Young Children Drawing at Home, Pre-school and School:

The influence of the socio-cultural context

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the research was to explore the impact upon the young child's drawing behaviours of the cultural contexts and the views and beliefs of significant others across both home and preschool/ school settings.

The theoretical framework was informed by four significant areas of recent research. Socio-cultural theory, (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978); Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model of child development; Dyson's (1993a), identification of an important role for drawing as part of a continuum of symbol systems used by young children to communicate their intentions and Kress's (1997) recognition of the young child as a 'multi-modal meaning maker', and drawing as one of the available modes used to make sense of the world.

Evidence was collected for one month, at the beginning of the school year, about seven children's use of drawing across home, pre-school and school settings over a three-year period. Two key research approaches were used:
1. Booklets of each child's drawings and photographs of the activities and contexts in which they drew them, collected by the significant adults in each setting
2. Semi-structured interviews with significant adults and with the children.
Contextual information was gathered via photographs/ digital images taken in the home and pre-school/ school contexts and, during the first phase of the project, observations of the children in their settings. The views of adults and children were triangulated against the evidence of drawings and photographs.

In the home context the findings particularly highlighted the impact upon drawing of gendered relationships, mothers' control over children's use of space and materials and the difference in experience for children with older or younger siblings. In Foundation Stage contexts drawing was a particularly meaningful activity for girls whilst boys spent more time in three-dimensional construction activity. In Key Stage One contexts the one art lesson each week was skill based and adult directed.

The study draws attention to the positioning of drawing, as part of a continuum of interrelated symbol systems, between play and writing. It argues for the recognition for its use by the young child within transformative meaning making and as a tool for thinking to be acknowledged in key policy documentation and through training provision for teachers.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Theoretical Framework

There are four significant areas of recent research which have informed the theoretical framework for this study. Socio-cultural theory, derived from the work of Vygotsky (1962, 1978) proposes that behaviours (including learning behaviours) must be understood in the context of their socio-cultural history within a community. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model of child development argues for an acceptance of the situated nature of young children's learning. Dyson (1993a), whose work focuses on literacy learning, identifies an important role for drawing as part of a continuum of symbol systems used by young children to communicate their intentions. Finally the work of Kress (1997) developed by Pahl (1999) recognises the young child as a 'multi-modal meaning maker', and drawing as one of the available modes used to make sense of the world.

1.2   Research into Young Children's Drawing

Little is known, however, about the impact of the different socio-cultural contexts of home and pre-school or school upon a child's use of drawing, particularly over any length of time. The tradition of collecting and analysing children's drawings has been dominated, in general, by the field of developmental psychology. This has mostly involved cross-sectional analyses in order to develop stage theories (Kellogg, 1969; Lowenfeld and Brittain, 1982) or to make links between early figure drawings and measurements of intelligence (Goodenough, 1926, Harris, 1963). Apart from Pahl's (1999) study of children's meaning making in a nursery class setting, there has been little research that looks at children drawing from a socio-cultural perspective.

1.3   The Study

This study collected evidence for one month, at the beginning of the school year, about seven children's use of drawing across home, pre-school and school settings. It was a longitudinal study that took place over a three-year period. Two key research instruments were used:
1. Booklets of each child's drawings collected by the significant adults in each setting
2. Semi-structured interviews with significant adults and with the children.
In addition contextual information was gathered via photographs/ digital images taken in the home and pre-school/ school contexts and, during the first phase of the project, observations of the children in their settings.

By triangulating the views of both adults and children against the evidence of drawings and photographs, the study aimed to show how the belief systems of significant adults and more able peers/ siblings impacted upon the child's access to, use of and beliefs about drawing.

The evidence was collected from September 1998 until November 2001. This was a period of continuing change for all involved in both pre-school and primary schooling. Government strategies introduced during this period for example included Baseline Assessment, the Literacy Hour and the daily numeracy lesson.

The researcher has drawn upon her own childhood experience of total immersion in drawing, particularly in the home context; her years of teaching young children and her valuing of their preferences and pre-occupations; and her role as a teacher educator and as a researcher.

Researching children's drawing began, for the researcher, with a critical study as part of a M.Ed. degree. This small-scale research project looked in detail at the role of the teacher in retaining the confidence of the young child in his or her ability to draw. The researcher was subsequently seconded for a period of four months to Leeds University to initiate the project from which this Ed.D. thesis is written.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   Understanding the Child as a Learner: A Socio-Cultural Approach

The Child as Learner

Although child development has been dominated throughout the 20th century by the interaction of two factors, i.e. nature and nurture, the 'coming together' of developmental psychology (Bruner; 1968; Meadows, 1993; Piaget, 1971; Wood, 1998) and social psychology (Vygotsky, 1962, 1967, Rogoff, 1990, Wertsch, 1985) places great emphasis upon the leading role of culture. Cole (1998) puts forward an approach which assumes that nature and nurture interact indirectly through the medium of culture (Figure 1).
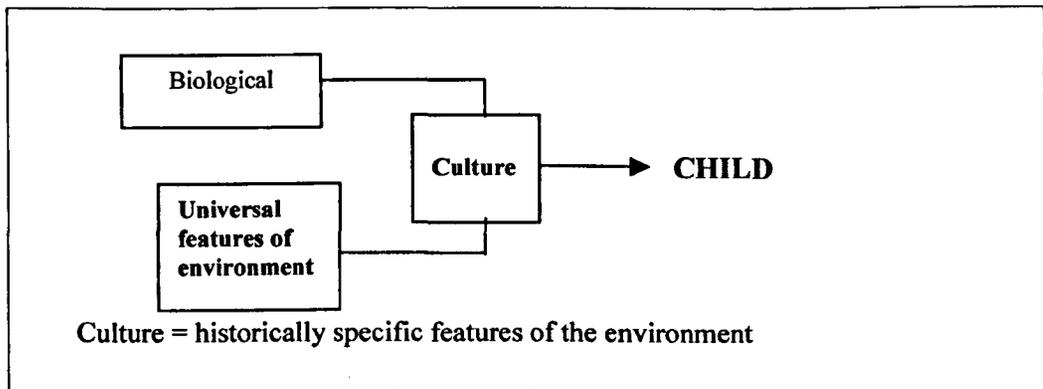
Figure 1: Schematic representation of inclusion of culture as mediator in theory
of development (adapted from Cole in Woodhead et al, 1998:12)

The alternative paradigm of a sociocultural view of children's development sees the child inhabiting an environment 'constructed through centuries of human endeavour' and being encouraged

> 'to participate in culturally defined ways of talking, behaving, thinking and feeling, mediated through their relationships with other, generally more experienced cultural actors.' (Woodhead, Faulkner & Littleton, 1998:1)

Importantly this view cuts through the 'conventional demarcation between cognitive, social and emotional development' (Woodhead, Faulkner & Littleton, 1998:1). It emphasises the importance of children learning holistically what is important, within the cultures of the communities in which they operate, through interactions with more experienced members of those cultures or communities (Bruner, 1996).

The view of culture as 'historically specific features of the environment' within Figure 1 does not seem to adequately reflect the nature of the relationships young children have with important adults within the cultural contexts of home and pre-school communities. Yet these relationships are seen by Woodhead et al, (1998:1) to provide the foundation of emotional security, the context for early learning and the mediating process of cultural influence. Trevarthen (1995a) seems to capture, in his definition of culture, the negotiation of shared understanding between people as they constantly act upon and change the world.

> 'Culture ... is an invention of human thoughts, an ordered fantasy that communities of people have agreed to endow with meaning' (Trevarthen, 1995a:5).

In this definition children are seen not as passive recipients but as interpreting the behaviour, demands and expectations of adults and other children as they co-construct a repertoire of ways of acting and reacting (Dunn, 1988). In co-constructing meaning they are actively selecting and shaping their own environment (Schaffer, 1996a).

Support for these views can be found in the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979) who rejects the 'deficit' view of humans as passive victims of the contextual features and constraints within their environments. He argues that 'the interaction between a person and environment is viewed as two-directional, that is characterised by reciprosity' (1979:22). His seminal ecological model of human development gives insights into how young children are situated as learners by the societies in which they are nurtured and educated. Bronfenbrenner's model delineates a complex hierarchy of systems in which the interactions of individuals within those systems are nested. Figure 2 is based on his conceptual model. He argues that people operating within these hierarchical systems are active agents in shaping the communities of practice in which they act and that ripples from one level are soon felt in others. Bronfenbrenner states that too little attention has been paid to 'the person's behaviour in more than one setting' and 'the way in which relations between settings can affect what happens within them' and 'the recognition that environmental events and conditions outside any immediate setting containing the person can have a profound influence on behaviour and development within that setting' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:18).

Trevarthen's (1995a) studies of infants and young children in the home context show adults and children 'tuning into each other'. He draws attention to the interactive rituals of young children's games with adults in the home context. Infants are strongly attracted to movement and from nine months, objects and actions on them are endowed with a 'common interest' resulting in 'protolanguage' as the child combines vocalisations, facial expressions and gestures to declare interests to their 'partners'. Trevarthen sees human beings having an essential motivation which 'strives to comprehend the world by sharing experiences and purposes with other minds 'in active negotiation of creative imaginings' (1995a:93).

1. Macrosystem	Historical/social/cultural ecological environments at national policy levels
2. Exosystem	Settings not involving the child as an active participant but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in the microsystems, e.g. patterns of employment within a locality, LEA systems, inspection structures
3. Mesosystem	Interrelations between two or more settings in which the child actively participates, e.g. parent and nursery, childminder and playgroup
4. Microsystem	A setting where the child (and their significant adult(s) or sibling(s)) experiences a particular pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relationships. That setting or environment will be characterised by particular physical features, rites and rituals, activities and objects. People in these microsystems will be assuming specific roles and responsibilities. E.g's A child in a home setting is absorbed into one set of roles – brother to an older sibling, son to a mother, 'the baby' of the house. The child in the nursery class is absorbed into another set of roles – friend to a group of boys, pupil of the nursery teacher, 'a big boy now' away from home.
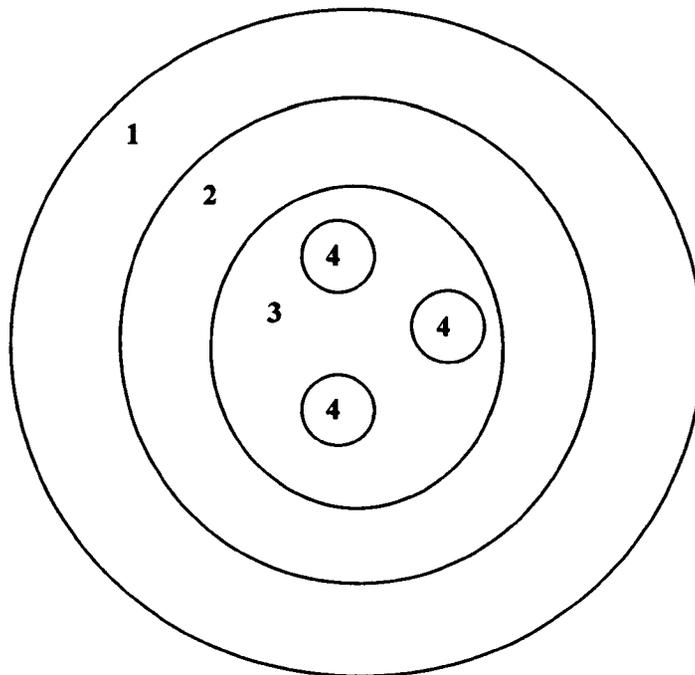
Figure 2: Historical/cultural influences on settings for the developing child
based on Bronfenbrenner (1979: 22)

Socio-cultural Theory

Socio-cultural theory is derived from the work of Vygotsky. He concentrates upon the social origins of mental functioning, seeing ways of thinking being modelled in social relationships and activities on/ in the intermental plane before being internalised in the intramental plane. For Vygotsky everyday social relationships with 'more knowledgeable others' whilst engaged in everyday activities allow young children to become 'enculturated and knowledgeable' about the social practices of their community (Vygotsky, 1932, in Ivic, 1989).

'It is through the mediation of others, through the mediation of the adult that the child undertakes activities. Absolutely everything in the behaviour of the child is merged and rooted in social relations. Thus, the child's relations with reality are from the start social relations, so that the newborn baby could be said to be in the highest degree a social being.' (Vygotsky, 1932, in Ivic, 1989:429)

Vygotsky's concept of a zone of proximal development, (1978) focuses upon the child's capacity to learn through instruction and the important role of the adult as teacher or guide. The term 'scaffolding' (Wood, 1998:98) is used to explain how the adult helps the uncertain child work through a task or activity, that is within his or her zone of proximal development, in order to achieve mastery. The term encompasses the support given to enable the child to eventually achieve the task independently and structure his or her own learning and reasoning, but also the inheritance of culturally developed ways of thinking and learning. Rogoff, Mosier, Mistry & Göncü (1998:227) stress Vygotsky's (1987) recognition of cognitive development within the zone of proximal development involving children in 'internalising skilled approaches from their participation in joint problem solving with more skilled partners'. Whilst the scaffolding role of the adult within parent-child relationships has been a key focus for research, Vygotsky also recognises as scaffolding the collaborative learning which takes place between 'novice' and 'expert' peers.

Vygotsky's seminal work, however, is seen by Scribner (1990) to be in grasping the significance of the social in things as well as people.

'The world in which we live is humanised, full of material and symbolic objects (signs, knowledge systems) that are culturally constructed, historical in their origin and social in content. Since all human actions, including acts of thought, involve the mediation of such objects ('tools and signs') they are, on this score alone, social in essence.' (Scribner, 1990:92).

Objects may be used in very different ways in different communities or microsystems. A book, for example, may be used as a source of comfort and reassurance during the ritual of a bedtime story at home and in school to point out the beginning and end sounds of some key words from the story text as part of the literacy hour.

The interactions around objects between adults and children are defined by Schaffer, (1992), as 'joint involvement episodes'. When an adult and a child pay joint attention to and act on an object it can provide both emotional security and a context for learning where a common focus is an object of interest or cultural significance. Whereas at the early stages of adult/child interactions the object may be a toy, later it may become something much more abstract such as an episode of playing with words. The important point is that these episodes are based on 'everyday' exchanges, and that whether they occur at home or in school contexts the quality of the interactions are critical to the quality of a child's learning (Anning and Edwards, 1999).

The establishment of joint attention has been shown in the early years to be an asymmetrical process (Schaffer, 1984) in which the child leads and the adult follows. As the adult follows the child's interests a dyadic interaction is established (Schaffer, 1996b).

> 'It is in the context of the child's own interests that the adult can then introduce additional material; for example, a verbal label for the object the child has just picked up or an extension of the verbalisation the child has just uttered.'
> (Schaffer, 1996b:253).

Within a pattern of dyadic exchanges the availability and use of both the material and symbolic tools of a culture or society are seen to shape and make possible particular ways of thinking. It is through communication that social understanding is made available for individual understanding (Schaffer, 1996b).

Children learn to act within socially defined roles usually through a process of labelling (Bailey, 1993). Through repeated dyadic exchanges young children begin to construct an identity which is meaningful for them. Given that gender is a central defining feature of society (Skelton and Hall, 2001), it is unsurprising that young children respond to the expectations and subtle but powerful pressures of significant adults to behave in sex-appropriate ways. Just as they explore and gain understanding of what is culturally appropriate and acceptable in functioning as a boy or girl and son or daughter, so they construct both an understanding of what it is to be a drawer or artist and a 'mastery' or 'helpless orientation' (Dweck, 1986) in their approach to that role.

Meaning making

Building upon the work of Vygotsky (1987), Wells (1986) and Bruner (1996), the term 'meaning making' is used extensively by socio-culturalists when considering the child as a learner from a sociocultural perspective. For Bruner meaning making involves:

> 'situating encounters with the world in their appropriate cultural contexts in order to know "what they are about." Although meanings are "in the mind," they have their origins and their significance in the culture in which they are created.' (Bruner, 1996:3)

Learning for Bruner (1983) proceeds from behavioural knowledge to symbolic or representational knowledge. A variety of first-hand experiences help children to broaden and deepen their behavioural knowledge whilst the opportunity to represent their experiences in a variety of media helps them to acquire symbolic knowledge. Influenced by Piagetian stage theory, Bruner's (1966) progressive yet cumulative modes of mental representation, the 'enactive', the 'iconic' and the 'symbolic', remain underdeveloped but reflect the child's developing ability to represent with increasing complexity and abstraction everyday behavioural knowledge and experience mentally. The interaction between culture and the individual is seen by Bruner (1996) to give an individual's thinking a communal cast and impose unpredictability and richness upon a culture. Haste developed a model representing these interrelationships.

INTRA-INDIVIDUAL

Children experience the use of
concepts in social practices and through
the negotiation of meaning. They bring
their own interpretations and perceptions
to each encounter with others

Children learn, through parents, siblings,
Peers, teachers and media, the normative
Frameworks and assumptions for
'making sense' in their society. This
understanding is mediated by the cognitive
capacities of each child

The socio-historical framework
is filtered through interaction with
parents, siblings, peers and teachers
and is refined by social and cultural

INTERPERSONAL   practices in homes, classroom and   **SOCIO-HISTORICAL**
                     playground. Specific meanings are
                     generated at the interpersonal level.

Figure 3: A model of the relationship between intra-individual, interpersonal and
the socio-historical factors (Pollard, 1996, following Haste, 1987)

By emphasising the immediate environment, society and culture as providing a framework for the child's individual and continuing construction of meaning, Haste's (1987) model of the relationship between the intra-individual, the interpersonal and the sociohistorical (Figure 3) augments the models proposed by Cole (Figure 1) and Bronfenbrenner (Figure 2). Haste's model sets out the cognitive processes involved as the child reflects upon, consolidates, constructs and represents his/ her understanding of the world, within a social process, through words, gestures and modelling with objects, mark making and drawing. Her model is in line with current consideration of commonality across the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky, particularly in respect to their understanding of the social origin of thinking (Smith, 1996, Daniels, 2001, Shayer, 2002).

Summary

Within a socio-cultural approach to learning, young children are situated as learners within the cultures of the communities in which they operate. They are particularly supported in constructing understanding through everyday dyadic social interactions with more experienced members of these communities, for example, their parents and older siblings in the home

context and practitioners and more experienced peers in pre-school or school. These reciprocal interactions are generally focused upon objects and tools for meaning making which have value within the culture in which the child is situated and become for the child instilled with particular meaning. Young children, following internalisation of what is initially a socially constructed understanding of the world, re-present their understandings through a range of communicative processes which include not only words and gestures but modelling with objects, mark making and drawing.

The following section explores children's use of drawing as one of a range of symbolic and narrative tools for meaning making.

2.2   The Young Child's Use of Drawing As One of A Range of Modes for Meaning Making Within Socio-cultural Theories.

Young Children Drawing

Drawing, as an activity which produces a great variety of outcomes, is seen by Perry (1992) to be

> '...making marks on a surface, with or without line, with or without colour, with or without black and white, with tools and selected surfaces or dispensing with them, with or without prior aim and purpose.' (Perry, 1992:90)

The drawings of young children are seen to have originated from their physical action (Matthews, 1994a; 1999) and play (Vygotsky, 1995) and are a predominantly linear way of defining shapes and events (Matthews, 1994). Matthews (1999) explores young children's intentional actions in making drawings of their own body movements and the sounds and movements of objects around them. He calls these 'action representations'. In common with Athey (1990) he describes development as 'an interaction between what is unfolding in the child and what is available within the environment' (Matthews, 1994). Athey concentrates on drawing as a reflection of children's inner schematic representations, the developing organisational or conceptual systems by which they make sense of diverse aspects of life. Matthews, however, sees children's drawings 'located within a family of expressive and symbolic actions used fluently by children between 3 and 4 years of age' (1999:49). He draws attention to the interrelationship of a range of conceptual interests and emotional concerns, which are reflected within children's 'artistic' representations and which are dependent upon the materials available within the environment.

For Matthews (1998:106) the non-linear systems of representation and expression are particularly sensitive to initial conditions. They are processes that unfold through time

'generated by simple rules' which 'interact with initial conditions in multifarious ways' (Appendix 1).

Matthew's viewpoint would seem to be affirmed by Goldschmeid and Jackson's (1994) work with children under two years old. Acknowledging the need to maximise the brain development of young children, Goldschmeid and Jackson highlight the importance of stimulation through early sensory experience and activity and therefore a need for an environment rich in interesting objects and materials. Drawing, initially through the child's use of his/ her finger(s) to 'unknowingly' make a mark or sign upon 'the world', can be seen therefore from the beginning to take place in a cultural context, structured by available materials, physical dexterity, action and interaction with those around him/ her.

Referencing the work of Trevarthen (1980, 1995b) Matthews suggests that

> 'the basis for the expression of emotion and the representation of objects and events form within an interpersonal arena between caregiver and infant' (Matthews, 1999:17).

Emotions are 'intimately involved' in object manipulation, tool-use and exploration and it is within this interpersonal relationship that the child acquires skills in 'viewing, handling and visually tracking objects', (1999:18) including the expressive and representational possibilities these might have. For Matthews, drawing is not primarily a problem solving situation, or an attempt to represent the observable shape of an object, but is concerned with children's search for their own identities as well as the identities and structures of events and objects (Matthews, 1999). This would seem to be affirmed by Malchiodi's (1998) understanding of children's use of art in general.

> 'Children use art to integrate not only their inner experiences and perceptions, but also to link their experiences of the outside world with the inner self, helping them to discover and affirm themselves and their relationships to people, environment and even society.' (Malchiodi, 1998:37)

Matthews (1992) feels that infants give meaning to drawing right from the outset of mark making. As one of the child's forms of meaning making, drawing is important as a means of both communication and action. It is internalised and used eventually by the child to re-present his/ her ideas, feelings and physical actions in a symbolic form.

Symbol Systems

Dyson (1993a) sees a symbol, be it a word, picture or dance, existing because of a 'human intention to infuse some tangible form – a sound, a mark, a movement – with meaning and, thereby, to comment on or take action in the social world'. Symbol making is, for Dyson, 'the essence of being human' and drawing, as a symbolic system, is one of the ways humans liberate themselves 'from the here and now'. Geertz (1983) argues that people who share a culture share

similar ways of infusing meaning into sounds (language), movement (dance), and lines (drawings), among other media. Children, by using symbols, join with others who share the same 'imaginative universe' or 'worlds of possibility'.

Dyson and Geertz (ibid.) build on Vygotsky's views of the close relationship between narrative, play and art and, as reported by Lindqvist (2001) 'the entire process through which children develop cultural awareness'.

> 'Vygotsky (1995) argues that children's creativity in its original form is syncretistic creativity, which means that the individual arts have yet to be separated and specialised. Children do not differentiate between poetry and prose, narration and drama. Children draw pictures and tell a story at the same time; they act a role and create their lines as they go along. Children rarely spend a long time completing each creation, but produce something in an instant, focusing all their emotions on what they are doing at that moment in time.' (Lindqvist, 2001:8)

It is through this interrelationship of symbolic activity, which includes both the verbal and visual as well as action and dramatic play, that children integrate and represent their understandings and by doing so create new meanings.

Figure Four shows key stages in an analysis of children's use of symbol systems developed from Dyson's model (1993a). It analyses drawing's situated nature within the child's use of a broad range of symbolic tools for meaning making. Dyson highlights not only the interrelationship of gesture, speech, play, drawing and writing for the young child but also a pattern of development which is both sequential and cumulative.

APPROX 6 YEARS	The child begins to use writing as a mediator i.e. writing assumes some of the representational and social work of movement, play and talk	
↑	The child begins to use drawing as a mediator i.e. drawing assumes some of the representational and social work of movement, play and talk	The emergence of writing as a prop or supplement to other symbolic tools e.g. drawing
	The emergence of drawing as a prop or supplement to other symbolic tools e.g. gesture and speech, sometimes combined in social play	
	The shaping of symbolic behaviour by social activity	
BIRTH	Initial exploratory behaviour	

Figure 4: The situated nature of drawing within a continuum of children's use of symbol systems (developed from Dyson, 1993a)

Dyson (1993a) recognises the importance of speech allowing children to represent meaning, to share their ideas with other people and, referencing Vygotsky (1978) 'to engage in increasingly more deliberate, more planful activity'. Fein (1987) describes how, with the support of talk, play becomes a kind of 'canvas' on which young children can collaboratively symbolise ideas and feelings. This kind of collaborative, playful talk is seen by Dyson (1993a) to support the evolution of drawing itself.

Matthews' (1999) and Dyson's (1993a) understanding of how drawing develops is a reflection of their own particular pre-occupations. Matthews' primary concern is drawing development and drawing as action representation. He recognises the importance of joint involvement episodes as opportunities for the child and caregiver to explore the manipulation of objects and use of tools whilst investing in them emotional meaning. Dyson's emphasis, however, is upon the child's use of integrated symbol systems and how writing emerges from within a continuum of symbolic representation. She pays attention to the child's use of 'props' to support social play with 'an interested other' and at around age two, drawing is seen by Dyson (1993a:24) to evolve as a prop for elaborate story telling supporting 'old, comfortable procedures e.g. dramatic gesture, speech and social play'. Whereas Matthews' action representations have meaning from the start, Dyson sees children gradually, through talk with others, investing their marks with meaning as they talk about their evolving intentions. Drawing can therefore be a way of children engaging in social play using a new symbolic medium which can shape and be shaped by their social and representational intentions (Dyson, 1993a).

Dyson acknowledges Vygotsky's (1978:115) distinction between drawing as a first-order symbol system directly denoting objects and actions, and writing, a second-order symbol system standing for the spoken symbols for objects or actions. She importantly draws attention, however, to the development of writing from drawing. Arguing (Dyson, 1982) that initially children do not discriminate between drawing and writing, she feels that from the children's perspective the transition may not be from speech to writing but from drawing to writing, with the connection with language coming after. Certainly her studies, carried out with children in a non-adult structured situation, show that, for the children, the distinction between the two processes does not appear critical. Her view is supported by Stetsenko (1995) who suggests, that drawing, more than any other medium:

> 'alerts the child to the dual-function of symbols and signs; as structures in themselves, and as referents to events and objects beyond the drawing surface'. (Stetsenko, 1995:154)

Within Figure 4 the close relationship between drawing and writing can be seen as writing initially emerges as a 'prop' for the now 'comfortable procedure' of drawing (Dyson, 1993a). At this stage children are seen by Dyson to engage in 'symbol weaving' as they 'write' stories (Dyson, 1986:381). She describes five-year-old children's texts as a complex interweaving of oral narratives, drawing and writing as they call upon all their symbolic powers. The differentiation of writing from drawing is seen by Dyson (1982) to be:

> 'A gradual process occurring during and through first attempts to represent experience through letter graphics' (Dyson, 1982:379)

She argues that pulling apart these separate entities, as tends to happen in educational contexts, detracts from the children's composing abilities (Dyson, 1993).

Narratives

There is a lack of recognition by most adults of the narrative connections for young children between speech, play, drawing and writing and the power of drawing in serving a narrative or 'storying' function for children by externalising their experiences, thoughts and feelings through visual images. Egan (1989) pays attention to the story form as a cultural universal which 'reflects a basic and powerful form in which we make sense of the world and experience' (1989:2). Understanding of young children's use of story is developed by Gallas (1994:xv) who takes the view that children's personal narratives, formed in an attempt to order and explain the world from all aspects of their experience, 'are often part of the silent language that embodies thinking'. In agreement with Dyson, she takes 'an expanded view' of children's narratives, not confining them to the spoken or written word, but including the stories they tell from early childhood 'in dramatic play, in their drawings and paintings, in movement and spontaneous song.'

Malchiodi (1998), from her position as an art therapist, makes the connection between drawing as a narrative form, enabling children to express their individual stories through a developmentally appropriate form of communication, and drawing as a focus for talk about their drawings. For Dyson (1993b) it is the interrelationship between drawing and talking which supports their narrative competence, enabling the child's meaning to be carried and their peers attention engaged (Dyson 1993b).

Although there is an acceptance within early years education (QCA/DfES, 2000) of the importance of both play and talk as symbol systems and narrative forms, the role of drawing within this process is rarely considered. Katz (1998) argues that the availability and encouragement of the use of a wide variety of graphic and other media leads to an early competence in pre-school children's ability to communicate their constructions of the world. She recognises that the potential for learning through graphical representation is under developed.

> '...many of us seriously underestimate preschool children's graphical representational abilities, and the quality of intellectual effort and growth it can engender.'
> (Katz, 1998:28)

Multi-modality

The innovative work of Kress (1997) on young children's meaning making at home has importantly drawn attention to the need for a broader view of literacy, one which includes both the reading and making of visual signs as well as the conventional reading and writing of words.

He argues that children are bombarded with a variety of stimuli both static (pictures, signs, posters) and moving (T.V., video, computer imagery) within their everyday environments. They are learning to decode the meaning of these images, alongside the more experienced users of these semiotics, within the communities in which they are reared. Kress's thesis is that 'children act multi-modally, both in the things they use, the objects they make, and in the engagement of their bodies; there is no separation of body and mind' (ibid.: 97). He draws on detailed observations of his own young children engaged in multi-model representations using:

- found materials to make 'models'

- household furniture and objects mingled with toys to make 'worlds' in which to act out involved narratives in play

- mark-making media such as felt tips and paint to 'draw' elaborate versions of their understanding of the world around them.

He calls these 'the energetic, interested, intentional action of children in their effects on their world' (ibid.: 114). He argues that:

> 'It is essential that .... children are encouraged .... in their fundamental disposition towards multi-modal forms of text and meaning making. .... Above all there will need to be particular emphasis on developing their awareness about the dynamic interaction between the various modes, and their awareness that all modes are constantly changing in their interaction with other modes; and through the sign maker's use.' (Kress, 1997:154)

Kress (1997) draws attention to the strong, dynamic interrelation of the resources available for making and the maker's 'shifting interest'. He feels that the practice of cutting out drawn objects by children has particular significance and that the affective quality and potentials of the 'cut out' is entirely different from those of the flat two-dimensional object. For Kress the cutting out of a drawing enables the child to 'move it about and place it in entirely new environments, with other objects, to form new structures in new imagined and real worlds' (1997:24). It would seem that the cut out object can 'bridge a gap' for the child between the two and three dimensional world.

Kress (1997) recognises the importance for the child of 'story'. He feels that between the ages of four and seven, at a time when writing is not yet controlled, children's narratives are:

> 'hybrid things with language used to indicate action and narrative sequence, and drawing used to represent, to display, the people and objects in the story.'
> (Kress, 1997:24)

Pahl (2002a:146), developing Kress's thesis, sees children's communicative practices are visual, oral and artefactual. She is interested in the interplay within these modes. The term 'meaning making' for Pahl incorporates children's visual and oral texts, narratives both written and spoken and artefacts including drawing, models and collage. She draws upon the work of Kress

and Van Leeuwen (2001) in using the term 'text' to describe 'the realisation of a discourse in one or more semiotic modes'.

> 'The looser use of the term allows me to understand and analyse how children's communicative practices may 'sediment' into a momentarily fixed artefact, which I call a 'text', such as a drawing or a shape.' (Pahl, 2002a:146)

For Pahl (1999) drawing and modelling are 'bound up' with telling stories. She uses Kress's thesis to study children's meaning making in nursery education and notes that the objects children made in the nursery settings often have a 'fluid quality'. Children create layers of narrative as they represent and re-represent versions of stories in their play. A shopping basket made from a cereal packet and strips of card for role-play in the nursery might be transformed into a carrycot for a doll when the model was taken home. She sees these 'lines of enquiry' offering scope for children to explore the gap between 'me' and 'not me' using the models they make as 'transactional objects'. The models children carry from nursery to home offer them opportunities to explore the inner workings of their minds through the outer material representations of their thinking shaped in particular ways by the environments in which they try to record their understanding of the world.

Summary

Drawing is an important symbolic system used by young children as a way of integrating their understandings and making new meanings. It is one of a range of interrelated expressive and symbolic actions, shaped by social activity by which children link the outside world with their inner self. Emerging from action and interaction with key people in the child's life, it is a developmentally appropriate system, used particularly between the ages of three and seven to 'bridge the gap' between three-dimensional symbolic play with objects and the abstract symbol system of writing. The interrelationship of play, drawing and talk can be seen to particularly support the child's narrative competence but whilst play and talk are recognised as important, drawing or graphical representation is generally underestimated in educational research and discourse. Moreover, given the situated nature of young children's learning and the social embeddedness of individual development, it is important to consider the environmental demands that impact upon and shape the child's developing behaviours in relation to drawing within the differing cultural and historical contexts of home, pre-school and school.

The section that follows considers the particular influence of the home context upon children's use of drawing.

2.3   The Influence of the Home Context on Young Children's Use of Drawing

Until the 1980's research into learning was strongly influenced by the Piagetian model of children solving cognitive tasks on their own. The theoretical shift towards understanding the

learner as a co-constructor in the social context (Vygotsky, 1978) led to investigations of cognitive development within shared activities in everyday settings. There was a recognition that children 'appropriate' and 'transform' the practices of different cultures, for example those of home, pre-school and school. (Rogoff, 1990). The learning experiences of children, within the informal curriculum of the home, are seen by Sylva (1999:172) to be illuminated by studies of the acquisition of knowledge viewed as 'the product of ordinary, repeated and regulated activities within social domains'. Studies of young children's literacy in the home (Alexander, 2000; Heath, 1982; Tizard and Hughes, 1984; Wells, 1985, Weinburger, 1996) reflect both the cultural significance of reading and writing activities in home contexts and their importance within the school curriculum. However, apart from the work of Pahl (1999, 2002a), who draws upon the theoretical framework set out by Kress (1997), there is little evidence of comparable studies in relation to young children's drawing as an everyday activity. The socio-cultural context influencing drawing has not been researched or theorised.

Rites, Rituals and the Home Space

Malchiodi's (1998) insights into children as drawers come from a theraputic rather than educational stance. Whereas both Matthews (1994, 2003) and Pahl (1999) developed their understanding of drawing through their involvement with their own children, Malchiodi, as an art therapist, has taken developmental, emotional and interpersonal perspectives in relation to drawing in order to support her work across a wide range of troubled children. She recognises that the rites and rituals of the home affect the child's motivations and attitudes about drawing. Whilst confirming that there has been little research exploring cultural aspects of drawings, Malchiodi sees the experience of childhood in some respects as universal, e.g. gender expectations, parenting and genetic determinants, but in others variable to the context in which the child grows up. For children the process of drawing is shaped by additional factors including:

'the materials with which they draw, the environment in which they create, and their personal capacities, motivations, talents or interests in drawing.' (Malchiodi, 1998:20)

The child's relationships with adults, siblings and peers will also affect the content and style of drawing, including levels of trust and safety and the degree of sensitivity shown by others to the process and understanding of drawing activity in children. (Malchiodi, 1998).

Malchiodi (1998) comments on the impact of the immediate environment and its influence upon children's participation levels. Whilst she recognises that the home as a context serves multiple functions, she feels that in order to express themselves freely through drawing children need, at the least, a suitable surface to work on and to have some freedom from restrictions upon their use of materials. Although many children are stimulated by a well-designed space, Malchiodi (1998:31) feels that too much space and too many distractions in the environment can also

overwhelm children. She cautions against children being surrounded by 'excessive amounts of materials and toys in the immediate vicinity' as this for some children results in a reduced ability to 'remain focused on drawing'. Malchiodi recognises, however, that children's participation in drawing activity does depend, to some extent, upon parents' attitudes to what they might consider 'messy activities'. This includes their understanding of the need for young children to have such experiences and their willingness to make appropriate provision for them.

In contrast drawing for Pahl (2002a:146) is emphasised as a form of literacy and included as one of a range of texts produced by the young child. She argues that meaning making within the home is intimately connected with the space in which it is produced and uses Dyson's (1993b) analogy of texts operating as 'crossroads' where adults' preoccupations, children's popular culture and family histories are played out. Looking at the status of children's multi-modal texts within homes, Pahl feels they occupy 'a contested space' which lies on 'the cusp of mess and tidiness'. The parents involved in her ethnographic study of three boys aged between five and eight were seen to be engaged in a 'contested dance' in which:

> 'symbolic and actual narratives, home meanings and metaphors and figured and re-figured worlds coexisted within the home space.' (Pahl, 2002a:146)

In recognising that both parent and child are connected to the meaning making process as they weave in and out of one another's space, Pahl draws upon Bernstein's (1977) understanding that ways of doing and structuring things in families can be related to the way space is organised. She pays attention to how children's meaning making moves between:

> 'bedroom floor to living room floor, taking in materials as diverse as prayer beads, paper, glue, modelling material and card. The children drew on cultural resources around them, including stories and narrative.' (Pahl, 2002a:147)

Pahl, (2002a) referencing Phillips (1999) feels that long running and sometimes hidden family histories profoundly shape children's meaning making and that these ongoing narratives provide an internal and external structure to what she terms children's 'world making' (2001:7).

