I have seen. Then I begin to sort based on what I value or wish to be true. This was a very difficult balance to hold (i.e., truth versus value)'*.

Ciara also found it difficult to generalise from projects as *'I could sort the same statement in different ways, depending on the project in mind. In the end I thought of the biggest and most ambitious project I had worked with children on and used that to sort the cards'*.

Some participants didn't understand some of the statements, Chelsea-*'in the loop'*? (55) and, although finding it *'very interesting'*, Nadia asked, *'What does ethical issues mean'?*

P set

Given the orientation of some researchers towards 'children as researchers', I wondered if I had done enough to include young people in the P set associated with this 'movement'. I also wondered if some adults associated with it might have struggled with the activity as there were 34 statements which contained the word 'adult' or implied an adult presence (2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 44, 46, 47, 49, 50, 52, 53 and 55). Although this may have made it difficult for a participant schooled in 'children as researchers' to complete the sort I reasoned that even if young people are regarded by adults as 'independent' there is still an element of adult involvement. Young people are under so much surveillance that it is hard to imagine a situation where they would design and execute a research project completely independently of adults. Bucknall's study for example, explores the 'experiences of children as researchers in primary schools'. There can not be too many children of this age who, without an adult's suggestion, think about doing some research. Fleming comments that 'projects that are wholly young people-led are noticeable by their absence in the literature' (Fleming, 2010, p9). Also once young people are

engaged, it seems to me that adults put several boundaries in place. Suppose the youngsters in the schools that Bucknall worked with wanted to go out of school to study knife crime, or homelessness? My guess is that adults would have to seriously question the children's safety in such a venture and either veto it or massage it into something that was sufficiently 'safe'. Mary Kellett (2010, p198) favours an approach where 'children lead and adults support them... a role reversal in that the adult is acting in the role of the child's assistant', emphasising support from adults rather than management. My assumption about the children as researchers model is that adults may be much more passive or non-directive but they are still involved and it was the young person's view of all this that I was hoping to explore.

From the literature, I was fairly clear that some adults did not view young researchers so positively as others. However, I was concerned that I might not have included young people with a less positive view of the topic. For instance, Clark (2004) discusses young people who criticised the low numbers of young researchers, feeling under pressure, not having enough say and who found interviews distressing. McLaughlin (2010) includes comments from young people who felt regarded as ill and incapable.

Towards the end of my data collection I emailed the Child Participation Network encouraging anyone who had worked with young researchers less successfully to contact me. I received no replies. I also asked one of my young researcher participants about how I might go about contacting young people who had had a less than positive experience. He pointed out that adults would generally work with young people in order to maintain their involvement in a project and so would need to demonstrate trust, warmth etc which would make it unlikely that I would find young people who had had a more negative experience. I'm left wondering about the extent to which I selected a biased P set, although interpreting YP3- counters this a little.

It is possible that the remote sorters may have had greater difficulty with the activity, although this does not appear to have been borne out by the results as the remote sorters load on a factor to the same degree as the sorters who completed

the activity face to face-check. Methodologically this approach seems to be robust, and Tubergen and Olins (1979) reported that their interpretations of Q sorts completed during personal interview and received in the mail were identical.

One of the limitations concerns the young participants who were still at school where members of staff approached young people on my behalf-a total of 14 young people. Whilst these young people were not coerced but took part voluntarily, Pole *et al* (1999) make the point that the power relations in a school, where the agency of pupils is often denied or at least tempered, make it more likely that they may have been more compliant.

Feedback from participants on the factor interpretations

I wrote to the participants inviting them to read the factor interpretations and tell me which viewpoint they identified with. In so doing I was keen to emphasise my concern with raising different voices rather than linking these voices to particular individuals and that I was attempting to check out the credibility of my interpretation rather than to see if I was 'correct' in my analysis.

Roger found it difficult to give a precise answer commenting that

we have experienced a progressive movement towards greater involvement and control for young researchers, but the distance travelled tends to vary depending on the specific project and research context. Thus, it would be difficult to express my view in terms of a precise alignment with one or other of the 'viewpoints' you identify.

Whilst Helen described the project as 'awesome' Jan was more critical, finding 'the three factors rather difficult to understand' as for her, they 'all contained contradictory elements, which made it hard to get a feel for what they were saying. The summaries were clearer, but did not always reflect the complexities'.

