

**THE RESEARCH PROCESS : THEORIES AND METHODS
IN AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF INFANT SCHOOLS**

FOUR VOLUMES : VOLUME 1

by

MARGARET WENDY BOWEN

**THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**UNIVERSITY OF YORK
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

APRIL 1990

CONTENTS

Page No.

VOLUME 1

Acknowledgements

Abstract

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER : A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	1
<u>SECTION ONE</u> : Research into Primary Education from the 1950s to early 1980s	9
<u>SECTION TWO</u> : 'Inside the Primary School', 'Ethnography' and Action Research	41
<u>SECTION THREE</u> : A Detailed Account of Two Studies of Infant Schools : Sharp and Green (1975) and King (1978)	
1. General Concerns	53
2. Theoretical Issues	54
3. Teachers' Definitions of Pupils	71
4. The Child Centred 'Ideology'	80
<u>SECTION FOUR</u> : A Justification for the Substantive and Methodological Concerns of the Thesis	91
CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES	98
AN OVERVIEW OF THE CONCERNS OF CHAPTERS	104

VOLUME 2

<u>CHAPTER ONE</u> : <u>THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES</u>	109 - 569
---	-----------

VOLUME 3

<u>CHAPTER TWO</u> : <u>SETTING THE SCENE</u>	570 - 616
<u>CHAPTER THREE</u> : <u>A REFERENCE POINT : SOME TERMS DISCUSSED</u>	617 - 641
<u>CHAPTER FOUR</u> : <u>HEAD TEACHERS : THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ROLE, THEIR VIEWS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAFF, THEIR EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVES, THEIR VIEWS OF CHILDREN AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS</u>	642 - 712

CHAPTER FIVE : THE 'SOCIAL' PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS :
THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHILDREN THEY
TEACH 713 - 781

CHAPTER SIX : TEACHERS 'EDUCATIONAL' PERSPECTIVES 782 - 883

VOLUME 4

CHAPTER SEVEN : THE MATERIAL PROVISION, AND THE ROUTINE
OR STRUCTURE OF NURSERY AND INFANT
CLASSROOMS 884 - 993

CHAPTER EIGHT : CONTROL AND COMPLIANCE? TEACHER AND
PUPIL INTERACTION IN THE INFANT
CLASSROOM 994 - 1040

CHAPTER NINE : SOCIAL DISCIPLINE AND SOCIAL WELFARE
ASPECTS OF THE 'INFANT TRADITION' IN
THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES 1041 - 1065

CHAPTER TEN : THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF INFANT
EDUCATION: THE DEVELOPMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL IDEAS AND THEIR INFLUENCE
ON THE INFANT SCHOOL IN THE NINETEENTH
AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES 1066 - 1121

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS 1122 - 1130

APPENDIX 1 1131 - 1136

APPENDIX 2 1137 - 1138

BIBLIOGRAPHY 1139 - 1178

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost thanks are given to the heads, teachers and children in the schools, without whom this research would not have been possible.

The labour of the typists who struggled with the manuscript is also gratefully acknowledged.

The encouragement of Professor Lister and Dr. Kyriacou of the Department of Education is also acknowledged, and also the Department for some useful financial assistance.

Thanks are also due to Dr. Ronald King of the University of Exeter for helpful comments on one chapter, and also as an example of scholarship which I have tried to follow.

Thanks are also given to friends both within and without the university who have sustained the researcher with their encouragement and tolerance during difficult times.

The researcher's employer is also thanked for his patience and granting of time off to complete the thesis.

Finally, though not least, thanks are also due to my parents for their constant support, both to my mother who alternately advised when in difficulty, consoled when despairing, and bullied into continuing when I would have given up, and to my father for putting up with it all.

ABSTRACT

The thesis is based on a mainly 'ethnographic' study of infant schools. It has three principal concerns; theoretical, methodological and empirical.

The theoretical concern is an examination of two claims put forward by Sharp and Green (1975). These were that 'phenomenology' was unable to discuss questions of power and that it was ahistorical.

The thesis attempts to show, partly through an examination of phenomenology, partly through the empirical work, and partly through adding an historical dimension to the study, that both these claims were mistaken.

The study of 'phenomenology' is shown as part of a survey of the 'interpretive' approach within which the research was conducted. The various schools of thought subsumed under the heading of 'interpretive' are examined, and compared with a prior discussion of the 'other' tradition classified as 'positivist'. The findings in this area, the examination of which is shown as a 'learning process', are that there have been misconceptions about the nature of these traditions and the degree of difference between them methodologically.

Methodologically, the thesis presents in some detail the methods and the problems of data collection, recording, analysis and validation associated with 'ethnographic' research. This form of research is shown as very dependent on the ability and personality of the researcher and also time consuming.

The empirical concerns of the thesis are with the degree to which a 'progressive ideology' was present in the schools seen. Two earlier studies had either taken it for granted in one case, or seen it as "axiomatic" in the other. By examining a range of schools, this research suggests that various ideological views, including a pragmatic approach adapted to particular situations, may be held by teachers, not one.

The research also points to the possible influence of head teachers on the existence or not of a 'shared ethos' in schools.

The empirical research also suggests that the social class of pupils particularly in a catchment area described as 'deprived', can influence the expectations of teachers both as to teaching methods possible and perhaps the achievement of pupils.

Finally, the thesis considers the historical development of infant schools and also of 'progressive' ideas. The inclusion of an historical dimension is related to the theoretical concern because it is based on the view that a form of 'phenomenological' research can be done retrospectively by examining the intentions of those responsible for the development of infant education and the growth of any 'progressive ideology'.

The historical chapters are an attempt to place in a wider context the study of the infant schools described within the thesis. This wider contextualisation of interactional situations was advocated by Schutz, one of the founders of 'phenomenology'.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER : A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter contains a review of the literature read as part of the research process. It therefore reviews literature read at the beginning of the research, and also considers that which was read during the process. The latter though is reviewed in less detail, since it is referred to in relevant later chapters.