> 'Children occupy worlds which they can draw on to create new fantasies and identities. This narrative quality, which can be close to a dream state, is one which is closely associated with the world of home, and the in-between spaces children occupy, such as playgrounds and play centres. They often remain un-recorded, for they belong to an ephemeral space, often unrecognised by adults.' (Pahl, 2001:7)

Text making in the home context is often ephemeral and transitory in nature (Pahl, 2002a:160). Because of this and because of an emphasis upon 'display rather than process' across homes and classrooms, Pahl feels text making is generally subsumed by parents under the general heading of play.

Developing the work of Kress (1997), Pahl (1999) recognises the need for young children to have time to immerse themselves in their ongoing narratives and to move from one material to another, using what is available to them to shape their sign making. She stresses that it is through their transformations of materials and objects to hand, that their narratives develop and they make new meaning and new forms of representation.

'Children see the complexity of the meaningful cultural world with absolute clarity; and in their making of meaning they construct elaborate, complex representations of that world – out of materials which are to hand: bits of paper, glued, cut, folded, painted, cut out; bits of tinsel; old birthday cards; coloured string; and so on.' (Kress, 1997:33)

Pahl (1999:104) argues that children have more opportunities to utilise fluidity in their meaning making at home. It is within the home context that she feels objects can be freely transformed from one function to another without the 'watchful gaze of an adult' and where children can adapt their meanings in mind to the nature of their resources. She emphasises the child's need for a space in which he or she can make a 'purposeful mess'; somewhere where there is not a constant emphasis on 'tidying up' (1999:104).

The Media, Popular Culture and Figured Worlds

Pahl recognises the influence of the media, for example videos, television and stories, upon children in providing a 'memory bank' (1999:17) or 'cultural resource' (2001:2) of ideas, images and narratives that children can draw on when expressing meaning and which support the creation of narrative structures. Marsh (2002), referencing Robinson (1997) and Browne (1999), supports this view and argues that media texts have a vital role to play in providing stimuli which both parents and children are confident with and knowledgeable about. Marsh's study of twenty six children aged between two and a half and three years and eleven months followed the completion of an initial questionnaire by a much larger sample of parents within a Sure Start initiative area. In completing the questionnaire, the parents of the children volunteered to be interviewed in their homes about their children's media use. The interview data was analysed alongside the field notes, completed by the researcher during the visits. These notes focused on the use of space in the living room with regard to children's artefacts and technological items and the actions and responses of the children during the visit. The study showed that the children were engaged in play in which they physically re-enacted narratives viewed on television. The parents in the study generally provided implicit support for the links between language, literacy and play through 'their unquestioning acceptance of, and involvement in, children's responses to televisual narratives' (Marsh, 2002:6).

'In many of the homes visited, the space around the television appeared to be demarcated as a space for celebrating and extending children's relationship with the screen. Often, children's dressing-up clothes, toys or books which were associated with television characters were situated there, ready to be taken up by children when necessary.' (Marsh, 2002:6)

Marsh recognises the pervasive nature of media and popular cultural texts in the home (Marsh, 2001a) and sees popular culture, for children, spanning a wide range of texts and artefacts:

> 'Children's popular culture overlaps with that of adults in that the broad fields into which it can be categorised are similar: music, sport, computers and related merchandise, books, magazines, television and film. However children's popular culture also incorporates such diverse artefacts as toys, games, comics, stickers, cards, clothing, hair accessories, jewellery, sports accessories, oral rhymes, jokes, word play and even food and drink. (Marsh and Millard, 2000:20)

For Marsh and Thompson (2001:3) the fact that texts have multiple interconnections means that children have access to books, comics, computer games, clothing, games and other artefacts, which are all connected by common themes as part of a 'narrativised system'.

Children's texts produced in the home are seen by Pahl (2002b:1-2) to be 'hybrid mixes of influences' and draw upon not only television and video narratives but influences from play station games, fairy tales and 'domain specific practices in the home, such as visiting grandparents'. For Pahl children's texts reflect 'life as it is lived' and act as artefacts in the construction of not only a personal identity but also the family's identity.

Pahl supports Dyson's view of the young child as a 'symbol weaver' (1986:381). She sees a collage of drawing, writing and logo (2001:3-4) to be typical of what might be termed 'a drawing' in the home context. The page is used by the child as a space on which to 'doodle out current interests and preoccupations' and by doing so integrate aspects of his or her experience. Pahl gives an example of a child integrating schooled literacy practices such as writing with his reoccurring drawings of birds in both home and school contexts into 'his pursuit of playing Super Mario'. Super Mario, a game marketed by Nintendo, can be played on the television screen using a hand held console to direct a character. In Pahl's example Super Mario becomes for the child:

> 'a 'figured world' which provides both narrative impetus, a means to describe experience, and a beginning for drawing and writing (Pahl, 2001:4).'

Pahl's study (2002b) recognises that young children, particularly boys, respond positively and in complex ways to popular culture phenomena. She demonstrates how the re-figuring of 'figured worlds' such as Pokemon, is united with interests the boys have within the family (Pahl, 2001, 2002b). Boys involvement in the figured world of Super Mario and Pokemon is for Pahl crucial to their identity formation and sense of self. Drawing upon the work of Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner and Cain (2000), she defines artefacts as 'pieces of writing, drawing, oral narrations, models and games' (Pahl, 2001:2) which are created in response to children's popular culture.

Gender

Within the home context, socialising agents are recognised as having a strong effect on children in their views of themselves as gendered beings (Bailey, 1993). These include, 'the number of adult males and females in their lives and the roles these adults model', 'the biological sex of older and younger siblings' and 'the degree to which access to media, especially television, is allowed' (Bailey, 1993:118). Given that gender is seen to be a defining feature of society (Bailey, 1993), it is to be expected that children's drawings, as texts which reflect 'life as it is lived' (Pahl, 2002b), will give evidence of their experience of what it is to be a boy or girl, man or woman.

Young children's attempts to make gender meaningful by distinguishing between girls and boys is seen by Bailey (1993) to be unsurprising, given that children are labelling by society from the moment of birth. She recognises that society continues to 'differentially reinforce sex-typed behaviours in accordance with these labels.' (1993:7). For Bailey this reinforcement occurs through verbal interactions, physical handling, disciplinary measures, and clothing and toy selection.

> 'Studies show that socialization into appropriate gender roles begins at birth, as girls, wrapped in pink blankets, are treated quietly, talked to softly, and described as being dainty, gentle, quiet, and cuddly, while boys are dressed in blue, referred to in terms of being big, strong, and athletic, and handled in a more aggressive, playful manner.' (Frisch, 1977; Ricks, 1985; Rubin, Provenzano & Luria, 1976 cited in Bailey, 1993:117).

Because sexual differences are generally hidden, young children seek for evidence of what it means to be a boy or girl, a man or woman and rely on other characteristics including, 'differing physical traits, clothing and behavioural play patterns' (Bailey:118). Bailey recognises that by 'determining how maleness and femaleness are elaborated in the everyday world', children establish their own genderedness and are accepted by others as being 'normal' functioning members of society.

Skelton and Hall (2001:iv), in reviewing the policies and literature which addresses the gender role development of young children, support Bailey's views. They give examples of how the mores of the local community provide evidence of what it means to be a man or woman. A child's growing sense of gender identity will therefore be supported or challenged by seeing women work outside the home or men taking part in child care responsibilities by, for instance, involving themselves in the playgroup or nursery.

Support can also be found in Skelton and Hall's (2001:ii) review for the evidence given by the studies of Pahl (2001, 2002a), March and Millard (2000) and Marsh (2001a) in relation to the influence of the media upon young children. Skelton and Hall recognise the gender stereotyping of images prevalent within the mass media as an influence upon 'children's active involvement in constructing their gender identities' within the home context. They cite children's favourite

games, toys, television and book characters as giving messages to children about the 'correct' way of being a boy or girl, man or woman.

Underpinning the views of Bailey (1993) and the studies reviewed by Skelton and Hall (2001) is a recognition of the control exerted upon young children through the generalising effect of culture and the media in its range of forms. Children are seen to be rewarded when they demonstrate culturally appropriate behaviour or punished if they display inappropriate behaviour.

> '...young girls learn how to be a girl because they receive approval for feminine traits such as caring, gentleness and helpfulness, whilst young boys learn that they are expected to be boisterous, rough and energetic' (Oakley, 1972; Byrne, 1978; Seidler, 1989 in Skelton and Hall, 2001:6)

Skelton and Hall, (2001:7) give a reminder that not all boys enjoy boisterous, competitive games and dislike literacy activities and not all girls are seen as co-operative, quiet and wanting to 'play out domestic scenes'. By taking a gender relational perspective, the 'trying out' of the language, attitudes and behaviours of being a boy or girl is seen to be a longer process and can vary from home to home. Gender is recognised therefore as 'a fluid concept rather than being fixed and unchanging', and as such is influenced by context.

There are some references to gender specific behaviours in the literature on children's drawing development. Children's art expressions are seen by Malchiodi (1998:185), for example, to be formed to some extent by 'traditional gender roles and images of gender in the media and literature and impacted by the gender values and beliefs of adults with whom children come into contact. She comments that although some studies point to the gender-related themes of children's drawings (Golumb, 1992), they fail to discuss whether this is developmental, the result of parental or societal influences or both and that the influence of gender upon children's drawings is still a largely unexplored area (Malchiodi, 1998:187).

In her discussion of the elaboration upon different themes by boys and girls within their drawings and art work generally Golumb (1992) reports:

> '...the spontaneous productions of boys reveal an intense concern with warfare, actions of violence and destruction, machinery, and sports contests whereas girls depict more tranquil scenes of romance, family life, landscapes and children at play' (Golumb, 1992:158)

Golumb gains her evidence from in depth, longitudinal studies of the preoccupations of gifted individuals, for example the horse drawings of Heidi between the ages of three and ten (Fein, 1984) and the space world of Roger (Blake, 1988) between the ages of six and thirteen. Whereas support for boys' concern with power and conquest can be drawn from a range of sources

(Feinburg, 1976) less detailed information is available about the content of girls drawings and their preoccupations. Golumb (1992) does, however, comment that girls use fairy tale images such as kings, queens and animals such as horses as the subjects of their drawings.

Dyson's (1986) analysis of the drawings of children attending kindergarten, i.e. aged between five and a half and six and a half, would seem to support Golumb's evidence. Twice a week over a five month period Dyson collected not only children's free drawings, but also their dictations and audiotaped talk while drawing, in order to examine the meanings young children express through the interrelationship between drawing, talk and dictated text. Whereas the common themes of boys were seen to be 'explosions, battles, and displays of power and motion' with actors and actions moving through time accompanied by dramatising actions and language, (Dyson, 1986:389), girls were seen to typically draw 'happy little girls and cheerful small animals'. Their interest was in detailing a character, usually a girl, as it was depicted. Dyson's discussion of a typical girl's drawing includes:

> 'As she talked and drew their hair and clothes, one might think she was dressing her dolls, rather than drawing her girls.' (Dyson, 1986:393)

Parents/ Siblings

Malchiodi (1998) draws attention to the shaping, by 'significant others', of attitudes about drawing and art within childhood, particularly in relation to their ability to 'be an artist' as an adult.

> 'Remarks made by parent can have an impact on children's desire and motivation to make art; even the most well-meaning parent has, on occasion, misinterpreted the content of a child's drawing, perhaps unknowingly discouraging the child from continuing to draw.' (Malchiodi: 1998:22)

Pahl's (1999) understanding of the free-flowing, transformative nature of young children's meaning making affirms the child as a 'masterful player' (Reynolds and Jones, 1997) within his or her socially constructed world. In recognising the complexity of the processes involved in text making, including drawing, she sees the adult in the home context supporting the child's need for unhampered exploration of ongoing narratives.

Malchiodi (1998:25) recognises that a child who appears reserved when asked to draw may have been taught at home to respect the adult in authority, to be careful of not making a mess or to waste materials, or to wait for instructions and approval before proceeding. She feels that it is important therefore to decipher and understand 'learned beliefs and values' before developing any conclusions about a child's interest, motivation, and process of drawing.

Malchiodi's views of the sensitive role of the adult when interacting with a child who is drawing echo Schaffer's (1996b:265) comments about the role of the adult in the context of joint task

involvement. Supporting Vygotsky's theory of a zone of proximal development (1978), he sees the adult crucially needing to be able to 'generate graded conflict' by paying attention to the 'characteristics and achievements of the child'.

> 'For this purpose the adult needs to be closely tuned in to the relevant signals the child is providing with respect to task performance.' (Schaffer, 1996b:267)

Schaffer considers that individual differences among parents in relation to their sensitivity in this respect may have wide-ranging implications for socio-emotional and cognitive aspects of their children's development. He draws upon evidence (McDonald and Pien, 1982, Rubenstein and Howes, 1979, and White and Watts, 1973) which suggests that children's developmental achievements are not facilitated by adult behaviour in which commands, controls and directions predominate.

Schaffer and Crook (1979, 1980), drawing upon a study of mothers interacting with their children at play, comment on the effectiveness of an adult's active involvement within their child's own orientation framework. Twenty-four mother-child pairs, where the children were either fifteen months or twenty-four months old, were observed and video-taped during an eight minute laboratory play situation. The mothers were asked to ensure that their child played with all of the eight available toys. Maternal regulation of child behaviour, in relation to the duration and complexity of play, was shown to be accomplished by a variety of subtle and indirect means based on the mother's sensitivity to the child's ongoing behaviour.

> 'The interweaving of adult and child contributions clearly provides the key to developmental change. ... It seems highly likely that attentional manipulation is one of the more important contributions of adults, though it has also become apparent that what the adult does in this respect must be based on awareness of the child's own spontaneous behavioural tendencies.' (Schaffer, 1996b:275)

Matthew's (1994) comments on the nature of the adult's role within his longitudinal studies of his own children's evolving use of drawing. He recognises that in respect to drawing children are not always able to say directly what they need but that they give clues about their thinking in their action, play and media use. The ability to draw is seen by Matthews to have a 'temporary autonomy' (1994:123), similar to that credited by Trevarthen (1988) to language acquisition, i.e. it can continue to develop for a little while if there is no support forthcoming from the environment. However, as with language, for drawing to fully develop, he feels interaction from another 'drawing user' is essential.

> 'Babies need an adult companion sharing in the representational adventure in which meanings are given to sounds, actions and images.' (Matthews, 1994:123)

The more experienced learner's role, according to Matthews, is to make suggestions or put certain experiences in children's paths and to respond with sincerity.

'This is the kind of environment in which the different ways in which children and adults express themselves are respected; where children feel confident that people will take their drawings seriously, and where it would be unheard of for child's drawing to be dismissed as mere scribbling.' (Matthews, 1994:124)

For Matthews (1994:125), the language of an ongoing conversation about drawing gradually takes different forms as the child grows. It can involve: the 'four-dimensional language of gesture, facial expression and sound in the shared space and time between baby and caregiver'; 'saturating' a child in ideas or taking a decision to 'tip-toe unnoticed by'. Importantly Matthews, referencing Bruce (1991), recognises that when a child shows a drawing to an adult it may be to share the experience rather than to ask for criticism. For Matthews, the main role of the adult is to try to understand what the child is trying to do and to talk to them using 'serious terms' for how lines shapes and colours are working within their drawings, therefore developing a 'shared field of discourse and understanding'.

Matthews advocates that adults draw for children with extreme caution.

'Because the majority of people are speakers, they tend to converse, even with the babbler, in ways which are better than the ways in which they interact with the scribbler.' (Matthews, 1994:124)

He felt that responding to and talking to his own children about their paintings and drawings had a far more significant effect on the children's drawing and painting.

Matthews does not underestimate the importance of the images, produced by others within the environment, in providing support as children develop ways of representing their new understandings. He gives as exemplars images found within photographs and drawings, in books and comics and on television and film. For Matthews (1994:123), working with other people's pictures does not make a child's image 'second-hand' but is a way by which they learn the drawing rules which 'translate a three-dimensional world onto a two-dimensional surface'.

Matthews' role as a parent supporting drawing activity is underpinned by his particular experiences as an artist, including not only his own habitual drawing behaviours but his values and beliefs as an artist. Matthews' children therefore both participate in and learn about the cultural values of their family as they explore the drawing materials and activities that are made available to them within the home context.

Given the lack of studies which look at the context in which drawing takes place it is important to acknowledge drawing's place within a broader definition of literacy (Kress, 1997), and the part it plays in a continuum of interrelated symbol systems (Dyson, 1993a). There are a number of good quality research studies of young children learning to be literate in informal, home-based contexts. It is therefore useful to look at studies that have concentrated upon the socio-

cultural context of literacy learning. Barratt-Pugh (2000:10) draws attention to children 'learning how to do literacy in particular ways'. What children learn about literacy is seen by Barrett-Pugh to depend on their interactions in literacy events and to differ from family to family.

> 'In some families, spelling and neatness seem to be important. In others, the content and ideas seem to be central to the writing process, as well as having fun and being able to re-create a story. The way in which the writing is carried out also varies, from a draft form to copying, to typing on the computer, to rubbing out and starting again. We also see that the adult in each family has a slightly different role: in one family the adult corrects and oversees; in another the adult demonstrates; in another the adult is joint author; while in another the adult writes along-side her children.' (Barrett-Pugh, 2000:12)

Children's language and literacy learning is seen by Barrett-Pugh, (2000:17) to come about through active engagement within particular cultural and social contexts and to be informed by their different experiences of what it is to be literate. Referencing McNaughton (1995) she draws attention to the particularity of the co-construction of learning, taking place for instance between mother and child, leading in some instances to expertise for the child within a particular activity or in another to mastery across multiple literacies.

Weinburger (1996) draws upon a range of sources to illuminate particular influences upon literacy in the home context. In understanding the parent's role in young children's literacy learning she draws attention to the importance of the availability of literacy materials at home and of parental encouragement of literacy by reading frequently with their children and by reading themselves as part of their everyday activity. Weinburger's findings echoed those of Durkin (1966) who studied families where children learned to read early. Durkin (1966) found that mothers in particular seemed to play a key role in helping their children become early readers. In addition to the points raised by Weinburger (1996) she added that mothers needed to feel comfortable as an educator with their own children and needed to be available to provide help when it was asked for.

The illumination within studies such as Weinburger's of key contextual features of the home context in relation to literacy, is helpful in directing attention to what may be in turn relevant in relation to drawing.

Summary

The historical attention that has been paid to the analysis of collections of drawings, either as longitudinal studies of one child or cross sectional studies of children drawing at an adult's request, have generally lacked contextual detail and not been completed in the home context. There is therefore little detailed information which can be analysed to support a real understanding of the influences within the home context which impact upon young children as drawers.

Evidence is given of the home as a possible context for the exploration and ongoing transformation of materials, objects and artefacts as part of the child's drive to make meaning. If available the 'more able other' i.e. parent or sibling is used by the child as a supportive resource, when access to information or skills is needed. Analysing the range of evidence presented within this section it is possible to put forward key contextual features of the home context which may influence drawing:

- parents own experiences of drawing;

- the availability of drawing materials in the home which can be freely accessed and regularly used;

- parental encouragement and extension of drawing through sensitive involvement, particularly when asked for help by the child;

- the availability within the home of a model for drawing;

- the role played by the mother, particularly her expectations of the child both generally and as a drawer;

- the messages given by the rites and rituals of the home in relation to what it is to be a girl or boy;

- the prevalence of popular culture e.g. through the media and through artefacts.

The following section discusses how the contexts of pre-school and school influence the child's use of drawing.

2.4 The Influence of Context on Young Children's Use of Drawing: The Educational Sphere

Government Policy, Curriculum Provision and the Standards Agenda

Since the 1990's the curriculum for young children in England has continued to undergo the dramatic policy changes which were heralded by the introduction of the National Curriculum. The development of the Key Stage One National Curriculum for five to seven-year-olds emphasised a subject-based rather than a topic or theme approach to curriculum planning and delivery. Further influences have included the impact of Ofsted inspections; the impact of Standard Assessment Tasks for seven-year-olds in English and Mathematics; Baseline Assessment for school entrants; the re-framing of initial teacher training for primary schooling in order to ensure that literacy (English) and numeracy (mathematics) are prioritised; the introduction of the Literacy Hour and the Numeracy Lesson into Primary classrooms and the drawing of parents into the standards agenda.

Early Childhood Education in the United Kingdom generally refers to children from birth to eight and currently includes two National Curriculum stages, the Foundation Stage and Key

Stage One. The Foundation Stage was introduced in the form of curriculum guidance (QCA, 2000a) and was formally recognised as a stage within the National Curriculum in 2002. It is concerned with the education of under-fives across a range of care and education settings. The demarcation between the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One comes as children end their reception year in primary school.

The more formalised Key Stage One curriculum has, since the introduction of the daily Literacy Hour and Numeracy Lesson, been heavily influenced by the dominance within the curriculum of English and mathematics. This dominance is also reflected in statutory end of key stage assessment requirements, which are used as a measure of school performance but also give messages about what is of value within the school system. Similarly in all pre-school settings offering education for three to four-year-olds, the requirement to deliver the Desirable Learning Outcomes (SCAA, 1996) and the Early Learning Goals (QCA, 1999a), linked to Baseline Assessment measures, has led to a preoccupation with promoting learning in literacy and numeracy. Initially these pressures affected the fostering of wider aspects of children's cognitive, affective, social, aesthetic and physical development. They have, however, been somewhat ameliorated in pre-school settings, set apart from Primary schools by the introduction of the Foundation Stage for under-fives in 2000, and by new schedules for inspection by Ofsted designed to broaden the construct of quality at the pre-school phase. Nevertheless, reception class practice for four- and five-year-olds is dominated by a school standards agenda, though the Foundation Stage is designed to include all under-fives.

Pollard (2001:4) feels that the enormous increase in the political attention paid to education in recent years across the whole of the United Kingdom, has been driven by 'international economic interdependence' which has generated anxiety about national competitiveness. This has led to education becoming an area through which governments can present themselves as looking to the future and as acting decisively in the national interest, 'irrespective of the beliefs, expertise and interests of teachers'. A 'performance model' has for Pollard, defined educational discourse and this is articulated through the language of competition.

> '...we have the language of curriculum delivery, attainment, targets, competence, appraisal, inspection etc. Teachers and schools, we are told, must perform more 'effectively'. (Pollard, 2001:4)

According to Pollard, the government views effectiveness as being achieved for primary education by raising pupil attainments in the basics of English and mathematics. The pressure of the performance model therefore 'ultimately comes to bear on the expectations that are made of pupils' (Pollard, 2001:4).

For Silcock (2003:50) the process of raising educational standards has been one of the government 'manipulating school curricula and teacher-behaviour'. In common with Pollard

(2001) he sees the present system of education as 'performance obsessed' with children being required to

> 'succeed in linear fashion (reach prescribed subject 'levels' at set ages) in given areas if they are not to depress their school's position in league tables' (Silcock, 2003:50)

This requirement reflects for Silcock (2003:50-52) the 'extraordinary naïve adult beliefs about children's capacities to learn whatever we want them to learn' rather than developing unequally across domains and investing value in some studies more than others. Taking a socio-cultural perspective Silcock feels that there is a need to respect children's 'personal commitments', and ensure that their successes are 'co-constructed' with 'learners' and teachers' decisions 'scaffolding' each other'. The constraints placed upon teachers have, according to Silcock markedly led to teachers 'over-controlling learners such that they lose sight of their own roles in their own activities'.

Silcock might find it ironic that creativity has been given official recognition as one of the overarching aims of the curriculum in English schools (QCA, 1999b). The National Advisory Committee for Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE, 2001) accepts that creativity is not unique to the arts, being fundamental to advances made across all areas of everyday life, but recognises the 'creative arts' as having an essential place in creative education. They are seen to be an important way in which children can discuss and express their feelings and emotions and be involved in giving feelings form and meaning by representing experience in various ways. The creative arts are also seen to reflect a child's profile of abilities across a wide range of intelligences. A contrast can be seen, however, between the messages given by NACCCE (2001) and those given by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA, 1999b). NACCCE (2001) emphasise the benefits to the individual of creative activity, particularly in relation to the enormous increases in their self-esteem, confidence and achievement that as a whole it can bring. QCA (1999b:11) however, use the language of economics to stress creativity as a necessity for future 'workers and citizens' if they are to be 'innovative, enterprising and capable of leadership'.

Curriculum Provision for Drawing: Art Education within the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One Curriculum

Within the culture of primary and secondary schooling drawing is situated historically within the creative arts and specifically within art education. Art as a subject within primary education has traditionally lacked status and occupied a peripheral place within the curriculum with little attention being paid to its teaching (Anning, 1995). Baldock (2001) sums up what he considers to be a fundamentally ambivalent attitude to children's art work

> 'They are encouraged, for example, to experiment with paint and colour. The results are then pinned up with no context suggesting what is being learned, as though the paintings

are finished products on display in an art gallery. We refrain from teaching drawing skills, but praise the child that produces a picture which (often by accident as much as effort) has strong realist characteristics or a real sense of movement or effective overall structure.' (Baldock, 2001:98)

The initial attention paid to art as a discrete subject within the National Curriculum Orders (DES, 1992) was seen to lead to improvements in practice, (Ofsted, 1998), particularly in recognising art as a distinct subject rather than merely being used as a time filler or to support other areas across the primary curriculum (Anning, 1997). Further changes to the curriculum, as the government pursued its standards agenda and prioritised literacy and numeracy, meant, however, that any gains were short lived and evidence of improvement being eroded is given in subsequent Ofsted reports (2001, 2002).

'The successes of primary art built up over several years are under threat on two fronts: increasing numbers of schools are allocating less time for art and design; and there is a growing tendency for art and design to be seen solely as servicing other subjects such as history and geography.' (Ofsted, 2002)

This reflects what is at most a weekly allocation of an hour for the teaching of art in primary school classes.

Anning (1995) saw the Key Stage One, National Curriculum Art Orders (DES, 1992, SCAA, 1994) giving opportunities for both the systematic planning and monitoring of art education and the teaching of skills and techniques. She also recognised, however, the lack of provision made for art education within initial teacher training and the ongoing general lack of support for the teaching of the Arts. It is not surprising, therefore, that Clement (1992) commented upon the lack of confidence expressed by many generalist teachers in their ability to teach to the National Curriculum Art Orders. The provision of an optional scheme of work for art and design by QCA (2000b), developed using the national curriculum programmes of study for art and design, was an attempt to support practitioners whose own educational experience in art might have been curtailed at the age of fourteen. Practitioners were encouraged by QCA to develop or refine the suggested schemes of work in the anticipation that the range of skills and experiences, identified as necessary in order for children to meet end of key stage requirements in art and design, would be met. Practitioners, left by their own education with a sense of inadequacy, particularly in relation to drawing, were given direct guidance as to how the subject might be taught, instead of being left to fall back upon what they remembered of their own art education.

In relation to drawing, the teacher's guide within the schemes of work (QCA, 2000b) states that 'children should be encouraged to practise their drawing skills on a regular basis'. However, although art and design is generally seen as 'offering opportunities to stimulate children's creativity and imagination' (QCA, 2000b:4) and to emphasise the 'freedom of the individual', and 'the freedom of expression' (QCA, 1999b:14), the opportunities listed for developing children's drawing skills (QCA, 2000b:24) and the exemplars provided emphasise the

importance of observational drawing but give no sense of the importance of what the child brings to the process. These self-contained units of work pay scant recognition to the need children have to develop and communicate their own ideas through drawing media, or of practitioners recognising and building upon the bank of schematic images used consistently by the child. The success of these units in empowering the child as an artist would seem to crucially depend upon how they are interpreted by the practitioner within the setting.

Within the Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance (QCA, 2000a:116) art education has been subsumed under the heading of creative development. In common with views expressed in the NACCCE report (2001), there is, within the area of creative development, recognition of the holistic nature of the child as a learner (QCA, 2000a). Creativity is acknowledged as being 'fundamental to successful learning', enabling children to make connections between one area of learning and another. What the curriculum documentation (QCA, 2000a) fails to do, however, is make clear the relationship between creative development across all curriculum areas and the particular contribution of art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play, usually recognised as 'The Creative Arts'. Unfortunately and confusingly, the term 'creative development' is used in discussion of both.

Foundation Stage documentation (QCA, 2000a) has recognised that, in order for children to be given the best opportunity for effective creative development, attention needs to be paid to various aspects of provision. Included in these aspects are a stimulating environment, time for children to explore, develop ideas and finish working at their ideas and opportunities for children to express their ideas through a wide range of types of representation. Guidance specifies that the role of the adult is to value the children's ideas and to support them in their exploration and expression by acting as role model, introducing appropriate vocabulary and helping them to critically evaluate their own work. There is a lack of detailed guidance, however, through documentation or through professional training, of exactly how to 'sensitively support' the child's developing skills alongside their expression of ideas.

Drawing as a skill is paid little attention within Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage (QCA, 2000a). There is little recognition of its role as a 'child appropriate' activity for children between three and five and no emphasis upon its significance as a symbolic system or to the close interrelationship between play, talk, drawing and writing. It is not surprising that Anning (1997) feels that there is much misunderstanding about the value of drawing and that although the opportunity to draw is freely available within pre-school settings and many reception classrooms, emphasis and value is placed upon a recognisable and often stereotypical end product, rather than recognition and support for drawing as one of the child's many forms of communication which is multidimensional and unique (Malchiodi, 1998).

The confusion that surrounds the role and value of drawing for young children's learning and development is highlighted by the use of the terms 'drawing' and 'mark making', in relation to graphic activity within QCA guidance (2000a). Under the heading of creative development the term 'mark making' is used whereas within communication, language and literacy it is termed 'drawing' within a 'stepping stone' which comes prior to mark making and writing. There is no explanation of terms to support practitioner understanding of how and if mark making activity differs from drawing activity and the practitioner could be led to believe that in terms of literacy activity drawing's role abruptly ends as the child forms their first 'letter-like' marks.

Lack of clarity and support for young children's drawing development within Foundation Stage documentation is compounded by some discontinuity in the underpinning messages about expectations of the child as a learner given across both foundation stage guidance (QCA, 2000a) and the National Curriculum programme of study for Art at Key Stage One (DES, 1992, QCA, 1999b). The QCA Foundation Stage guidance (2000a) reflects the view held by early years educators of children as 'able learners, powerful thinkers, feeling human beings' (Nutbrown, 1996, xv) but seemingly underplays the importance of drawing within children's symbolic development. The National Curriculum programme of study for Art (DES, 1992, QCA, 1999b) however, is seen by Matthews (1992, 1999) to pursue as its goal realistic representation derived from a 'top down' model of development. This stage theory, generalised from the work of Luquet (1927), Piaget (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969), and Kellogg (1969), is criticised by Matthews for casting the young child in an outdated deficit role.

Supporting Drawing: The Role of the Practitioner

Matthews (2001) is particularly critical of the National Curriculum Art Order's proposals for teaching. He feels they are 'destructive to children's use and understanding of visual media' and he states that

> 'In accordance with the model of the entire English National Curriculum, the art curriculum focuses, not upon the learner but upon bodies of knowledge within the subject area. Because it is devised in terms of the transmission or 'delivery' of these bodies of knowledge to passive recipients, it is inevitably insensitive to children's development' (Matthews, 2001:29).

According to Matthews the National Curriculum has led to children's art having to 'be seen to fulfil an educational purpose of a peculiarly limited kind' and to 'an encouragement of overt teaching involving an active interference, on the part of teachers, with children's development'. For Matthews the last twenty years have seen 'the systematic devaluing of children's spontaneous art'. He defines spontaneous art as

> 'the kind of art children produce, with great intensity and enthusiasm, by themselves, and for themselves. It is an art which serves their own intentions, and with which they construct their own understandings of their world.' (Matthews, 2001:29)

Such art is seen by Matthews to be 'seriously misunderstood and maligned within the educational system'.

Using drawing as a case study, Matthews (2001:28) draws attention to six and seven-year-olds in primary schools rarely getting a chance to draw freely. He sees this to be partly because of the National Curriculum demands for the teaching of English and mathematics, but also because of 'the way in which the National Curriculum in art is couched'. The chance to draw comes according to Matthews 'either out of school, or else in a set 'art lesson' following the requirements of the art National Curriculum guide'. When offered the opportunity to draw freely, Matthews reports that children begin realising the possibilities of their own drawing and talk excitedly to each other and to their teacher about imaginary objects and events as they take shape upon the drawing surface. Their explorations of 'the structural, expressive and representational potential of drawing' are seen by Matthews to feed back into subsequent representations and be extremely important for the child's holistic development.

The lack of understanding of young children's images within the context of the contemporary educational system is seen by Matthews to lead to the suppression of young children's drawings alongside other art-forms they spontaneously generate (2001:29). His (2001) exemplification of drawing within the National Curriculum resonates with Walling's (2000:62-63) recognition, as an art educator, that National goals when 'localised' within the school culture, 'define the manner in which students can demonstrate competence'. National goals are seen by Walling to result in 'backward design', a form of constructivism where an objective or standard is defined and instruction is designed so that the child will 'construct that knowledge'.

Matthews (2001) would seem to agree with Walling's view. He draws attention to young children's free drawings measuring up very poorly against conventional methods of assessing children's art including that of the National Curriculum. Matthews feels that the National Curriculum orders assume that the end point of drawing development is when children 'make pictures of how three-dimensional objects appear as if seen from a fixed position in space'. He sees this view encouraging teachers to stamp out the spontaneous drawing of childhood and correct children until they make 'good' representations which are 'socially sanctioned by society' (Matthews, 2003:34-5). He feels this view is extreme and is just as bad as what he terms the 'romantic, laissez-faire approach' whereby adults approach children's art with an uncritical sentimentality that children's drawings and painting are 'delightful outpourings which will be damaged by any form of adult influence or teaching'. Matthews recognises the need for practitioners who can support artistic development as part of children's holistic construction of understanding.

NACCCE (2001) echo this view in the emphasis they place upon the importance for children's creative development of adults who have both skills and knowledge. The creative process of the Arts is seen by NACCCE to involve children in developing forms of expression whereby meaning is not only 'uniquely available in the form in which it is expressed' but how it looks is inseparable from what it means and how it means (NACCCE, 2001:33). NACCCE (2001:95) draws attention to the importance of adults not only teaching for creativity but also 'teaching *with* creativity'. The report highlights the importance of teachers:

- having expertise in their particular fields
- needing techniques that stimulate curiosity and raise self-esteem and confidence
- recognising when encouragement is needed and confidence threatened
- balancing structured learning opportunities with self-direction
- using open questioning rather than closed questions which often rely on linear processes and logical reasoning

These points, seen to be fundamental to creative teaching across the curriculum, again draw attention to the particular need for generalist primary practitioners to have greater expertise in supporting children across the Arts.

Although Matthew's (2003) criticisms are concentrated upon the Programme of study for Art at Key Stage One and above, within the Foundation Stage the Arts fare little better in terms of practitioner expertise. Whereas attention has been paid to ensuring practitioners are knowledgeable in relation to the teaching of literacy and numeracy through ongoing training, the exploratory and imaginative nature of art activity, coupled with practitioners concern to 'support children's development with an enabling, facilitating and observing role' rather than directly as 'teachers' (Moyles, Adams and Musgrove, 2002a:1), has led to drawing being marginalised as part of the child's 'right to play' or their 'right to childhood' (Siraj-Blatchford, 1999:21).

Moyles, Adams and Musgrove (2002b:14), reporting the findings of the 'Study of Pedagogical Effectiveness in Early Learning' (SPEEL), state that the multiplicity of types of provision, ethos and staff qualifications and training within Early Years settings result in significant 'diversity of effective pedagogies'. Their comment reflects the historical division not merely between primary and pre-school education but also between the social services 'care' sector and the educational sector regarding provision made for under-fives. Just as Matthews (2003) is concerned with the lack of understanding of the development of drawing at Key Stage One, so Moyles et al, (2002a:4) reveal areas for further development for Foundation Stage pedagogy within which support for the teaching of drawing is subsumed. These areas include child development knowledge and its links with QCA guidance (2000a) and understanding how to interact with children at the level of teaching whilst not undermining children's confidence in their own skills and abilities (Moyles *et al.*, 2002a:4).