Jane's comments were similar, finding it

a lot to take in on each of the viewpoints. When I read the main body of the description (for example of Factor 1) I think that there is a lot in there that I agree with. However the summary for viewpoint 1 doesn't resonate with my

responses as much as Viewpoint 3... there are just so many elements in each of the viewpoints that I found it difficult to agree with all elements of any of the viewpoints.

Emma2 noted the passage of time since she took part that may have 'impacted on how retrospectively I feel the project went'. After I sent the report she wondered if she had 'become more cynical about the project as time has gone on (i.e could we have done more to be more inclusive, encourage equality / power share)'.

MT commented that 'young people feel more confident/keen to determine their own agendas outside of the school structure' indicating again that it would have been useful to have gathered information about the type of research project that young people had been involved with. She also added that

It is certainly difficult to categorise experiences into a summary viewpoint because levels of power and influence are constantly being negotiated and change throughout the lifespan of young researcher projects. It also varies depending on aims/objectives/participant and adult profile/context/setting etc. etc.

Concerning my factor interpretations-the viewpoints and the extent to which I have been able to represent them-we have seen that some participants were able to recognise their own viewpoint from those presented. I leave it to the reader to decide if the viewpoints are credible, dependable or trustworthy, transferable to other situations, transparent and coherent (Morrow, 2005).

On Q

The literature is not awash with criticisms of Q and this might be partly due to it remaining on the fringe, straddling qualitative and quantitative approaches ('perhaps the ultimate mixed method' The Psychologist, 2008) in a somewhat unique and quirky position, as well as the robust defence that Steven Brown and others in his wake have mounted whenever 'threats' (perceived or otherwise) are made. Hogan (2008) lists a number of criticisms and of those, one that I have encountered has been the forced nature of the distribution, said by some to restrict

the sorting options of the participants. My participants voiced few complaints about feeling restricted apart from stating occasionally that they had too many items on one side. In such cases I reassured them that others had made similar observations, reminded them that it was possible to agree (or disagree) with all of the statements and invited them to draw a line which divided up the grid into zones of broad agreement and disagreement, something that they could do readily. Brown (1971) demonstrates that the shape of the grid or distribution preference is of little consequence and that the number of different ways in which 33 statements can be sorted using a -4 to +4 ranking distribution is 'roughly 11,000 times as many (sorting) options as there are people in the world' which leaves 'sufficient room for individuality to be expressed' (Brown, 1980, p267). However, whilst acknowledging that the forced choice might feel like a lack of freedom there is perhaps a stronger argument in explaining that the shape makes no difference and so can be viewed as helpful to the sorter by making the task easier-it's one less thing to think about.

What initially looks to be a more serious charge is that of Robbins and Krueger (2000) who argue that claims that the bias of the researcher is distanced and removed are 'unfounded and epistemologically naïve' (p636). However, after stating that the construction of the Q set and the interpretation is 'assembled in the theoretical terrain of the researcher' this becomes diluted when Robbins and Krueger explain that Q is no different in this respect to any other method.

Smith (2001, p340) suggests that confusion could be avoided with fewer references to 'mentalistic' terminology such as internal/external, inner/outer and states of mind. Such distinctions draw us into debates concerning the nature of subjectivity which, unsurprisingly given its title, surface from time to time within the pages of *Operant Subjectivity* (published by the *International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity*). However, these are difficult to resolve (and certainly beyond the scope of this study).

The next and final chapter concludes the thesis before indicating future projects suggested by this study.

Chapter 8 **CONCLUSIONS, REFLECTIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Conclusions

The story of my research began with a desire to explore viewpoints of young people's behaviour using Q. The final exploration concerned the position of young researchers from the perspective of young people and adults. Three studies were conducted.

Q study 1

Q study 1 which explored the anticipated benefits to young people contemplating working as young researchers found five factors and five viewpoints were interpreted.

Given that the first Q study was only intended to give the potential 'co-researchers' a first hand taste of Q and the analysis therefore, was in this sense 'opportunistic', and, as we have seen in Chapter 7, the study was not without its weaknesses, the results were interesting and further testament to the robust nature of the methodology.