Burgess stated that it is usual for research reports to indicate that the literature review constitutes the real start of the research, "For it is the reading that ... helps to generate a research problem". (Burgess, R., 1984a, p. 32).

As Burgess and also Hammersley and Atkinson pointed out, the researcher's own personal interests and experience may provide an impetus for starting research. (Burgess R., 1984a, and Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). Their interests and experience form part of what Aggleton termed "topical concerns". (Aggleton, 1987, p. 1).

The research which is reported in the main body of this thesis was conducted in infant schools. Interest in this area of education arose in part from having been an infant teacher, and also from reading the work by Sharp and Green (1975) and King (1978). It was not clear from these studies what other research had been done nor how their work fitted into other research specifically concerned with primary schools. For example, they were both concerned with the relationship between a 'progressive, child-centred' ideology and teachers' classroom practice, but gave little indication whether this issue had been considered elsewhere. As will be shown in a section in this chapter such an issue has been of concern to other researchers, though these have not necessarily had a specific sociological interest in primary schools. However, as is indicated later in this chapter when looking in detail

at the work of Sharp and Green and King, when the former in particular and the latter, to some extent, were doing their research, the concern with the issues such as the relationship between educational ideas and practice was only beginning to emerge, often as a consequence of research into other issues such as streaming, such as that by Barker-Lunn (1970) and Bealing (1972).

Because of the researcher's initial interest, this chapter reviews in part that literature which was available when the research began, and in its early stages, which has some bearing on infant schools.

The opening sentence of this introduction spoke of the 'research process'. This was because, methodologically this study falls within the 'ethnographic tradition', something which is examined in the following chapter. The point of this statement is that writers discussing this style argue that the stages within it are not clearly defined. Hammersley and Atkinson for example, stated that the collection of data was not distinct from data analysis (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p. 174). Burgess made a similar point (Burgess R., 1984a, p. 161). In the same way a review of the literature has stages which are not separate. Reading research literature is a continuous 'reflexive' process, and this reading occurs at all stages, from the initial development of concerns through to the writing up stage. The interaction between reading and the 'actual research' and its cyclical nature is clearly brought out by Davies, who stated that:

"The interaction between my reading of the work of others and my interpretation of my own data went on in a cyclical fashion over the year."

She illustrated this by stating that the reading influenced her interpretation of what children said to her, and her own understanding of what they said "influenced my reading of the work of others". (Davies B., 1982, p. 175).

Therefore, the review contains references to work read as a consequence of developing concerns, because although some of the issues raised by other researchers helped to initiate this research, they neither pre-determined it nor dominated it from the beginning, even if some of the data presented in later chapters covers similar areas. The 'ethnographic' style requires to some extent an open mind when beginning the research.

This review of the literature serves several purposes.

One purpose is to indicate how the present research stands in relation to other research, and to indicate a possible 'research gap'.

A second purpose is to identify and discuss the issues with which other researchers have been concerned, particularly, though not exclusively, in relation to primary education. This is done for two reasons. First to indicate the initial impetus for the present study. Secondly, because certain issues amongst those so identified later emerged in the present research, as shown in the main body of the review. These issues are presented in conclusion to this review.

While identifying these issues in the review, the changing nature of educational research into primary (here subsuming infant schools) is also pointed out, to indicate the methodological concerns of the present research. They are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

A third purpose of this review which bringing out the issues serves is to provide pointers for the later chapters of the thesis, an indication of "foreshadowed problems". (Malinowski, 1922, p. 8-9).

The review is also used to provide a justification for the present study, both in terms of its initial concerns and those which developed, and in terms of the methodological approach adopted, although a detailed discussion of the methodological concerns is reserved for the next chapter.

The first section of this chapter presents an account of various kinds of research in primary schools ranging from the 1960s through to the early '80s.

This account is arranged both chronologically and thematically. The section is not however, concerned with 'ethnographic' accounts of primary schools such as those by Sharp and Green (1975), King (1978), Pollard (1985) or Hartley (1985) because these are discussed in other sections.

The first part of the section discusses sociological studies which considered external factors which were seen in the early 1950s and 60s as influencing the educational system, especially these which related to primary schools. It considers studies which were concerned also with internal organisation aspects of schools such as streaming, for example, which were linked to external concerns such as the relationship between class and attainment.

The second part of the first section notes that another stand in primary school research existed during some of the period surveyed. This was a concern with the nature of ideas behind primary school practice. It is indicated that on the one hand certain research promoted the notion that progressive ideas were translated into practice, while on the other hand other research, especially from the 1970s onward concluded that 'progressive' rhetoric did not necessarily coincide with practice in primary school classrooms.

The third part of this section briefly raises the issue of the problems of the methods used in these studies, although the methods themselves are also briefly discussed in relation to individual studies in the first and second part of the section.

Section 1 identified one strand of research in primary schools which did look at primary school practice although it was not guided by any particular theoretical (sociological) perspective. Section 2 examines another strand in research which was guided by such a perspective, and which also deals with classroom practice, which is termed 'ethnographic' or 'interpretive' research. This stresses the need for understanding of 'individuals' and their interpretations.

The first part identifies the emergence of the 'New Sociology of Education in the early 1970s', (the term 'ethnographic' was not used in the early 1970s) though it indicates such concerns had been raised before. It then goes on very briefly to outline the theoretical ideas which inform 'ethnography'. It is brief because this aspect is dealt with in greater detail in the following 'Methodology' chapter.

The second part of this section considers ways in which 'ethnographic' studies can be classified. It is argued that this can be done on three levels, according to theoretical framework, secondly, according to the setting in which such research is done, and thirdly according to its concerns. Each of these areas is briefly examined.

The section sets out to show that until the early eighties the majority of studies have been conducted in the secondary rather than primary sector (although during the eighties the number of the latter has increased). Thus at the time this present research was started the lack of much sociological, ethnographic research on primary schools and more particularly infant schools, was one reason why research of this type in an infant school was undertaken. Also, as stated, other research in the primary sector, that was concerned with the relationship between progressive child-centred ideas and teachers' practice referred more to primary schools than infant schools, and this was the main reason for locating this study in an infant school.