Bringing together the SPEEL (Moyles *et al.*, 2002a, 2002b) findings with the views of NACCCE (2001) and Matthews (2003), what would seem to be missing in relation to drawing and the learning process, is recognition of both practitioner and child needing to take part in 'reflexive co-construction' and interactions that involve 'joint involvement episodes' or 'sustained shared thinking' (Siraj-Blatchford, Sylva, Muttock, Gilden and Bell, 2002:3). The 'Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years' (EPEY) research, carried out by Siraj-Blatchford *et al.* (2002), found that learning within Foundation Stage settings came from a process of 'cognitive construction' which was achieved only when the child was motivated and involved. In recognising the importance of periods of sustained shared thinking between adult and child, the study showed that even in the most effective settings these did not happen very frequently. In excellent and good settings the balance of who initiated activities, practitioner or child, was seen to be very equal, revealing that 'the pedagogy of these effective settings encourages children to initiate activities as often as the staff'. For the children in reception classes, however, there was a much greater emphasis upon staff initiated activities. Siraj-Blatchford, *et al.* (2002:3) found that in all of their case study settings, although the children spent most of their time in small groups, 'sustained shared thinking' was most likely to occur when children were interacting one-to-one with an adult or single peer partner. Freely chosen play activities were seen to often provide the best opportunities for adults to extend children's play.

Kindler (1995:11-12), referencing the work of Vygotsky (1978) draws attention to the importance within art education of the supportive adult being concerned with the child's present developmental abilities whilst looking forward to areas well within the child's reach. She recognises that a 'laissez faire' approach to learning encourages the child to 'stay in place'. Vygotsky's theory is recognised by Kindler as being both child-centred and discipline-based. She sees the admiration of children's art as a social phenomenon, and whilst not arguing that it does have an enviable sense of directness, purity and intensity, she does feel that this blinds parents and educators to children's actual needs. These include:

> 'the need to be stimulated and challenged; to acquire skills and abilities that permit fluent use of visual symbols; and to operate at the level of a zone of proximal development.' (Kindler, 1995:12)

For Burton (1980) the adult has a particular role to play in encouraging the beginnings of artistic language. She describes how verbal interchange between a child and a practitioner can be a means of enriching and expanding artistic learning. Burton draws attention to the subtlety of the practitioner's role in not telling the child what to do, or providing specific directions, but rather encouraging conscious choice making. It is through reinforcing the child's terminology through dialogue that Burton sees the child being offered an opportunity to pause and reflect, which in turn intensifies his or her learning experience.

The Social Construction of Drawing within the Educational Sphere

Bresler and Thompson (2002:153) recognise the power of schooling to affect children's artistic development. They feel that where the arts are concerned, all institutions, schools and pre-schools '...permit and facilitate some practices and prohibit others' and that schools are where children:

> 'learn routines and rituals, where they confront the necessity of sharing space and materials, working within prescribed period of time and cleaning up and putting away when they are told to do so.' (Bresler and Thompson, 2002:153)

Burton (2000:336-338) accepts that the 'intensity, vigour, body involvement and evident excitement' with which young children 'create something where nothing was before' is followed by a slow decline in the dynamic responses to materials in the years of middle childhood. She sees young children's discoveries, as they act on and change materials from 'one state of being to another', being linked to their imagination and resulting in acts of expressive meaning. Children's excitement comes from their direct recognition of a connection between their actions, the outcomes of their actions in the materials they use, and inner sensations and experiences. In the process of transforming materials Burton sees young children taking:

> 'new journeys from an inner world of private meaning to an outer socio-cultural world within which the private expressive voice is elaborated.' (Burton, 2000: 338)

Burton recognises that the young child's attention increasingly becomes focused on acquiring the representational conventions of the school culture as their natural artistry is overtaken by the need for technique and skill acquisition determined by teachers and parents (Burton, 2000:338).

Tarr's (1995:23) detailed study of the 'art making' of three- and four-year-old children took place within a pre-school over a two month period. It gives exemplification of the views expressed by Bresler and Thompson (2002) and Burton (2000). It involved both observation and, following each period of observation, discussion with the experienced practitioner who was working with the group of fourteen children. From her findings Tarr highlights the importance of daily routine in both transmitting cultural values and providing structures for the creation of meaning. She found that alongside the routines set out by practitioners, for example the organisation of the session within a predictable format and the structuring of group activities in a 'ceremonial or ritualistic manner', there were mutually constructed interactions which took place between children and practitioners. These interactions, whilst appearing more spontaneous, retained a common structure across occurrences.

The most clearly ritualised interaction between practitioner and child around art making, occurred as a child completed a piece of work, took it to the practitioner and received a comment such as 'beautiful' or was asked about the subject matter. Within this ritual Tarr saw

children learning to seek out practitioners for validation and acceptance and in doing so gaining understanding about what was acceptable as 'school art'. She recognised this as indirect teaching, which was further supported as the practitioner, in selecting work for display, gave messages to both the children and their parents about what was valued. This practice influenced parent and child interaction about art-work and further shaped children's responses. The practitioner, in an awareness of the need to support the child's construction of a positive self, gave generalised praise such as 'lovely', 'beautiful' and 'tell me about it'. This response was seen by Tarr to fail to teach anything about art or art skills and therefore to fail to support the development of the child's self-concept as an artist. Tarr's study (1995:24) gives evidence of the transmission of meaning between practitioner and child not being simply a stimulus-response interaction, but requiring interpretation. Meanings were selected, suspended, regrouped and transformed by both child and practitioner during and because of action and interaction. Evidence was also given of children seeming to be stimulated to continue with a certain action because of a comment made by the practitioner. Importantly, however, children also showed autonomy by rejecting a practitioner's suggestion that they felt did not meet their needs.

Tarr's study found that although the experienced early years practitioner stressed the importance of process over product, this emphasis was routinely contradicted in practice. The contradiction began as the child took the art-work to the practitioner for acknowledgement and it was the product, rather than the process that was commented upon. It was supported by the importance attached to the name of the child being put on the product and the request by the practitioner that the child put the work in a safe place. Final reinforcement of the importance of product was given when parents asked children whether they had made 'something to bring home today' (Tarr, 1995: 25).

Whilst the importance of children being involved in 'messy activities' (Tarr, 1995:25) was recognised by the practitioner, Tarr found in practice, however, that the opportunities to be 'messy' were part of the socialising process of teaching children to become orderly. She found that there were ritualised conditions surrounding the accessing of what were classed as 'messy activities' and that many comments to children were concerned with them maintaining an acceptable balance between neatness and mess. For Tarr, art in this pre-school setting gave messages of the cultural values of order, ownership and assumptions about pre-school as a place of cultural transmission rather than about artistic creation, skill acquisition or self expression.

Hamblen's (2002:22) analysis of art activities, as exemplified in educational literature, draws attention to planned practice which has little in common with how professional artists work and which is therefore removed from Bruner's (1960) idea of the curriculum being structured according to the activities of professionals. The activities planned for school settings fit into a notion that:

'creativity must be expressed in specific time increments (one hour or less), noise must be kept to a minimum, work produced must not be messy, the clean-up of used materials must be accomplished in approximately five minutes, work spaces are depersonalised, and the products produced must be easily stored.' (Hamblen, 2002:22)

Pearson (2001), in recognising drawing as a socially constructed activity, draws attention to the need for drawing to be a part of everyday practice if meaningful development is to take place. Unusually, Pearson questions the importance of drawing for *all* children and draws attention to the greater importance of the adult recognising the child's choice of form of representation. Pearson states that there is consistent, if informal, acknowledgement that many children do not produce drawings (e.g. Duncum, 1986, Gardner, 1980). Rather than presuming that drawing is a natural kind of activity Pearson considers that

'Graphic productivity is not significant to being an adult and this has to be accounted for as part of the social world within which adults, along with children, exist. To understand graphic activity involves grasping its existence in social life as one possible, but unnecessary, practical element of social existence.' (Pearson, 2001:353)

Graphic activity in both children and adults is seen by Pearson to be dependent on socially and culturally understandable choices. He supports this view by reference to Hagen's (1985) findings of a lack of significant difference when comparing the drawings of graphically inexperienced children and graphically inexperienced adults.

Anning and Edwards (1999), in their example of a child's construction of self as a builder, stress the importance, in the child's development of a mastery orientation, of the role of the adult in modelling the use of building materials and artefacts. Pearson (2001) recognises that in order for the child to fully develop his or her drawing capability he or she will need to construct an image of what it is to be an artist or to be able to use drawing with purpose in everyday life. He draws attention to the child's need to access models of graphic practice, whether these are peers, parents, practitioners or the products of graphic activity.

Although the influence of popular culture upon the child within the home context is recognised (Marsh, 2001b), there is little corresponding evidence of this influencing curriculum content in either pre-school or school settings. Children's interest in cartoon and video imagery, has been recognised but has failed to cross over into educational settings where it is viewed as inferior or ignored (Wilson, 1992). Dyson (1993b), however, in her study of the social worlds in which children learn to write, takes a Vygotskian perspective in relation to her understanding of children absorbing the forms of culturally significant symbol systems which surround them at home and school. Referencing the work of Paley (1986), she recognises that what children most want to learn is how to socially connect with others. She argues for practitioners making positive use of children's interest in each other.
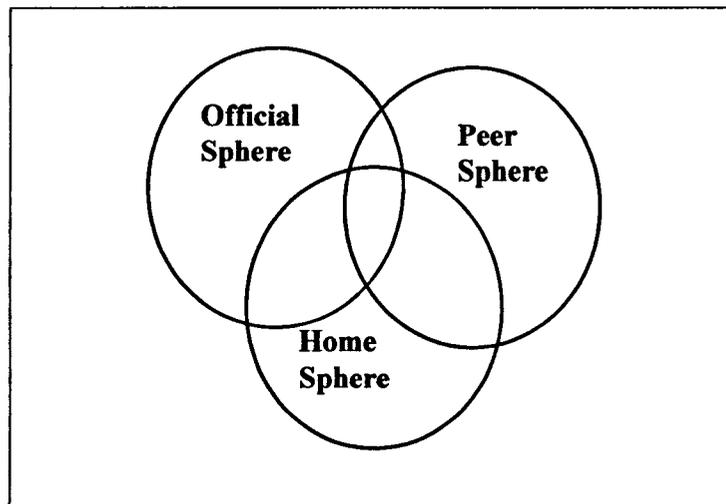
Figure 5: The Multiple Social Worlds of the Classroom (Dyson, 1993b:3)

Similarly the classroom is for Dyson (1993:3) a complex social place where children are dynamic members of 'diverse reference spheres' (Figure 5). She sees there being no neat boundaries between home and school or what she terms the 'official' (teacher-controlled) sphere and that of peers. Her diagram exists merely as a graphic metaphor of the existence of these spheres. Dyson draws attention to a whole social world that for children exists separately from the 'official' world of schooling. This 'peer sphere' is seen by Dyson to develop as the child turns from adult to peers in order to gain knowledge of a culture which is their own.

Within children's social world Dyson (1993b) recognises that the peer group dynamics within any classroom are influenced by the divisions and inequities of the larger society. She accepts that no two children share exactly the same set of experiences or belong to exactly the same set of social worlds, and that they bring into the classroom a 'repertoire of genres or familiar ways of constructing symbolic worlds' (Dyson, 1993b:11). Their dialogue, including stories, songs and jokes, is seen by Dyson (1993b:54) to be a particularly important way of 'negotiations between differences' taking place. In her detailed observations of a class of five- and six-year-olds, Dyson saw the most explicit verbal negotiations taking place in relation to gender.

Paley (1986:x-xi), in her detailed, narrative observations of role-play in the domestic areas of one kindergarten and elementary school, sees a change in the way play behaviour progresses for boys and girls. For a three-year-old, regardless of sex, it is remarkably alike, with costumes representing male and female roles being casually exchanged. By four years children, in an effort to co-ordinate themes, tell each other who they are and the boys are seen to be rebelling against the girls' need for them to be plumbers and firemen. Paley observed many boys preferring to be monsters or superheroes, whilst for the girls 'mother and baby reign supreme'. Paley sees role-play dramatically changing among five- and six-year-olds as the children are involved in what she terms 'separation by fantasy' (1986:xii). She comments that as they search

for a social definition of what it is to be a 'boy' or a 'girl', society provides them with 'Barbie dolls and Star Wars'. She also recognises, however, that within the classroom she studied they invented symbols of their own in an unstated game of 'boys and girls'.

> 'You hop to get your milk if you are a boy and skip to the paper shelf if you are a girl. Boys clap out the rhythm of certain songs; girls sing louder. Boys draw furniture inside four-story haunted houses; girls put flowers in the doorways of cottages. Boys get tired of drawing pictures and begin to poke and shove; girls continue to draw.' (Paley, 1986:xi)

Skelton and Hall (2001:iv) accept that children have a desire to 'demonstrate publicly that they are clearly a boy or a girl'. In order to challenge learned stereotypical behaviour they recognise that active intervention is needed on the part of adults to help children understand that a variety of behaviours is acceptable. They draw attention to the feminised culture prevalent in early years settings and the lack of examples of good practice with children in relation to gender equity and sex role stereotyping issues. They cite various management and organisational practices in early years settings as differentiating between girls and boys including:

- segregation as an administrative device for example, lining up, registration, team games and classroom competitions;
- using the opposite sex as a threat for example, seating a boy who is misbehaving next to a girl as punishment;
- steering children towards traditional gender appropriate activities either through suggestion or through modelling for example, female practitioners non-involvement in sand, water and block play;
- paying more attention to boys because they talk more in class or rebuking boys more publicly
- assessing work according to gendered expectations
- holding different perceptions of boys and girls ability based on for example boys greater use of physical space or success in gaining the practitioner's attention.

Skelton and Hall (2001:v) recognise the importance of the stories children play out in allowing them to make sense of themselves and others and recommend that ways of weaving alternate storylines into children's play which treat the themes of children's stories seriously, but are fun, should be found.

Accepting that artistic activity becomes a decidedly peripheral and neglected concern in classrooms focused on academic routines, Thompson (1995:3) draws attention to an appreciation, within the pre-schools of Reggio Emilia, of the role of visual expression in children's efforts to make sense of their experiences. Within these settings artistic activity is recognised as one of the 'most comfortable and fluent means of investigating and interpreting

experience that young children have at their disposal' and drawing, painting, modelling and constructing take an integral part within children's investigations.

Evidence of the importance of visual expression is shown by the inclusion in each of the settings of a practitioner whose speciality is art. In addition to the provision of a large studio, equipped with a wide range of art materials and including those usually associated with the art-work of older children. Every classroom has its own miniature studio. Importantly children participate in extended enquiries, which often originate in their interests but always connect with their experience. Because visual statements are made as the children are consolidating and expressing what they have learned through dialogues, field trips, preliminary sketches and discussion, the practitioners of Reggio Emilia claim that intervention is seldom necessary (Thompson, 1995). Given Tarr's (1995) understanding of the important influence of underpinning structure and ritual upon children's art making, their claim, however, might be disputed.

Practitioners within the pre-schools of Reggio Emilia argue that all knowledge emerges in the process of self and social construction. In common with the emphasis upon the individual within the education systems of both the United Kingdom and the United States of America, part of the role of the practitioner is to establish a personal relationship with each child and 'ground this relationship in the social system of the school' (Edwards, Gandini, Forman, 1998:115). In the pre-schools of Reggio Emilia, however, there is an emphasis upon children working as part of a group. It is by working within a group that children are seen to become active agents in their own socialisation and knowledge building with peers. The interrelationship between social and cognitive development is seen to be 'a sort of spiral sustained by cognitive conflict' where both conflicts and recognition of differences are seen to be essential

> 'Conflict transforms the relationships a child has with peers – opposition, negotiation, listening to the other's point of view and deciding whether or not to adopt it, and reformulating an initial premise – are part of the processes of assimilation and accommodation into the group. We see these dynamics, until a short time ago considered only as part of the socialisation process, also to be substantially cognitive procedures; and they are an essential element of democracy.'(Edwards, Gandini, Forman, 1998:115-118)

The role of the adult is to initiate and nurture situations that stimulate this kind of learning process, where conflict and negotiation appear as the driving force for growth.

Summary

The government standards policy, with its dominant concern for achievement by children in English and mathematics, can be seen to have exacerbated an ongoing neglect of concern for children's creative and artistic achievement. Given the importance of drawing as a symbolic system for the child, particularly between the ages of three and six, it would appear very difficult for it to be developed as a communicative and learning tool. Once the child has moved from the holistically underpinned Foundation Stage setting into the more formally organised

Key Stage One classroom it would seem that opportunities for choices of modes of representation, including drawing, are drastically reduced. The development of drawing within the 'official' school setting would appear to be dependent upon whether it is featured as one of a rotation of activities within the framework of weekly, one hour lessons provided by the Scheme of work for Art (QCA, 2000b). Little is known about the drawings completed by children 'unofficially' within school.

Within Foundation Stage settings, the need for creative development through art activity and drawing is generally acknowledged and provided for. There would seem, however, to be a lack of clarity in relation to understanding of the role of the adult in artistic activity, particularly in relation to under and over direction. Unlike the pre-school settings of Reggio Emilia, the importance of the presence of an art educated practitioner within an early years setting seems not to have been considered.

Chapter Three, which follows, reviews literature which has influenced the decisions made about the use of appropriate methodology within the study.

Chapter 3

LITERATURE REVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

Within this socio-cultural study of young children's drawing, booklets of children's drawings, compiled by participants, were used not only as a data source but also as a tool for stimulating dialogue and eliciting the values, beliefs and perspectives of parents, practitioners and children. This dual use of drawing as data and as a research tool is innovative and reflects on increasing interest in visual imagery within our culture and in using visual data as a source for research into socio-cultural aspects of enquiry. In addition the study was supported by the detailed contextual information provided by digital images and photographs.

Given the foregrounding of visual evidence within the study, this chapter considers the growing interest in visual data, particularly in relation to research which values the 'voice' of the child. It highlights the use of case study as an appropriate research design for longitudinal, detailed, socio-cultural study and draws attention to the particular sensitivity required on the part of the researcher working across the contexts of both home and educational settings in order that data is collected within an ethical framework.

3.2 Field of visual culture

Research using drawings is part of a 'recent reworking' of the field of Cultural Studies in order that a specific field of Visual Cultural Studies can be defined (Lister and Wells, 2001:62). The field of Cultural Studies has always included an interest in the visual. However the late twentieth century's explosion of imaging and visualising technologies suggests to Lister and Wells that everyday life has become strongly influenced by 'visual culture'. Although photographic images have been a major element of visual culture in modern industrial societies, the globalisation of images and the impact of media symbols has led to all kinds of visual information becoming part of a new 'visuality of culture' including 'oil painting to the internet' (Mirzoeff 1998:3). This has led to interest in visual information processing as a way of understanding the world.

Prosser (1998:115) recognises that the use of photographs within the research process is oriented not only by 'underlying epistemological and methodological assumptions' but also by the particular academic discipline within which the research is situated; the theoretical framework guiding the study; the researcher's role and his or her personal attributes including

skills, experiences, values and beliefs. He recognises that reading images is an everyday, automatic skill in a visual world. Yet he feels the use of the image is not adequately reflected within word-orientated, qualitative research methodology.

'The qualitative paradigm uses words or occasionally numbers and only very rarely images except as a representation of words and numbers' (Prosser, 1998:100)

Images within films, videos and photographs are acceptable within research methodology 'only as means to record data or as illustration and subservient to that of the central narrative' (Prosser 1998:99). Their use as a primary source of research evidence has been restricted and their status within the research community has been low.

Prosser draws attention to the trend among both visual sociologists and visual anthropologists over the last twenty years of taking into account 'the way images are contextually bound and mediated by socio-cultural settings' (1998:102). Collier (2001:38) in discussing the use of photographs supports this, stating the need for enough contextual information to be recorded to make each photograph 'analytically intelligible'. If visual images are to be reliable sources of cultural information he sees as the ideal situation

'... a carefully made visual research collection with comprehensive temporal, spatial and other contextual recording, good annotation, collection of associated information and maintenance of this information in an organised data file.' (Collier, 2001: 38)

The use of images with words is seen by Prosser (1998:1) to enhance understanding of the human condition. He argues that films, photographs, drawings, cartoons, graffiti, maps and diagrams, signs and symbols, taken cumulatively can signify a culture. When taken individually these images become objects which capture a moment in time from which a great deal of information can be elicited. In relation to the collection and analysis of children's drawings the need for contextual details would seem to be particularly necessary. Because their meanings, when analysed individually, are subjective and often transformative, detailed contextual evidence will increase the validity of research conclusions. Validity can also be strengthened by seeking meaning across a series of drawings completed by each individual (Cox, 1997), particularly if evidence is gathered over a sustained period of time. The work of Matthews (1994, 1999, 2003) and Cox (1992) has been important in the development of analytical frameworks in relation to drawing; Matthews analysing children's art work as artistic expressions and Cox as technical achievements.

Within developmental psychology and education much attention has been paid to the collection and analysis of human figure drawings. Sets of 'one off' drawings have been used since the 1960's in assessing children's intelligence (Goodenough, 1926, Harris, 1963) and in establishing developmental stages in children's drawings (e.g. Kellogg, 1970). The variability

shown from drawing to drawing in relation to particular features has meant, however, that the use of figure drawing as tests is deemed unreliable (Harris, 1972). The fact that drawings, and images in general, can be analysed in a variety of ways has therefore detracted from their use as a reliable source of quantitative data.

3.3 Using drawing and photographs as a stimulus for articulating understanding

Image –based techniques, including both drawing and photographs, have been used across the fields of clinical psychology and education to gain greater understanding of children's thinking and particularly to support, encourage and stimulate them to put their thoughts into words.

A Therapeutic Model

Within medical therapy children's drawings have been used to stimulate children in their free recall of events on the assumption that emotionally disturbed children reflect their problems in their drawings (Di Leo, 1973, 1996). Goodwin (1982) recognises that the use of drawings opens up communication between a child and an adult, which in turn encourages narrative accounts. Miller, Veltcamp and Janson's (1987), study of sexually abused children is supportive of Goodwin's work and gives evidence of children becoming highly verbal regarding the content of a drawing once it is completed. Drawing is seen to be a supportive rather than a threatening activity for a child who is hesitant in talking during treatment.

Wakefield and Underwager (1998), recognise the usefulness of drawings as diagnostic aids and in building rapport between an adult and child. They stress, however, that there have been serious methodological problems in relation to their use in relation to cases of possible sexual abuse and research on indications of abuse or trauma determined by analysis of drawing is still inconclusive. The process of encouraging the child to give information has resulted in interviewers priming the child, which in turn has led to errors in some children's accounts. One example of the consequence of adults shaping children's responses was seen by Wakefield and Underwager to be the inclusion, within children's narratives, of imaginary remembered experiences which they consistently believed to be true. Wakefield and Underwager draw attention to the need for drawings to be used in a non-suggestive way and for children's descriptions not to be selectively reinforced.

Whilst children's drawings and art expressions continue to be explored in relation to their diagnostic value, within art therapy there is widespread acceptance by practitioners of drawings and paintings as 'containers for feelings' and they are seen as having inherent therapeutic value. Children who cannot communicate emotions verbally are seen to gain release, order and containment through drawing (Malchiodi, 1998:110).

As a Tool for Exploring the Views and Belief Systems of Professionals and Parents

In a small-scale educational research project, submitted as part of doctoral studies, Lucas (2000) used the analysis of photographic evidence to elicit the views of practitioners as to what they considered constituted quality educational learning experiences for the five-year-old in England and in Sweden. Lucas recognised that the video camera had the potential to produce more detailed data than the snapshots of time collected by the camera but he drew attention to the ease of use of disposable cameras. As videoing would have needed to take place across the duration of one day in all of the twenty educational settings involved in the study, he felt that the logistical difficulties of organising data collection were too great. Having collected the photographic evidence, all practitioners were asked to select a small group of photographs according to pre-determined criteria and to carry out sorting activities. These activities were felt by Lucas to be particularly successful in enabling the practitioners to stand back from what they were doing and articulate their thoughts.

> The act of practitioners reviewing practical situations within photographs generated dialogue concerning professional knowledge about work with children and wider beliefs about education. These might not have been verbalised without the photographic 'support'. (Lucas, 2000:103)

The importance of professionals, parents and children being able to articulate their views of the quality of educational services was recognised in the national evaluation of Sure Start (Brodie, 2003). The need for evaluation to be more culturally appropriate and sensitive and for local families to take part in the design, re-shaping and on-going development of local programmes led to a focus upon participatory research methods and ongoing 'conversation' between all involved in the research process. Increasingly action research, traditionally associated with practitioners, has been applied to research and evaluation involving service users such as parents (Brodie, 2003:7). Brodie included as methodology, alongside surveys, semi-structured questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observations and film and video, the use of visual 'mapping' methods. She gave as an example pictures of places in the community being used as a medium for research participants to express opinions about aspects of life in their communities.

As an Approach to Exploring Children's Views of Educational Services

Building upon methods used in participatory appraisal, the Mosaic approach is proposed by Clark and Moss (2001) as a way of listening which acknowledges children and adults as co-constructors of meaning. It is an integrated approach which combines visual and verbal tools alongside the process of dialogue, reflection and action. It was inspired by the development of pedagogical documentation in the pre-schools of Reggio Emilia in Northern Italy. The Mosaic approach was developed as part of a study of two groups of children, one group aged between three and four and the other under two. The aim of the study was

'to find practical ways to contribute to the development of services that are responsive to the 'voice of the child' and which recognise young children's competencies' (Clark and Moss, 2001:2)

Clark and Moss use the term 'mosaic' to reflect the multi-method approach taken to young children and adults making meaning together. Within the methodology, children's own photographs, tours and maps were joined to talking and observing in order to gain deeper understanding of children's lives. Disposable cameras were used within the research, extending a technique used by the Daycare Trust (1998) for children to photograph their 'favourite' things in nurseries. In Clark and Moss's (2001) study, photographs taken by the three- and four-year-old children formed the basis of following interviews and gave evidence of an in depth view of the nursery. The older children were also paired with the two-year-olds in taking photographs which reflected their daily routine. Clark and Moss felt that the resulting photographs gave the children a product that they knew had value in the adult world and a powerful new language. They felt this contrasted with an undervaluing of children's own drawings and paintings.

Underpinning all aspects of Clark and Moss's study was the recognition of the need to let the child take the lead, to be flexible and to listen carefully. Tours and maps, adapted from Hart's (1997) 'transect' walks and Langsted's (1994) 'walking interview', were seen by Clark and Moss as a way of extending children's work with cameras. Led by the child or children the tour or walk was an exploration of the setting guided by the children themselves. The recording of the tour was decided by the children and included audio-tapes, drawings and photographs. Once the photographs were processed, the children chose from their range of documentation to make a map or model of the site, adding new drawings and writings as they progressed. Through the active process of documenting, including walking, directing and map or model making, the children's perspective and priorities were gained and drew attention to the particular importance of key spaces and key people.

Although entitled 'Listening to Young Children' the study involved interviewing parents, allowing them to share their unique perspective about their children, convey some of their interpretations of their children's feelings, needs and skills and to form another piece of the mosaic.

3.4   Case Studies

The case study is particularly suited as a research design for a longitudinal, in depth study which focuses upon real people in real situations and takes particular account of the context as 'a powerful determinant of cause and effect' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000:181).

Recognition of the 'wholeness' (Sturman, 1999:103) of human systems within the case study makes it particularly suitable for an across-context, socio-cultural project.

Case study is seen by Edwards (2001:126) to be the most broadly used form of qualitative research design. She sees it being used to answer the question 'What is going on here?' in relation to the 'particularities of lives in context'. She refers to individual cases, illustrative and comparative cases and lifestory. She recognises that a case study can be an individual, a family, a work team, a community, or some form of intervention. What would seem to be important for Edwards is that it has within it 'a set of interrelationships that both bind it together and shape it, but also interact with the external world'.

One of the difficulties put forward by Edwards in relation to the use of the case study is the temptation for researchers to generalise from the cases (the particular) to the wider population (the general). Although the case study can provide insights into other, similar situations and cases and assist in their interpretation (Nisbet and Watt, 1984), the strength of the case study is in particularisation and in rigorous examination of what is seemingly familiar. Edwards also recognises that identifying the boundaries of the case can be difficult for the researcher given its complex interconnectedness with other social systems. Reflecting Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model of the interrelationship of a hierarchy of systems, she sees a case as

'a set of concentric circles in which the major focus is on the central circle with interest decreasing as one moves towards the outer ring' (Edwards, 2001:128).

She draws attention to the need to decide what will be the foreground and background of the study as whatever is placed in the foreground should drive decisions about data collection.

Yin (1984) differentiates between types of case study according to outcomes and identifies the exploratory (as a pilot to other studies or research questions), the descriptive (providing narrative accounts) and the explanatory (testing theories). Edwards (2001:126) is more concerned to explore their purpose. She sees case studies as having one of two broad purposes. Firstly it is of intrinsic interest to focus on one case and the interactions and meanings held by participants. Even if more than one case is chosen, Edwards sees the focus being inside the case and comparison across cases not being the main concern. Although an intrinsic case can be seen to raise questions about wider issues, it is not designed to be generalisable. The second purpose is that a case is selected as an example of 'phenomena occurring more widely'. The fine-graded exploration that a case study allows would assist general understanding of the phenomena. Exemplary cases can be selected to represent a particular category from a wider population and can be illustrative or can involve comparison across cases in order to identify common themes. This allows more general understanding of the field to be built from the ground up. Exemplary

cases can also be incorporated into mixed designs to provide illustrative evidence to inform understandings from other data sources.

Stake (1995: 4-5) recognises that a case study or a small number of case studies, which he terms a 'collective case study', will be difficult to defend in terms of being representative of the whole. He feels in selecting a case the concern can not be with representation or typicality but with 'maximising what we can learn' from the layers of data collected for the case.

> 'Our time and access for fieldwork are almost always limited. If we can we need to pick cases which are easy to get to and hospitable to our enquiry.' (Stake, 1995:4)

Stake feels it is important that the researcher makes choices from amongst the many ways of carrying out case studies in order that the method fits his or her style of operation or circumstance (1995:xii). In common with Edwards (2001) he feels that 'the real business of case study is particularisation' (1995:8) in order that the familiar is seen afresh as a result of rigorous examination.

Edwards (2001) recognises the importance of case studies being designed to allow ongoing analysis to inform further data collection and to allow researchers to be alert to emerging themes. She sees research diaries as a useful tool to record the researcher's changing interpretations of the field of study over time. Given the importance of collecting good quality evidence, the number of cases to be analysed will have an impact upon how broad a focus can be taken.

Both observations and interviews are commonly used in case studies as means of collecting evidence, with observations often being used as a starting point for interviews. Case study researchers often use interviews to explore their interpretation of the data and the tentative links they have been making between elements of the case as part of the process of progressively increasing their understanding of the case. Although the researcher can focus the topic of the interview, he/ she should avoid constraining responses. (Edwards, 2001)

A common criticism of case studies is lack of rigour in the analysis of data. Qualitative analysis usually involves content analysis. This can vary as to how fine or broad it is and for example can include fine analysis of children's talk or broad identification of themes. It can involve the whole text or segments of it. Decisions about analysis need careful justification by the researcher. Analysis can be theory led or data driven. Edwards cautions that although data driven analysis involves constructing a category system from the evidence that has been collected, they often begin with the researcher's beliefs about the focus of the study which may have been informed by earlier research.

Analysis of data within a case study usually reveals complexities and ambiguities as part of a 'well- substantiated story' (Edwards, 2001:133). Within a case study report, Edwards sees the story strengthened:

> 'by using voices from the field, or detailed snapshots of the field, to bring to life the arguments being pursued in the research report' (Edwards, 2001:133)

This 'story' should retain the reader's interest whilst retaining sensitivity to the complexities and multiple perspectives revealed in the study. Case studies can be presented as a traditional, richly illustrated research report or, if the researcher's aim is not to produce illuminating research but to offer a critical interpretation, it may take the form of a personal narrative, giving more opportunities for inventive representation.

3.5 Ethical sensitivity and the practical challenges of working with parents in their homes and children in pre-school and school

Working With Parents in Their Homes

There is little written specifically about the ethical sensitivity of working with parents in the home context. The British Educational Research Association (BERA) ethical guidelines (1992) draw attention to:

- the need for researchers to inform participants about the aims and purposes of the research and for their informed consent to be gained before they take part in any research project;

- the need for honesty and openness characterising the relationship between researchers and participants; and

- the responsibility of the researcher to be mindful of cultural, religious, gendered, and 'other significant differences within the research population' (BERA, 1992:2) in planning, conducting, and reporting of their research;

- the right of informants and participants to remain anonymous and the responsibility of the researcher for taking precautions to protect the confidentiality of both participants and data.

Underpinning the BERA guidelines is an ethic of respect, not only for the quality of educational research and for knowledge but also for persons and for democratic values.

Because there is a greater likelihood of research taking place in the home in the field of sociology, it is useful to consider the British Sociological Association's (BSA) 'Statement of Ethical Practice' (2002). The BSA recognises that the researcher enters into personal and moral relationships with those they study and draws attention to this including not only individuals but also households and social groups. They see research relationships as being frequently characterised by 'disparities of power and status' (BSA, 2002:3) but feel that despite this relationships should be characterised by trust. Social research is seen to often intrude into the lives of those studied and BSA recognise that although some participants may find the

experience a positive one, for others the feeling that the researcher has intruded into their private and personal worlds may be particularly disturbing. The BSA asks its members to minimise disturbance to those participating in research.

Kvale (1996:117), discussing the role of the researcher as an interviewer, feels that during the interviewing process the importance of the interviewer as a person is magnified because he or she is the main instrument for obtaining knowledge.

> 'In the end ... the integrity of the researcher – his or her honesty and fairness, knowledge, and experience – are the decisive factors.' (Kvale, 1996:117)

The qualitative research interview is for Kvale (1996:30) a specific form of conversation. Its purpose is to obtain descriptions of the lived world of the interviewees with respect to 'interpretations of the meaning of the described phenomena'. It is an 'inter view', an interaction between two people where the interviewer and the interviewee act in relation to each other and reciprocally influence each other. A well conducted interview, as a conversation in which two people talk about a theme of mutual interest, is seen by Kvale to be an enriching experience for the interviewee. It is an opportunity for them to have the sole attention of someone who is interested in, sensitive toward, and seeks to understand as well as possible another's experiences and views on a subject (Kvale, 1996:36).

Working With Children in Pre-school and School

Growing concern has been expressed for the rights of children as research participants (Alderson, 1995, Davie and Galloway, 1996, Ginsburg, 1997). Within research, and particularly within research in formal and educational settings, unintentional anti-child bias remains. Although respect for children, rather than protection of children, is highlighted in guidance from both the United Nations (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child and The Children Act (Department of Health, 1989), much research is carried out on and about children, but seldom *with* children (Alderson, 1995). This position reflects the child's historical position within society which has lacked both power and status. The implication is that children lack competence. Often both political and parental pressures conspire to ensure this view is retained, the politicians by portraying the child as a potential worker, the parents by using the child as a vicarious success symbol. The researcher, by moving the focus of interest from children as subjects to children as people, can show respect for children as citizens, not as adults in the making, but as 'able learners, powerful thinkers, feeling human beings' (Nutbrown, 1996, xv).

For researchers working with children in educational settings, where the role played out by adults is usually one of power and authority, ethical considerations must be at the forefront of their thinking. Guidance (United Nations, 1989, Department of Health, 1989) rightly raises questions for such researchers but cannot provide answers. The importance of informed consent

being sought from children where possible, as well as from significant adults and for anonymity and confidentiality to be stated and adhered to, can be seen to be 'straight forward' (Grieg and Taylor, 1999). Coady (2001) however recognises that there have been cases where parents have agreed to children being subjects of research that has poor outcomes for the children and that parents, in any case, are not present where the research is conducted in an institution. In regard to anonymity and confidentiality, there is little guidance published in relation to the ethics of collecting visual data from children, where subjects can be identified through video-tape, digital image or photograph. Given general public concern about images of young children being published and made available through the internet, the advice given by Dimond (1996:177) that risk to the child as a research participant must be 'negligible' places great emphasis upon the researcher's decision making process. The researcher must fully understand the term in relation to possible consequences of the approach to be taken prior to commencement of the project. Longitudinal studies can be beneficial in creating some space in time between the collection, analysis and publishing of material, allowing the huge changes which take place physically as the child matures to give increased anonymity.