We can see how the results of the Q study are complimented by the flower exercise but provide a much deeper and richer understanding of the topographical nature of the items and themes. We discovered that the young people valued opportunities to develop their research skills and identities as young researchers, a point which is currently under-represented in the literature.

Q study 2

Q study 2 explored the views of young people about their experience of working as young researchers, finding four factors, where five viewpoints were interpreted. Discussion of the results from this study led us to propose that young people have more of a voice and experience greater power when they feel more included and enjoy positive relationships with adults. When young people feel less included, although their relationships with the adults might be positive, they experience less of a voice and if they also have greater responsibility they can end up frustrated.

We also found that having a more powerful position is not necessarily associated with being positioned as a social actor or as having greater responsibility.

A counter perhaps to the adult position that young people *must* be empowered and have responsibility as researchers, is that young people *can* accept a discrete role (and pockets of participation) if the adults facilitate their active participation by trusting them, enabling them to contribute to decision-making and ensuring that they have a voice. Examples were found where some young people lamented the lack of adult guidance and support.

Another view, found only amongst the young people indicated that some felt that they were expected to take on too much, whilst others felt that they had, in contrast, a relatively 'easy life'.

Q study 3

Q study 3 illuminated adult's views about the topic of young people as young researchers, finding and interpreting three factors. Overlap was found with the young people's viewpoints so that both groups shared a view which positioned young people with greater power. A second view which was shared, positioned young people more in the role of assistant to the adults.

General key points

Chapter 6 selected a limited number of themes to explore, making links with the literature as it did so. Limited space prevented further discussion, but a key point that I would hope to leave the reader with here is that we clearly do not have a 'one-size-fits-all' solution. We have learned instead that young researchers are positioned in different ways. Exploring adult views of public participation, Webler *et al* found similarly that 'people hold different views about what is a good process' (2001, p448).

We also have some understanding of the current state of this topic from 'the field' - a barometer of how things are. Davey (2010) reports that cultural, legal and structural progress in children's participation has been significant in the seven years since 2003 and that investment to support this has been considerable.

However, Prout cautions that 'children's participation is a subject high in rhetoric but sometimes low in practical application' (Prout, 2002, p75) and Chawla (2001) indicates where students are allowed to have tokenistic influence over decisions of little consequence. Dependent on adult 'permissions' and co-operation, although the implementation of article 12 to respect children's views is legally binding, Lundy (2007) warns of a widespread lack of understanding of the article and a dangerous 'chicken soup' effect where the voice of the child is unquestioningly seen as a 'good thing' (See also Fleming 2010, p12), a gift of adults which dilutes the impact and extent of children's rights. Whilst the right for children to participate may not be fully exercised it is also worth remembering that this standard is not applied to adults either (Hart, 2002).

Brownlie *et al* (2006) assert that 'there is an increasing consensus that participation is not an uncomplicated good' (Brownlie *et al*, 2006, p1) and that whilst research by young people can potentially contribute to the agenda of participation it is a theme, not 'immune to the potential criticisms of participatory work in general' (Brownlie *et al*, 2006, p1). In similar vein Davis refers to the danger of regarding participatory processes from a doctrinal position which is 'beyond critique' (Davis, 2007, p136) and Czymoniewicz-Klippel, (2009) describes the literature as judgemental, where non-participatory approaches are villified and critical of research which is participatory but adult-led. Thomas (2007) adds his voice as a critique of participatory work with children when he writes that flaws in such work include children not being enabled to take decision-making positions, for projects to be adult led or top down and for certain 'kinds' of children to be included to the exclusion of others.

Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) problematise participatory approaches by questioning assumptions that adults need to empower young people so as to enable them to act, that participation equals agency, the oxymoronic 'passive participation' and the unintentional effect of encouraging young people 'to take part in the processes used to regulate them' (p504).

Again, I have found the situation to be more complex than being able to conclude that young researchers are a 'good thing'. However, there has been some support

for suggesting that there is greater power-sharing between young people and adults, than might have been the case 10 years ago.

Developing my own perspective on the topic has been influenced by relationality. Coupled with a search for useful frameworks led to the work of Wong *et al* (2010), which neatly avoids the implied hierarchy of a ladder and seems closer to the experience of young people involved as young researchers.