The third part of this section looks at another area of research, 'Action' research. It briefly examines the origins and concerns of such research, and looks at some examples of it which has been done in the primary sector.

The section attempts to show that to some extent 'Ethnography' and Action Research do share similar concerns but that the former has appeared to concentrate more on interaction, and teacher pupil relationships, whilst the latter appears to focus on the nature of the curriculum itself, that is what constitutes 'doing' reading, storytime and mathematics, for example.

This final part of the section also attempts to show that whilst 'ethnographic' and 'Action' research do seem, as stated, to have similar concerns and deal with similar issues, this fact is recognised by some 'Action' researchers but is ignored by others.

This point seemed important, because there seems no reason why one 'tradition' of research should not look at other forms than its own. This seems to be the position of, for example, Pollard and Tann (1987), but Sharp and Green did not do this, which is why this review has sought to cover a number of areas.

Section 3 discusses two studies which particularly relate to infant schools, those of Sharp and Green, and King. No study concerning infant schools can ignore these. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, they provided a major impetus for the study. Since they have been written other sociological research on infant and primary schools has been written, for example Lee (1984), Pollard (1985) and Hartley (1985). These studies were read during the research and are also referred to in this section where they deal with similar issues to those of Sharp and Green and King.

As stated in the introduction the review not only considered literature which was read at the start of the research but also that read at later stages within it. Thus, at various relevant points reference is made to more recent research such as that of Lee (1984), Pollard (1985) and Hartley (1985) and various others. These writers particularly, like Sharp and Green and King, were all concerned with the issue of the relationship, if any, between the 'child centred' progressive ideas and practice. Literature is also referred to which is concerned with the nature of the role of the head and his or her position in a school as both Sharp and Green and King looked at head teachers in their research. This section also looks at references related to the historical development of infant schools. Interest arose after reading Sharp and Green's and King's accounts as this was an area which they did not look at in much detail.

This section contains four parts. The first part gives a brief overview or outline of the research of Sharp and Green and King. The second part discusses some theoretical concerns arising from these studies. Sharp and Green, for example, criticised social phenomenology stating that it was unable to deal with certain areas such as power and constraint. This view is discussed. King used a Weberian perspective in his study. The present research criticises his use of this in relation to the issues of power and authority.

The third part of the section looks at a particular aspect of the research of Sharp and Green and King. This is concerned with teachers' perspectives concerning pupils, parents and home background, and the concept of typification.

The fourth part of the section looks at these authors' treatment of the relationship between 'child-centred' progressive ideas and infant teachers' practice, and the views presented in more recent research.

The fourth section of this chapter attempts to set out briefly a justification for the substantive and methodological concerns of this thesis, which are discussed in the course of this review.

The first part of this section argues that 'justification' is a difficult process because a particular piece of research can originate from a variety of sources, including personal experience. There may initially be only a vague general interest in an area, often hard to justify.

The second part of the fourth section outlines the reasons for beginning the present research, which are discussed during the main part of the review. The section thus picks up these points.

The third part of the section explains why some concerns were incorporated as the research developed. It is noted that it is equally as hard to justify why certain features are picked out for study during the research, as for the initial interest.

The final part of this chapter points out the issues with which the thesis is concerned and the order in which these are presented.

SECTION 1 :

RESEARCH INTO PRIMARY EDUCATION FROM THE 1950s UNTIL THE EARLY 1980s

As stated in the introduction, the first part of this section discusses research which was done in the period from the 1950s to the early seventies. Secondly, it discusses work done during the period from the early 1970s until the early eighties on the relationship between progressive ideas and primary practice. A third part of the section briefly looks at the issues raised by the methods used in the above studies.

Various writers have shown that during the fifties and sixties most research in the Sociology of Education was concerned with external social factors such as class and home background which influenced the educational process, including selection, and with internal processes such as streaming. (Banks, 1976, Bernstein, 1975). Various studies which were conducted in primary schools (and secondary schools) were concerned with these issues. This aspect of research as it relates to primary education in the 1950s, 1960s and early seventies is discussed first. This research was mostly conducted within a structural-functional framework. The structural-functional approach is one derived primarily from the work of Durkheim. (Banks, 1976). It has been argued that the emphasis of structural-functionalism:

"was very much upon the relationship among social institutions and not upon the relationship among individuals within the organisation."

(Hartley, 1985 p. 2)

The term is not a clearly defined one. It is argued by Kingsley Davis, for example, that it should not be assumed that structural-functionalism refers:

"to a consistent, recognisable approach within sociology [but] instead we must entertain the hypothesis that as mostly commonly defined, it is as broad as sociological analysis itself."

(Kingsley-Davis, 1959, p. 758)

It has also been argued that structural-functionalism accounts for social consensus rather than conflict. (Hartley, 1985). Floud and Halsey similarly argued this point. They stated that:

"The structural-functionalist is pre-occupied with social integration based upon shared values - that is with consensus."

(Floud and Halsey, 1958, p. 118)

Other writers, however, have disputed such a claim. Mennell, for example, argued that:

"The consensual view of society is not logically inherent in a functionalist approach."

(Mennell, S.. 1974, p. 142)

This is referred to again in Section Three of this chapter as Sharp and Green mention it, and the theoretical, philosophical antecedents of structural-functionalism are briefly discussed in 'Methodology'.

Research conducted within the above framework looked at issues such as the social determinants of educability, social class, family background, selection procedures and the internal organisational principles of schools (for example, streaming). Floud, Halsey and Martin in their research were concerned with the effect on selection of the material environment, and also on the distribution of selective places in different areas. They studied South West Hertfordshire and Middlesbrough. They found that contrary to expectations, widening the scope of selection had not improved the chances of working class boys, but that instead more middle class boys had been enabled to enter grammar schools. In relation to material environment they found that where an area was fairly prosperous that home background made less difference, but that in a poorer area such as Middlesbrough, the better provided homes gave a better chance in the selection for grammar school. (Floud, Halsey and Martin, 1957).