The researcher's ability to adhere to the more general ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence and justice (Beauchamp and Walters, 1989) is recognised as being complex. In trying to protect the child from perceived exploitation, the researcher can unknowingly cast him/ her in a passive role and make assumptions about the child's autonomy. In order to recast the child as a powerful player in research, particularly when the child is involved in dialogue with the researcher, some control must consciously be transferred to the child him/ herself. The greater autonomy the child has, the greater opportunity he or she will have to become an enthusiastic informant rather than a reluctant subject within the research process (Hood, Kelley and Mayall, 1996). Within any research design the methodology chosen for the collection and analysis of data becomes crucial in allowing the child's voice to be represented in its own right.

Within an interview situation the child needs to be encouraged to enter into relaxed dialogue with the researcher. To this effect the researcher must become involved in exploration within the interview situation for example moving gradually from a directing approach and learning not only to be an effective listener but to crucially use silence to encourage the sharing of more information (Lowenthal, Landerholm and Augustyn, 1994). By accepting 'the freedom to abandon adult preconceptions and to follow where the child's thought leads' (Ginsburg, 1997:49) the researcher also accepts the great demands this brings. If the knowledge gleaned from interviews is seen as co-constructed i.e. 'created through the interaction of the partners in the interview conversation' (Kvale, 1996:11), the interviewer's own understandings, values and beliefs become factors to be accounted for in analysis. It is these factors which underpin the decisions he or she takes as to the direction the dialogue takes. The researcher needs to show 'sensitivity to the child's motivation and defences, an interpretative orientation and ... a distinct

ethos of caring' (Ginsburg, 1997: 63). The ability to 'read' both the verbal and non-verbal clues, given by the child in relation to his emotional state, and to act upon them out of concern for the child's emotional well being must be a high priority, particularly when working with young children. It would seem that the child's level of confidence ought to be the key factor which guides the progress of the interview. Through longitudinal studies the researcher can become particularly well attuned to this affective aspect of the research process.

Grieg and Taylor (1999:131) draw attention to children being 'special as interviewees and requiring special methods' which take their competencies and motivations into account. 'Breaking up' an interview by using a range of methods or tools to draw upon areas of child competence as stimuli for dialogue, enables the researcher to maintain a child's motivation over a longer period of time. This takes into account children taking 'longer to warm up than adults' and allows them to 'talk at the top of their abilities without fatigue' (Carpenter, Fujii and Kattaoka, 1995:170). Using a range of methods or tools also caters for a child's preference for a certain mode of expression.

It is recognised that when working with young children the researcher will need to:

> "adapt and modify methodologies so that the design of the research is appropriate
> to the age and cognitive and social development of the child". (Taylor, 1998:270)

There is also a need to move away from what Drummond (1998) might call relentless if benevolent questioning, questioning which encourages one word answers and allows little time for thinking. In its place the researcher needs to strive for relaxed dialogue which displays an attitude of respect and which enables the child to 'disclose aspects of themselves, their thoughts, their feelings and values' (Kitwood,1985:303). Shier (2001) recognises that creative visual methods, involving the use of games and art activities, are age-appropriate techniques which can support young children in expressing their views.

3.6 Summary

There are a number of ways in which the methodological issues discussed within this chapter relate to the theoretical framework of the study (Chapter Two) and to the research questions. Given that the study focuses upon drawing and children's drawing behaviours, Prosser's (1998) recognition of the importance of valuing the image within research methodology as a primary source of data is particularly important. His views can be linked to the work of Kress (1997, 2003) who recognises that the world is increasingly moving away from the dominance of writing to 'the new dominance of the image' (2003:1). Whilst for Prosser the use of the image has been under-represented in qualitative methodology, Kress (1997) criticises the narrow focus

upon the written word in the domain of education and draws attention to young children's fluid and transformative use of visual imagery in non-educational contexts.

The need for research methodology to be 'child-friendly' is recognised as part of the ethics of researching with rather than on young children (Alderson, 1995). Dyson (1993a) and Malchiodi (1998) have recognised not only drawing's appropriacy as an activity for young children but also the inter-relationship which exists for children between drawing and talking. Whilst Wakefield and Underwager (1998) have shown that drawings can be used to build rapport between adult and child, both Clark and Moss (2001) and Lucas (2000) show that children, parents and practitioners are able to become involved in relaxed dialogue when evaluating visual images which have particular meaning for them. This is particularly important for a study that uses visual images as a tool for enabling participants to articulate their understanding and by doing so gains information about their values and belief systems.

The storying function of the combination of image plus spoken or written narrative, as recognised by Malchiodi (1998) in relation to children's use of 'draw and talk', is familiar to children and adults who have been involved in episodes of story telling with picture books. The flexible, multi-method approach implicit in the case study, is particularly appropriate for the inclusion of both image and narrative and supports Collier's (2001) emphasis upon contextual detail as a means of gaining richer data and ensuring greater reliability. A case study approach can also accommodate the adaptations and changes characteristic of a longitudinal study, particularly one focussing upon the complexities of different values and beliefs of participants across a range of contexts.

3.7   Research Questions

1. What is the impact of the socio-cultural context of home and pre-school / school on children's drawing behaviours?

2. How do the belief systems of significant others (professionals, parents, siblings, peers) influence how and what children draw?

Chapter 4

RESEARCH DESIGN/ METHODOLOGY

4.1 Aim

To explore the impact upon the young child's drawing behaviours of the cultural contexts and the views and beliefs of significant others across both home and pre-school/ school settings.

4.2 The Research Questions

1. What is the impact of the socio-cultural context of home and pre-school / school on children's drawing behaviours?
2. How do the belief systems of significant others (professionals, parents, siblings, peers) influence how and what children draw?

4.3 Overview of The Project

This longitudinal study took place over a three-year period between September 1998 and July 2001. It drew upon the meaning making through drawing, making models and small figure play of seven three- to six-year-old children as it took place in home and early childhood care and education settings. However, the focus of this study is on the children's drawings. The study recognises the importance of accessing the views of parents, key workers and children on the meanings of the collected drawings and of gaining contextual information about the homes and more formal learning settings in promoting drawing in pre-school and primary school.

The three phases of the research design are outlined in Figure 6. The design is qualitative and emergent with each phase informing the next. A multi-method approach (Brewer and Hunter, 1989) or triangulation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000) was used within the project to increase the validity of the findings. By using a range of methods it was possible to elicit viewpoints from more than one stance. Methodological decisions reflected the influence of the socio-cultural framework which underpins the research, Prosser's (1998) work in relation to visual culture and the image as a key data source, and research which has used stimuli to enable participants to say what they know (Goodwin, 1982; Lucas, 2000; Clark and Moss, 2001).

Phase One 1998/99				
Site	Site 1 (early years centre)	Site 2 (infant school)	Site 3 (primary school)	
Setting	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Target children	Luke 3.0 Donna 3.8	Jake 4.0 (N) Simon 4.1 (N) Holly 4.6 (N)	Edward 4.9 (R)	Lianne 5.0 (R)

Sept 1998
- Ethical guidelines established
- Piloting interview schedule with a parent and a teacher
- Visits to settings – contextual information
- Selection of target children
- Semi structured taped interviews with teachers/ key workers
- Visits to homes – semi structured taped interviews with parent(s) about child/ contextual information

Oct 1998
- One month data collection:
    - by teachers/ key workers in pre-school settings
    - by parents in home settings
    - using booklets to record/ annotate 'drawings'
    - throw away cameras to record 'models/ modelling'; play
- Visits to all settings to observe children

Nov 1998
- Revisits to pre-school settings and homes
- Taped dialogues with adults (and sometimes children) stimulated by evidence of drawing

Jan-Aug 1999
- Data analysis
    - Transcripts of tapes – beliefs/ behaviours of adults about children's drawings
    - Coding of children's drawings – content of drawings: people, places, things,
    - Similarities/ differences at home and in pre-school settings for each child
    - Patterns of similarities/ difference across settings
- Meetings with professionals

Phase Two 1999/ 2000							
Site	Site 1 Early Yrs Centre	Site 4 Primary School	Site 2 Infant School			Site 3 Primary School	
Setting	Class 1	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7	Class 8	Class 9	Class 10
Target children	Luke 4.0	Donna 4.8 (R)	Jake 5.0 (R)	Simon 5.1 (Y1/2)	Holly 5.6 (Y1)	Edward 5.9 (Y1)	Lianne 6.0 (Y1)

Returning to track children's drawings, parents' views, and different adults beliefs/ behaviours in institutional settings. No opportunities to observe children in home or classroom context. Piloting methods/ tools for accessing children's voices i.e. discussion with me about completed books, discussion with friend (chosen by child) about completed books, completion of 'smiley face' questionnaire.

Phase Three 2000/ 2001							
Site	Site 5 Primary Sch	Site 4 Primary Sch	Site 6 Primary Sch	Site 2 Infant School		Site 3 Primary School	
Setting	Class 11	Class 12	Class 13	Class 14	Class 15	Class 16	Class 17
Target children	Luke 5.0 (R)	Donna 5.8 (Y1)	Jake 6.0 (Y1)	Simon 6.1 (Y2)	Holly 6.6 (Y2)	Edward 6.9 (Y2)	Lianne 7.0 (Y2)

Returning to track children's drawings, parents' views, and different adults beliefs/ behaviours in institutional settings. Interviews with children using methods/ tools piloted during previous year. No observation of children in home or classroom context.

Phase Four 2001/2002	Analysis of data

Figure 6: The longitudinal research design

4.4   Methods of Data Collection

Interview

Semi-structured, audio-taped interviews were used with adult participants, prior to their one month involvement in collecting data, across all three phases of the study. The interview schedule (Appendix 3) provided a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered, but allowed the researcher the flexibility to follow up lines of enquiry with further questions and the interviewee to elaborate upon points of interest. A second semi-structured, audio-taped interview with adult participants followed their compilation of the booklets of annotated drawings and photographs. In this case the collected data was the focus for discussion. Once again the researcher was able to pursue any responses made by participants which were of particular interest.

In choosing the semi-structured interview as a method of data collection it was recognised that much would depend upon the rapport the researcher established and maintained with participants. In order to benefit from the vivid, in-depth responses of participants it was accepted that the transcription of the audio-taped material would be a lengthy process and that open-ended questioning would make analysis of data more difficult.

Following Phase Two of the study, a range of tools was developed for accessing child participant's voices. These were included within the research design for Phase Three and are explained in detail in Section 4.6 'Piloting Dialogue With Children'.

Observation

During Phase One, child participants were observed in both home and pre-school/ school contexts. In the pre-school and school contexts non-participant observations were collected using both a simplified Target Child observation schedule and detailed narrative description. In the home context there was greater interaction between the researcher, the child and the parent. Observations were therefore in the form of field notes, written immediately after each visit. It was recognised that the presence of an unknown adult in the home setting would impact upon both the child's behaviours and parent/ child interaction.

Although some observation of the child took place in the playground context across Phases Two and Three of the project, there was no further observation of the child in home or school settings. As the children moved into the more formal classroom arrangements of Key Stage One, the presence of the researcher in the classroom for any length of time was ethically unacceptable, being overly intrusive for both the child and the practitioner. In place of observations, brief observations of the child in the school setting, or the setting minus children,

were captured by the researcher through digital images. These images allowed the minutiae of the child's context to inform analysis.

Booklets/ Scrap books of annotated drawings/ photographs

A primary source of evidence across all phases of the project were the booklets of each child's drawings and photographs of the activities and contexts in which they drew them. The collection period was one month and this followed the initial semi-structured interview with all adult participants. Unusually the booklets served a dual purpose, as they were also a vehicle for eliciting the views of participants, both children and adults. In recognising the ethical problems of asking participants to give of their time, the instructions and the process of keeping the booklets were kept as simple as possible. It was anticipated that participants would differ in their ability to collect data consistently.

Meetings with professionals

Following each phase of data collection and initial analysis, meetings were held with professionals working across a range of early years settings. These tape recorded meetings ensured that initial attempts to analyse the data were referenced against the views knowledgeable others.

4.5   Phase One: Initial Project Design

The Research Design

The initial design for the research project (Phase 1: Figure 6) was based on the decision making process set out in Figure 7. Initially this was to be a one-year study and the decision was taken to focus on children as near as possible to four years of age. This age was chosen because of the likelihood of children using drawing as a key mode of meaning making (Dyson, 1993, Lowenfeld and Brittain, 1982, Malchiodi, 1998) and because of the range of differing provision available for four-year-olds in England. Settings were chosen firstly because they represented three different types of provision and secondly because either the researcher had developed a good working relationship with the key practitioner in another aspect of her work, or the setting had been involved in a previous research project with the University. The research sample was therefore drawn from three settings within two LEA's in the North of England. These were:

i)   Day-care setting

A Family Centre in an inner city area characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment and poor quality council housing.

ii)   Nursery class within an infant school

A long-established school in a mixed residential area, which included local families and 'professionals' who as in-comers were buying up and converting predominantly older properties.

iii)   Two parallel reception classes within the same primary school

A newly built school in a mixed private and council house area in the inner suburbs of a large city. The community was made up of mainly young families. Parents tended to be in skilled work or service industries.

Needs in relation to the research hypotheses	Decisions about methodology
Inclusion of evidence across the contexts in which the child draws	The need for the study to involve both home and pre-school/ school settings
Examples of the sample children's drawings to be analysed as the 'outcome' of the impact of 'more experienced others' views and beliefs in relation to drawing	The child's completed drawings to be collected by parents in the home context and a key practitioner in the pre-school/ school setting
Data collection by parents to take place over a 'manageable' period of time	The drawings to be collected in both contexts for a one month period
Contextual information gathered to inform adult understanding of drawings, given the transformational and subjective nature of children's early drawings	Parents and practitioners to annotate children's drawings with contextual detail e.g. date drawing completed, what child had been doing prior to the drawing activity, if help requested etc.
Contextual evidence to be gathered about the adult's role in the context e.g. provision of materials, routine of the day, amount of choice given to the child	An initial interview prior to the collection of drawings with parents and key practitioner
The need for key information to be gained across participants but for an informal approach to be taken so that the adult is relaxed and his/ her responses are not constrained. He/ she must feel able to expand on a particular area or topic	A semi-structured interview schedule to be prepared and trialled with a parent and a teacher Interview to last approximately 30 minutes
The need to access the views and beliefs about drawing of key adults in both settings	Information gained during the first interview. A second interview to take place following the collection of drawings. This time structured by the collected drawings.
Additional information about child's use of environment and preferred activities and use of artefacts	Disposable cameras given to parents and practitioners to record child's use of artefacts in home/ pre-school or school contexts
Because two children very young the research to be 'low key' i.e. the children involved as little as possible	Discrete observation of children in both home and pre-school/school settings and 'written up' as field notes
The need for a visual record of child's environment	Digital photographs/ photographs taken by researcher of each setting

Figure 7: Decisions about research design at Phase One

At each phase of the study ethical considerations were taken into account. The British Educational Research Association guidelines were followed. Permission for the study to take place was obtained from local education authorities and head teachers/ managers of all establishments. Letters seeking permission from parents for their children to be part of the research were sent out and a signed reply slip returned before the study was able to commence. All participants in the study were assured of the confidential nature of the work with which they would be involved. Piloting of the semi-structured interview schedule took place with both a parent and a teacher and the ordering of questions was slightly adjusted. The draft letter, which was to accompany the scrap books given to both parents and practitioners, was shared with participants involved in the piloting process in order that the instructions were 'user friendly'.

Consultation took place with the practitioners in each setting to identify the children to be included in the sample. One girl and one boy from each of three settings were to take part as it was felt that this was a manageable sample which would allow for the detailed study of the processes of drawing. It was requested that children were chosen according to gender and age. In one setting, however, given that the practitioner had already approached the parents of two boys, the 'extra' boy was retained. In another setting, because of the manager's concern about the ability of parents to be able to fulfil the research requirements without additional stress being placed upon some very difficult home circumstances, 'ability to cope' became a further criterion for selection. The inclusion of this criterion meant that younger children were included in the sample (i.e. a three and a three and a half-year-old). In the primary school setting, given that these children were new entrants, practitioners chose, in the event, children of parents with whom they already had built a relationship (i.e. they had an older sibling in the school). These children were nearer to five in age than four years of age. The proposed study of four-year-olds became, in its first phase a study across the 'Foundation Stage' (DfEE/QCA, 2000a) (i.e. three-to five-year-olds).

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) would classify the sampling process used as purposive in that cases were 'hand picked to increase the range of data to meet the specific needs of the study. All settings were chosen for their 'normality' and for their potential to contribute to the collection of information-rich data, leading to maximum learning, 'modified generalisations' and refinement of understanding (Stake, 1995:9). Further characteristics of the sample selected are given in Figure 8.

Child	Luke	Donna	Jake	Simon	Holly	Edward	Lianne
Age	3 years 0 months	3 years 8 months	4 years 0 months	4 years 1 month	4 years 6 months	4 years 9 months	5 years 0 months
Siblings	1 younger brother	Only child	1 older sister	1 older sister	1 younger brother and sister	1 older sister	1 older brother
Occupation of mother	Part-time supermarket checkout operator	Full-time mother (previously bar worker)	Pert-time literacy support teacher	Full-time mother (previously radiographer)	Full-time mother (previously nursery assistant and nanny)	Check-out operator	Classroom assistant in school attended by Lianne
Occupation of father	Long distance lorry driver	Scaffolder	Refractor y engineer	Salesman (motor factors)	Process operator in chemical industry	Engineer	Skilled technical worker
Setting attended	Day care setting (called a Family Centre)		Nursery class of Infant School			Parallel reception classes of Primary School	
Location of setting	Inner city area characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment and poor quality council housing		Long established school on the outskirts of a city but classed as 'inner-city'. Housing predominantly private with large older properties being converted by young families. Community made up of a mixture of professionals, skilled workers and those working in the service industries. 25% of children of ethnic minority.			Inner suburbs of large city. Newly built school in a mixed private and council house area. Community made up of mainly young families with parents in skilled work or service industries.	

Figure 8: Characteristics of the sample selected

The transitional period of entry to a new educational setting was chosen for data collection as this period was likely to highlight the similarities and differences of the learning context as the child bedded into new routines and rituals. The parents and practitioners were interviewed at the start of the school year using a semi-structured interview to probe their beliefs about the value of drawing and modelling activities for children's learning and in particular their perspectives on the learning behaviours of the case-study children. Field notes were kept about contextual features of the setting. The parents and practitioners were given an instant camera and a large scrap book and asked to collect evidence of the children's 3D representational play and 2D communications over a period of a month from both home and school contexts. They were asked to add notes about the purpose, time and context of the children's activities. At the end of the month the parents and practitioners were revisited. The photographic and visual evidence of the children's activities were used as the stimulus for a dialogue between the researcher and adults.

During the first phase, because of a four-month secondment to Leeds University, the children were observed by the researcher both at home and in pre-school/ school settings in order to gather contextual information. Valuable information was gained about their level of confidence within both settings and the individual child's preferred mode(s) of meaning making. The observations helped to support both ongoing analysis and the generation of prompts offered during the second interviews or conversations around scrap books with parents and practitioners that followed. In the pre-school/ school settings all of the children had a relatively unstructured daily routine, with plenty of free choice in relation to the activities or materials on offer. Particularly in the case of the pre-school settings, the researcher was one of many visitors to the classroom and was not particularly conspicuous. Following the home visits, however, the children had a variety of levels of awareness of the researcher's link with them depending on both their age and the amount the researcher was talked about in the home setting. At this stage the researcher was 'the lady interested in your drawings'.

Following data collection a group meeting was held for all participating practitioners with both researcher and supervisor present. Discussion was facilitated across settings in relation to examination of the scrap books collected in both home and school contexts and practitioners helped in identifying key issues arising from first attempts to analyse the data. All interviews and the workshop discussions were tape recorded and transcribed. Each year the parents were presented with full size, colour replicas of the scrap books and photographs and encouraged to talk more broadly about their children's experiences at home and school of learning to draw and model. Meetings between researcher and supervisor were held regularly to discuss the progress of data collection and particularly to reference emerging issues. This process enabled the researcher's understanding of emerging issues to be triangulated against another, knowledgeable in the field.

4.6   Phase Two

Given the rich data collected within what was to become the first phase of the project parents were asked whether they would be willing for their child to participate in two further periods of data collection and all agreed. A decision was made to carry out the same data collection processes for two further years i.e. phase two and phase three. Head teacher and manager approval was once more gained but with a proviso by the head teachers that their practitioners were willing to be involved. Before agreeing, all practitioners wanted to discuss the nature of the project, particularly given that the major new government initiatives of the Literacy Hour and Numeracy Lesson had recently been, or were in the process of being introduced. A meeting with the researcher would also enable them to judge whether they could work with her.

During the second phase only one child was still at pre-school with all the others falling into the primary school age band. The year group classification for each of the sample children had a strong effect on the research project. Four of the seven children were in Year One classes, their daily timetable dominated by the need for teachers to deliver both the literacy hour and the daily numeracy lesson. Gathering contextual information was difficult. Having sensed that observation within the classroom would be an imposition upon the teacher and had the potential to have an unwelcome or unsettling effect upon the child it was not carried out at this stage of the project. The children were therefore observed only briefly within the classroom, with digital images being taken of the classroom context. Time was spent observing the child discretely at playtime, using a digital camera again to record the child in informal play contexts.

Home visits were made, as in Phase One, to interview mothers both prior to and following their collection of drawings. Many mothers were now working part-time, however, and it was important that the researcher fitted into their schedule and wherever possible avoided disrupting family meal times. As most interviews took place whilst the children were at school, there was no opportunity to gain contextual details of the child operating within the home context.

In order to aid the interview process, transcriptions were included on the Phase Two interview schedule of the replies given by parents and the practitioners who were involved in the project for a second year. This information was used as prompts for comparative analysis from the interviewee. As in Phase One, following data collection a meeting was held with professionals involved with the project in order to reference the researcher's interpretation of evidence against a wider professional group.

4.7   Piloting Dialogue With Children

Following data collected in Phase Two of the project it became evident that the child's voice was not being 'heard'. The parent or practitioner was mediating the child's 'versions' of their drawings. It was felt that the child might be able to contribute more directly to the research. In the home settings parents had once again responded well to the research brief. However many teachers in schools were unable to reflect the voice of the individual child, particularly at this early stage in the school year. These children had moved classrooms, in some cases twice, since Phase One. A further layer of data needed to be incorporated into the research design which would increase the child's participation in and hopefully understanding of the meaning of their drawings. Access to the children's feelings about the changes they had experienced in different classroom settings would also be gained.

Interviewing the adult participants had proved to be a relatively flexible way to collect evidence and had provided rich data. The use of interview techniques, adapted to meet the needs of young children was piloted to be incorporated into the research methodology for the final phase of data collection. However, as other researchers have discovered, (Davie and Galloway, 1996; Grieg and Taylor, 1999; Hood, Kelley and Mayall, 1996) accessing young children's voices is a methodological challenge.

Prior to exploring dialoguing with children a letter was sent to the child and to the parents giving information about why the researcher wanted to talk with the child, what this would entail and when this would take place. This was in order that the children should be informed participants in the research, be given time to think through what was going to happen and have the added security of knowing that the meeting with the researcher had their parent's approval. Although the intention was to explain the research process to the children and to ask if they were happy to be part of it, in practice this was not easy to do. Much of the initial talk with the children was centred upon making them feel comfortable and part of this process was to involve them in activity. The children understood that the researcher was interested in their drawings but further information was greeted with blank disinterest. The researcher decided that any signs of discomfort on the part of a child, whether communicated verbally or visually via body language, would result in termination of the research process.

Figure 9 sets out the features of seven 'explorations' of approaches to accessing the children's voices.

	Date	Child(ren)	Context		Activity
1.	Nov. 1999	Jake (5.3) Simon (5.4) Holly (5.10)	staff room resources: pencils and paper		1. adult questioning 2. drawing – child chosen topic
2.		Edward (6.0) Lianne (6.3)	unused class room resources: pencils and paper, one of Lianne's phase 2 books		1. adult questioning 2. drawing – adult suggested topic
3.		Luke (4.3)	staff room resources: phase 2 books, pencils, paper		1. dialogue around book 2. drawing – child chosen topic
4.		Donna (4.11)	child's classroom during assembly and playtime resources: phase 2 books, pencils, paper		1. dialogue around book 2. drawing – child chosen topic
5.	May-June 2000	Jake (5.9)	child's classroom Head teacher's office	resources: all child's phase 1 &2 books, friend, questionnaire	**1. dialogue around books** **2. dialogue around books with friend** **3. completion and dialogue around 'smiley face' questionnaire**
6.		Holly (6.3)	empty class room library area		
7.		Simon(5.10)	child's empty classroom		

Figure 9: Exploration: Dialogues with children
(Shaded area denotes strategies used with children during Phase Three of the project)

Talking to a non-physically active child resulted in one-sided, adult dominated questioning. Introducing free drawing to a group of children worked well in that conversation, because it was not such a key focus, was more relaxed. When children worked together, however, one child dominated and it was noticeable that the girl in the group or pair was un characteristically quiet. The 'smiley face' questionnaire (Appendix Two) physically occupied and involved the children by focusing their attention upon everyday preferences. The researcher's role became one of facilitator and allowed for a more collaborative and playful relationship to develop. Using several different activities maintained the child's interest. Dialogue between researcher and child around his or her scrapbooks was most useful when carried out as close as possible in time to their completion. When the child shared the scrapbooks with a friend, the researcher moved to another part of the room. This resulted in the children producing a naturally child centred style of dialogue.

4.8   Phase Three

Phase Three saw all children established in primary schooling and contact maintained with all families even though one child moved out of the original area of the study. As in Phase Two of the project, all practitioners, although initially wary, agreed to take part in the study. In one

school this was despite an Ofsted inspection falling within the data collection period. Following the piloting of dialogue with the children after Phase Two data collection, the successful strategies (denoted by the shaded area within Figure 9) were used by the researcher in dialogue with each of the children during Phase Three of the study.

4.9   Data Analysis Frameworks

Analysis of the data took evidence of the children's activities as the starting point. This approach has been used in research into children's emergent literacy by Bissex (1980) and Dyson (1989) and into children's mark making/ drawing by Matthews (1999) and Cox (1992). The children's drawings were not coded using developmental (Matthews, 1999) or technical (Cox, 1992) criteria. The emphasis was upon the content and style of the children's drawings. The analytical frameworks developed at each phase of the project as the research questions were addressed.

Phase One:
The analytical framework for the study reflected a socio-cultural psychological lens and was concerned with the behaviours, interactions and perspectives of significant actors (children, parents, practitioners) within environments, structural systems and cultural contexts (pre-school, care, school, home).

The initial coding, however, reflected the need to manage the complexity of the data analysis. A key framework began to emerge using the categories of people, places, things and quality of interaction for the initial sorting (Appendix 7). This coding put the children's drawings to the fore and although records were kept of contextual features, these formed the background of the analysis.

Phase Two:
With an initial analytical framework in place for understanding the content of the children's drawings, the theoretical framework was returned to in order to re-organise the data under themes which also accommodated contextual characteristics of the drawing episodes:
- Observed/recorded child behaviours
- Distinctive features of the environment
- Values and beliefs of significant adults
- Adult styles of interaction
- Adult views of children's behaviours
- Children's views of their behaviours

Transcribed dialogue from the interviews was coded, physically rearranged and key sections of text highlighted to sort the texts under these six themes (Appendix 8). An important principle was the constant referencing backwards and forwards between the detail of an individual case, the case as a whole and the entirety of cases. It was useful to scan key images for each child, across one phase and onto one page to provide support for holistic comparison across the contexts of, for example, home and pre-school, and as the study progressed, comparison across phases (Appendix 9). This was an innovative way of revisiting and acknowledging the centrality of the children's drawings to the research process.

Contextual Information: Notes, Digital Images and Photographs

The researcher made observational field notes as part of the ongoing collection of data. Any across case connections made by the researcher, as part of ongoing analysis, were also recorded. Both digital images and photographs were taken (Appendix 10), but the benefits of being able to download and store digital images systematically were soon realised. Unlike the parents, practitioners did not always use their disposable camera and in such settings images collected by the researcher were important in capturing evidence of contextual details. This was particularly important during Phases Two and Three of the study, when observation by the researcher within the classroom was minimal.

The following chapter draws upon the data collected in relation to one child over the three year duration of the study to present a narrative analysis.

Chapter Five

## ANALYSIS 1: LONGITUDINAL CASE STUDY

5.1 Introduction

Within this chapter one case study is presented. It exemplifies the complex interaction between home, pre-school and school contexts and the child as a meaning maker. The case study also highlights the importance to the project of the extended time frame of its longitudinal design in enabling the complexity of the dynamics of change to be captured. There is no significance in choosing this particular case. All seven cases provided equally rich data.

The foregrounding of visual imagery as central to this research project continues as data is analysed and findings are presented. Each section within the following longitudinal case study begins with an example or examples of visual imagery taken from the scrapbooks of drawings and photographs and collected by parents and practitioners over the three year duration of the study. The images are accompanied by key sections of narrative, included as annotations in the scrap books by parents and practitioners as contextual detail, or collected by the researcher during the semi-structured interviews and dialogues with the children. The analysis following the data presented uses the cumulative evidence to construct a 'story' of the child as a meaning maker, particularly in relation to his use of drawing and the influence of cultural contexts and significant others upon his journeys into representations of those meanings.

5.2 Luke

Phase One: Luke, 3.0 Years, Drawing at Home

Mother: *'In the morning he'll bring me "the bible", the TV programmes and will say "let's see what's on then". After lunch he often watches a film, time and time again ... we have a silly time when we dance around. 'When he watches (the fruit pastille advert) you can see him backing away from the telly.' 'He's forever making squiggles with the pen, then cutting them out and then making shapes with the cuttings. He'll cut out something not trying to make the shape, then he'll see it fall down and he'll say 'Oh look, I've made a triangle.' He'll pretend he made it properly.' 'I did (drew) La La and he said 'La La's head doesn't go like that.' You have got get the right colour, the right shade.'*

Figure 10: *'Strawberry eating a little boy' from the Fruit Pastille advert'*
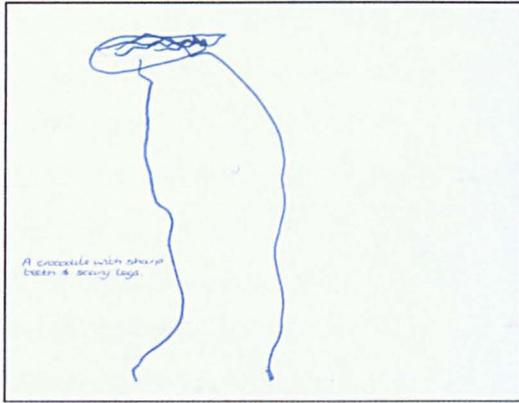
Figure 11: *'A crocodile with sharp teeth and scary legs'*

Mother: *'We've a song about crocodiles from Pontins when I was a kid – Never Smile at a Crocodile'. 'He puts cushions on the floor and the cushions are stepping stones and all the carpet is water and there's a big crocodile.' 'In between the sofa and the chair we've got a triangular shape and he sits in there and it can be his reading corner. He blocks himself in so I can't get in.' 'He loves books ... when he was little everywhere he went he had a book.' 'I can't believe what he comes out with ...'*

At just turned three Luke was the youngest child in the sample. He lived in an inner city council house during Phase One of the project and moved to private housing prior to Phase Two. He had one younger brother. Luke attended a Family Centre three days a week. His mother was the dominant figure for Luke in the home as his father, a long distance driver, was absent during the week. Luke's father had little involvement in playing with his sons at the week-end. Saturday was the family shopping day and, with mother working at a local supermarket, Sunday was spent with the paternal grandparents.

Understandably, as Luke's life was controlled by a weekly and daily pattern of events, Luke liked routine and ritual. He knew what should happen each day and became upset if this pattern was broken. In the home context he was concerned that everything was kept in its proper place. Although Luke's mother saw this as a characteristic of Luke, the space within the home was particularly well organised and the two boys had quickly learned for example where their dirty clothes had to be put and that there was an expectation that at the end of an afternoon of free play objects would be put away. The separation within the home of materials and objects that were to be used with the mother's permission at the table in the kitchen and those that were freely available in the lounge reflected both Malchiodi (1998) and Pahl's (2002a) recognition of the connection between meaning making and the space in which it is produced.

Luke's mother strongly modelled and supported particular forms of meaning making. Children's television and videos were a big part of her day and she enjoyed watching them with the children, often referring to favourite characters in her conversations and building them into their joint play episodes. As in Marsh's (2002) study of three-year-olds, everyday exchanges about television and video characters took part within joint involvement episodes on the floor in front of the television and influenced Luke's interests and preoccupations. His drawing *'Strawberry eating a little boy from the Fruit Pastille advert'* (Figure 10) is a reflection of his interest in imagery from the television screen.

There was little evidence of Luke's mother encouraging gender specific behaviour but she did seem to regularly include an element of scariness within her interactions with the boys. This was part of what she called their 'silly time' when they sang and danced together. Both drawings Luke completed at home during this period revealed a fertile imagination and a preoccupation with 'scary' things. His drawing *'A crocodile with sharp teeth and scary legs'* (Figure 11) reflected a fascination with crocodiles. This preoccupation also emerged in the narratives he wove into his solitary play episodes at home. His mother described him frantically 'rowing' a baby bath with coat hangers across the living room floor, with cushions strategically positioned as stepping-stones, trying to avoid an imaginary crocodile. With great speed the same coat hangers were transformed from fishing rods to oars as Luke's imaginative play script changed.

Luke used a 'megasketcher' to draw with in the lounge as paper, pens and scissors were reserved for when his younger brother was asleep and could only be used at the kitchen table. The 'megasketcher' was used for the recording and erasing of continuous rotations, which were drawn quickly and with great energy. These were private drawings, requiring no input or comment from his mother. Luke's fascination with scissors began with his mother cutting out butterflies for him to colour and she recollected her own love of cutting out as a child. His current preoccupation was with systematically cutting paper into strips, turning each strip at a right angle and cutting it into a smaller strip until he was left with tiny pieces of paper. Sometimes he made a mark on the paper as a prop for his cutting action. Whilst cutting or drawing at the kitchen table Luke involved his mother in listening to what she felt was a continuous monologue. She recognised that, like her, Luke was a great talker and he wove stories around his random cut outs, stimulated by their shapes and stopping occasionally to check she was listening.

Luke's mother felt that drawing with or for him was difficult as he insisted on all the detail being correct. She described how when she tried to draw the teletubbies for him he was very critical of what she produced. Influenced by discussion of Luke's progress at the Family Centre, she had been trying to interest him in drawing people because she had been told that this was an important stage he had missed out.

Phase One: Luke, 3.0 Years, Meaning Making at The Family Centre
At three years old Luke was very reliant on the presence of his key worker as he was a tentative, nervous participant in Family Centre activities and sought the one-to-one conversations he had with his mother in the home context. His preferred activities were cutting paper, dough and watching videos, all activities familiar to him at home. Among his peers at the Family Centre he was unusual in his ability to remain captivated by video and television imagery. His key worker at the Family Centre also commented on his ability to enter into long monologues about home events with adults, using the language of a much older child and including many adult phrases.

Within the Family Centre Luke re-created therefore as far as possible the joint involvement episodes he enjoyed with his mother at the kitchen table as he gained the attention of his key worker by involving her in his 'tea party' role-play. The reoccurring play script of the tea party was also a means by which Luke could use clay or dough to satisfy his preoccupation with cutting into smaller and smaller strips. During the morning free-flow activities he would watch the activity of older boys warily, bolstered in venturing out to find his key worker by a book firmly clutched under one arm. If his key adult was not available he would search for his substitute, four year old Rebecca, who would firmly take hold his hand. Each afternoon his key worker tried to interest in the available craft activity, usually involving paint or glue. Luke was a reluctant participant in these activities. Kept immaculately clean in the home setting, he was unhappy when his hands had glue or paint on them.