Throughout this study 'co-researchers' have remained in inverted commas supplanted by the term young researchers which avoids some of the assumptions related to power and equality.

Implications for teaching and learning were briefly considered, leading to identifying projects including views about the ALM and what this study might have to offer to our understanding of engaging young people as well as adult learners in education that is participative.

Reflections

Fit for purpose?

Chapter 6 posed a number of questions whereby a project concerned with voice might be judged. These can now be applied to the research here. From the start there was an intention to embrace diversity, hear multiple voices and the methodology facilitated this. To some extent adult silences were discussed (given that YP3 and YP3- had no match in the adult viewpoints). I have also indicated areas where I (unwittingly) did not 'allow' things to be said by not including certain statements in the Q sorts. I provided opportunities for the participants to examine the voices that were created and endeavoured to enable the nature of the relationships between the project leader (me as researcher) to be determined (in terms of both doing the work and in relation to power and decision-making). There has been talk of power and it has been possible for the reader to determine the degree to which young people contributed to or made decisions. In relation to a final question concerning where the voices went, the uses to which they were put, I hope to pursue my aim to problematise 'co-research' by publishing aspects of this

research.

Inevitably, research generates more questions. It has also identified those which serve to guide my future research and practice, including:

- What are children?
- How can we, as adults, find out about them, their lives and their experiences?
- How can we engage with children in ways that are respectful, mutually beneficial and liberating, rather than exploitative or dominating?
- How can we involve the children themselves in these processes? and
- What options are available to us for sharing what we find out?

(Tisdall *et al* 2009, p1)

Some of my research outcomes relate closely to results which have satisfied my desire to problematise the strong theme found in the literature regarding the 'movement' around young researchers, to discomfort, create a climate of perturbation or critically question that travel in this direction is unilaterally experienced as a 'good thing'. Other outcomes are perhaps less tangible and result from the process of thinking about my participation in the lives of young people and what might make this important and serve to improve my practice. Adults working with young researchers has enabled me to consider the potential to open up new possibilities, where boundaries between young people and adults are more fluid, less fixed, where new spaces might be created for different relations, where new hopes for alternative futures might be forged.

The researcher-practitioner

As a practitioner, I worry that, too often, I may operate by peddling ideas and explanations which are only one step beyond or no better than a lay or pop psychology. I serve, or the outcome of my practice might be criticised as upholding or buttressing individualistic explanations that pay lip service only to the idea of the importance of 'the child in context'. Corcoran makes the point well when he writes that

within an ideology of individualism, context/ situation/ background may be vaguely considered (although usually as an after-thought) in relation to the action taking place but that first and foremost, the agency of the individual (typically their psychobiology) will be primarily held to account (Corcoran, 2006 p77).

I might be inclined to defend me-as-practitioner pragmatically, but whilst articulating a more systemic (and non-individual) and less deficit-based gaze as a researcher, realise the inconsistencies between both positions. This research has provided opportunities for these two positions to occupy more closely the same patch of conceptual space.

It has also enabled me to consider the 'nature' of research and of the world. Emphasising '(inter)dependence, incompetence, incompleteness and vulnerability' Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) use 'methodological immaturity' so as to position research and more generally life, 'as a necessarily complex, incomplete and messy process' (p511). Advocating proceeding from a 'position of ignorance' they see research as 'a process of muddling through' and 'experimentation' (p512) where researchers 'are not simply reporting a world that exists 'out-there', but are creating and experimenting with an emergent one' (p512). Linked is 'an emergent, constitutionally unfinished, 'almost-not-quite' ontology' where 'subjectivity is performatively produced through the continuous unfolding of action' (p510).

Implications For Further Research

Young researchers

Given the criticisms of Q study 1 in the previous chapter, one immediate area for further research could obviously include using an improved Q set with a more varied P-set so as to explore further the benefits of working as a young researcher. One opportunity currently being explored with a colleague with contacts in the region, is to improve and use the Q set with students in the Caribbean. This approach could be differentiated so as to explore the assumed benefits *prior* to embarking on a project and the benefits judged as having accrued from the experience once it has finished.

Other work suggested by Brownlie *et al* (2006) would include how young researchers might be effective or 'good', their experience of obstacles or barriers to successful work and what makes such work effective.