It has also been argued that the issue of selection concerned many

researchers in the 1950s and 1960s, and that "social class instead of talent seemed to be the predictor of educational achievement". (Hartley, 1985, p. 3).

One argument put forward was that pupils from the 'middle class' were more likely to succeed at school because of their home background and early socialisation equipped them with cognitive and linguistic skills, and their values and attitudes were consonant with the demands of formal education. Those from working class backgrounds on the other hand were said to lack such attributes. One research study which focused on the home as a major environmental influence on educational attainment was that of Douglas (1964). This research surveyed 5,362 children all born in March 1946 and followed them through primary school and through secondary school selection, looking at parental background. The research found that social class was one of the main factors which influenced children's progress at school, and which operated to depress the performance of otherwise talented working class pupils. (Douglas, 1964).

Attention was then turned to organisational aspects of schools. It was argued that under-achievements might have something to do with institutional factors. (Floud, 1961). Thus much of the work done on streaming in the primary school could be seen as being conducted within the wider concern of the Sociology of Education with the relationship between social class and attainment which had consequently looked at selection at eleven for allocation to secondary schooling. However, as will be shown later some studies of streaming produced evidence which related to primary education practice. (Barker-Lunn, 1970, Bealing, 1972 and Boydell, 1980).

Streaming "involves classifying children of the same age into two or three groups on the basis of some measure of ability". (Banks, 1976, p. 200).

Douglas, mentioned earlier, found that on the basis of performance in intelligence tests that 'middle class' children stood a greater chance of being allocated to the upper streams of primary school and obversely less chance of being placed into lower ones. Jackson also found in a study of streaming in a primary school that children from 'professional managerial' backgrounds had only five chances in one hundred of going into the 'D' stream, and that streaming began as soon as children left infant school or infant department of the junior school. (Jackson, 1964). His findings were important in that they indicated how early streaming could begin in the primary school. Dixon, in a later article on streaming in the infant school stated that she considered that streaming still existed in the infant school, albeit hidden.

"I believe that many infant classes still maintain a system of grouping which suggests that a hidden system of streaming still exists."

(Dixon, A. I., 1978, p. 43)

In 1970 Barker-Lunn, in a study of primary schools, followed up the ideas of a relationship between streaming, ability and social class. In a longitudinal study conducted in both 'streamed' and non-streamed classes she pointed to the extent to which streaming occurred in non-streamed schools in a covert way.

Barker-Lunn looked at a large group of teachers. A survey of existing methods of organisation was carried out using a stratified random sample of 2,000 junior schools. Structured interviews were also conducted in a comparative study of two matched pairs of streamed and non-streamed schools. Questionnaires were also used.

In 1982, Barker-Lunn did a questionnaire study of 732 junior schools and departments and found that 25% of such schools formed classes based on some form of ability grouping, particularly in areas such as the 3 Rs. (Barker-Lunn, 1982).

In relation to streaming Banks argued that controversy exists. She stated that:

"... there has been a tendency to ignore many important variables, including the attitudes of teachers and the methods and materials they are using in their teaching."

(Banks, 1976, p. 202)

Banks believed that Barker-Lunn's original study attempted to solve some of these problems and that it looked at "teachers' attitudes and classroom practices" (p. 202). In reading the actual study the observation, however, seemed to be only a small part of the study as a whole. Barker-Lunn did, however, state that teachers' attitudes were more important than the effects of streaming or non-streaming.

This section so far has focused on one aspect of research into primary schools. It has stated that during the fifties and sixties that within the Sociology of Education there was an interest in the social factors which influenced the education system and which was conducted, as stated, within a 'structural-functional' framework. Studies on streaming were to some extent conducted within this framework.

Bernstein argued that the focus was on the failure of working class pupils instead of the actual education such children were failing at. (Bernstein, 1975). Gorbutt also claimed that the stress on external factors drew "attention away from the role of the school and teacher in helping to create the failure of the child". (Gorbutt, 1972, p. 5). However, Jackson seemed to point out that through streaming teachers' beliefs affected pupils' views of themselves and thus depressed achievement rather than streaming simply reflecting ability.

The work of Floud and Halsey, and Jackson can be seen as important in that it exposed the defects of the selection process and the unequal distribution of opportunities especially in different geographical areas. Partly as a result of the research of Floud, Halsey and Martin political

interest was aroused but also because of the unequal distribution of grammar school places, the principle of selection at eleven was challenged by both some middle class parents and those who advocated comprehensive schooling. Consequently changes were brought about in the educational system leading to the decline in selective education and the growth of the comprehensive school.

Apart from the research outlined above another strand can be identified, in the same period (but extending through to the early eighties as well) that concerned with the nature of ideas which inform primary schools' practice. The second part of this first section deals with this.

Some research dealing with this second issue took place in the 1960s namely that of Gardener and Cass (1965), Garner (1966), Plowden (1967) and Goodacre (1967) for example.

Gardener and Cass set out in their research to describe the ways in which teachers worked, and to convey "the philosophy underlying the education of young children in England today". They were concerned with features of 'good' infant practice. Teachers involved in the study were chosen because it was considered that they represented good 'informal' practice, and demonstrated features of this in their classrooms. (Gardener and Cass, 1965).

In terms of methods, Gardener and Cass used observation and interviews. Observations were carried out during a specific period, "the play period". What was said and done during this period was recorded at regular intervals. This was done during a seventy-five minute period on each of four days. The emphasis was on the researchers' coding and interpretation of events into pre-scheduled categories. Interviews were used in order to assess teachers' opinions regarding the advantages and

disadvantages "inherent in this way of teaching". (Informal). The questions were predetermined, e.g.