Phases 1 and 2: Luke, 3.0 and 4.0 Years, Drawing at the Family Centre
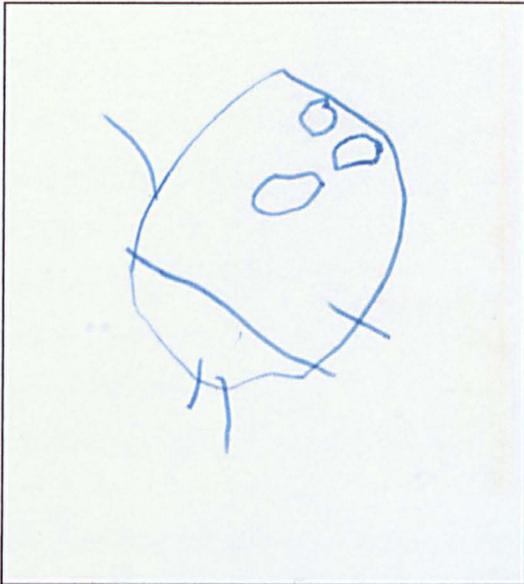
Figure 12: *'Mammy'*

Manager: *'When they (key workers) hear mark making, it doesn't matter how many times you go through it, they still think writing. That's there at the back of the mind all the time. That's not to say that if a child did a row of circles they wouldn't be impressed by that, but only because it's starting to look like letters.'*

Key Worker (Phase 1): *'The afternoons are when you get time to do your display work, you know, the pictures you want the children to do.'*

Key Worker (Phase 1): *'We haven't the time to give them one-to-one experience and then perhaps there's something in the profile – is able to draw a face – and you think I haven't seen him do that, so you sit with him and say... shall we see what we can do?' 'Oh look you could do a circle for the face, two eyes, a nose and a mouth see if you can do that'. 'I do it, yes, because I'm stumped to know how I can help them.'*
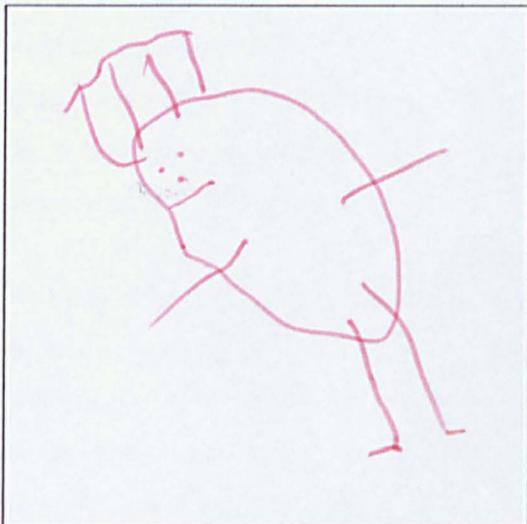
Figure 13: *'My Mummy'*

Key Worker (Phase 2): *'Normally with drawings it is just scribbles on the paper. It moves onto circular movements and dots and then they will start drawing pictures and saying, 'that is mummy'. ...We might not be able to recognise it but they will start saying what it is.'*

'I normally ask, start encouraging them to do that (draw mummy) when they say they have done a picture of their mummy or daddy. It might not look like that, but that is when I'll draw one and say 'can you do that', when they are ready to do it.'

During both Phase One and Phase Two of the project there were strong messages given by staff at the Family Centre, to both Luke and his mother, about the importance of drawing people. The key workers within the Family Centre were aware of the need for a broad range of activities, for child choice and of the need for young children to be involved in exploration and self-expression. Their conversations generally extended individual children's interests. However the messages given by 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education' (fSCAA, 1996), gave further emphasis to a tendency within the Family Centre for key workers to channel children towards emergent and adult recognisable mark making. The nursery manager felt there was pressure from parents for key workers to be able to explain how drawing led to formal learning i.e. writing. The practice within the setting of including drawing within the term 'mark making' allowed drawing a valid place within the curriculum, but seemed to be devaluing drawing as an activity in its own right. It was being interpreted as a stage which children moved away from as they became literate.

One of the ways in which the Family Centre gave messages about the purpose of drawing was by its inclusion within the child's developmental record, as part of a progression from horizontal and vertical marks through figure drawing and onto early writing. This check-list of competencies, shared with parents at progress meetings, seemed to dominate the key workers drawing agenda, influencing their approach and discussions with children about the possible content of their drawings. Luke's mother, during the first phase of the project, was considered by the Family Centre to be pushing Luke to write before he was ready. Using the check-list, they told her that it was important that he did not miss out drawing figures before writing.

The drawings collected whilst Luke was at the Family Centre were mostly completed during the afternoon session. The routine at the Family Centre was for the morning to be spent in 'free flow', with free choice of activities and rooms being allocated to a particular type of activity e.g. large construction. For the afternoon sessions the children were allocated to a base under the supervision of their key worker. This was a more pressured time for the key workers when they were more likely to 'set up' a directed art activity, often linked to a half-termly theme. It was also a time when they would update their developmental records and for Luke this meant that they concentrated on figure drawing.

Both 'Mammy' (Figure 12, Phase One) and 'My Mummy' (Figure 13, Phase Two) were adult initiated drawings, reflecting the setting and key worker's expectations of what a child of Luke's age should be drawing. 'Mammy' was drawn following the key worker's modelling of a similar figure, and during the completion of 'My Mummy' Luke was shown where to put the eyes and nose, but did decide to put the hair on himself. From the comments of Luke's key workers it can be seen that through suggestion and direction children were encouraged to achieve the drawing competencies as set out in the setting's developmental record.

Both of Luke's key workers admitted to finding interaction with a child who was drawing difficult. The inclusion of drawing a person on the developmental record underpinned their presumption that every child should and would want to draw the key people in their lives, particularly mummy. They acknowledged that some children had difficulty in drawing people but felt that it was acceptable to work with a child as long as they were judged as ready. 'Readiness' for one of the key workers was when the child verbally labelled a drawing mummy. Following a child labelling a drawing 'mummy' the key worker felt justified in drawing a model for the child. She explained that this model was based upon her understanding of what might be achieved by the child with visual support. Luke worked hard to ensure his representation closely resembled her model (Figure 12). This pressured approach, however, did little to encourage and value this very young child's need to make meaning in his own way. It had little in common with Matthews (1999) or Malchiodi's (1998) understanding of drawing supporting the child's development of identity.

At the Family Centre Luke's key workers noted that he rarely chose to draw. 'Our house' (Figure 14, Phase One) was completed without adult presence and although the drawing is named, its content can only be debated. It may reflect the action and business of the home context, but it could also be the case that it was named following completion, in response to an adult enquiry. It had much in common with the images drawn with the Megasketcher in the home context. Examples of similar drawings, completed by children of the same age as Luke, are seen by Matthews (2003a:83) to combine a variety of lines and shapes within a single drawing. 'Our house', contrasts with Luke's representation of 'Dr. Jekyll when he turned into a nasty monster', (Figure 15, Phase One), which was completed in response to an adult's request for him to draw and with an adult present. Whilst Figure 14 reflects Luke's continued use of drawing to explore and represent his fears and the influence upon him of video or television images, it also demonstrates a much more controlled use of line. In this instance the discussion which occurred between adult and child, prior to drawing taking place, followed the child's interest and focussed his resulting action.

Figure 14: *'Our house'*

Figure 15: *'Dr. Jekyll when he turned into a nasty monster'*

**Phase 2: Luke, 4.0 Years, Drawing at Home**
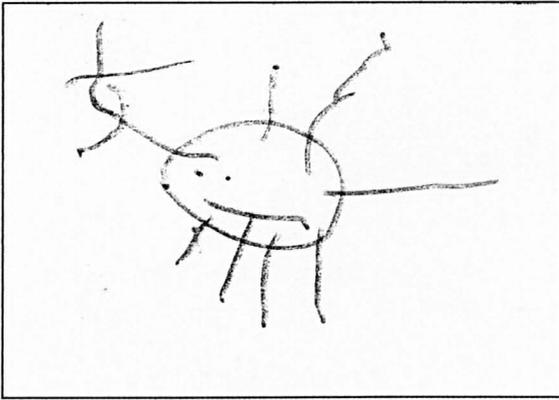
Figure 16: *'Birthday card'*

Mother: *'They sometimes see it (on plastic shelving) and say 'can we draw' or 'can we paint' and I'll say 'not now' or 'maybe later'. Paint at nursery 'out of sight, out of mind.' 'He won't draw people. Very, very rarely draws people.' 'Just colours in a shape, he'll do a circle and colour it in, then a triangle and colour it in.' 'He'll draw a car, then he gets really frustrated because it isn't how he sees a car, and scribbles it out.' 'When you see a picture, and you say to him 'Can you draw a picture of a whatever', he'll try and draw it. Because it doesn't look exactly like a pig, he'll say it's rubbish, and if it is the mega sketch, the zipper goes down and he won't even have it on.' 'When we draw he says "That doesn't look nowt like a house. That doesn't look nowt like a cat, where's its tail?"'*

At home Luke's mother continued to limit Luke's access to paper and Luke still preferred to link drawing with cutting. Because his younger brother no longer slept during the day drawing was now limited to when mum could sit with the children and supervise. This meant that Luke's preferred pattern of drawing and talking freely at the kitchen table, with his mother semi pre-occupied with household tasks, was interrupted. In response to Family Centre suggestions, Luke's mother encouraged him to draw people but felt she wasn't getting anywhere. She felt Luke got really frustrated because he couldn't make his drawings like the images he visualised. Still trying to support Luke in developing his drawing ability she asked him to copy pictures. Luke, however, frustrated by what he saw to be his inability, made critical remarks about both his mother and his younger brother's drawings. The drawings collected during Phase Two by Luke's mother reflect her attempts to support his drawing and were probably mostly instigated by her. The drawing of his brother, given to him as a birthday card (Figure 16) was the only evidence of Luke drawing freely on paper. This was still, however, probably completed at his mother's request and in her presence.

Phase Two: Luke, 4.0 Years, Meaning Making Through Role-play

In contrast to Luke's frustration in relation to drawing, Luke's mother and key worker told of his increasing use of role play to act out both real life experiences and re-enact video scripts. His mother gave examples of both his fascination for tape measures and his preoccupation with the role of the doctor. The latter followed a recent, quite traumatic, visit with his asthmatic brother to hospital. Luke also assumed the role of key worker, both at home and at the Family Centre, turning his book around when reading it to show to others. At the Family Centre his favourite book was 'Funny Bones' which fitted into his love/ hate relationship with frightening images, constantly fed by his mother's sense of the dramatic.

Figure 17: *'Barney'*

Mother: *'He's copying a scene from 'Barney' when the children have a circus. At the interval the 'Barney Children' go round with trays of healthy snacks. The white brick in his hand is a small box of raisins. He also had grapes, carrots, celery and small drinks of water.' 'As soon as he sees it (a tape measure) it's gone, its disappeared, its clipped onto his trousers and he's a workman' 'He likes being scared, not too scared obviously, but he loves making people jump. He loves being jumped upon as long as he knows it is going to happen.' 'The night before Halloween there was a film 'Hocus Pocus' with witches, and it is a bit scary. But what we did was we turned all the lights off, and put the pumpkin on top of the TV and lit it...' 'When its on...(the video) he just sits and watches it but afterwards he will do like pretending that he is in that film, or that character. Nine times out of ten he's always the baddy.' 'His character Woody, in the film, because they are all moving house, he is in charge and he's telling them to get a moving buddy, a partner, so they won't get lost, and Luke is sat there copying it word for word.'*

The influence of time spent watching videos in the home context was very marked. His mother discussed how he used familiar objects available in his immediate environment to support a role, having memorised the script of the key player. When watching a video Luke also found the toys he had that were associated with that particular video, bought from his favourite shop, the Disney Shop. It was obvious that Luke's mother gained pleasure from her son's interest in these popular cultural artefacts, confirming Marsh's (2001b) findings of parents' active acceptance of the pervasive nature of media texts in the home.

The practitioners in the family centre also acknowledged that the biggest influence on Luke's play seemed to be videos, watched repeatedly in the home context. At the Family Centre Luke used construction to support his play and often 'set up' the play scenario and then invited others to join him. As the oldest child in the nursery, and with the departure of the older children to school, Luke had obviously grown in confidence and was now a leader, particularly in role-play. He had strong ideas about how a particular 'story' should be re-enacted and complained to his mother when other children did not want to play 'Jurassic Park'. It was noticeable that the recurring play theme of escaping from frightening situations unified his play across both pre-school and home contexts. Luke introduced one of his favourite games, 'stampede', to neighbourhood friends. This again had been watched on video.

Luke: *'We are being chased by monsters, dinosaurs and ghost... Quick get in you'll be safe... You just can't get them to do what you want...they want to go and play Mums and Dads.'*
Key Worker: *'He will be playing something else but he will always go back to Jurassic Park.' 'Some children will come over and stay for a little bit, but then if they don't do what he wants them to do, he says they are messing it up.'*
Mother: *'It is about a load of animals chasing them.' 'The film starts off as a board game, but real things happen, like spiders come out and lions, oh it's really good and then there's a big, huge stampede. 'He says "Where do you go if you die? What if you are good, what if you are bad?" He thinks that you have to be old and have 'twisted neck' before you die.' 'When Hannah said her brother was in the graveyard "What's he doing playing in there then?" 'He died' "Children don't die" and they are arguing about it.'*

Figure 18: *'Being chased by monsters, dinosaurs and ghosts'*

The family had recently moved into their own home away from traffic in a quiet cul-de-sac and children of a range of ages were invited into the large garden to play. This ensured that under Luke's leadership complex play scripts could be re-enacted. His mother commented that broadening his circle of friendships had caused Luke to ask questions and to search for meaning and understanding.

Phase 2: Luke, 4.0 Years, Moving Towards Formal Writing

Although Luke had not yet voluntarily drawn people, as a four year old at the Family Centre he spent a short period of time each day as part of a small group of children preparing for statutory schooling the following September. These sessions of what were perceived as school routines and rituals involved the children in working with numbers in addition to the stories and singing they had when they were younger. The children were expected to 'fit in' with what the adults were doing and to 'sit down and respond when spoken to'. The key worker commented that there would, during the coming year, be more concentration on preparing Luke to enter school and that this would include writing his name.

Luke's mother was now advised by staff from the Family Centre to provided materials to support Luke in learning to write. With practice Luke could now recognise and write his name. His mother was proud of this but admitted that this, and trying to write numbers, was stressful for Luke. She commented that he got really anxious and upset that he could not do it right.

Mother: *'We've got this learning to write thing and its like mazes when you've got to go a certain way, and he's fantastic with them. He loves doing them, going through the gaps and doing squiggles.' 'He recognises a load of numbers and letters, but as for writing them down. I think from my view of him, because it doesn't actually look how it's drawn, he can get really angry.'*

Phase 3: Luke, 5.0 Years, Drawing at Home
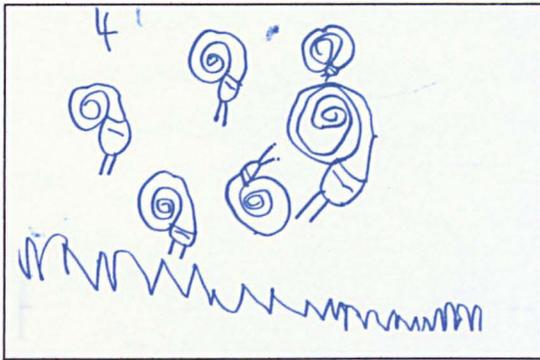
Figure 19: *'Sea snails'*

Mother: *'With everything being put away I don't know if its out of sight out of mind.' 'I think he can draw something now and recognise it. Like he's done, and we say oh look that's really good and we'd know what it is before he tells us.' 'He's harder. He's not as sensitive and he's more rough.' 'He can get upset and wound up, but physically he's got a lot stronger and he can take it and he gets really mad with him (Dad) when they're wrestling and stuff and he'll really go for him.'*

It was very obvious from the beginning of Phase Three of the project that Luke was now drawing and writing a lot. Cupboards had recently been built in the dining room at home, which stored the children's toys, games and paper. Luke's mother felt this had influenced their choice of activity. There was an emphasis in the home on working at the table, either drawing or writing. The scissors and the Mega-sketcher were no longer readily available and although the boys were able to get their own paper from the shelf, pens were kept in the mother's bedside cabinet and she therefore again limited drawing. Although his mother had said Luke wasn't cutting any more and chose to write and draw, Luke said he was not allowed to cut at home any more. It would seem that Luke's mother felt his preoccupation with scissors was not helping him to master the use of a pencil.

Luke was now happy to draw. There was a huge change in Luke's ability to represent images in a way that he found satisfying and which allowed him to use them to communicate with others. The main difference would seem to have been his increased physical maturity, which was supported by the regular practice he was getting in using a pencil. The drawing *'Sea snails'* (Figure 19) demonstrates Luke's ability to interpret a topic of interest in a satisfying way because of his developing drawing skills. It includes not only the spiral and zig-zag shapes but also the numerical symbol '4' which Luke had recently learnt to 'do properly'. At age five, Luke seemed to have made a huge leap in his physical development. He was much more physically daring, as long as he was in control, and had a range of new accomplishments, including enjoying climbing trees and jumping down stairs. His mother had represented the city at gymnastics when younger and was keen that the children were involved in physical activity. Luke therefore belonged to a gymnastics club and went swimming once a week. Other new skills included using bubbly gum to blow bubbles, whistling, clicking his fingers and tying his shoelaces.

Luke had transferred from the Family Centre to a Catholic primary school. Towards the end of his time at the Family Centre staff thought that he could be over confident and dominate the younger children. His mother certainly thought he had changed and recognised the influence of

Luke's father who played a much stronger part in the upbringing of his two children now they were classed as boys and no longer babies. A key shared interest of father and boys included watching the television coverage of wrestling matches. The play fighting which followed was encouraged by Luke's father as a way of 'toughening them up' in preparation for the world of school.

Figure 20: *'Lots of little pictures'*

'He gets wound up if you ask him to write a card out, he gets really wound up.... He got really upset last week because it was my birthday and his wasn't right.'
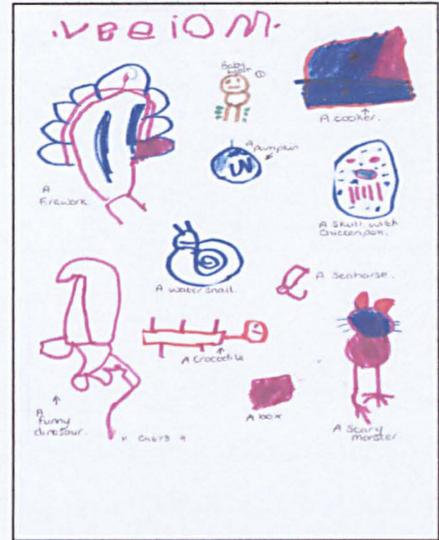
Figure 21: *'Arranged cut outs'*

'He writes whenever he gets the chance. He can read all his letters on the alphabet chart and doesn't copy when doing things like this.'
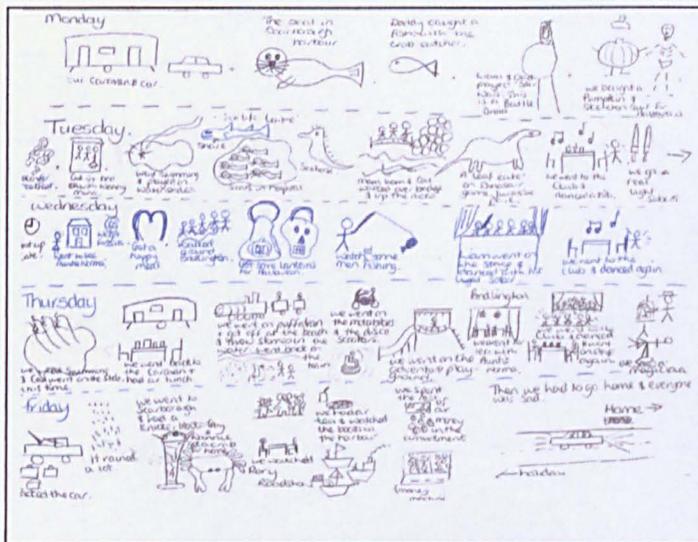
Figure 22: *'Holiday diary'*

Figure 23: *'Names'*

Luke still liked to draw individual pictures. These now obviously represented internal and meaningful visual images for him and he seemed to be attracted to drawing as a way of capturing stages of a story. *'Lots of little pictures'* (Figure 20) was completed towards the end of his time at the Family Centre and was accompanied by oral story telling. Each small image was a separate story and many represented experiences which had affected Luke emotionally for example, 'a machine sticking a needle into a baby' an 'me crying'. There were also images of

recently 'discovered' animals and machinery which interested him. A wonderful *'Holiday diary'* (Figure 22), completed by Luke's mother with his help at the beginning of the reception year, recorded the salient features of his holiday experiences as it unfolded by using labelled images. It provided evidence of his mother's continuing influence in modelling story form and showed how, probably unknowingly, his mother helped him to bring together drawing, writing and story. *'Arranged cut outs'* (Figure 21) was a collaboration between Luke and his mother but with Luke in control. Drawing and cutting out allowed Luke to control the final effect on the page. As Kress (1997) recognised, moving the image from its original environment and placing it amongst other objects, or in this case images, allowed new meanings to be formed. Luke could therefore name, rename, or discard these cuttings at any stage in the process, prior to his mother sticking them down. The act of cutting out allowed for a drafting process and took away the pressure of failing.

Luke's developing interest in writing is shown in Figure 23, which would seem to be a list of names. Although there was a regular time set aside by Luke's mother each evening for drawing and writing, importantly there seemed to be little pressure put upon Luke as to the content or quality of his drawings. Without being asked he included at the bottom of the page a drawing of himself. During Phase Three Luke had a relaxed and confident approach to drawing and it was his inability to make letters perfectly, the current focus of his mother's attention, which frustrated him.

**Phase 3: Luke, 5.0 Years, Drawing at School**
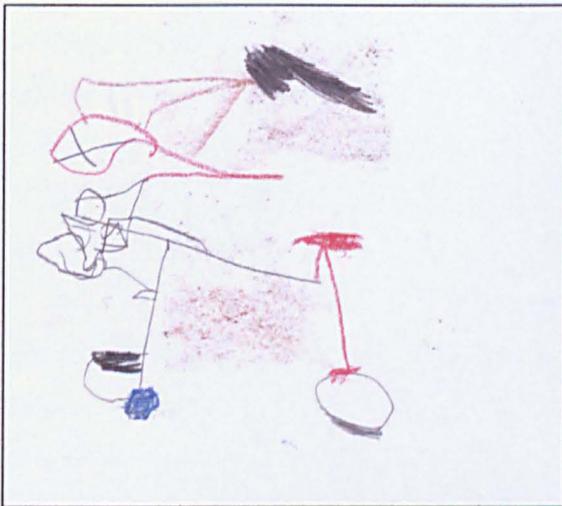

**Figure 24:** *'Machine for making bread'*
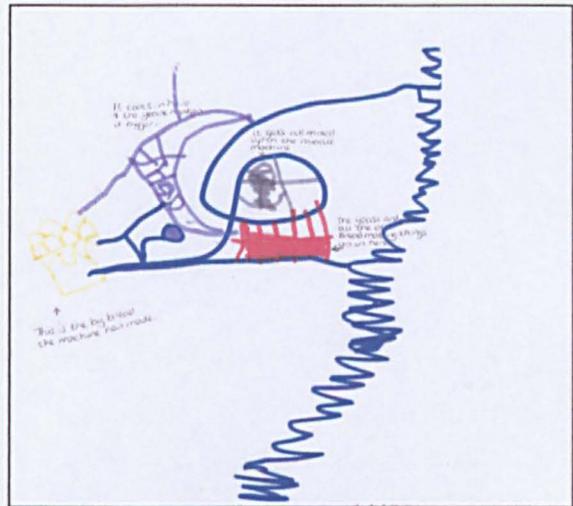
**Figure 25:** *'Bread making machine'*

Figure 26: *'Aeroplane and machine'*

Practitioner: *'A lot still just have the circle with the arms and legs coming out of the head but I would expect to see a recognisable face' 'I say (to the work experience girl) don't do it for them. You're there to talk to them basically; you're not there to draw. Let them get on with the drawing. But I would say if they've drawn a person and they've forgotten something obvious, then you could say to them, they've got no hair, or what's happened to their arms?' 'She's quite arty (the work experience girl) and she likes just sitting doodling.' 'He likes to talk... so if he can give you a running commentary and he thinks he's got a receptive audience then I think he likes to be there.'*

Figure 27: *'Dinosaur'*

Practitioner: *'If he's in the office you could lose him for virtually the whole day' 'He showed me the picture saying at first that the circles were spots but then correcting himself saying 'No I mean they're scales'.*
Luke: *'But know what, have you seen that bit where Scooby Doo falls down that hole and that panda went like that, pointing out on the wall and then a zombie came out. That was the first zombie. Oh have you seen the T-Rex movie? Oh you should, it goes, its good. Right this T-Rex eated only one dinosaur. It bit it, then it ate it. It was one of the nice ones.*

Having transferred to the reception class of a Roman Catholic primary school, Luke was taught by a confident and experienced early years teacher who had, in addition to her initial teacher training, completed an intensive early years course at the local university. This course had involved her in both theory and practice in relation to working with children of nursery age and informed her beliefs about the holistic needs of the children she taught. She was concerned to introduce formal education gradually, seeking to provide a balance of child and adult initiated activity.

As in the Family Centre, however, the class teacher's expectations regarding drawing were linked to realism and figure drawing. The children were allowed to draw whatever they wanted if a drawing table was set up, but the teacher commented that the children often replicated the standard images which adults drew for them and cited as an example a recent preponderance of house drawing. The passing of an idea from child to child was confirmed by Luke's representation of a house, drawn for the first time during his initial weeks at school. Although Luke's teacher felt the girls generally seemed to be more interested in drawing than the boys, she noted that Luke was often to be found at the drawing table. Within this classroom the gender divide, recognised by Paley (1984), in relation to choice of activity, seemed to be generally understated and the provision of water, sand and an exploratory weighing activity drew the attention of the boys away from under developed construction provision. The teacher

commented that she had deliberately removed cars from the construction area because it had led to the area being dominated by the boys.

The third and final phase of the project gives evidence of Luke's choice of drawing as a developing form of representation and meaning making. He may have been attracted to drawing in this setting, whether at the drawing table or in the office, for a range of reasons. Most importantly for Luke's growing confidence in his own ability, in this setting drawing was an activity without teacher direction. This was a stress-free atmosphere where he was given time and freedom to express and explore his own preoccupations, knowing they would be valued but not set in comparison with others. He had always been able to concentrate and become quietly immersed for long periods of time in activities that were meaningful to him and he was now motivated to draw because of a real sense of achievement and satisfaction in relation to his drawings.

Commenting on his *'Machine for making bread'* (Figure 24) he said *'You'll love this'*. This drawing had been similarly represented the preceding evening in the home context and named as *'Bread making machine'* (Figure 25) by Luke. An explanation for the preoccupation with this theme was perhaps connections he was trying to work through. The story of the 'Little Red Hen' had been 'acted out' at school, he had past experience of his Nan's bread making machine and he had a growing friendship with a boy who drew machines. Perhaps these factors led Luke to try to make sense of the way a machine can deliver a loaf of bread in this way. In this drawing and in *'Aeroplane and Machine'* (Figure 26) there is a continuity of line reminiscent of his earlier drawings, but this interest in movement and connections had now developed to incorporate shapes which required more complex hand/ eye co-ordination.

The class teacher tried to support her understanding of the need for talk about drawing by planning for a work experience girl to sit with the children at the drawing table. Her guidance to the teen-ager emphasised that she was not to draw for them but that she could point out inaccuracies if they were drawing for example a person. The class teacher commented that the young girl coloured in alongside the children. Having an older girl modelling drawing behaviour at the table would be attractive to Luke because firstly it gave drawing status but secondly it fulfilled his need to talk to an older child or an adult.

Suddenly Luke seemed to be using drawing to explore and make connections across his broader range of interests. There was however no evidence of the influence of cartoons, which had replaced his fascination with video images and stories, in his drawings. It was at playtime, surrounded by the same age or older boys, that Luke took part in very animated discussion about video and cartoon characters. Playtime was when chasing and pretend fighting games

flourished and his love/hate relationship with scary images was retained. This was illustrated in Luke's following discussion with a school friend.

LUKE *But you know what? One day, one night, my Dad told me this story and do you know what he said? This little boy went on holiday with his Uncle Nick and do you know what? One day the little boy looked out of the window at the field and they were playing football and he went to tell his Granddad and he said those are ghosts. And then the next night he stayed up really late and looked out of the window again and they were playing football again and guess what they were playing with? A head! Somebody's head!*

SCOTT *I've seen it real me. I've seen someone kicking someone, a dead people.*

LUKE *Oh, don't tell me about it will you. Oh please don't. I'm not going to listen.*

SCOTT *It's not scary; it's not scary.*

LUKE *Right*

SCOTT *Once I heard this boy scream and there were monsters out of the windows, zombies.*

LUKE *There's no such thing as zombies.*

In the classroom Luke spent a lot of time in the office area, mark making and copying words rather than the role play and 'dressing up' area. *'Dinosaur'* (Figure 27) was completed in the office, and Luke spent a long time discussing his drawing with another boy. He then brought the finished drawing to his teacher. At aged five Luke was confident in his drawing ability and, supported by the school context, found drawing, combined with talk, a satisfying means of re-presenting and communicating his meanings.

5.3 Summary

This case study presents the very individual journey of one child's meaning making through drawing. It highlights the huge influence Luke's mother had upon his meaning making in the home context and Luke's attraction to similar patterns of activity in the pre-school context. Key aspects of her influence upon his use of drawing included the routines and rituals which structured every day activity; her regular involvement in play with the children and her use of dramatic action and narrative to recreate the themes of familiar television programmes and videos as re-occurring play episodes. As a three-year-old, Luke's episodes of drawing, either alone with the 'Megasketcher' or alongside his use of scissors at the kitchen table, offered opportunities for him to explore the impact of line upon a flat surface and, when his mother was a background presence to his drawings, to accompany his actions with an ongoing narrative.

In sharp contrast, an educational and developmental agenda within Luke's pre-school, which prioritised both literacy and numeracy, heightened his mother's anxiety that he should perform well in these areas. This had a negative effect upon Luke's use of drawing as a meaning making tool. The drawing milestones set out within the pre-school developmental checklist led to expected outcomes of figure drawing and writing. This led in turn to a pre-occupation by

practitioners and by Luke's mother with drawings of 'mummy' and name writing. When the latter occurred it was a cause for much public celebration, communicating to the children an obvious message about its importance to adults within the setting. In contrast, adults had no understanding of Luke's 'action representations' (Matthews, 1999) and therefore failed to recognise them and to pay them attention. Little support could be given for what would seem, to the unknowing eye, to be 'scribbling'. Links were not made across his drawings, his love of story, his developing preference for role play and his ability to support action with dramatic narrative. Instead interactions around episodes of drawing became narrowly focused upon adult requirements and were over-directed. This constrained Luke's meaning making, leaving him with a negative orientation towards drawing as an activity.

As recognised by Trevarthen (1995a), Luke did not passively accept adults' control of his attempts to make meaning. In the pre-school context drawing became, for Luke, another adult-led activity that he accepted must be completed in order that he could return to his own preoccupations. At home, however, his frustration when asked to draw to an adult agenda was more openly displayed. Across settings Luke rejected drawing as a freely chosen activity. At four years old the 'shaping' of drawing by adults meant that for Luke it was an activity that 'got in the way' of meaning making. In contrast, Luke's need to play freely in role was accepted across settings and Luke continued to develop a mastery orientation towards role play as a communicative tool. Echoing his mother's behaviours in the home context, he determinedly played out increasingly complex video narratives, organising the arrangement of space, objects and his peers with great confidence. On entry to primary schooling he was ready for the challenges of a new setting and the playground activities of older boys were particularly attractive to him as he sought further narratives of power, action and adventure.

The routines and rituals of the reception class day, alongside his own increased strength and dexterity, fortunately allowed Luke the opportunity to rediscover drawing and to achieve satisfaction with both the process and the outcome. This highlighted the importance of young children firstly being allowed time and space to construct and communicate meaning across a variety of modes and secondly having a gentle and gradual introduction to more formal literacy skills. Luke's reception teacher's confidence in her understanding of young children's needs meant that drawing was available to children each day as a child chosen, open-ended activity where the value of 'draw and talk' was recognised.

Chapter Six

ANALYSIS TWO: CROSS SECTIONAL ANALYSIS ACROSS SEVEN CHILDREN

6.1   Introduction

In this chapter the term 'critical incident' is used to denote an episode of drawing and its contextual 'story', selected from the organisation of data within the analytical framework set out earlier in section 4. The analysis leads to themes across the seven cases. Key themes are:

- Evidence of the impact of the key contextual and cultural influences upon the children's drawing within the home, pre-school and school;

- The impact of affordances and constraints upon the children's use of drawing

- Evidence of changes and consistencies in drawings in relation to both individual children and the seven children and the reasons for them

- Links with theoretical models

As in Chapter Five, photographs and children's drawings are foregrounded and are set alongside utterances from parents, practitioners and the children, which relate to the visual data. Thus the visual data, triangulated with the 'voices' of significant participants in the research, remains central to the analysis and discussion of findings. In each case there are references to how the children's drawings changed during the three years/ phases of the project. The critical incidents are organised around affordances and constraints to highlight positive and negative influences upon children's use of drawing across contexts. This organisation reflects the use of 'constant comparison' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and the search for 'contrasts and paradoxes' (Delamont, 1992), which forms part of the search for patterns in the analysis of qualitative data.

The photographs and drawings are set alongside significant utterances from parents, practitioners and the children themselves related to the visual data. Thus the visual data, triangulated with the 'voices' of significant participants in the research remains central to the analysis and discussion of findings. In each case there are references to how the children's drawings changed during the three years / phases of the project.

Critical Incidents: Children Being Enabled to Use Drawing for Meaning Making

CASE 1: JAKE 4:0 Years, Home Context

Mother: *'Emily and Jake were singing about magic spells. Jake was chanting and dancing. He went to the blackboard, picked up some chalk and drew a magic spell boat. He then continued to draw the boat, sea and gang-way. He talked all the time, describing what he was drawing. The drawing was energetic and fluid. He used different colours and drew with the tip and side of the chalk. He made a spell to make lug worms. He chanted "Abracadabra lug worms", striking the board with a red stick of chalk.' 'People always comment on the fact that my children are very verbally expressive...they can paint with words. My husband and I are articulate and spend time talking to the children.' 'Jake is strongly attracted to dad's activities as an engineer.'*

Figure 28: 'Magic spells'

Jake had many opportunities at home to express himself in his own way and with considerable exuberance. His family, as more experienced members of a community (Bruner, 1996), encouraged within interactions his use of both talk and action as his main modes of satisfying his curiosity. These modes were 'scaffolded' (Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976) by detailed explanations in which appropriate technical terms were used in an accessible and age-appropriate manner and by opportunities for exploration. Jake was not overly constrained by a need to be tidy or to use materials in a conventional way.

Whilst his mother, a part-time teacher, and his father, an engineer, frequently took Jake and his six-year-old sister out to places of interest, they spent less time playing with the children. They ensured, however, that the toys and open-ended equipment that they provided – for example construction kits – supported and stimulated the children's interests. Jake was active in ensuring that meaning was co-constructed (Dunn, 1988). Through talk he interrogated the adults to get the information he needed, and through the physical manipulation of objects he investigated their properties and how they worked, feeding back his findings and further questions to his family.

There seemed to be an expectation that the children would 'get on with' play by themselves, using objects either found within their environment or in the well-provisioned playroom set aside for them. Chalking or painting materials were stored within sight in the kitchen and were therefore separated from everyday playroom activity and more likely to involve adult supervision. There was little encouragement for watching television and play episodes involved physical activity and, as recognised by Pahl (1999), the transformation of everyday objects. Episodes of play had a strong imaginative narrative to which both children contributed equally

and which drew upon the rich provision of books and storytelling activity by the parents. Within the continuum of children's use of symbol systems developed from Dyson (1993a) (Figure 4), drawing was emerging for Jake as a supplement for his more practised symbol systems of gesture, speech and playful action. His drawings were the visual equivalent of dramatic play, with lines being used to represent both objects and, in the case of zig-zags, dashes and dots, to symbolise movements and actions. Jake's mother commented that she and her husband rarely drew for the children and that drawing was not frequently chosen as an activity by Jake or his sister. Burton's (2000:336) description of the young child creating with 'intensity, vigour and body involvement' is particularly apt in relation to Jake's drive to explore multi-modally the connection between the working of moving objects and the transformative potential of new materials, in this case chalk. Given the lack of real interest in drawing shown by Jake's parents and older sister and the absence of a model at home for drawing behaviour, much of Jake's drawing depended upon the attraction of drawing within the pre-school context. Given the interest Jake had in what being a boy meant, the availability of a male model or models for drawing activity would be particularly important if he was to continue to develop drawing as a way of making meaning.