Behaviour

Positioned as practitioner my desire to use Q to explore young people's views of their behaviour remains. I am keen to revisit the initial research questions that fuelled my early doctoral work and have discussed this project with interested EP colleagues in other Local Authorities. Using Q to contrast a young person's viewpoint with that of the adults in their world, might be a more heterotopic approach for an EP hoping to develop practice that embraces second nature orientations and avoids essentialising human being (Corcoran, 2009). Card sorts might be further developed or other tools for exploring change or identifying the views of a child or young person (about change or receptiveness to help for instance) might emerge.

One of my young participants in Sec2 asked 'Have you used....done anything with the stuff we gave you?' So, in addition to my interest, there is also a sense of guilt, or at least unforeseen ethics concerning the way in which the early study served as a Trojan horse for an enquiry into young researchers which getting back to behaviour would address.

What kind of behaviour though? Like Stetsenko, Lois Holzman (2001) also refers to the lack of 'a social-cultural foundation' to psychology, stresses the transformations that we undergo as human beings and the need for a 'psychology of activity'-a unit of study to replace behaviour as the target. Again, we find Holzman emphasising the dialectic of both being and becoming, learning and developing by performing (or acting). Following Holzman (2009) we saw how young researchers can work with adults in a ZPD to perform research, to become and be researchers.

Learning

The benefits of a collaborative inter-professional or multi-agency approach have been powerfully advanced in recent years, as failures at individual, organisational and strategic levels have led to childrens' needs being ignored

or their significance underestimated and crucial information left unshared. The death of 'Baby P' in the London borough of Haringey in the UK, in 2007, gave renewed impetus to discussions about inter-professional or multi-agency collaboration. Inter-professional education (IPE) has been seen as one approach through which to address some of the issues of communication and collaboration identified by Laming (Laming & Great Britain, 2003) and others. Whilst much of the discussion on IPE is focussed on qualified and practising professionals, an equally important debate concerns pre-qualifying professional education. Along this line, I have employed Q in an evaluation study in order to explore the views of pre-qualifying students in different professional groups engaged in an example of IPE. More specifically, I have worked with University colleagues in Health and Social Care to enable trainee EPs to join Social Work and Medical students in a web-based virtual scenario called 'Getting the Message'. A Q-sort of 45 items has been used with a range of students, all of whom have taken part in the 'Getting the Message' activity and which has been designed carefully so as to take account of the range of their experiences.

I also hope to explore the area of learning by picking up the points raised in relation to the Adult Learning Model (see page 193). I have started to compile a concourse and Q set which could be used with Doctoral students training to become EPs.

Participation

In the Local Authority in which I work there are a number of opportunities for networking with adults who are responsible for participation in the city, which could enable me to seek the views of young people involved in different projects. I am drawn to the way in which three elements—power, relationships and voice, coalesce into a triumvirate and would like to draw on my local contacts to develop my understanding of Wong *et al's* 2010 model, (discussed earlier on p192).

Coda

'One of the surest of tests is the way in which a poet borrows. Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make it into something better, or at least something different' (Eliot, 1950, p125). I hope that through this study I have at least procured some valuable ideas in order to provoke a view of young people positioned as researchers which is different to simply seeing their involvement as advancing a cause, a right or an inevitable route to empowerment.

Stravinsky insisted that true freedom was in self-imposed restraint (Balletmet) and I have learned that the same can also be said of research ('less is more'). I have followed Billig's (2011) advice, exercising restraint in my use of the passive and attempted to employ everyday language. Such considerations have made me increasingly aware of some of the implications for me as a practitioner. For instance, Billig's plea that 'We should describe (and thereby imagine through our writing) what people do, feel, and think' (2011, p17) provides me with a clearer focus on trying to 'get the child' and articulate this to adults. My hope as a practitioner is that this might facilitate an increased willingness on the part of adults, to engage emotionally with a young person's situation so that they might also develop a more informed view of the child's position and be more motivated to explore possibilities for change. I am trying to encourage or facilitate those who work with children and young people, to think differently about them, so that a more socially just and inclusive community can be developed.