"What is the function of the teacher in the active school?"
(Gardener and Cass, 1965, p. 168)

This account appeared to take for granted the notion of 'good infant practice' and equated it with 'informal' and then sought to demonstrate features of such practice. The study did not set out to examine how teachers described their own practice in their own terms.

The sampling adopted, as stated, focused on one time period. It is not clear how far this 'play period' represented life in the infant classroom. The kind of sampling adopted, because it focuses on one aspect of the day, does not give a full picture, or show the processes of classroom life. The study did not indicate teachers' reasons for using the approach they did. Descriptions of teachers and what they did were included but such descriptions seemed to have been framed according to the researchers' point of view. For example:

"The teacher was always natural with the children" (p. 158)
It did not seem to have been asked whether the teacher saw herself in this way, or whether she considered it important. Explanation of what was observed did not appear to have been sought.

Gardener and Cass, themselves pointed out disadvantages of the methods they used. For example they considered that it was necessary to know children really well to be able to decide the meaning of a particular context. (Gardener and Cass, 1965). However, the same could be said about teachers in the study.

Richards argued that prior to 1976 there was little detailed characterisation of teaching methods. (Richards, 1982). However, Gardener and Cass, as stated, set out to describe the ways in which teachers worked. There was much detail in the sense that the study looked at different

aspects of infant teachers' work and activities. However, it did not cover these aspects in great depth.

The N.F.E.R. programme of Reading research was also concerned with methods. 'Reading in the Infant Classes', published in 1967 surveyed "methods of teaching reading". Its main aim was to:

"Provide a picture of the infant schools' method of teaching reading ... and how, if at all ... two important factors of school organisations and social area affect this."

(Goodacre, 1967, p. 76)

Goodacre also looked at the measured intelligence of pupils and the effect of teachers' attitudes and expectations regarding children's home background and pupils' attainment. (Goodacre, 1967). It thus linked both earlier concerns of the Sociology of Education to the teaching process.

Studies such as those just mentioned were not 'detailed' in the sense that they provided pictures of life in the actual classroom, and about the daily organisation of the activities. In relation to Goodacre's study this was not the aim in any case. Goodacre stated that the aim of the study was to present a "broad picture" rather than focus on particular classrooms. (Goodacre, 1967, p. 6).

The research presented in this thesis is, however, concerned with the nature of the infant school curriculum, how activities were organised, and why teachers used the methods and approaches they did.

In 1967 the 'Plowden Report' which was devoted to primary education officially endorsed a 'progressive' approach in the primary school, although it did not specifically define what was meant by the term 'progressive'. Marriott argues that the Plowden Report:

"Hinted that a large and increasing number of schools ... put them [progressive ideas] into practice."

and that "such schools represented a 'general and quickening trend'." (Plowden, 1967, p. 118; Marriott, 1985, p. 26). The report considered 20,664 schools and divided them into nine categories. Ten per cent of these schools fell into categories 1 and 2. Category 1 represented those schools and were described as "good" and "leaders of educational advance". In category 2 were placed schools which were "good" and "with some outstanding features". In category 3 were placed the schools thought to be "good ... in most respects" but "without any special distinction". (p. 102). According to the Report 10% of all the schools surveyed fell into these categories (p. 102). The majority of the schools fell into category 6, schools described by the Report as lacking enough merit to go into category 3 "and yet too solid for category 8", and as being "run of the mill" schools. (Plowden, 1967, p. 102). Whilst Plowden may have advocated 'progressive' ideas their evidence does not necessarily seem to suggest large scale practice of these by primary teachers. This report is considered in more detail later when discussing Sharp, Green and King. They both cited Plowden as a source of the 'child-centred' 'progressive' ideology. Sharp and Green in particular questioned whether rhetoric and practice in the infant schools they studied matched. As this review indicates this was an issue taken up by other research on primary schools from the early 1970s onward, and is still an issue today. (See also Pollard, 1987).

Several writers did take up the progressive message and appeared to promote the idea that progressive ideas were translated into actual practice, that changes were taking place in primary schools.

Books like those of Blackie, 'Inside the Primary School', purported to describe practice in actual schools and provided general statements about primary education. (Blackie, 1967). In 1974 Blackie again emphasised the trend towards progressive practice in primary schools. (Blackie, 1974, p. 18). Likewise, Bassett also stated that "primary education is

undergoing major change." (Bassett, 1970, p. 3).

Other writers also appeared to accept a connection between 'progressive' ideas and practice. The Anglo-American primary education project 'British Primary Schools Today' set out to publicise 'modern' methods and focused upon what was considered to be examples of 'good infant practice'. Featherstone, one of the contributors, spoke of the "infant tradition" and also agreed that:

"Good English teachers ... relate their teaching practice to basic theories of development"

although such ideas "are more or less in the air". (Featherstone, 1972, p. 27). The Plowden Report itself, however, reported that few teachers related practice to theory or research, for it is stated that:

"It would be difficult to find many teachers who could relate what they did in the classroom to any particular piece of research."

(Plowden, 1967, p. 191)

Another American writer, Silberman, also has argued that "Informal education is more influential and widespread amongst infant schools and the infant departments of mixed infant and junior schools," (p. 211) than "in junior grammar and secondary schools". (Silberman, 1970, p. 212).

The idea that progressive practice was the norm in primary classrooms was taken up by other writers such as the authors of the Black Papers. Progressive methods were blamed for alleged failings in educational achievement and falling standards in literacy and numeracy. The first paper 'Fight for Education' which appeared in 1969 contained an article by C. M. Johnson who was critical of the alleged freedom of children in primary schools. (Johnson, C. M., 1969). Another paper in 1969 and one in 1970 made similar criticisms. The Black Paper of 1977 wrote of the 'spread of progressive education in unthinking ways into state schools' (Cox and Boyson, 1977, p. 18). It was also argued that "all the accumulating evidence indicates clearly that formal structured traditional teaching methods are superior to informal non-structured

traditional education". (p. 19). The implication is that 'informal' means a lack of structure. Yardley, however, in a book about 'structure' in primary education argued that it was an important feature of informal education, but a term which had been misinterpreted. She stated that even if:

"the child is left free to design his own work pattern [this] ... does not mean that learning has no structure."