CASE 2: JAKE 4:0 Years, Nursery Context
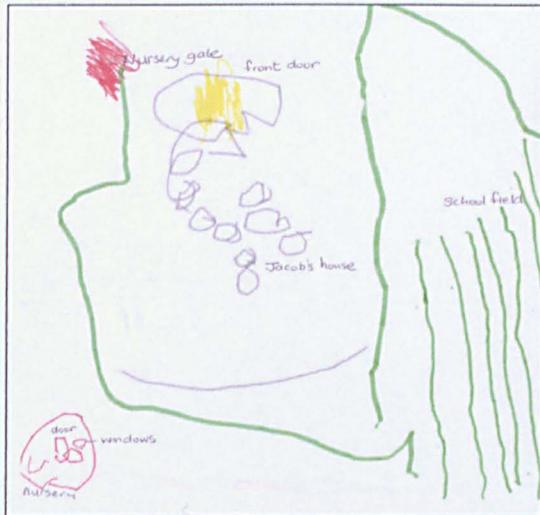
Figure 29: 'Route from home to nursery'

Practitioner: *'Key adult introduced new artefacts into the wet sand area to stimulate children into devising an imaginary route from home to nursery e.g. buildings made by children, houses, shops, figures petrol station, cars, etc. Jake worked in the sand for a further twenty minutes after input. He left the area and joined his friend drawing a plan of his journey from home to nursery (stimulated by key adult). Jake decided independently to draw his own plan. He was eager to discuss his work with both peers and the key adult on completion. 'He's interested in what his peers are doing, watches them and will try to build upon what they are doing.'*

Mother: *He's strongly attracted to his Dad's activities. His Dad's interested in maps, maps are useful.' 'He's exploring being a boy.'*

The nursery classroom was divided into workshop areas for role play, creative activities, mark making, construction play, etc., and curriculum planning was based on themes or topics. In a room brimming with stimulating activities, Jake started the day with his preference for working with his male peers, clustered in the technology and sand provision areas, as he continued the process recognised by Skelton and Hall (2001:25) as 'building and shaping' his own gendered identity. Within a small group of same-age boys he played a major part in the three dimensional re-enactment of common narratives, supporting physical action of body with enthusiastic verbal description as he looked to his friends for acceptance.

He responded politely to the daily requirement to 'do the task' set by the topic framework. This included drawing, painting and making models of different kinds of buildings. His decision to choose to draw a plan (Figure 29) was unusual. Although representative drawing was prioritised within the nursery, and children soon learnt that this was a way of gaining adult attention, Jake, following a pattern of stimuli set down in the home context, was generally only attracted to graphic activity when it was linked to the exploration of novel materials. He would rarely follow through to its final stage the nursery pattern of adult input followed by three-dimensional activity and then two-dimensional representation. In this instance he was motivated by both the prior completion of the drawing activity by his particular friend Thomas, and by the link he made between this map-making activity and the interest in maps and plans he shared with his father in the home context. The interconnection between the contexts of both home and nursery (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) supported Jake's recognition of this form of drawing as a novel and appropriate way of replaying and graphically organising his experienced world (Dyson,1989).

CASE 3: HOLLY 4:6 Years, Home Context
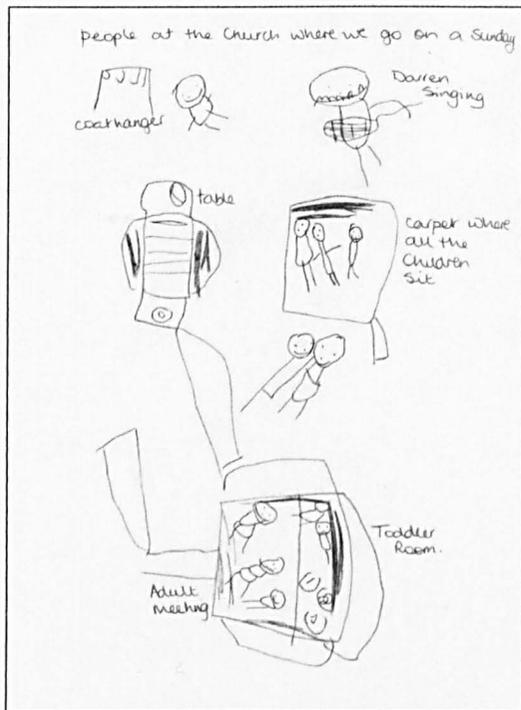
Figure 30: 'Sunday School'

Dad: *'We have a joke and say Dad's not very good at drawing, (the pair of us are hopeless at drawing) but I'll draw and she'll just copy*

Mother: *'We'd been to church on the Sunday. We'd gone to our Mam's afterwards and our Mam has drawing things at the other end of the room and then she came and showed me. I didn't actually watch her doing it – there was nobody with her.' 'When you go in the room where Holly goes in, the kids' room, there's a little rack that's the coathanger and then Darren does the kids singing, there's four tables for each age group and the children sit on a carpet and listen to a girl called Emma who tells them what they have to do and tells them stories and they play games. Andrew goes upstairs to the toddler room because he's too little for them so this is upstairs now the toddler room is directly above the adult meeting, which is funny how she's put them together like that and that's just separated it.' 'She plays often with her Dad. When I go to do the same thing she will say "You don't do it like Dad does" or "You don't do it like Nanna does". She prefers to do jobs with me.' 'She's always asking questions about when we were little, she does it with her Dad's Mam as well.' 'With older children she watches, with younger children she bosses.' 'I can see a lot of me in Holly. I always wanted to do jobs with our Mam, offer to make the beds, wash up. Mam taught me to bake when I was nine and I can imagine Holly to be like that.'*

Holly was the oldest of three children at the start of the project, having a three-year-old brother and a one-year-old sister. Her mother was at home full time and her father, a shift worker, spent a great deal of time with the children. The extended family, especially grandparents, figured strongly in family routines and rituals. As committed Christians, many activities were associated with church events. Holly's mother and father made a conscious decision that the television

would not be watched until after eight o'clock when the children were asleep. Interactions between family members were gentle and relaxed, reflecting the leisurely pace with which the day unfolded. The children were listened to and their questions were responded to with care.

The lounge, which ran from the front to the back of the house, was used by the family as both a living room and a play room and was full of young children's predominantly plastic toys. After attending nursery each morning, Holly spent the rest of the day in either free play or helping her mother with household tasks. Her mother remembered needing to be involved in her own mother's tasks when she was Holly's age. Storying was a part of every day routine. Stories were requested by Holly about when her mother or father were little, or were invented by Holly's father telling of simple moral dilemmas faced by animal characters. Holly often asked her father to draw and label these characters for her.

Although Holly enjoyed helping her mother it was to her father that she gravitated for play episodes. He involved both Holly and her brother in 3D construction activities, making boats and aeroplanes with 'stickle bricks' and Holly fitted in with his ideas. Whilst accepting of her father and grandparents as play partners, Holly and her brother excluded their mother saying she was not good enough and she accepted this. When playing without an adult present Holly could often shut out the younger children and concentrate on her personal play agenda. She used her two favourite dolls to replicate domestic scenes and routines and collected objects, mainly toys, to set out as, for instance, elaborate birthday teas. Whereas as a three-year-old she had set out shops, her current arrangements reflected her recent attendance at a range of birthday parties. Holly noticeably represented a particular theme many times and her drawings reflected her inner schematic conceptual and organisational system (Athey,1990).

Each Sunday, following attendance at church, Holly visited her maternal grandmother. As recognised by Malchiodi (1998), the immediate environment had an influence upon the amount Holly participated in drawing. In the context of her grandmother's house, where children's drawing was particularly valued, Holly was a prolific drawer. A plentiful supply of paper was always available in a designated area of the living room and was accessed by all the grand children. When Holly was younger her older male cousins were often present to role model drawing behaviours. In this context there were no competing toys available and Holly rapidly completed many sequences of drawings. Adults praised and accepted her drawings without making suggestions for improvement. Holly, strongly independent in any case, usually rejected offers of help, annoyed that an adult's interference might cause a picture to be spoilt. Help with drawing had to be requested by Holly, rather than being offered by others.

Holly's drawings were autobiographical, being linked to her or her family's everyday or recollected experiences. Many represented the family at home or church. She had a particular

fascination with the topological layout of rooms. Just as her 3D arrangements, completed at home, included many objects and small figures spread across the floor, so her mapped out drawings were crammed with figures. Most figures were undifferentiated and schematic but occasionally a key figure had additional detail that made him or her recognisable. A Sunday school teacher in her representation of Sunday School (Figure 30) was drawn for example with teeth and guitar. These were features of his appearance and his role at church which dominated Holly's visual remembering. Holly's drawing activity was characterised by its fluidity as on page after page her accumulated mental imagery in its enactive, iconic and increasingly symbolic modes (Bruner, 1966) poured forth. In addition to the replaying of everyday experiences, her drawing during this phase of the study often included her visualisation of her mother's stories of her own childhood which were requested repeatedly by Holly.

Drawing was a frequent activity for Holly in the home context and her mother recognised the influence of her own mother's interest in drawing upon her own provision for it. There was little evidence, however, of Holly moving between three-dimensional and two-dimensional representation. Instead prolonged time was spent with a particular mode of representation, repeating and elaborating or refining a well-rehearsed, family-oriented theme.

CASE 4: HOLLY 6:6 Years, Home Context

Mother: *'We were given this long pink dress for dressing up. Holly thought it was great. She said "Can I put Odette on?" – that's the swan princess and she wears a long dress and she's got long hair, so she dressed up and she was doing all the actions and all the singing and she goes mad when I sing to it. "Stop it" she says, "I want to sing".*
'She went to Elizabeth's, her friend in class, for tea one night. Elizabeth has a television and video in her bedroom. They watched the Disney video about Arial. She really got into it and she's got a book about it.' 'She doesn't draw while the video is on it tends to be afterwards ...she doesn't sit down because she'll start dancing around and singing.'

Figure 31: 'Wedding'

Across the second and third phase of the project Holly developed drawing as her key mode of meaning making within the home context. Drawing for Holly continued, as in Phase One, to be a fiercely independent medium of self expression. Her home had been extended to make room for another new baby and this gave Holly her own bedroom and a space in which to make meaning. Two years ago there was an absence of popular cultural images and toys were shared with her siblings. In contrast Holly now kept her personal possessions in a bedroom which reflected a pre-occupation with the Barbie doll. This included the colour scheme, a Barbie

lampshade and Barbie notebooks. Her mother not only supported her need for what she termed 'a typical girls' room' but was also sympathetic towards Holly's need to spend time alone. An agreement was reached whereby having spent some time playing with the rest of the family Holly could then enjoy time alone in her bedroom, usually drawing at her desk and playing schools. For Holly having a space of her own was important in a house that seemed filled with very young children. It gave her much needed private space in which she could imagine and support her imagining through drawing or role play. Having her own bedroom also brought with it the responsibility of keeping it tidy and answered the pleas Holly constantly made for her mother to let her help her more with household chores.

Although television was still not watched in the home context, videos were acceptable. These were mostly gender specific. Passed on to the family by families with children who had out grown them, Holly's mother felt they met the needs of both Holly and her brother for same-sex popular heroes and heroines. The videos did not appeal to both girls and boys and this meant that each child watched them alone. Just as Pahl (2001, 2002b) recognised how boys integrated in their texts family interests alongside representations of Super Mario and Pokemon figures, so Holly drew upon the imagery of heroines from 'girlie' videos such as Pokahontas and The Little Mermaid, and the all-female peer group drawing sessions enjoyed during wet playtimes in school. Holly's mother supported what she saw as the harmless narratives of gender stereotypical videos by providing clothing which enhanced for Holly their physical re-enactment. In doing so she reflected the behaviour of the parents in Marsh's (2002) study who unquestioningly accepted and became involved in children's responses to televisual narratives.

A further example of the power of imagery available in the home context to influence the content of Holly's drawings was her fascination with her parent's wedding photograph. The side view of a male and female figure declaring their love for one another was a reoccurring image (Figure 31). As Holly's focus moved from family relationships to friendships, so her drawings increasingly included sequences of static and elaborately decorative female figures which, heavily influenced by videos and talk with peers, re-told and elaborated visually upon romantic narratives. Drawing was an opportunity for Holly to project herself into the future and to imagine the time when, like her twelve-year-old friend, she would be allowed to have longer hair and high-heeled shoes.

CASE 5: SIMON 5:1 Years, Home Context

Figure content with handwritten labels: "Football" / "BECKHAM"
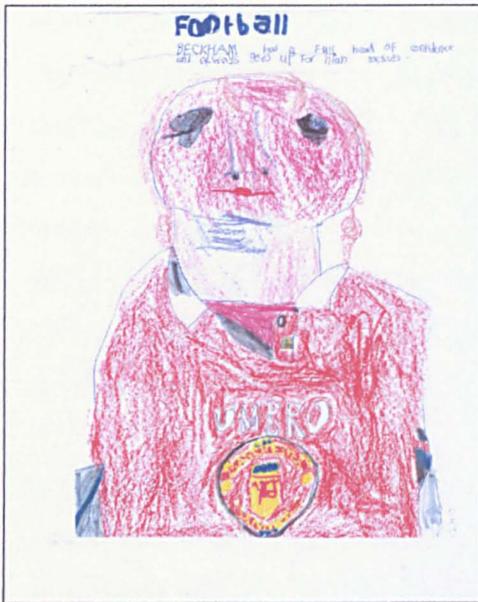
Figure 32: 'David Beckham'

Mother: *'I think there is always something in there wanting to be out and he is still planning (drawings) at night and getting up to go and do it in the morning.'*
Simon copied this from his football book although the words at the top are his own that he asked me to spell out for him. The picture was copied from a black and white print in the book and Simon drew the shirt first and then went to bed and had to finish on Monday by adding the face. He added the colour and the detail of the badge. 'Last summer my husband was off ill for six weeks beginning to the end of the world cup and they sat together and watched it.' 'He watches television for about twenty minutes and then he will come and scream up and down and kick the ball. He will go back and watch it. He will career up and down here shouting their names and sometimes saying "what a pass".
'He has got a bit more space in his bedroom now so he goes up there.'
Simon: *'This is my favourite drawing.'*

Simon's home context was characterised by a real interest in drawing and art and craft activities generally. His father was recognised by the family, and particularly by his mother, as being 'artistic'. His sister, four and a half years older than him and academically very able, modelled both drawing and writing each evening as she completed homework at the kitchen table. During the project's first phase Simon, wanting to emulate both his father and sister, had been supported by his mother in reproducing images and artefacts seen on television programmes such as 'Art Attack' (Figure 38). This learned behaviour meant that in his nursery context, faced with making decisions as part of child initiated play based activity, he sought the support of a key adult and showed most confidence when involved in adult directed small group activity.

The second phase of the project was a time of great self-confidence for Simon as he developed his two overlapping areas of 'specialist' knowledge, football and drawing. Unlike one year earlier, when Simon seemed desperately reliant upon the support of mother in being able to achieve a satisfactory end product, he could now participate fully in drawing and craft activities.

Apart from playing schools with his older sister, Simon spent a lot of time drawing, watching television or taking part in craft or baking activities with his mother. He spent little time outside playing football in the garden and, unlike the other children who lived nearby, Simon and his older sister were not allowed to play out on the street. Whereas toys were stored upstairs in the children's bedrooms, drawing and craft equipment was readily available in the kitchen. This equipment was added to if a tool or material was needed to achieve a particular effect or to try out a particular technique seen on the television. Drawing was often the last thing Simon did at night and the first thing he turned to in the morning.

Significantly Simon and his father regularly watched football and drew together. His father used these playful drawing sessions to introduce more advanced pencil skills and it was through these joint involvement episodes, accompanied by discussion and evaluation, that terms such as shading and perspective were introduced and that Simon developed his mastery orientation towards drawing. Practised in drawing, Simon's father was able to scaffold his son's progress through the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) in relation to the development of drawing skills, whilst maintaining his son's social and emotional well being. Simon introduced drawing competitions between himself and his father as to who had drawn the best footballer and it was evident that Simon now believed himself to be a very competent drawer.

Importantly these playful interactions were usually driven by Simon and were intrinsically motivating. Both Simon and his father were competitive and the dyadic exchanges between them would seem not only to have many of the qualities of 'shared sustained thinking' seen by Siraj-Blatchford *et al.* (2002) to lead to 'cognitive construction', but also to involve Simon in the conflict and negotiation recognised by Edwards, Gandini and Forman (1998:118) as being 'driving forces for growth'.

Art programmes on children's television were a continuing influence upon Simon's drawing activity but now Simon was able to interpret these for himself, rather than relying on his mother. He now drew independently and, confirming Matthews (1994) recognition of the importance of the support gained from visual imagery within the environment, used images from football magazines and annuals as a starting point, adding to or adapting them to meet his own needs. Many of his drawings concentrated on representing the cartoon images that were available in the home context for him to copy. Minnie Mouse was, for example, copied from the front of a T-shirt, as were the Star Wars figures displayed on cereal boxes. Writing was increasingly included alongside the drawings in the form of the banner headlines – again modelled upon the format of football annuals. Motivated by the value placed upon drawing by his parents, his father's modelling of what he considered to be appropriate artistic behaviour, and the provision of art equipment, Simon had constructed a positive image of himself as an artist, confident in his ability to use drawing to make his own meaning.

CASE 6: SIMON 5:1 Years, Year One, School Context

Figure 33: 'Footballers'

Practitioner: *'When they have total free choice which is maybe once a week, then they can work where they want, construction, lego, bricks or art and design and technology.' 'Art is a foundation subject so it takes a back seat.' 'Simon very rarely initiates conversation, he just sort of gets on with things. 'He doesn't talk a lot. When he does it's about football. I have a book on football which is one of mine, and when we have quiet reading sessions he always goes and gets it.' 'They are all very football orientated.' 'He always chooses to draw. He doesn't sit with people. He is quite content. 'At the end of a lesson, if we have finished early, they can do what we call 'read, write or draw'. 'He is the youngest child in the class. I have children two years older than him.'*

At five years and one month old and after two terms in both nursery and the reception class, Simon was the youngest of ten Year One children in a mixed Year One/ Year Two class. The practitioner commented that there was little time for him to have a choice of activities and that she found having to teach the whole class much easier to manage, particularly in ensuring that the children had covered everything. She admitted that in comparison with the time prior to the introduction of the literacy hour, she now had little time to talk to individuals as she was constantly teaching. There was little recognition in the planning and organisation of activities, of provision for children as independent or collaborative learners. As recognised by Silcock (2003), the teacher heavily directed children's activity in order to cover the content of the statutory curriculum. With a new class and in the 'run up' to an Ofsted inspection the statutory weekly art lesson seemed not to be a priority.

Although preoccupied with the demands of prescribed curriculum delivery, Simon's teacher tolerated with humour his ability to adapt and give a football theme to many of the activities he was required to complete. Given that the pattern of learning set down for Simon in the home context had been adult-structured activity and seated paper and pencil work in the company of an older, academically able sibling, Simon, unlike for example Holly and Lianne, did not seem to find the daily routine of the Key Stage One classroom restrictive. There was a commonality of experience across home and school which fostered in Simon a sense of well being.

Simon seemed to be stimulated by the presence of older children, spending a lot of time watching them whilst in the classroom. On the playground, however, he chose to stay with the other Year One boys in his class. Confident in his sense of self, Simon did not feel it necessary to choose the boy-dominated construction area in which to play during 'wet playtimes' and at every opportunity would demonstrate what Skelton and Hall (2001:iv) would see as 'non-conventional behaviour' in his preference for drawing. Wet playtime drawings were completed

alone or with one other boy who favoured drawing above construction. Already, conforming to Skelton's (1989) observation of children selecting single-sex groupings within the infant classroom, and what Paley (1984:ix) terms 'the five-year-old's passion for segregation by sex', Simon chose not to sit with the girls who grouped together in order to draw.

CASE 7: LIANNE 5:0 Years, Reception Class, School Context

Practitioner: *'This is a follow up using 'We're going on a bear hunt' book. I put the table together and we taped bits of paper to the table and we were drawing on the table and we'd made the cave out of something and they were going to get all the objects and we created this map. We told a story using a puppet of the people that were on the bear hunt moving along and she was desperate to get a pen and paper.' 'She chose a large piece of paper from the construction area. She collected a bear and two small world people for her drawing. She drew a bit, then sat up and look at her drawing before adding to it. She used the bear and people to 'act out' her story.' 'As she drew it she was saying "this is the cave, this is all the wishy washy grass, this is all the mud." She was going "squelch, squelch, squelch". She was saying "Whooo this is the snow storm." She was doing it and her whole body was moving and she was drawing it on paper.'*
'I don't mind if they're less accurate in their drawings than in their writing.' 'Sometimes I've stopped myself saying "Dogs don't have five legs do they?" Because if that child's representation has six legs, that's them expressing themselves. It's artistic licence.' 'We want all this to come out.' 'She doesn't particularly need me because she can go and get all the things she needs. She's quite happy working on her own a lot of the time.'
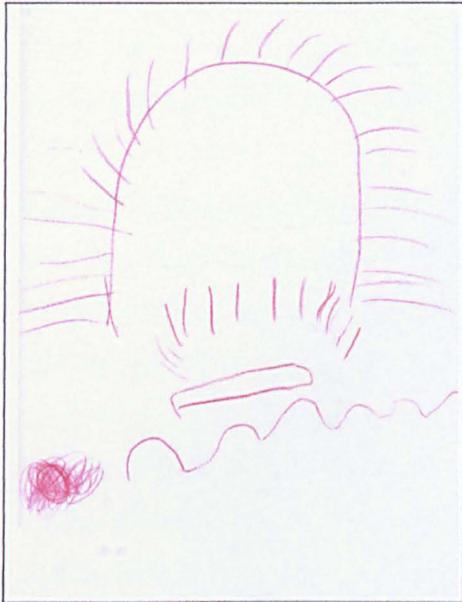
Figure 34: 'We're going on a bear hunt'

In both home and school contexts Lianne was given substantial freedom to make choices and transform the available materials and artefacts in order to make meaning. In the home context

she spent much of her time 'in role', and in confirmation of the views of both Malchiodi (1998) and Pahl (2002a), was supported by her mother's very relaxed attitude to the use of home space. Her mother accepted Lianne's need to gather and re-arrange everyday found objects. As a classroom assistant she was able to understand the rites and rituals of both home and school settings and support Lianne's meaning making across the contexts of home and school.

In the school context Lianne's teacher was respectful of her right to make private communications and, partly because of her preoccupation with targeting individual children for baseline assessment, encouraged her to make use of a wide range of accessible materials within a well-organised environment. Lianne was offered a range of whole class and group open-ended activities. All were intended to support her in making connections between what she already had some experience of and stimulate learning across the curriculum. These activities or experiences were balanced with time in provision areas, giving Lianne opportunities to internalise and then represent her new understanding.

Making use of the children's attraction to the story form, the teacher sent the class a message, ostensibly from a teddy bear in the stock cupboard. Lianne was strongly drawn to role play within the 'office' and, in response to this letter, she made use of the readily available scissors and tape to send 'messages' in envelopes to her peers. She increasingly included drawing and individual letters as part of these narratives, seemingly unaware of the distinction between these two symbolic forms. Importantly Lianne's teacher modelled the use of drawing alongside verbal, physical and three-dimensional activity and encouraged the class to re present meaning as a group, taking a trial and error approach to decision making and valuing all contributions. This acted as a stimulus for Lianne to use the group experience for further personal exploration, in the absence of pressure to achieve a particular outcome.

Lianne's playful, self-directed response to the activity based upon the story book 'We're going on a bear hunt' is shown in Figure 32. Importantly, the teacher was confident that this example of what Burton termed 'expressive meaning' encompassed a range of acceptable learning opportunities. Not only was Lianne's teacher bridging the play/work divide, but she was unconsciously drawing upon the work of Kress, (1997), Dyson (1993) and Pahl (2002b) as she actively supported the development of Lianne's multi-modal literacies and encouraged her as a symbol weaver to make meaning through visual, oral and artefactual texts. Across both home and school settings Lianne's engagement in her chosen activities was total, indicating an emotional satisfaction with what she was doing and ensuring she maintained a mastery orientation towards learning.

CASE 8: LIANNE 6:0 Years, Home Context

Figure 35: 'Envelope'

Mother: *'This is what she brought her stamp card home in...she drew all over it.' 'She loves reading and is forever drawing.' 'At home I read her her favourite stories like The Little Mermaid.' 'She's still drawing before school you know, rushing them off at the last minute.' 'She copies how her brother does his arms. They're both at it, drawing together.' 'I have loads of trouble getting her to do her homework. She's never got time for it. She just wants to draw. She doesn't want to do this writing.' 'She uses Barbie paper, she has got a little notebook and it's got hearts all over it.' 'She's just a doodler, she just has to be doodling.' 'Sarah came last night, that's her little friend and she went straight upstairs, "I'll just bring a few dolls down, a few babies", and she has got all babies laid out all over the sofa.'*

'Her birthday was a couple of weeks ago and she wanted those babies that drink and go to the toilet with nappies, and that's what she has got, and she feeds it religiously every day.' 'Last night I had Sarah for 3.30 until 8pm and they were still playing with babies. She just never tires of it.' 'She's not interested in TV, not at all.'

Whilst at school, Lianne made the difficult transition between the very differing contexts of Foundation Stage and Key Stage One (Figure 40), home continued to offer her freedom to make meaning in her own way. Her roleplay reflected her observation and imitation of everyday rites and rituals of the female role models of mother and teacher as she played 'mums and dads' and 'schools', always taking the lead organising role.

Lianne often brought another same aged friend home to play after attending school. Alongside their play with 'babies', the Barbie-inspired figures of 'Mary Poppins', 'The Little Mermaid' and 'Anastasia' were used by the girls to re-enact play scripts. These scripts generally featured the arguments, 'falling outs' and 'making ups' of friendships, rather than the video-inspired themes that gave the figures their names. The figures within these play episodes generally acted as a prop for talk rather than action.

With access to a plentiful supply of paper and pens, Lianne used drawing alongside her ongoing play with dolls as part of her role as mother, or increasingly her role as teacher. Alongside registers and replicas of school reward systems Lianne drew the static 'lined-up' and labelled figures of family and friends which reflected her increasing interest in clothing, particularly her fascination with 'high heels'. Her mother commented upon her arguments with Lianne about what was considered to be suitable footwear for school and her growing interest in rings, necklaces and earrings. Lianne's use of decorative patterning and the heart motif in particular (Figure 35) is unsurprising, given its prevalence upon artefacts, recognised by Marsh and Millard (2000) as targeted to be attractive to young girls.

Although there are no drawings collected to support its use as a wet playtimes activity, Lianne's mother acknowledged this took place and that Lianne, like six year old Holly, was part of a group of same-aged girls who chose to draw together at school. These group episodes of 'draw and talk' were a key opportunity for Lianne to make her own meaning through drawing in school. They were important in enabling a commonality of both content and style that was recognised in Dyson's (1986:389) description of girls' preoccupation with representing images of 'happy little girls'.

Lianne's patient and gentle older brother, seemingly happy to fit in with his sister's demands, also continued to influence the development of her drawing and writing skills. Her mother actively encouraged Lianne to turn to him for support and she continued to play with and work alongside him, observing and copying the strategies he modelled to create a particular effect.

CASE 9: DONNA 5:8 Years, Home Context

Figure 36: 'Doll for new sister'

Mother (Donna aged 4.8): *'She's four, She came home yesterday with homework. I thought 'Oh'. 'I can't believe how much she's come on in just a year.' 'From four to five and what she knows is unbelievable.'*

Mother (Donna aged 5.8): *'She did a lot (of drawings and paintings) when I'd had Elizabeth. She wouldn't leave my side so they were all on the kitchen wall, all her drawings.' 'When I came home from hospital, I was only gone six hours and she was really emotional.' 'As soon as she's home from school she's out with the kids, with the gang.'*

Practitioner (Year One): *'She's a free spirit. She likes to think she can just get up and sit down. She'll kind of float off to do something.'' 'Donna is the sort of child who doesn't choose to go and mark make.' 'It's the building she likes and the home corner.' 'Because she wasn't in our nursery she's different to the others because she hasn't been sort of moulded into their image and likeness.' 'I wouldn't have expected to be a good reader, but she is.' 'She's not interested in presentation, although it's getting better.' 'We have to have these children up to scratch, to get them to Year Two, where the pressure's even greater. These children are put under tremendous pressure, it's ridiculous really, but that's the way we're living.' 'Parents are interested in how much writing they've put on paper.' 'They don't technically do free drawing. If they're drawing in topic they're drawing for a reason.'*

As an only child, a move for Donna from her home on the edge of a busy main road to one where she could 'play out' led to social connection with older girls (Dyson, 1993) becoming an important feature of her learning. A strongly independent approach to adult requests characterised her behaviour across home and school settings. Whilst her mother battled to ensure key rules of behaviour were maintained at home, practitioners in both Reception and Year One classrooms spoke of her taking what she needed from the environment, generally showing little involvement and 'getting by' whilst giving the minimum.

As a pre-school child Donna had been an amiable little girl, encouraged by her mother to spend most of her time making her own choices and decisions and to be able to 'stand up for herself'. At home she had happily played alone, occupying herself in role play and with small-scale construction and jigsaws. A range of artefacts was available for play which Donna could use freely, but there was little emphasis on drawing. Given an absence of role models, and the 'low-key' availability of drawing materials, both seen to be necessary by Matthews (1998) and Malchiodi (1998) for drawing to thrive as a mode of meaning making, Donna did not draw regularly. Although she ensured strict guidelines for behaviour were adhered to, Donna's mother had been generally a background presence and the television was switched on by Donna and used to supplement her play. This pattern was to some extent followed at the family centre she had attended. There she worked independently but within sight of her key worker, who was

generally based each morning in the room set aside for small-scale construction. Over time she became involved at the family centre in small group play activities with her female peers.

As Donna moved into statutory schooling, joint focus episodes at home continued to be mainly at Donna's instigation, asking her mother to look at her, for instance, as she performed a dance routine. One exception was the involvement of Donna's mother in teaching the writing of individual letters and the sounds they made. Donna's mother was aware of her own lack of some basic skills and her intervention supported Donna in being relatively independent in her completion of adult-initiated reading and writing activities in the school context. The provision of a range of her own books at home led to Donna gaining real pleasure from reading.

In the Year One class of primary schooling, the focus upon 'one-off' activities, completed within a short timescale and emphasising curriculum or basic skills coverage, held little meaning for Donna. Drawing was one of many free-choice activities available for ten-minute periods three times each week but was rarely chosen by Donna. When it was she drew family members, houses, gardens and children playing. Used as a low-key, all-girl social opportunity her drawings were generally underdeveloped, lacking the vibrancy of drawings completed with real involvement and being used in a minor way to support talk and gesture. Donna's total engagement came in the playground, when she sought out the nine and ten-year-old girls she played with after school and joined in animatedly with talk of jewellery, make-up and boyfriends.

The arrival of a new baby sister resulted in what was an unusual interlude of concentrated, meaningful drawing activity at home, as Donna included the baby in her representations of the family and adjusted to her own responsible position as 'big sister'. At a time when Donna needed to stay in close proximity to her mother, drawing as an activity offered physical action, dyadic interaction and, as stressed by Malchiodi (1998), a means of emotional release.

CASE 10: EDWARD 6:9 Years, Home Context
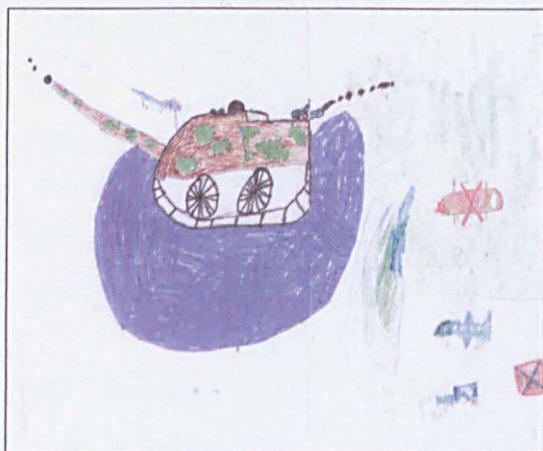
Figure 37: 'Army Tank'

Mother: *'He's got a new friend who's moved in up the road who likes armies, wears all these camouflage clothes and shows Edward all his military things. Now Edward wants to draw army pictures all the time.'* *'My brother used to be in the Marines and in the Army Art. Corps and he asked "Can I ring him up and see if he's got any old books on the army?"'* *'He might do some drawing, then give it up and go back and then finish it off.'* *'At school he always tags on with the wrong, the ones that are quite a handful, watching not getting into trouble.'* *'He's got really stroppy. He knows what he wants and he stands his ground.'*
Edward: *'Those are baddies and then they walk in and there's bombs there and then they'll die.'* *'That's where they all go into the jet pack base and that's where the jets set off.*

As the younger child Edward seemed to be in competition with his very able, eleven-year-old sister for his father's attention. Home was characterised by disputes between the two children where Edward was seen as the protagonist. The fact that toys were kept in the bedrooms, and were generally brought downstairs individually, constrained the freedom with which Edward played. There was little opportunity for the acting out of narratives using found materials as drawn attention to by Kress (1997) and Pahl (1999) and the use of paper and pencils seemed to be reserved mainly for homework set by school. Edward's father, although working long hours, was his preferred but infrequent play partner and his mother had little involvement in play activity of any kind. Father and son shared an enjoyment the traditionally male activities of using a three-dimensional construction kit and watching wrestling on television.

Whereas at school he enjoyed watching the misbehaviour of older boys, his parents were concerned that his current involvement on the fringes of older boys' activities, whilst out on his bike at home, would eventually lead him into trouble. His parents seemed surprised that his reports from school were so good but for Edward it was important to complete set tasks properly. He responded well to a strong female practitioner who ensured school rules were adhered to and set clear expectations for behaviour and achievement. Constrained by a lack of construction materials in a classroom dominated by resources for the implementation of the government's literacy and numeracy strategies, Edward had little opportunity to continue to develop his interest in construction. His teacher saw him therefore as an able child with no particular interests but with a strong preference for the company of other boys.

Edward had shown little real interest in drawing until influenced by a slightly older boy with a passion for drawing armies who moved into the neighbourhood. Edward was led into drawing through the action narratives told by his new friend as he drew. His attraction to themes of power and conquest, explosions and battles, and to the technical machinery associated with them, is seen to be common for boys by Dyson (1986) and Golumb (1992).

This section, using critical incidents as exemplars, has drawn attention to the affordances which have led to the seven children demonstrating a mastery orientation (Dweck, 1989) towards drawing as a mode of meaning making. It highlights the importance of the context in which drawing takes place and the enabling role taken by adults, siblings and peers. All the incidents demonstrate the ability of drawing to meet young children's need to communicate, integrate and transform their understanding of the world.

The following section presents critical incidents which constrain children's ability to use drawing for meaning making. It makes links with section 6.2, particularly in relation to discussion of the impact of context and the roles of key others.

6.3 Critical Incidents: Constraints Upon Children Using Drawing for Meaning Making

CASE 11: SIMON, 4:1 Years, Home Context

Figure 38: 'Flowers'

Mother: *'We worked on this together and were very impressed with a good result. From an idea on 'Art Attack'. 'He was so thrilled because it's such an instant visual result. It's quite an interesting effect isn't it?' 'Sits and draws for one hour every day.' 'Sticks at things longer than you would expect for a four year old.' 'Watches television three hours each day.' 'I've had to draw a picture this morning for him to colour in. I don't know if this stems from the fact he feels he can't draw what he wants to put down.' 'He likes to copy.' 'My husband, not that he sits and does drawing very often but he's arty.' 'He does a lovely picture for them to colour in.'*

Apart from some role play with his older sister where, given their four-and-a-half-year age difference, she took the lead in setting the play agenda, Simon spent most of his time either drawing or watching children's television. The much-admired drawn images of his father or older sister surrounded Simon in the home context. Whilst his father prepared for a bi-annual teenage activity week that he ran locally for the church, his academically able sister seemed to effortlessly draw and write at the kitchen table following attendance at school.