I have become increasingly aware of the meaning or importance of being a fashionable or trendy EP. In this way I am drawing attention to the potential power of having conversations which include current or contemporary ideas, approaches and techniques. Linking explanations to current or fashionable ideas such as attachment or personalised learning, for instance, might prove to be more persuasive. Vivien Burr (2003, p145) notes that we are 'inducted not only into narrative thinking but also into the form and content that our narratives may take' and discusses 'hearable stories' that are tellable in so far as they are dependent on other stories circulating in the culture.

In our culture we sometimes assume that children are *damaged* by adults through abuse or through their inability to develop a healthy self or sense of self. We might assume that such damage needs fixing, to be repaired before the individual can move on. The narratives or stories of children's lives become suspended in an indeterminate middle which follows an unhappy beginning. Helpers such as EPs are invested with the power to draw on the prevailing narratives so as to explain and provide meaning to children's behaviour, available discourses are drawn upon in order to fit the nature of the repair to the damage. Approaches, techniques, strategies and interventions used by helpers such as EPs are temporarily located within this set of discourses, perhaps collectively described as a helping paradigm.

This suggests that the way in which I might determine the effectiveness of different technologies of help (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, person-centred counselling, Solution-Focused Brief Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, etc.) is relatively unrelated to the technology itself and much more closely linked to the location of the approach or strategy in a particular time and space. In one sense, an approach will only be successful if it fits the cultural time which is shaped by a select number of theorists and practitioners whose ascendance has contributed to the paradigm's zeitgeist. This helps us to understand why approaches from years ago (eg attachment) are rediscovered and why others, such as curriculum based assessment, become less popular. In more extreme terms we might argue that a main concern for helpers should be to demonstrate that what they offer or do, resonates with the soundings of the day or, in this sense, is 'fashionable'.

Creating stories of children's lives provides more options, an expanded repertoire of envisioned futures-*What did the character in the story do next?* Here is an example of where my position is much more than academic navel-gazing, where my ontology of practice leads me away from a search for 'the truth' to a place where I work in relationship with those seeking my help so as to make meaning. Part of this process involves 'getting' the young person.

Co-creating stories means that there are multiple truths and voices (present, unheard and currently unimagined) where my personal and professional lives merge and draw from each other. It also suggests that there are multiple pathways

from 'problem to solution' all of which may get me/us there, with more or less economy.

Rather than assuming there is a truth, I can come at a situation 'as if'. Rather than adopt a deficit-based Psychology, I can suspend belief (or disbelief) or just for a minute act and encourage others to do the same, imagining what might happen if we regarded a young person 'as if' they were dyslexic, autistic, dyspraxic... in order to open up new ways of thinking which might generate approaches and strategies, so as to contain situations and move things on in ways hitherto unthought of.

Through my interpretation of the factors, I have provided a first-person interpretation of part of the experience of young researchers-their viewpoints. I have explored what it might be like to be a young researcher, focusing particularly on how power, voice and relationships between young people and adults might be associated. Rather than positioning the young researcher at the front of the band I am choosing perhaps to see them more as important ensemble players.

One of the biggest 'take-aways' for me perhaps from this research is as a practitioner, to focus my ambition on 'getting' those that I work with and in particular on nurturing the child's voice, developing a first-person interpretation which 'gets' them, imagining what it might be like to be them.

Exploring freedom in jazz I have crawled out on a limb, been on the edge, faced some terrible moments by risking making a fool of myself. Like improvisation (Kamoche *et al*, 2003), research can be a risky enterprise so it's been affirming to realise again that just as a practitioner I can as a researcher deal with the stress of the unknown. Holzman (2001) discusses improvisation where performers create action and participate in activity which discovers and is collaborative and transformative.

Oldfather and West (1994) explore qualitative research within a jazz metaphor, creating a 'pathway for making explicit the tacit understandings that enable us to make our ways as researchers without fully orchestrated scores' (p22)-sounds like

abduction. They also discuss Rosario's appropriation of Coltrane's 'sacred act of jazz' (p23) and his relationship to thinking as a sacred form. Rosario (1991) refers to Coltrane being needed by Miles Davis for taking solos lasting at times for more than an hour. "Why you play so long man"? Miles would ask. "It took that long to get it all in", Coltrane would answer. Time to take the horn out of my mouth and face the music.

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