(Yardley, A., 1974, p. viii)

The Black Papers assumed the existence of 'progressive' methods in primary schools whereas, as will be shown, such evidence as existed provided a rather different picture of primary school practice.

As Richards pointed out, since the early seventies there has been an increase in primary school research. (Richards, 1982). This research has focused on a range of issues such as primary school organisation. Bealing (1972), Boydell (nee Bealing) (1980), Moran (1972) and Nash (1973) have been concerned with this issue. Other research such as that of Hilsum and Cane (1971) has been concerned with the nature of the teacher's day, and the research of Bassey has examined how teachers and pupils in a primary school spend their time. (Bassey, 1970), Some research has looked at teachers' aims, for example Ashton et al (1975) and Taylor, P. H. (eds. 1975). Teaching methods and their effectiveness in primary schools have also been examined by various researchers including Bennett (1976a) and Galton et al (1980a) for example. Later of course more interest was expressed in what went on within the school setting. Cleave et al, for example, looked at differences between the nursery and infant school. (Cleave et al, 1982). There was concern with the meanings teachers and pupils attached to their actions in the classroom, and classroom interactions. (See also Sharp and Green, 1975; King, 1978; Pollard, 1979, 1985, 1987; Davies, 1982 and Hartley, 1985). These last are referred to in the following sections.

It was noted in the first part of this section that various studies looked at streaming. There were other studies of streaming in the seventies and early eighties, such as that of Bealing (1972), Boydell (1978, 1979, 1980) and Nash (1973). These studies not only provided evidence about 'streaming' but also raised questions about the extent of progressivism in the primary school. In the case of Nash the research is referred to, not only briefly in this section but also in Section 2 because the research falls within the 'interpretive' tradition. In Nash's own words the study was:

"working towards an interactionist view of the classroom."
(Nash, 1973, p. 121)

The study is also referred to in Section 3 of this chapter when discussing the work of Sharp and Green and King in relation to 'teachers' definitions of pupils'.

Bealing, referred to earlier, studied 189 teachers within two local authorities. She found evidence of a decrease in streaming and that the form of organisation that teachers who had abandoned streaming adopted allowed children to engage in a variety of activities. However, it was also found that, "Despite the relatively informal classroom layouts adopted by the vast majority of teachers there was so much evidence of tight teacher control over ... where children sit and more that it seems ... doubtful that there is much opportunity for children to choose or organise their own activities". (p. 235). The study also found widespread use of grouping based on similar abilities and attainments and called into question "widely held beliefs about the impact of new ideas in primary classrooms and the extent of the primary revolution". (p. 231). A three part questionnaire was used to collect information about the various issues. (Bealing, 1972).

Nash undertook his study in a 'non-streamed' primary school in Scotland. In most of the classes he observed most teachers seated pupils

in groups of mixed ability and "had separate groups for teaching reading, number and writing" (p. 13). In one class where the teacher had "two teaching groups (number and English)" and where "the seating pattern did not reflect these groups" (p. 13) it was found that children were still able to say which group they were in and "which group was higher than another". (Nash, 1973, p. 15).

The research of Nash, like that of Bealing, also provided 'evidence' about the extent of progressive methods in the primary school. It was argued that while:

"primary school innovations of recent years [such as] non-streaming, activity methods and the integrated day have taken firm root amongst the teachers of younger children"

that these "innovations" were "relatively feeble amongst teachers of senior primary classes." (Nash, 1973, p. 49). Nash, however, assumed the existence of such innovations in the infant school even though there was little research evidence to support this view.

In 1980 Boydell did a follow-up study to that of Bealing. He found that whilst streaming had completely disappeared and had been replaced by mixed ability teaching there was still tight teacher control and an emphasis on the 'traditional' curriculum. (Boydell, 1980).

The integrated day was also a focus of research in the 1970s. This term also came up during the period of observation and was, as will be shown in later chapters, defined in various ways. Moran also looked at the integrated day. He looked at both infant and junior teachers and found that the term was used by teachers to "refer to widely differing types of organisation in the primary school". The study also revealed information about the notion of free choice and that "In no cases in the survey did the degree of children's choice lead to a completely unbroken day". (Moran, 1971, p. 69).

In terms of methods a questionnaire was used. This:

"Consisted of eight open-ended questions designed to elicit information about respondents' classroom practices, particularly their timetabling and organisational procedures, the nature of the curriculum, the deployment of teachers and grouping devices".

(Moran, 1971, p. 65)

Another study also looked at the "aims of primary education" (Ashton et al, 1975). The study by Ashton et al involved teachers in stating aims and then studying the differences of opinion between teachers. (p. 2). The aims of primary education were first discussed with seven groups of teachers from the Midlands. During the second stage of discussions, thirty-one other groups from Devon, Dorset, Northumberland and North Yorkshire were involved. During stages 2 and 3 the discussions became more 'focused' and 'structured'. As a result of these a list of statements about the aims of primary education was produced (2,045). This number of aims was reduced to a final set of 72 aims. During the next stage a questionnaire was designed to discover teachers' opinions about these aims, first to investigate the relative importance teachers attached to such aims, second to look at the relationship between aims and certain variables such as sex, age, training, position, school and the age group taught, and thirdly to investigate the possible relationship between those aims considered important and variables such as those related to environment and organisation of schools in which the teachers worked. (p. 20).

Section Four of the questionnaire examined teachers' assessments of their own approach to teaching on a five point scale which varied from "Most Traditional" to "Most Progressive". Teachers were asked to examine five paragraphs along this continuum and to match their own approach to one of the five paragraphs which most exemplified their own approach.

In 1979 Ashton et al repeated the survey. Fifty-three of sixty teachers involved in the 'Oracle' project (to be discussed later) answered

the questionnaire. The results of the 1971 and 1979 studies were compared. (Ashton, P., 1981).