Unlike Jake (Figure 28) and Holly (Figure 30) whose images were a fluent outpouring of experience and understanding and who required adults only as an appreciative audience, Simon needed support from his mother in both drawing and craft activities in order to achieve what she considered to be a *'pleasing end result'*. Their joint activity usually followed them watching the same activity being 'worked through' on the television programme 'Art Attack'. Although there was discussion between Simon and his mother as to an appropriate division of labour and Simon could be very assertive when an activity particularly appealed to him, the programme 'Art

Attack' encouraged viewers to focus upon stereotyped and simplified cultural images and a prescribed end product. In order to achieve the required effect many of the activities involved Simon colouring in the representational outlines drawn by his mother.

By trying to conform to a stereotypical understanding of a 'pleasing effect', aimed at children older than him and beyond his unaided capability, Simon developed a helpless orientation particularly in relation to initiating what Matthews (2001:29) would term 'spontaneous art'. A pattern of reliance upon the support of others in the home context was followed through into the nursery context where he sought activities that he was familiar with. He gravitated to paper and pencil activities, familiar to him from playing 'schools' with his sister, where a key adult was available to give some direction. Simon found making choices within a free play context

difficult. Unlike his well-ordered home with its predictable routine, this was a context crammed with opportunities but also with decisions that needed to be made by him. In comparison with Jake, and Holly, who attended the same nursery, Simon was one of the children Malchiodi (1998) would consider to be overwhelmed by the opportunity for decision making within his nursery environment. All three children sought to continue the pattern of meaning making laid down in their individual home contexts. Simon's seeming eagerness and confidence, when taking part in ritualised small-group, practitioner-initiated activities, was interpreted positively by practitioners in the nursery context as part of his readiness for more formal learning. His uncertainty when faced with initiating self-choice activities was not commented upon.

CASE 12: SIMON 6:1 Years, Year Two, School Context

Figure 39: 'Apple'

Practitioner: *'Art lesson. The class were given a general lesson introduction in observational drawing. We talked about shading, light and dark, sketching. Simon sat and listened carefully. During the activity Simon sat and worked by himself without talking to anyone for the entire time he was drawing. He stopped every now and then to look at his work so far.'*
'Fourteen was the age when I last had any art lessons.' 'I know I'm not a very good artist, I make that clear to the children.' 'I'll model something to show them. I have the whole class on the carpet and I've an object in front of us and I'll show them exactly bit by bit what I'm doing.'
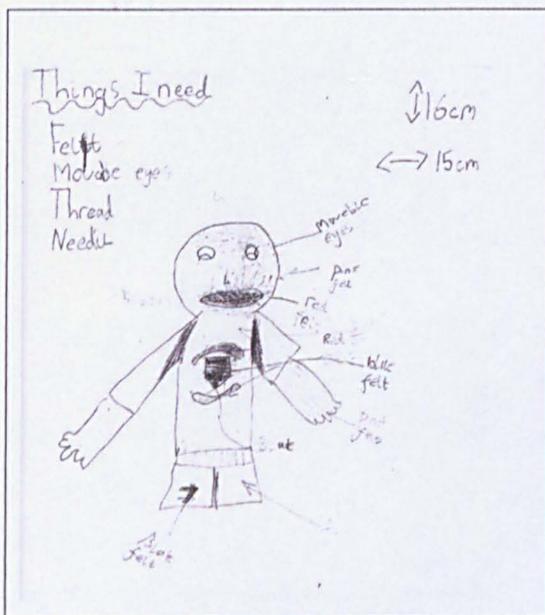
Figure 40: 'Puppet plan'

Practitioner: *'Design and technology lesson. The children have been looking at a range of puppets since September. They have investigated how they are made and what they are made from. In a few weeks they are going to make their own puppets – hand or finger – and are designing them today. Simon asked questions during the introduction about what they would make their puppets into.'*
'The thing he found most difficult was actually thinking about what to do. What kind of puppet he was going to create.'
'All the boys he chooses to work with are sensible boys.'

During Phase Three of the project Simon was an anxious child in his school setting. This contrasted markedly with his seeming contentment and mastery orientation during Phase Two in his mixed Year One and Two class. The transition from his Phase Two class to a high-ability streamed class of Year Two children in Phase Three of the study had proved unexpectedly difficult for Simon. Certainly much was expected of him as a very academically capable child in a school year that was dominated by SATs. Generally a sensitive child, Simon now viewed school very seriously and showed little enthusiasm for any part of the daily routine. The school day was split into the apportioned times, which depended upon the valuing of a subject within the statutory curriculum and the Literacy Hour and the Daily Numeracy Lesson dominated each morning. Simon's mother felt he was worrying about his ability to cope with numeracy and, as a consequence, was beginning to miss school on occasional days, complaining of stomach ache. In retrospect Simon's mother felt he did not cope well socially in last year's mixed-age class and, as an August birthday, would have gained more confidence by being placed in the class that contained only Year One children. Over a two-year period, between the ages of four and six, Simon had spent time in four different classes and, apart from his time in nursery, he had been the youngest in each class. The school's decision making process regarding the placing of Simon would seem to have prioritised his academic rather that social and emotional competency.

In comparison with his previous teacher who was experienced, relaxed and very aware of Simon as her youngest child, his new teacher was unfamiliar to both the school and Simon and had trained to teach Key Stage Two children. This made Simon's transition to his new class more stressful. Having been seconded to the infant school from the junior school, where she had taught children in Year Four, she admitted to having overestimated the level at which she set literacy and numeracy work during the early weeks of the new term. Being 'housed' in a portable classroom, physically situated near to the junior school, compounded Simon's insecurity. As a virtually self-contained unit this building restricted his contact with the warm and familiar main school to mainly whole-class assembly times, and he missed the opportunities he might have had to be a relatively 'big fish in a small pool'.

Although drawing was used as illustration as part of geography, history and science, both the QCA Art and Design and Technology half-term schemes of work used by his teacher offered Simon opportunities for drawing. He responded seriously to both areas of activity, being anxious to grasp what the teacher required of him and what would make the activity a success. During the weekly art lesson what should have been enjoyable, given the concentration upon drawing and Simon's familiarity with the terms and practice of 'shading' and 'sketching', was overshadowed by Simon's general lack of confidence. He also had particular difficulty in making sense of the overall aim of the puppet theme within design and technology as it was spread out over weekly design and technology lessons. During phase two of the project Simon

had been used to each taught session being complete in itself and for the content to be prescribed. Just as in his nursery context, Simon found having to think of his own starting point, in this case designing his own puppet, very difficult.

The Year Two teacher tried to give the children in her class some time for free choice of activity, however 'choosing' had a low status within the prescribed Key Stage One curriculum and in practice, given the demands of the hierarchy of official time allocation, this was for thirty minutes each Friday afternoon, prior to the class going swimming. At wet playtimes, however, Simon was noted by his teacher as being part of a small group of boys planning and designing a large poster to tell of two football teams playing each other. As recognised by Dyson (1993) and Skelton and Hall (2001), the need for these boys to connect socially with their same sex peers was strong and for Simon a drawing activity enabled him to demonstrate his expertise and be valued by other boys. Wet playtime activity had little value within the school's curriculum, however, and despite much work going into the bold-lettered names of the two teams across the top of the page, the poster was never finished. The starting of a new one each wet playtime was evidence of the boys' ongoing pre-occupation with this activity. Simon played a full part in the group planning process, which seemed to be the most important part of this activity and the teacher commented that the boys discussed what they were going to do in great depth, far more than they did in lesson time. She did not, however, consider ways of incorporating such opportunities for 'sustained shared thinking' (Sira-Blatchford et. al., 2002) within her everyday practice and seemed to accept the domination the end of key stage assessments had over the academic year. Unlike the pre-school contexts of Reggio Emilia (Edwards, Gandini, Forman, 1998), the fascinations children held in common failed to become part of her curriculum. Opportunities to bring together the developing separation between the culture of schooling and children's own culture through informal shared dialogue around drawing were therefore lost.

Unsurprisingly, given his lack of experience of play with children of his own age, in both home and school contexts, Simon found outdoor play times difficult. Recognition by the 'peer sphere' (Dyson, 1993:3) was increasingly important for his social and emotional welfare and Simon was concerned that within his small 'gang' of boys he was not listened to because he was the youngest. Unlike his peers, he lacked the coping skills they had built up as they regularly played with other boys in and out of the school context without an adult presence.

Unusually, given his total absorption with drawing when aged four and five, Simon was not drawing in the home context. Those drawings he did complete were often labelled and his mother felt this stemmed from his awareness that others needed clarification of his meaning but also perhaps reflected the influence of the school context where labelling, as in Figure 40, was being used extensively alongside diagrammatic drawings within directed activities. Simon was now much happier making, almost independently, the three-dimensional representations

modelled by the television programme 'Blue Peter'. These he could explain to others and they had an obviously useful outcome as in the case, for instance, of a cardboard box table football. They were presumably a topic of shared dialogue with peers at school the following day. His mother remembered that drawing gradually became of lesser importance for Simon's older sister at this age as she became involved in after school organised social activities, completed homework and needed time to totally relax in front of the television.

Simon was enjoying the 'stories with chapters' that his mother had introduced him to and now read to him each evening. As a result of this and his growing ability to write unaided, he had begun to write a novel on the home computer, returning regularly to draft additional chapters. In relation to Dyson's continuum of symbol systems (1993) (Figure 4) Simon's pre-occupation with writing and three-dimensional model making in the home context at the expense of his former love, drawing, was not unusual. Whilst reflecting an able six year old's progression in the use of symbol systems, with writing becoming a significant 'mediator' alongside other forms of meaning making, some use of drawing, in a supporting role, however, would have been expected. Its absence could have been due to Simon's extreme tiredness following school or due to writing being supported and encouraged at the expense of drawing by Simon's mother.

CASE 13: HOLLY 5:6 Years, Year One, School Context

Figure 41: Aged 5:6 'Friendship'

Mother: *'You won't be able to play quite as much you know ... I think they have got sand and water ... but there are no dolls or anything like that.' 'She often talks about Amy and Katie the twins because she wants hair like theirs, a long plait down the back so she is growing her hair.' 'I will look in her reading bag and she will have a picture of something, what I would call a girly picture now with the eyes and eyelashes and the sun and the sky and the grass.'*

Holly: *'I don't like reading ... When I've got a new school book I have to read it ... My mam gets it out and she wants me to do it but I don't want to do it.'*

Practitioner: *She isn't one to initiate conversation ...there won't be a lot of language.' 'She's not doing free writing. She's not at the level where I would be expecting them to write stories.'*

Following her time in the nursery (Figure 30), Holly spent two terms in the reception class and was now in the Year One class of her infant school. As she progressed through the educational system, attempts were made to change her carefree approach to graphic communication. Her drawing and writing, so quickly completed, were seen to lack care and the need for improvement in her formation of letters was discussed at a parents evening. This led to Holly's mother sitting with her at home after school, trying to get her to take more care with her writing and to form her letters correctly. Always independent, Holly badly needed to continue the

pattern of making meaning in her own way within the home context. After a day at school where choice was limited she particularly resented her mother's interference and stated a preference for reading and writing when she wanted to, rather than when she had to. At home she continued her enjoyment of arranging dolls, making models and drawing but outdoor playtime was the only opportunity for role play and there was no provision of sand or water within the school context

There was little evidence of the valuing by practitioners in any of the Year One or Year Two classrooms of what Matthews (2001:29) would term 'spontaneous art'. Holly's mother found drawings on scraps of paper in Holly's school bag and recognised the similarity of content between them and the drawings Holly completed at home. These were particularly in evidence during periods of wet weather when drawing was a playtime option. These drawings were not part of the planned curriculum and were never recognised or commented on by adults in the school context. Just as Dyson (1993) recognised the world of peers as separate from the official world of school, so these drawings were part of Holly's social world and enabled her, alongside her female peers, to enter into the draw and talk that characterised their social practice. It was noticeable, across all Key Stage One classrooms within the study, that where drawing occurred it was interconnected with talk. The dominance of construction activity by boys, which to some extent started in the nursery but was allowed to become taken for granted within the reception class, meant the girls not only had had few options available to them for wet playtime activity, but had generally further developed an understanding of drawing over time as satisfying communal narrative, facilitating and being facilitated by talk. For both Holly and Lianne, drawing, supported by the images of Barbie Doll and Disney video heroines, bridged the social worlds of home and school.

There was no collected evidence of art activity within this Year One context over the one month period of data collection. The teacher commented, however, on her preoccupation with the need for the children to have all completed a printing for an urgently needed display. By doing so she drew attention to the use of art activity for its decorative product, rather than the quality of the process (Bresler, 2002). Drawing, as reported by Ofsted (2001, 2002), also serviced the needs of other curriculum areas and photocopied proformas with decorative borders were 'filled in' as accompaniments to writing activity. Whilst fitting in with the need to complete an activity within the time allowed for one lesson, little time was left for drawing to be seriously developed. Many of these stereotypical patternings, for example heart shapes, would have strongly appealed to the girls in the class, but would probably have had little credibility with the boys. Whilst meeting the learning objectives set for the activity by the teacher, Holly adapted many of these low-level recording activities to continue her preoccupation with figure drawing and what her mother would term 'girlie' images.

## CASE 14: LIANNE, 6:0 Years, Year One, School Context
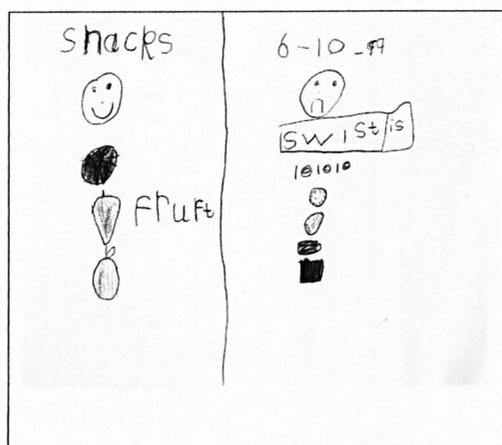
Figure 42: 'Snacks'

Practitioner: *'Looking, as a whole class, at food we eat as snacks. The recording involved observation of the food. Separating the page into two halves with smiley faces was modelled. The rest of the layout is Lianne's choice.' 'We do collective art, you know like collective worship. We do art on Tuesday afternoon, that is the time when their individuality comes out because we generally show them what we are willing for them to do... then we say now we would like you to have a go at something like that.' 'If I was never to let them choose some children wouldn't really show me what they were capable of because some of the children, their talents are restricted in the numeracy and literacy because of say their handwriting skills.' 'We were going to have a doctors (as a roleplay area) but we had just done it in Reception, so you see they had done all that measuring.'*

Practitioner: *'I am having to squash her because she is so excitable, so in situations where she is meant to be concentrating on what is going on, she is much more interested in other children.'*

Mother: *'She didn't want to come to school this morning. I asked her why, she just said "cos its boring".'*

The separation of the curriculum into distinct subject areas and the introduction of the Literacy Hour and the Numeracy Lesson had a huge impact upon Lianne's opportunities to use drawing to make meaning. The transition from the reception to the Year One class was particularly stressful for Lianne, given the autonomy and freedom of representation she had experienced across home and school. This freedom was suddenly curtailed as she entered Year One. In common with Holly's experience in her Year One classroom, accessible materials were limited and were focused upon literacy and numeracy activities with no provision for role play. The classroom physically looked different as, without workshop areas, tables and chairs dominated the room and display areas were designated to literacy, numeracy and ICT (Appendix 10).

The teacher recognised the importance of these children having time for choice of a range of activities and recognised that given the opportunity for free choice children often made accessible to her behaviours and competences not shown in, for example, heavily directed literacy and numeracy sessions. With the whole of the morning taken by literacy and numeracy, however, she felt this had to be limited to a thirty minute block of time following spelling and singing each Friday afternoon. Further evidence of the lack of priority given to opportunities for children's role play was given with the decision, by the two teachers with parallel Year One classes, not to have a roleplay area because they felt it would not fit in with the term's topic of 'ourselves'. Given that whole class lessons predominated it is difficult to see how, apart from the one half hour set aside for free choice, children would have accessed role play.

Subjected to this constrained and directed curriculum Lianne complained to her mother of being bored. At this early stage of the new school year, the Year One teacher reported that Lianne was a very excitable child who, being very sociable, found it difficult to remain focused during whole class 'carpet time' when she constantly had to be reminded not to talk. Lianne's parents, trying hard to support the class teacher, began a reward system whereby Lianne received sweets for paying attention and keeping quiet.

The weekly art lesson was interpreted as a teacher directed, whole class activity, referred to by the teacher as 'collective art, you know like collective worship'. Although the teacher felt this was an opportunity for children's 'individuality to come out', her instructions to the children at the beginning of the lesson included modelling the kind of response that was expected. This concentration solely upon a directed approach to drawing, divorced from context, was in stark contrast to the opportunity that had been given for meaning making by Lianne's reception class teacher (Figure 34). In the reception class Lianne's participation in group decision making around two and three dimensional activity, stimulated and supported by story and rhyme, led to further individual, self initiated, multi-modal activity. Whereas the pattern of Lianne's day in the reception class had allowed for long periods of uninterrupted activity, her Year One teacher recognised that in order to avoid children having to return to an activity one week later, each lesson needed to be complete in itself. She collected no evidence, however, of work completed by Lianne during time set aside for art activity during the period of data collection. Given that across the curriculum activities that did not in practice fit into their prescribed time allocation were left unfinished, there may have been no completed art work to collect. Drawings such as Figure 42 were completed during sessions allocated to other curriculum areas. Drawing could only be started following writing and was again dominated by an adult set agenda and a pressure to fit into an allocated and pressured time slot.

Lianne's opportunity for playful activity came during playtimes spent with a group of same-age girls. Led by an older girl, she imitated the dance routines and behaviours of favourite pop star performances as seen on video or television. For Lianne this was the best part of the school day. In common with Holly's Year One setting, drawing was a wet playtime activity, generally unacknowledged by the teacher, and not recognised or collected as art activity for the research project.

6.3   Summary

Although all the children within the study used drawing as a mode of meaning making, the drawings produced reflected the complex interaction of their contextual and cultural environments, recognised by Bronfenbrenner (1979), and were very individual. There was

evidence of children progressing through the symbolic system identified by Dyson (1993a, Figure 4) and of the particular influence of children's previous and ongoing experiences of play with three-dimensional objects and the integration of play and talk as recognised by Kress (1997), Pahl (2002b) and Geertz (1983).

The impact of everyday home routines and rituals, as 'set up' by mothers, was a striking influence upon children's choice of drawing as an activity across home and pre-school settings, particularly in relation to the provision of freely available drawing materials and an adult who valued drawing as an activity. This influence was echoed in pre-school and school settings by female practitioners. Most adults were uncertain of their role when interacting with children who were drawing unless they themselves were confident drawers and often over directed in their attempts to support the child in achieving what they saw as more accurate representation. Whilst pre-school contexts gave children opportunities for self-initiated activities (including drawing) within a largely integrated curriculum, these opportunities were lost in Key Stage One contexts. As children moved from Foundation Stage to Key Stage One settings the discontinuity of provision and the effect of this upon children's ability to make meaning was highlighted. Children were constrained by an overly didactic and separated curriculum at Key Stage One where individual meaning making through the written word dominated. The opportunity for self-initiated drawing was dependent largely upon poor weather and 'wet playtime' routines.

Children's choice of drawing was strongly affected by their gendered play preferences as they moved across home and school contexts. The constant presence of the mother in the home setting meant that pre-school girls had a female role model readily available. They were generally independent, relaxed and confident in their play and use of drawing. In contrast, the availability of the father was limited. Because of this joint involvement episodes between father and son around particular objects or choices of activity were very meaningful for pre-school boys. This led to boys developing a particular focus within their meaning making which was generally three-dimensional. In the absence of the father, boys were attracted to the super-heroes of television and videos. Surprisingly pre-school girls rarely watched television. Across home and pre-school, girls' pre-occupation with drawing people was deemed more acceptable than boys' action drawings and therefore received more positive feedback as available female adults failed to 'tune in' to boys' pre-occupations and interests.

Having identified themes arising from analysis of critical incidents drawn from the seven case studies, the following chapter uses Bronfenbrenner and Ceci's (1994) bio ecological model of development, as the theoretical model within which to nest a discussion of influences upon children's drawing behaviours.

Chapter 7

DISCUSSION

7.1   Introduction

The aim of the research project was to explore the impact upon the young child's drawing behaviours of the cultural contexts and the views and beliefs of significant others across both home and pre-school/ school settings. Central to the study has been its socio-cultural framework. In relation to research about young children's drawings, this framework has innovatively brought together both sociological and psychological issues.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) hierarchical model (Figure 2) was useful at the start of the study in providing a framework within which the complexity of interrelationships within and across the settings could be recognised. It particularly drew attention to the particular patterns of activity, roles, interpersonal relationships and physical features which impacted upon the seven children's meaning making and, in turn, afforded or constrained their drawing behaviours. As data was collected during Phase One of the study, it became evident that what was missing from Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model was the psychological element. Whilst Bronfenbrenner (1979) argued for the reciprocal interaction between a person and his or her environment, this was not adequately reflected in his theoretical nesting of systems.

This development of a bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner and Ceci, 1994:571) importantly included the child as a central 'biosystem' (Smith, 2002). This 'updated' model acknowledged the centrality of psychological thinking whilst recognising that genetic material does not produce finished traits but interacts with environmental experience in determining developmental outcomes. It also, however, takes account of the individuality of new meaning, externalised and constructed by the child within and across socio-cultural settings, and, as recognised across the case studies, responsive over time to fluctuations in a child's self-esteem, motivations and biological development. Given the evidence of personal responses involved in young children's meaning making through drawing within this study, this revised model, with the child as a central 'biosystem' proved helpful.

7.2   Home Contexts

Evidence of the impact of the socio-cultural context of the home and the psychological features of their relationships with significant others upon children's drawing behaviours was characterised by its complexity. Overwhelmingly one of the key features within the home

context was gender roles and the impact of the constant presence of the mother, in contrast to the limited availability of the father. Whilst fathers and older siblings were usually involved in short episodes of direct physical play with the child, mothers were more constantly available either in the background of children's play or as resources, giving support when it was requested. Girls observed and absorbed the everyday routines and rituals of their mothers' 'playing out' of their female nurturing role within the family. These were replicated in the peopled worlds of their own independent domestic play. Girls merely accommodated their father's style of playfulness but for boys, the attraction of their father as a male role model was more intense, given the short periods of time they spent together. The objects upon which attention was focussed in the home settings and the way they were used within joint involvement episodes therefore had particular significance for boys in their father's absence.

Children's use of symbol systems was filtered through the role taken by mothers and fathers and the cultural messages given by the parent to the child as to what was appropriate representational behaviour for a boy and girl. All the mothers of girls in the study spoke of their daughter's being happy to play independently for long periods of time, supported by the dolls and soft toys which 'peopled' their constructed worlds and the cultural artefacts which surrounded them. Their drawings emerged from and supported their social play and their internal narratives and 'set out' the people in their world in a two-dimensional version of their three-dimensional play. Girls seemingly progressed steadily through Dyson's (1993a) continuum of symbol systems. In contrast, boys' development of drawing as a symbol system was markedly influenced by their prolonged preference for three-dimensional activity and, unless regularly modelled by a key male figure, was a background activity which was generally underdeveloped.

Within the home it was evident that both boys and girls were supported in their development of three-dimensional and two-dimensional symbolic activity by 'storying'. Combined narrative and action was used as a tool in constructing their identity and answering the questions ' Who am I?' and 'How should I behave?' Girls were drawn to the family stories told by mothers, particularly those which validated their inner storying by referencing their current activity and preoccupation to incidents from their mothers' childhood. Boys sought support for their interest in a dynamic world beyond the immediate home context. Limited by their fathers' prolonged absences and their mothers' focus upon the home and family, they were particularly stimulated by television and video cartoon images. The actions, movements, explosions and demonstrations of power that characterised the fantasy world of superheroes of popular culture were notably captivating. Whereas girls storying was extended through the drawing of static and increasingly detailed and decorative female figures, boys initial retelling of stories through drawing often occurred as dynamic extensions of their whole body movement as the drawing tool 'hit' the page.

Children's ability to create new meaning, as they combined and transformed their thoughts and ideas through interaction with their home environment, was supported by the playfulness of more able others. Whilst fathers' involvement in their children's play was usually characterised by direct intervention or co-construction, the mothers' role in structuring meaning making through the 'laying down' of rites, routines and rituals had particular influence upon the child's development of a playful disposition and a mastery orientation towards meaning making. The mother's role included her tolerance of 'mess', her organisation of space and time, her control over the availability of cultural objects and artefacts, including the watching of television and videos, and importantly, her recognition of children's need to have some time relatively free from adult direction. In accepting and encouraging a child's imaginative interweaving of reality and myth, answering his or her questions with warmth and good humour and responding uncritically to the products of their meaning making, mothers encouraged their child to experiment and communicate openly whilst de-emphasising the need for him or her to be perfect. The mother's support of a playful approach to meaning making led, in relation to drawing, to a child acting unselfconsciously, without fear of criticism. Attempts to direct drawing activity instead of responding to the child's requests or drawing initiatives led to children having a 'helpless orientation' (Dweck, 1986) towards drawing and its rejection as a mode of spontaneous meaning making.

For pre-school children, their mother's control over the opportunities to integrate three- and two-dimensional activity was dependent upon both their organisation of space and the child's position within the family. In this study, where the pre-school child had younger siblings, drawing was confined by the mother to the kitchen table, rather than taking place alongside other forms of play in, most commonly, the living room. For these children the importance Kress (1997), Pahl, (2001, 2002a) and Matthews (2003) place upon the mixing of drawing materials, toys and everyday objects, was largely unrealised. A pre-school child with an older sibling not only was more likely to have a regular model for drawing behaviour but also had paper, pencils and completed drawings more readily 'to hand'. In the case of a sibling who prioritised drawing for meaning making, his or her influence on the younger child in the family cannot be underestimated.

All these specific features of children's experiences were nested within the wider macrosystem of a culture which included not only contrasting expectations of males and females but also the impact which commercial interests, work and media imagery had upon the values and belief systems of peers, siblings and significant adults.

7.3   Foundation Stage Contexts

Within their pre-school contexts the children needed security and reassurance. They looked for commonality both in patterns of meaning making through familiar materials and in their interactions with adults and peers. Boys' insecurity was shown as they initially turned to their female practitioners for support in establishing a pattern of behaviour. They soon turned, however, to male peers to continue their preoccupation with their identity. Influenced by the patterns of meaning making laid down in the home context and given their growing need to disassociate themselves from female behaviour (Bailey, 1993), boys were drawn to play with building materials and miniature wheeled vehicles. They particularly enjoyed the opportunity for representation of meaning through physical action that outdoor activity provided. In comparison, girls self-esteem was strong and they entered pre-school with confidence and independence. They found their pattern of interaction with their mother in the home context mirrored by those of female practitioners in pre-school settings. Their pre-occupation with mother and baby routines was echoed by their female peers.

The female practitioners who dominated the daily worlds of Foundation Stage settings understood developmental progression to include the drawing of a person. In many pre-schools this was emphasised within a developmental checklist. Girls' inclusion of recognisable figures of people in their drawings were therefore met with approval. Whilst for Matthews (2003), as a form of meaning making, the marks left by boys' rapidly completed rotational movements have validity as the dynamic aspects of objects and events, they were unrecognised as of value by practitioners in Foundation Stage settings. With their representations of movement and action ignored, boys rejected practitioners' well meaning attempts to force figure drawing upon them. They continued to represent in three dimensions, where their building activity was recognised and validated by both adults and male peers. In contrast, there was no validation given to their need to explore in role play and drawings the powerful issues of good and evil which underpinned their preoccupation with the superheroes of popular culture.

Within Foundation Stage settings, the organisation of the environment and practitioners' understanding of their role either facilitated or constrained children's ability to integrate their understandings through transformative meaning making. Lianne's reception teacher, whilst providing areas of provision, recognised children's need to literally construct understanding. She provided, in addition to an office and roleplay area, a large drawer where children knew they could find oddments of, for example, string, cardboard and material. She listened carefully to the narratives which accompanied the children's 'makings' and was knowledgeable about their preoccupations. Importantly for their integration of a variety of modes of meaning making, she ensured children could freely access connecting and drawing tools for example, scissors, tape, pens and pencils and acknowledged the need for 'mess'. In her planned teacher initiated

focus sessions she supported children in integrating home and school knowledge and ensured that in the midst of curriculum requirements their 'voice' was heard.

In contrast, although provision for meaning making in Jake's nursery setting was particularly well resourced and accessible to children, there was little recognition of the need for children to move across domains of provision. Whilst partitioned areas allowed children to focus upon one particular form of activity, they worked against the 'joined upness' which would encourage transformative meaning making (Appendix 10). A further constraint was the well intentioned and well informed nursery teacher's implementation of a regular pattern of adult directed activities. As the children moved through a constant routine which began with, for example, a whole class, shared experience of a story, and proceeded through firstly three-dimensional and secondly two-dimensional activity, their meaning making was over controlled. Channelled within a teacher chosen theme, their responses lacked spontaneity. Children's voices became submerged beneath the overriding voice of a teacher interpreted curriculum.

7.4   Key Stage One Contexts

Within Key Stage One contexts, drawing categorised as art lacked status in comparison with outputs from reading, writing and numeracy. Whilst the Literacy Hour and Numeracy Lesson dominated the morning time-table, art was allocated forty-five minutes each week or fortnight. Although drawing was commonly used as a 'time-filler' following the completion of teacher directed activity, these short spaces of time, often five or ten minutes, gave little opportunity for a child to develop and complete a drawing. In contrast with Foundation Stage contexts where there was a balance of child chosen and teacher directed activity, the time available for child chosen activity was approximately half an hour per week, usually each Friday afternoon. The art area remained in most classrooms, but given the separation of the curriculum into discrete subject areas and the necessity for whole class lessons, these areas were generally used for storage of materials. Whole class art lessons in carpeted classrooms were constrained by the need not to spill paint or glue and this mitigated against the child's freedom in exploring or combining materials (Appendix 10).

As children moved from the reception class into Year One, they tried to make sense of the continuities and discontinuities between Foundation Stage and Key Stage One provision. For Simon, a child who relied on others to initiate activity and who had a pre-school background dominated by seat-based activity with pencil and paper, this move was reassuring. For boys whose primary mode of meaning making was still three-dimensional play however, the movement into Year One required them to almost bypass drawing. Practitioners failed to recognise the mediating role of drawing between three-dimensional activity and the abstract

symbolism of writing. The children who were experienced, autonomous decision makers across home and school found the transition to a Key Stage One classroom particularly traumatic. Lianne's mother spoke of her daughter's initial shock and tearfulness, of her not wanting to go to school and of her boredom within a classroom where there was 'nothing to do'. With the organisation of time, space and materials dominated by daily whole class literacy and numeracy lessons, Lianne's school environment now prioritised the symbol systems of letters and numbers rather than visual images. This resulted in a sudden narrowing of the forms of meaning making available to her. Her adjustment to this formal context was, however, rapid and her initial trauma was not communicated to her Year One practitioner. What was noticed and reported by the practitioners in the study, across settings, was the increase in aggressive behaviour as children, particularly boys, attempted to gain power and control on the playground during play times. Yet practitioners failed to make a connection between children's aggressive behaviour and their loss of a sense of self and frustration within an imposed and prescribed curriculum and rigid classroom organisation.

On the playground children maintained a fascination with the gendered activity of their older peers and observed and imitated their actions. Although boys were strongly attracted as spectators to older boys' football games, they also grouped together under the leadership of a dominant male and re-enacted in their strongly physical play the power struggles of good and evil which underpinned their super hero narratives. During wet playtime activity these themes were extended as boys continued their unopposed dominance of three-dimensional construction materials. If, unusually, construction materials were not available, and reading was the only other option, drawing became a second choice occupation, recognised by both boys and girls as a gender neutral activity. Pairs or small groups of boys came together to develop a particular interest which they held in common. The content of their drawings often reflected the influence of television and play station and was dominated by their continuing fascination with movement and power. Common themes observed in the study included football, robots and army battles. Practitioners, however, collected little evidence of wet playtime drawing activity as part of the study, thus confirming its lack of status within their understanding of what was significant in the curriculum.

In common with boys' interest in the activity of their own gender, girls' playground activity included watching and replaying the actions of older girls. For girls this consisted of the songs and dance routines demonstrated by their favourite pop groups on television and talk about fashions in hairstyles, jewellery and clothing. Girls had learnt since being in the nursery that boys' dominance of certain spaces within educational settings was to be accepted. By the time they entered Year One it was taken for granted that the construction toys belonged to the boys. Drawing, as a wet playtime option was therefore a well established activity where large groups of girls congregated around tables to draw and talk. These 'drawing clubs' offered girls a social

opportunity to continue their fascination with being female but also, as recognised by Dyson (1993b), an opportunity to playfully integrate their unofficial child culture with their transformed version of the official school world. The content of their drawings reflected therefore not only the growing influence of the decorative cartoon heroines of video images and their fascination with hair length and shoe height, but also their replaying of the teacher's role through the completing of registers and the ticking of sums.

As children moved from Year One into Year Two, there was a continuation of patterns of classroom organisation and curriculum delivery which, in comparison with the traumatic transition between the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One, enabled both teachers and children to be confident in their roles. It was evident that the children had been encultured into the school system and that this was reflected in their expectations of a mainly seat based, writing dominated curriculum, strongly directed by the teacher. Teachers continued in this role during art lessons where they drew upon their own recollections of (mainly failed) attempts to behave as artists in order to demonstrate drawing skills. In contrast with the drawing which took place during wet playtimes and which formed part of a separate child culture, art lessons delivered via QCA schemes of work failed to be meaningful to the child. They attempted, unsuccessfully, to continue a theme over weekly intervals in discrete packages but gave no recognition to the pervasive influence of popular cultural images. Teachers did not make the connection between drawing skills taught in art lessons and their expectations of children in relation to their use of drawing to illustrate knowledge across other curriculum subjects. Children therefore learnt to interpret the differing messages given by adults in relation to drawing, which were dependent upon context and had little in common with their own use of drawing for personal and communal meaning making.

Within Key Stage One contexts the political beliefs and values, which underpin government policy and legislation at macro level, impacted upon the culture of schooling and were translated into everyday classroom practice via the influence of a complex range of factors. These factors included not only the messages given by Ofsted inspections, local authority training, head teacher priorities, parental pressures and the media to practitioners but also the their particular interpretation by practitioners. Practitioner understanding of drawing, art and creative activity was influenced by initial teacher training, understanding of child development issues and personal and historical experiences of these activities.

Chapter Eight

IMPLICATIONS

8.1   Implications for the Knowledge Domain

Whilst accepting that there are universal aspects in the development of children's drawing (Matthews, 1994), this study draws attention to the strong influence upon that development of the socio-cultural contexts in which the individual child participates. In bringing together psychological and sociological perspectives within a focus upon young children's use of drawing, the importance is highlighted of the beliefs of significant others across contexts in creating an environment in which drawing is supported or constrained. The study also recognises the impact of media influences upon child-initiated drawings completed across home and peer contexts. It contrasts this with the failure within educational contexts to recognise and validate the images children represent from popular culture. It also recognises the lack of opportunity for children to pursue their motivation to co-construct meaning through self-initiated drawing activity in the formal educational context of the Key Stage One context.

Key ideas put forward within the literature review (Chapter Two) are reflected in the findings of the study. Drawing, recognised by Vygotsky (1995) as part of young children's syncretistic activity, was evidenced as one of a range of modes of meaning making used by the child to support his or her symbolic communication of socially constructed narrative (Dyson, 1993a; Gallas, 1994; Kress, 1997). Approaches to narrative meaning making, across the contexts of home and school, were particularly influenced by children's understanding of gender roles (Skelton and Hall, 2001). These initially reflected the role modelling of behaviours of the same sex parent and older sibling(s) but increasingly included the influence of children's interactions and negotiations within their preference for single sex peer groupings outside the home context. Skelton and Hall's recognition of practitioners' expectations of stereotypical gender behaviour in children generally, was confirmed in relation to drawing activity. Boys' use of drawing for meaning making, until they were at a stage of visual 'realism', was unacknowledged from the perspective of the dominantly female practitioners in educational settings.