In 1971 half of the sample rated intellectual development as most important. In 1979 two-thirds of the sample rated it as such. In 1971 'computation' was ranked twentieth in importance. By 1979 it had moved up to second position. 'Every day' maths was marked fifteenth in 1971, and in 1979 it had risen to fifth place. Aims related to writing and spelling ranked thirty-third in 1971. By 1979 they had moved up to seventeenth place. It was concluded that in 1979 there was more stress on intellectual development and basic skills, though results were 'broadly' similar.

As stated, teachers in the survey were asked to assess their own approach in relation to five paragraphs, using a five point scale. In 1971 the largest category of teachers was 'moderate' (45.6%) and 30.2% of the sample fell within the 'Most Traditional', 'Traditional' categories. In 1979 the stress was towards the traditional (44.4%) (p. 33). With regard to the 'Progressive' and 'Most Progressive' dimensions in 1971 25.2% of the sample fell within these categories but in 1979 the percentage had fallen, with only 15.6% showing a preference for the progressive approach. (Ashton, 1981, p. 34). Ashton considered that the findings indicated a marked turn away from the progressive approach. However, the two samples were different so that it is not clear whether differences in results were due to real changes in teachers' opinions or the nature of the sample itself.

It was argued by Ashton et al that the study in 1971 indicated a "polarity in opinions" between the "traditionalists" and the "progressive" (Ashton et al, 1971, p. 54-8). Delamont argued that "This study ... revealed deep-seated hostility between adherents of 'progressive' and 'traditional' roles". (Delamont, 1987, p. 10-11). This comment, however,

appears a little extreme since Ashton et al's study did not examine teachers' beliefs in depth, but instead presented 'general' trends of opinion amongst the sample.

The 1971 study indicated differences in opinions between, for example, "older, more experienced, more established teachers" and "younger, less experienced, less established teachers". The former were found to be more concerned with the "socially oriented concept of education" (i.e. stress fitting into society) and showed a preference for 'traditional' and 'very traditional' roles. Younger teachers on the other hand though inclined to give weight to "the social oriented role" emphasised the "individually oriented" purpose and thus stressed emotional and personal development. Younger teachers were also found to favour the progressive teaching role, though it was argued that not all teachers stressed this pattern. (Ashton et al, 1971, p. 87).

Ashton et al also found that "infant teachers" preferred the "progressive role". (p. 84). The study indicated that the schools' age range was an important factor in the approaches used by teachers, and was one of the characteristics "most significantly related to teachers' opinions". It was found that:

"At the highest level of significance" teachers in infant schools, more than junior schools, agreed with progressive approaches to teaching. It was found that there were strong indications to show that junior school teachers preferred a more traditional approach. (p. 78). If it was the case that such differences did exist between infant and junior schools then differences between 'older' and 'younger' teachers might not necessarily be as distinct as Ashton et al seemed to indicate. This aspect was looked at in this thesis as it became apparent as the research progressed that differences existed between an 'older', more established head and a younger, less established one.

Like Nash, mentioned earlier, Ashton et al believed infant schools to be 'progressive'. They stated that in infant schools:

"more informal approaches to teaching are of much longer standing than in junior schools."

(Ashton et al, 1971, p. 84)

They did not, however, provide evidence for such a claim. Their research indicated differences between infant and junior teachers in the sample, and their responses to various descriptions ranging from 'progressive' to 'traditional'. The writers themselves stated that the descriptions relating to different purposes of primary education were simple characteristics and that:

"Both raised several questions of meaning and definition."

(p. 88)

It was argued that teachers could only respond to such descriptions "globally" and that the ways in which teachers answered the questions could only show "very broadly the emphasis of their stand in relation to the whole nature of education". (Ashton et al, 1971, p. 88). The same could be said of teachers' responses to the five descriptions of teaching approaches. In any case research of this kind whilst telling us what teachers 'think' about aims does not show what teachers actually do in their classrooms, although as Ashton et al stated, it did "appear to suggest a difference of opinion between teachers" and "possibly a fundamental cleavage". (Ashton et al, 1971, p. 55-6). Furthermore, it also appeared to indicate that no progressive revolution had taken place.

Other studies sought to describe practice in a 'systematic' way. Hilsum and Lane attempted to construct a picture of the whole of teachers' "professional activities". (Hilsum and Lane, 1971).

Bassey looked at various aspects of primary practice, and the day to day work of a number of teachers. This study indicated how teachers organise the "day to day work of their pupils" (p. 9). It looked at



whether teachers worked alone or with a class, or with teams, at the grouping of pupils, at the time spent on class; individual or group work, and on what subjects were taught. It also looked at the apparatus which teachers used in teaching maths and other subjects.

This study was essentially a descriptive report. A questionnaire was used. The questions were designed with the assistance of polytechnic tutors and then refined through discussions with the research team, L.E.A. advisers and members of the project's advisory committee which included three teachers representing their unions, three members of Nottingham Education Department, and three members of the polytechnic. The questions were tested in ten schools and subsequently revised. It was considered that the questions were unambiguous, suitable for brief answers, and that such answers were suitable for collation. The questionnaire was given to the teachers to read prior to an interview. Bassey stated that in reading the report the reader should realise that what was seen:

"... is not an exact image of what happens in the classroom but an image which is distorted by the process of data collection."

(Bassey, 1978, p. 18)

This remark may well be true of most research.

Like the studies cited earlier by Bealing and Nash, the research of Bassey also appeared to indicate that primary schools did not necessarily use progressive methods, as stated by Plowden in the foreword to '900 Primary Schools'. She writes that:

"Judging from the replies, there does not seem to be any danger of the schools in Nottinghamshire moving into so-called progressive methods."

(Plowden in Bassey, 1978, p. 7)

One of the findings of Bassey's research was that the majority of junior school teachers in the sample did not permit, or rarely permitted, pupil organised work. Thirty seven per cent out of the sample never

allowed this, and thirty eight per cent permitted less than six hours a week. (Bassey, 1978, p. 7).