The study provided evidence which confirmed Matthew's (2001) concern for the lack of time and attention given to children's self-initiated drawings in educational contexts generally. Due to the primacy of a narrow understanding of literacy (Kress, 1997), practitioners had little real knowledge of children's drawing processes, pre-occupations and interests. Across both home and school settings, adults lacked awareness and knowledge of the value of drawing activity. They did not know how it might be developed as a child-appropriate symbolic tool, used to

support children's thinking and dialogue (Dyson, 1993a; Anning, 1997). They therefore failed to enable young children to become skilled in using visual expression to make sense of experience in a process of self and social construction within the curriculum (Thompson, 1995).

8.2   Implications for Further Research in the Field

Within the field of child development, further study of drawing is needed which takes a socio-cultural approach. There is a need to replicate or to carry out similar small-scale, longitudinal studies in order to gain further detailed evidence of children's meaning making and use of symbol systems over time. A particular focus would be the interrelationship and development of three-dimensional activity, drawing and writing across home and educational contexts as set out in Dyson's continuum (1993a, Figure 4). Whilst this study recognises important differences across the genders in their progression through Dyson's continuum, there is a need to give further consideration to other cultural differences and similarities in young children's learning, particularly in relation to children from 'working class' and 'middle class' families. One hypothesis put forward as a result of this study is that 'working class' boys, who do not have academically orientated mothers, would benefit from the support of drawing in order to develop their own narratives through drawing and make better sense of the writing process. There is also a need to investigate with practitioners opportunities to support young children's playful integration of three-dimensional and two-dimensional activity as they make meaning in Foundation Stage contexts. This might be extended across the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One curriculum and organisational divide.

Visual evidence was central to each stage of the research process within this study. Supported by quotations from narrative it proved to be an accessible means of gathering rich data for analysis. It gave an alternative view of the worlds of children and adults through the triangulation of evidence across home and educational settings. Certainly young children's meaning making through the use of movement, gesture, three-dimensional construction and two-dimensional images could not have been 'captured' purely in a written form. Drawing, alongside other forms of visual evidence such as photographs and digital images, was also highlighted as a powerful tool within the research process for gaining access to and exploring the views and beliefs of parents and practitioners and children's constructions of self.

Within a longitudinal study collecting visual evidence, supported by participants' perspectives on that evidence, had much to offer in building relationships. Participants responded very naturally to both drawings and photographs and this reduced the amount of questioning needed from the interviewer. Visual imagery also captured and facilitated analysis of detailed evidence of change over time through children's responses to enabling or constraining factors within their

environments. In addition, the gathering of data across cultural contexts gave essential evidence as to the differing perspectives of parents and practitioners in relation to the children's constructed understandings as they moved across contexts. The drawback of the research methodology was that it was time consuming in data collection and analysis. It also placed heavy demands upon the researcher as maintaining relationships across the three years of data collection. This commitment in time and engagement was hard to sustain when studying on a part-time basis.

Looking critically at the limitations of the methodology, it is recognised that data collection and analysis was particularly time consuming. It placed heavy demands upon the researcher in maintaining relationships across the three years of data collection. This commitment in time and engagement was hard to sustain when studying on a part-time basis. Account must also be taken of the timing of data collection. Gathering data at a time of transition for the children, i.e. as they were settling in to new educational contexts, had a particular impact upon the evidence gained. A drawback of building a longitudinal study upon an original short-term project was that initial decisions made about methodology needed revision if children's ongoing rights as research participants were to be paramount. This was particularly evident in the decision to abandon observation in the settings, even though it was a rich source of data which supported the triangulation of evidence. In relation to sampling, given the findings of the study, the range of data would have been increased by the inclusion within the selected sample of a boy with an older brother, instead of three of the boys having older sisters. Finally, the foregrounding of visual images in research, from data collection to dissemination of findings, raises ethical issues for consideration and debate within the research field. The use of visual imagery, circulated as electronic rather than hard copy, is a sensitive issue in relation to the meaning of 'informed consent' and children's rights as participants in research. This is particularly true in relation to photographs in which children might be identified.

8.3   Implications for Application of Findings to the Real World At This Time.

Across the contexts of home and school there is a need for greater understanding of the integrated and essentially creative nature of young children's engagements with their environment and with adults, siblings and peers. Children are particularly vulnerable to the responses of adults in their need to develop a positive sense of self as they make meaning across a range of modes. Adults who value and work with children's responses, rather than dominating and overly controlling them, support children in developing a mastery orientation to learning,.

Particularly important for young children is the requirement for an adult to be knowledgeable about the various forms their inquiry might take and to understand progression and

interrelationship across their use and ongoing development of symbol systems. In comparison with play and talk, drawing within the Foundation Stage is under researched and under developed. Currently drawing is considered as merely preparation for writing or classed as peripheral because of the prominence given to literacy and numeracy within the curriculum. Drawing needs greater consideration for its accessibility and its ability to form a connection between play and writing as the child moves from three-dimensional activity to the greater abstraction of two-dimensional activity. There are implications for a reframing of drawing in order to recognise this connection within teachers' initial training and their continuing professional development. At policy level, although 'communication' is now included alongside language and literacy within the areas of learning of the Foundation Stage, exemplification of children's multi-modal texts is needed within key documentation. This would support a broader approach to literacy and give important messages to practitioners and parents about recognising drawing as visual yet communicative text making.

For boys, the inclusion of drawing within literate behaviour might lead to a gentler progression into writing. Certainly there needs to be greater recognition of their particular fascination with movement and action and support given for its representation across the activities of three-dimensional construction and two dimensional drawing. Care must be taken, however, not to over formalise drawing within the Foundation Stage and move it away from its playful, spontaneous and imaginative nature. Practitioners working with young children will therefore need to feel secure in their ability to promote multi-modal activity, to engage in inquiry rather than transmission based learning (Bruner, 1986), and to take part in the episodes of sustained shared thinking recognised by Siraj-Blatchford *et al.* (2002) as encouraging motivation. They will need to carefully consider where, within their particular setting, adult divisions, routines and rules 'cut across' children's 'joined up' thinking and work against children's transformative meaning making.

The parents within the study enjoyed interest being shown in their child. They were intrigued by their children's development over time in relation to the broader boundaries of what was considered learning within the study. It was evident, in contrast, that there was limited opportunity for discussion between parents and practitioners, particularly within primary school contexts, and that the focus of any discussion fell within a much narrower range of literacy behaviours. In demonstrating the importance of staying close to young children's learning, in order to gain an insight into its complexity, this study draws attention to the importance of narrative forms of assessment which Carr (2001) terms 'learning stories'. In attempting to recognise the complexity and subtlety of children's patterns of engagement with their worlds, Carr captures the importance of the child's voice through her approach to the collection of verbal and visual evidence. Children's learning stories are regularly transferred across home and pre-school contexts. Carr feels they work against reducing children's learning to simple and low

level outcomes and goals. Instead they build shared understanding, meaning and involvement between child, parent and practitioner.

As children move from pre-school into primary school they increasingly conform to the particular pre-occupations of their gender. There is a need to ensure that their preoccupations are acknowledged and their voices are valued within their classroom and school community. The current domination of children's time by a prescribed curriculum within Key Stage One does little to recognise children's rights to child appropriate participation or sustained shared thinking between adult and child as they build upon a child-initiated theme. The current format of an occasional focus upon drawing skills within one forty-five minute art lesson per week in Key Stage One contexts does little to bring balance into the curriculum and meet the child's important and ongoing need to construct his or her self image through meaning making. More appropriate for young children's needs would be an extension of the underpinning holistic philosophy of the Foundation Stage into Year One. This would remove some of the constraints of subject divisions and, with appropriate support, might encourage practitioners to move away from the dominance of a narrow focus upon writing activity within the literacy hour. Certainly, there needs to be consideration given as to how to bridge the current division which exists between children's peer culture and the more formal culture of statutory schooling in order to move closer to NACCCE's (2001) call for the integration of both skill and meaning within creative and cultural activity.

Chapter Nine

CONCLUSION

This socio-cultural study of young children's drawing behaviours demonstrates how strongly drawing, as a mode of meaning making, is influenced by the particular qualities of the environment in which it takes place. Children's self-initiated drawings, completed by pre-school children across the contexts of home and pre-school, were characterised by their vigour, by the concentration that accompanied their production and by their meaningfulness for the child. As children entered primary schooling the impact of the beliefs of educational policy makers at both macro and meso levels were interpreted through the values of practitioners. There was a paucity of opportunity for drawing with meaning for children within the official curriculum and a lack of confidence and expertise shown in relation to the development of drawing skills by practitioners at Key Stage One. This was, to some extent, balanced for the child by the opportunities to draw presented by wet playtimes when girls, and to a lesser extent boys, used drawing, supported by talk, to synthesise the influences of popular culture and the media. These groupings were the genesis of a gendered community of both understanding and practice.

The home context was of particular importance in creating opportunities for children to use drawing, as one of a range of modes of meaning making. The routines, rites and rituals, established by the mother as she organised the pattern of the day, supported or constrained children's opportunities to combine materials and make connections in their thinking. Rather than direct involvement in play, the mothers' valuing of children's playful activity and their use of storying to help children make sense of their experiences was linked to children's own development of the narratives which underpinned their meaning making. Whilst girls, secure in their mother's availability as a role model, seemed to move effortlessly into including drawing as an activity alongside their 'mother and baby' role play, for boys it seemed more difficult. Development of drawing as a symbol system was, for boys, dependent upon its modelling by a significant male. In most homes, however, it was some form of three-dimensional construction activity which took priority in joint involvement episodes between father and son and in the absence of the father boys turned to the super heros of television and video culture for action and adventure. This initial gendered choice set a pattern of activity as boys moved into pre-school and turned to both construction activity and their male peers as they made meaning in the absence of an adult male role model.

As children moved between home, pre-school and school, the organisation of the environment, the provision of materials, and the role modelling of behaviours by significant adults, older siblings and same sex peers, shaped children's learning dispositions and their self images as

'artists', communicators and pupils. Environments which encouraged the child to explore, which sustained that exploration by tuning into the child's interests and valued the child as a partner or co-constructor in the process of learning also encouraged positive dispositions towards the activities in which they were taking part and a 'mastery' orientation to learning (Dweck, 1991). In contrast, an early need to conform to stereotypical or overly rule bound conventions resulted in children either rejecting the activity as one of choice or needing support (often unavailable to them in educational contexts) in 'measuring up' to perceived adult expectations.

In relation to drawing, children were given particularly conflicting messages as to its importance and what was required of them by adults. The involvement of practitioners in demonstrating drawing techniques within a subject specific art lesson at the start of Key Stage One marked a sudden change in practice as children moved from the relative freedom with which they approached drawing within their Foundation Stage contexts. This change ensured that the art lesson fitted in with a curriculum dominated by prescribed learning objectives and outcomes. What was missing for the child's continued construction of a drawing self, however, was the opportunity to acquire the skills necessary to support the use of drawing as a communicational tool within personal and communal meaning making. Within the Key Stage One school art lesson, an opportunity to bridge the gap between the cultures of what Dyson (1993b) termed the 'official sphere' and the 'peer sphere' went unrecognised by generalist practitioners. Lacking in appropriate experience and training, they turned to pre-packaged art schemes of work for support, but the weekly forty five minute art lesson did little to engage the children in the kinds of deliberations and explorations of artists searching for meaning.

In order to move forward, both parents and practitioners need to recognise the necessity of children actively participating in meaning making within the cultures they inhabit. Rather than merely reproducing what has gone before, their representations should be valued as contributions to a community of learners where adults and children develop understanding and construct meaning in partnership. Parents need to be reassured as to the importance of their recognition of young children's needs. These needs include providing not only well-established and predictable routines, which help to encourage a sense of security, but also introducing interesting and novel experiences and providing space for thinking. Such experiences and opportunities stimulate children's need to make new meaning through the transformation of the everyday materials which surround them.

Within educational settings there needs to be a reframing of Foundation Stage and Key Stage One practitioners' understanding, across contexts, of the concepts of both literacy and communication. It is only by knowing what to look for that they will appreciate the significance of drawing, as a symbolic tool within young children's learning. The current limiting of

children's communicative responses to merely the written mode by the age of six, places limits upon the boundaries and interconnectedness of children's thinking. Parents and practitioners should pay attention to a wider range of young children's spontaneous meaning making behaviours and recognise their multi-modal text making and gendered preferences. Drawing as a child appropriate symbol system should be granted higher status as an important tool for tuning into children's worlds and ensuring that their 'voices' are heard.

Appendix 1: The Development of Drawing

Children	
Birth – 1 year	• imitate actions and movement using their whole body • are aware of patterns which have strong contrasts and resemble the human face • make intentional marks, for example, with food using finger and hand • are aware that movements result in a mark
1 – 2 years	• make a variety of marks, sometimes described as scribbling • are aware that different movements make different marks • grip pen or crayon using palm of hand • make marks which record and represent the movement of their bodies and other objects • draw overlapping and layered marks
2 – 3 years	• use pincer grip to hold graphic materials • produce continuous line and closed shape to represent inside and outside • combine lines and shapes • produce separate but linked shapes
3 – 4 years	• name marks, and symbolic representation is emerging • experiment with the variety of marks that can be made by different graphic materials, tools and surfaces • unaided, use a circle plus lines to represent a person, often referred to as a 'tadpole person' • start to produce visual narratives
4 – 5 years	• are able to produce a range of shapes and sometimes combine them, for example, to produce a sun • draw shapes and figures that appear to float in space on the page • draw figures which include more details, such as arms, legs, hands, fingers, eyebrows • subdivide space on page to show higher and lower
At 6 years	• draw figures that are grounded and use lines for ground and the sky • display depth by making figures in the distance smaller to indicate further away • include more detail in their drawings, for example, windows, doors and chimneys on buildings • drawings have more narrative features, for example, may feature a number of episodes of the same story

The Development of Drawing
(Matthews, J., 1994, in Rodgers, R., 1999:132)

Appendix 2: Letter to Parents and Practitioners

21.9.98

Dear Parents and Early Years Practitioners

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this small research project which is gathering information about how young children develop the ability to represent their understanding of experiences.

I would like you to use the book provided to stick in any material you collect. This might be examples of the child's mark making, drawing, painting or collections of objects. Any examples which are too big to be stuck into the book could be dated and collected separately, but written about in the book. Some of these examples can best be collected by using photographs, for instance if the child uses a particular arrangement of chairs, boxes, cushions etc., or, more usually in a nursery/ school situation, building blocks. In most cases the child will be using these objects to represent or stand for something else and might give us evidence of to their interests and concerns, i.e. what they are thinking about.

Each time you stick an example in the book I would like you to write down the date and any information, in note form, that you think might be helpful. This information might include the time; how long the child took to complete the activity; whether the child was working alone; if the child returned to the activity to add to it; and any behaviour or talk which might give clues as to what the child was thinking. Any support the child requested or was given also needs to be noted. I am anticipating that majority of the evidence will come from activities chosen by the child but there might be some examples, particularly in the reception class, of the child drawing as part of an activity directed by an adult.

I would like you to collect the examples between 28th September and 1st of November. During this time I would like to observe the children, if possible, at nursery/ school and at home.

If at any time you need my support you can leave messages for me by telephoning Nicky at the University on 0113 2334654.

I am looking forward to working with you

Yours sincerely

Kathy Ring

Appendix 3: Semi-structured Interview Schedule

FIRST SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOR PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

Thank you for being willing to take part in this research. This is the first semi-structured interview which takes place before you begin collecting examples of the child's mark making, drawing and painting.

1. The child

- a) Name of child
- b) Nursery/School attended by child
- c) Has s/he attended other pre-school provision?
- d) How has s/he settled into nursery/ school?
- e) What does s/he like to do at nursery/ school?
- f) Is this the same as at home?
- g) Does your child bring home drawings and paintings from nursery/ school? How often?

2. Home context/ resources (N.B. All questions need to enquire about change over time)

- a) Does your child play in a particular room?
- b) Which toys does your child play with most?
- c) Does your child collect objects, for example cushions and chairs, to play with?
- d) Can you take me through the general pattern of a 'typical' day when your child is at home?
- e) Is there something your child plays with or at for a long time?
- f) Does your child watch television or videos?
- g) Does your child use a computer?
- h) Does your child want you to play with him/ her?
- i) constantly   often   sometimes   occasionally   very little   never
- j) Does s/he like to play with other children?

Probe until topic exhausted.

3. Drawing/ painting

- a) Does your child make marks or draw?
  constantly   often   sometimes   occasionally   very little   never
- b) Does your child ever return to drawings or paintings?
- c) What happens to completed drawings and paintings?
- d) Can you list materials the child uses regularly? E.g. pencils, crayons, junk boxes etc.
- e) Can you list materials the child sometimes uses?
- f) Do you have scrap paper or do you have to buy paper?
- g) Does your child want help?
  i) before drawing
  ii) whilst drawing
  iii) when finished
- h) Do you think your child is influenced by his/ her brother(s) and sister(s) in the way s/he draws or paints?

Probe until topic exhausted.

4. Any other comments

Appendix 4: Extract From Transcript, Interview With Parent

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2. Home context/ resources

e) Play
Does your child still play everywhere?
(Phase 1: Plays everywhere - where I am - has playroom and toys in bedroom kitchen - water, painting, food, technology, dough)
Yes, he likes playing wherever the fancy takes him.
Which toys does your child play with most?
(Phase 1: cars, lorry's, vehicles, tool set, sword, guns, books, poster of body and names him central character - "doing" - role play)
Has the above changed at all
No, that's very similar. He likes playing with his calculator, he likes going onto the computer. If he, he loves playing with guns and swords and things, and he will sometimes make them out of his construction toys.
So who do you think is influencing his play?
I think he is influenced a lot by what he sees on TV and older boys that he plays with. He is desperate for Action Man and when any other boys come round, particularly older boys, he is happy to join in with them, being some sort of side-kick in some sort of super hero game.
So in this street where you live are there just older boys?
Well they tend not to even live on the street, they are just people we have met through playgroup or children of friends of mine.
But he is not particularly attracted to boys that are younger than him.
No
It is the same age or older.
He finds that younger children irritate him, and we've got one friend whose got an older girl who is 11yrs and a younger boy, and it's the older girl he wants to play with. She is a bit of a tomboy anyway, she is into dinosaurs and computers and the little brother is an irritation as far as Jacob is concerned.
So if he had a younger boy, and an older girl who did girly things, who would he go for.
He would probably ignore them both. He doesn't like them hanging around him and following him around. He would rather be on his own. **So lets just talk about this superhero business. He watches TV and is quite absorbed by it?**
He gives it 100% of his attention.
And what kind of programmes does he enjoy.
He loves super hero programmes and adverts. I was telling you before about him reciting them back and telling me which cleaning things I need to use. Ones that clean more stubborn stains. Quite often in a supermarket he'll spot things that he has seen on adverts, so they'll love him.
So he really uses TV to learn. So why is he so attracted to superheroes?
I think it is something to do with feeling powerful, he's quite small and he's the youngest in the family and he gets frustrated and he feels that he hasn't got any power in his life, and I think these heros are very powerful, and he'll quite often say 'Look at my muscles'. He's quite solidly built but he is small, and he has got eczema, he's small and spotty with glasses on. Not really a candidate for superman, but he loves feeling that he's this great hulky matcho figure.
When did he get his glasses.
Just over a year ago.
So did he have them the last time I saw him.
Possibly not
I don't think he did. How did he take to that?
He's quite happy about it, Eleanor's got them, Dad's got them
Sometimes they feel quite special at school once they have got glasses.
Oh yes, he doesn't feel vulnerable, he feels it's like jewellery, its sort of an enhancement.
How does your husband encourage Jake with technology and with building and making things?
Sam's very ... I would always say 'well lets keep everything in it's little box, and there's the instructions, and we can make the ambulance up', or the aeroplane or whatever, and Sam was, 'No, you just shove it all in one box, you tip it all out and you make something.' He made wonderful things for Jake, he made a model of the cliff lift with pulleys. He has made him fabulous aeroplanes with runways, and the sky's the limit, and it's always been emphasised that the sky's the limit, and if you have an idea and you make it. And now that Jake has got the fine motor skills to make things he will, and I don't know if I mentioned it on this side, but you know I mentioned that I haven't got anywhere to put my hot cup of tea, so he went away drew a little design, made this cup holder out of lego and, you know, he was really proud of it and mummy and daddy would give him permission to use it on different occasions.

Appendix 5: Extract From Transcript, Interview With Practitioner

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2. Classroom context/ resources

a) How much choice of activity is given to the children?
A lot, it is very very structured now in Reception, we do Literacy and Numeracy daily. Towards the end of the year, we do the full hour for Literacy and we were doing the full hour for numeracy as well. At this time of the year we tend to do the input on the carpet and a little bit of what we call table time, where we get the children to actually sit at their tables before they can actually go and get busy. We call it Getting Busy, but it is actually very structured in the fact that the children work in ability groups and depending on, I have like a management board and depending on the day, I put on what I want the children to do in their busy time, so they don't actually have free choice.
But when it is not the busy time, is it always either Literacy and Numeracy or they would be fitting in one of those things?
Yes, it is always Literacy, Numeracy or I've done an input on one of the Foundation subjects and then they would go and get busy, but their busy time would be very structured, so I would make sure that a certain group were on a computer at a certain time and a certain group weren't in the brick making area all the time, and I found last year especially with the class that I had, I had six boys who would have always gone into working with the bricks or working with construction.
So tell me the areas you have got in your room for busy time?
For busy time, I have maths activities in trays that they can select, language activities in trays, and imaginative and role play type activities like a farm, and a road and things like that
And then I have small construction which is a choice of Mobilo or PolyM, various people and cars and things for imaginative play, there is a brick area, I have a role play area which I change every half term and I also have sand, water, an art and craft area which is used, sometimes to support the curriculum and sometimes I will just put things in for the children to go and do, or they can just go and make models or make sticky pictures or whatever they want to do. I also have a story area.

b) Can you take me through the general pattern of a 'typical' day - how time is used by the children? What would happen first?
When they come in on a morning, they would take their name from the table, we have started a self register system, put their name on the board and then they would sit on the carpet and I would take the register, I would do, whichever subject it was I would do my teaching input then from the teaching input, they would go into their groups and sit at tables and do activities at tables. Some would finish at different times depending on what the activity was and what the group was.
So when you say these are the activities, there is not busy time in this at all, this is teacher directed, and do they tend to be doing, all to be, the same subject?
Yes, it is not integrated at all anymore. So, if our thing is Literacy that morning, each group would be doing something Literacy based that morning, if it is Numeracy they will be doing something Numeracy based. Sometimes it might be just threading or copying their name or it might be matching shapes
She still fits within the type
Yeah, of the subject. Depending on what they task was and how they have got on with it, sometimes some children will sit there for half an hour and really work hard at a task, other times they are not really motivated by it in which case I would judge how it was going and how those groups, I would be working anyway with a group, and the other groups would be working independently, so depending on how it went, I would judge what they were going to do next. If they have finished, you know, one group had finished early, I would say to them, 'Right you can go and you can have busy time', but then they would have to go and look on the management board and see what their busytime was.
So on the busy board, what would they find?
They would find a picture, they would find their group name, it is all velcroed and then they would find photographs of the activities, so lets say I wanted them that day to do small construction, there would be a photograph of the PolyM and stickle bricks, and they could choose one of those three things.
So they have got choice within a very prescribed area?
Yeah, which enables me to make sure that they do something creative, something imaginative, something under construction, but they are working in the sand and the water, because in the sand and water, there are tasks set up as well within there which are changed ever two or three weeks, depending on how they have gone, and the children are not forced to those tasks, but certain key children, mostly the less able children, I will make a point of working with them in doing those practical tasks, we had building three sandcastles in the sand this week so my poor ability children, I would actually go with them and do that. make sure they did it.

Appendix 6: Extract From Transcript, Child Talk

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Child   C
Adult   A
Response unclear ***

Child (C)   Yes I'm going to put two on because I'm going to put two on.
Adult (A)   You'll have to tell me which is which. Oh right, come on then, which is that one?
C   That one's reading , looking at books and that one's the reading books and the one with ***
A   That's reading books?
C   Yes.
A   Are you not keen on that? What do you not like about it?
C   It's something *** I just don't know.
A   You just don't know, right. Listening to stories at school. Your turn.
C   We don't do that.
A   Like story time. Do you not have story time?
C   We have family reading where people in, people's classroom, people's Mummy's and Daddy's in their classroom come and they read you stories.
A   Well do you want to put that then for that, what do you feel about that? Oh, right. Now these are empty because there's some things you do at school I don't know about so is there anything that you want me to write in that you want to do a face about, about school things?
C   Working at school.
A   Working. What do you mean by working?
C   You know.
A   Just school work?
C   Yes.
A   But I thought that you did drawing and computers and painting and all those things as working. What do you mean?
C   No. I mean things like we do things maths and ***
A   So I'll write down maths, science?
C   We don't do science. Maths and other kind of work. That's the only proper work.
A   Writing stories?
C   We don't write stories.
A   Literacy hour?
C   Yes. We do write stories, we do write stories sometimes.
A   So are you meaning working meaning maths and literacy hour?
C   Literacy, what's that?
A   That like when Mrs. Thompson said to you, "Oh you'll be missing literacy hour", that's when you do words and sounds.
C   Yes, literacy hour.
A   Is that work?
C   Yes.
A   So maths, literacy hour...
C   We sometimes do literacy hour.
A   So working, go on then do me your face about working and I've put maths and literacy hour. What kind of face is this going to be I wonder? Oh dear. Why don't you like that? You just don't.
C   No.
A   All right, I've got everything then?
Is there anything else you want to put in a box?
C   Erm, no.
A   No.
Which is your favourite, let's look at the smiley faces and see if we can decide.
C   I've only got two sad faces.
A   And a lot of all rights. But you've got all that top row, construction, drawing, playing, playing, listening to stories are very happy. Which out of those do you want to put as your favourite, or are you going to say all the smiley faces?
C   All the smiley faces.

Appendix 7: Data Sort, People, Places, Things, Quality of Interaction

PIC ANAL 3

Name *Child 5*   Setting *Home*

Category	Numbered Coding of drawing/ photograph														
CONTENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
PEOPLE		X				X	X								
Self as mum		X													
Baby		X													
Self as puppy						X									
Self as teacher							X								
Dolls as children							X								
PLACE							X								
Classroom							X								
THINGS															
House	X														
Repeated action			X												
Pattern			X												
Name				X											
Letters				X	X			X	X	X					
Stampcard							X	X	X						
Books							X								
QUALITY OF INTERACTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
JOINT ACTIVITY Adult/ child															
ADULT PRESENT			X	X											
Child alone															
With one other			X	X											
In small group															
NO ADULT PRESENT	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X					
Child alone .	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X					
With one other															
In small group															

ANALYSIS OF DATA Domains: 1. Observed/recorded child behaviours; 2. Distinctive features of environment; 3. Values and beliefs of significant adults; 4. Adult styles of interaction; 5. Adult views of children's behaviours; 6. Children's views of their behaviours	

2		DISTINCIVE FEATURES OF ENVIRONMENT	
Pa1		**Int1** *General pattern of a 'typical' day when your child is at home? Book and storytape in Mum's bed, child minders, playgroup, lunch - child minder nursery library bath bed - read to* *Our home's very stimulating and there's a lot of activities so our children have lots of things to do and are more interested in doing and making and exploring* **Obs** A lot of free choice from a wide range of toys **Obs** Physically allowed to be quite adventurous - slid down banisters	
Pa2		**Int1** *41/2 yr gap between children she's 8 yrs* *Story at bedtime* Doesn't use a computer **Obs** Had obviously been watching a video and wanted to go back to it **Obs** Showed me drawing completed this morning when requested by mum **Int2** **H5** *"A cartoon Island - he explained it to me - he planned it out the night before in bed. He told me he was going to draw a picture of Noah's Island on a big piece of paper and when he got up the next morning I think he'd done it before breakfast"* *Had the programme been on just before he went to bed* *"No it wasn't even the same day"* (link with journeys and maps at nursery?)	
Pa3		**Int1** *Dolls and water at home but no sand* Weekends Saturday one grandmother visits house *When our mam comes (grandparents) she introduces a game to H and she'll play that for a while. She lets adults lead but bosses children - its often just an idea off somebody and she takes it further on her own.* *No pattern to day when not at nursery* **Obs** *Brother copied everything I said (3?) (likely to copy H)* **Obs** *All 3 children very relaxed, as are parents - played very well together. Church tape playing - this is a large part of family life.*	
Pr2		*Child free to choose his/ her own activity most of day*, might be told their group is going out in the shared area but when they're out there they have free choice.	

Appendix 9: Extract From Collated Visual Evidence of Children's Meaning Making: One Child Over Three Years of Project

Phase 1, Child 2: Home Context

1 Shoes

2 Writing on Hair Leaflet

3 Teaching Dolls

4 Stamp Card

Phase 1, Child 2: Reception Class
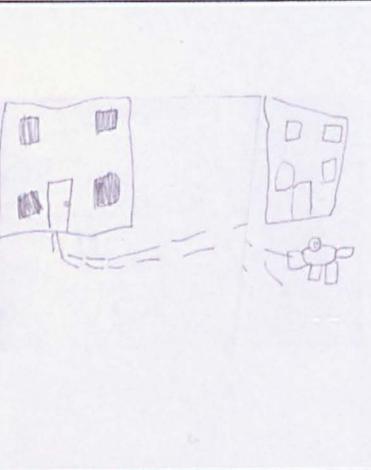
5 Journey to School

6 Bear Hunt

7 Forest With Bears
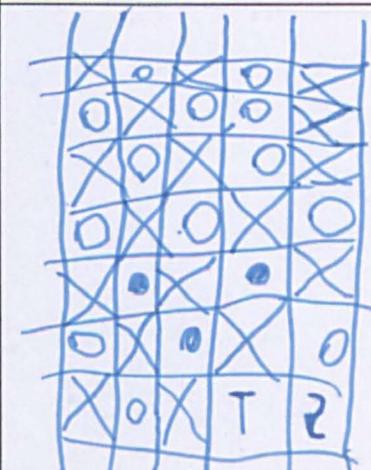
8 Bears and Letters

9 Bear Game



10 Register

Phase 2, Child 2: Home Context

11 Barbies	12 Flowers	13 Rainbow
14 Girls and Hearts	15 High Heeled Shoes	16 Ticks and Crosses
17 Shared Writing	18 Stamp Card 2	19 Telephone Book
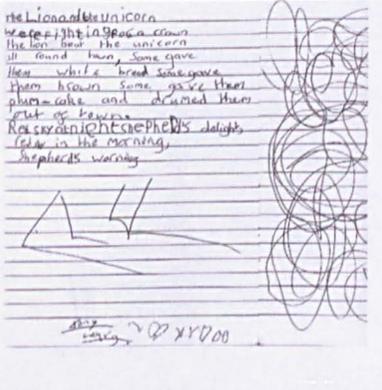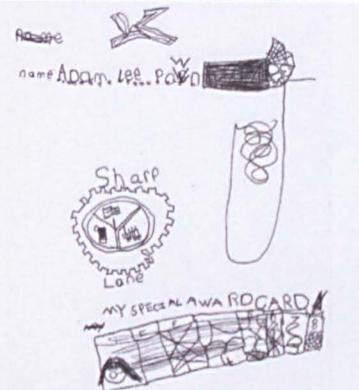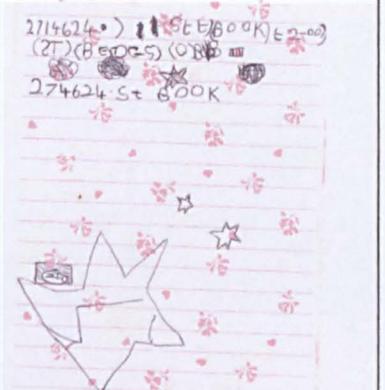
Phase 2, Child 2: Year One Class
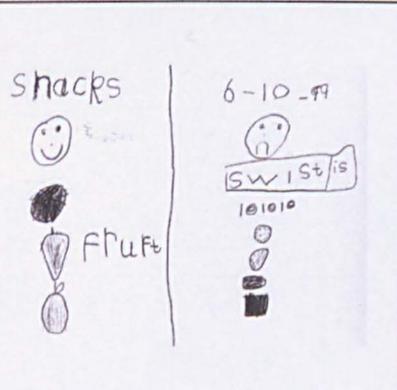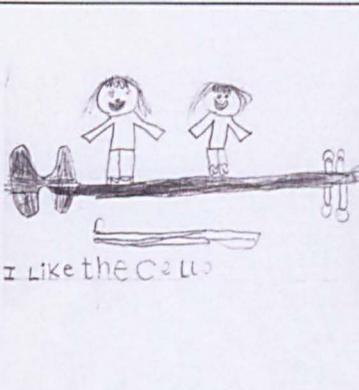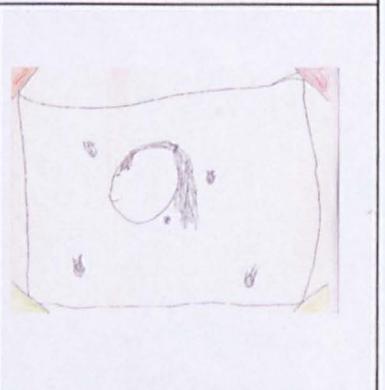
|		
20 Snacks	21 Cello	22 'Choosing Time' Drawing

Phase 3, Child 2: Home Context


23 Tea and Storying


24 Drawing With Friends

25 Story Front Page
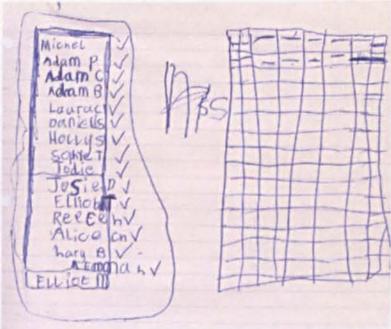
26 Register

27 TV and Meaning Making
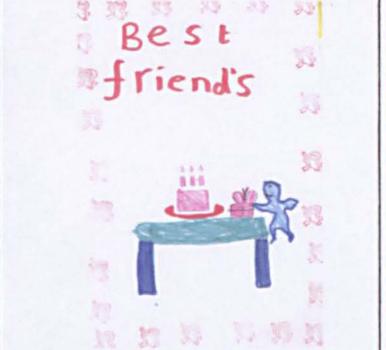
28 Best Friends

29 I Love You


30 Kiss Me

31 Making With Brother

Phase 3, Child 2: Year Two Class
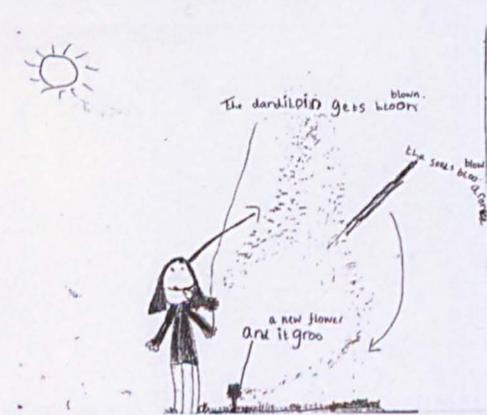
32 Seed Dispersal
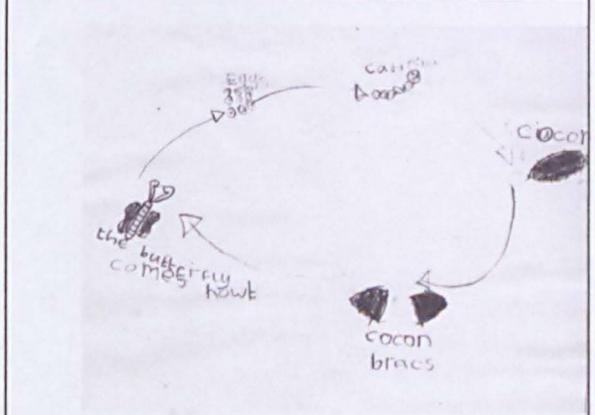
33 Life Cycle of Butterfly

Appendix 10: Extract From Collated Visual Evidence: Classroom Contexts

a) Foundation Stage: Nursery	
b) Foundation Stage: Reception	
c) Key Stage One: Year One	
d) Key Stage One: Year Two	

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