Classwork was also shown to be the most used method amongst the sample of junior school teachers. (p. 28). The study also indicated that junior school children spent a lot of time on areas such as 'mathematics' and 'language work'. (p. 24).

Infant teachers were also included in the survey. With regard to organisational pattern a mixture of 'group' work and 'individual' work seemed to be the main patterns. Thirty three per cent of the teachers stated that they used a mixture of group teaching (fixed groups working at different activities) and individual teaching. A further forty two per cent worked individually. (Bassey, 1978, p. 64).

The report showed that the 3Rs were important. In the case of Maths for example, forty nine per cent of infant teachers wrote that it was a daily requirement for younger infants and sixty two per cent replied that it was a daily requirement for all older top infants. Only six per cent and two per cent respectively replied that there was no regular requirement. In the case of 'writing' the percentages were even higher. Sixty five per cent of infant teachers said that writing was a daily requirement for younger infants, and seventy six per cent of infant teachers in the survey said it was a daily requirement for older infants. Only four per cent and one per cent respectively said that there were no regular requirements regarding writing. (p. 72). Reading too, appeared to be a regular requirement in the infant schools.

The research of Bassey also seemed to indicate that pupil organised work was more prevalent amongst the infant teachers in the survey. (p. 82). In the area of 'Integrated Studies' fifty nine per cent of the sample of infant teachers said that "some of the time" was spent on "children chosen

individual activities". (Bassey, 1978, p. 82). However, the term 'Integrated Studies' includes maths, reading, writing, art and craft and P.E., and it was not clear in which areas such choice existed.

As stated the study by Bassey, like the research of Bealing and Nash, indicated that progressive methods were not necessarily used in primary schools, although there did appear to be differences between infant and junior teachers in the Nottinghamshire sample. The research results did not appear to match the image of primary schools portrayed by the 'Black Papers' cited earlier. However, such research only gave a general picture of primary school teachers 'practice', for as Bassey himself stated, the method of data collection did not enable a detailed picture of primary teachers' actual practice to be made.

Other research on primary teaching methods and their effectiveness included the study by Bennett (1976a) and also various studies under the title 'Oracle' in the early 1980s.

The first of these studies, that of Bennett, reported the results of a Social Science Research Council project which set out to examine whether differences in teaching styles differently affected the cognitive and emotional development of pupils and also whether different types of pupil perform better under certain teaching styles. It was argued that:

"The definition of teaching styles presented problems and that researchers have been criticised both for ambiguity in terminology and for concentrating on a narrow range of behaviour. In an attempt to overcome this problem a search of relevant literature was supplemented by interviews with teachers."

(Bennett, N., 1976b, p. 19)

The information obtained was used as the basis for a questionnaire which covered such areas as classroom management, organisation, curriculum content, teacher control and planning.

A Census was carried out on 3rd and 4th year primary teachers in 1,871 schools in Lancashire and Cumbria. The response rate was 88%. From this census a classification of teaching styles was obtained by grouping together teachers who had answered the questionnaires in similar ways. This classification "resulted in twelve styles rather than the ubiquitous traditional, progressive dichotomy". (Bennett, 1976, p. 19).

During the second stage of the research the pupils of thirty-seven teachers (3rd year pupils) were chosen to represent the styles identified and they were followed through a school year. At the end of this year they were tested in reading, maths, and English. On entry to the 4th year the pupils were given a personality test and in the following June re-tested.

Bennett stated that for the sake of simplicity and reliability pupils' progress was "analysed in relation to three general teaching styles labelled formal, mixed and informal". (Bennett, 1976b, p. 19).

The main conclusions drawn from the study were that pupils taught formally showed greater progress in basic subjects than those taught by the informal methods. However, Bennett also stated that the 'best' teacher of all used an informal style. In this classroom the children showed gains in all attainment areas. It was also found that "the amount of time spent on maths and English was equal to or in excess of that spent by many formal teachers" and that:

"... teaching of these subjects was clearly structured and sequenced."

(Bennett, 1976b, p. 19)

It was stated earlier that Ashton et al in their research on the aims of primary education found that the age range of the pupils was an important factor in the approaches used by teachers. Bennett found that:

"In general teaching styles do not vary by age of pupils taught."

(Bennett, 1976a, p. 42)

However, the sample of primary teachers was narrower than in Ashton et al's study, being limited to third and fourth year pupils in the junior school, whereas in Ashton et al's research the survey was carried out with the whole of the 5-11 age range. This could thus account for the different findings of the two studies.

Bennett's research indicated that:

"... a high degree of permissiveness does not appear to be the norm in primary classrooms despite assertions to the contrary"

and that:

"Teacher control of physical movement and talk is high."

(Bennett, 1976a, p. 43)

Bennett's research also indicated that much of children's work was teacher directed rather than pupil directed. It was found that seventy-seven per cent of pupils' time was spent on teacher directed work and only twenty-three per cent of that time on pupil directed work. (Bennett, 1976a, p. 43).

There have been a number of criticisms of Bennett's research particularly as regards the methods used. Gray and Satterley were critical of the research design and sampling. (Gray and Satterley, D., 1976, p. 45-56).

It has also been argued that Bennett gave no data on "reliability and validity, errors of measurement" or "data on standardised tests". (Gray and Satterley, 1976, p. 19). Chanan considered that if Table C1 on page seventy-seven was re-examined that re-calculation indicated that the mixed style of teaching produced the greatest gains in respect of reading, maths and English and that the research as presented "contains a major contradiction of a kind which makes a dramatic difference to the general conclusions". (Chanan, 1976, p. 15).

Armstrong agreed that the type of research techniques and measurement used by studies such as that of Bennett were not sufficient tools to

study the learning process. He stated for example, that:

"Research Instruments such as standardised tests and observation schedules are too coarse to be much help in mapping the processes of learning in all their variety, subtlety and refinement."

He called for commitment to "sustained research and enquiry as an essential pattern of the enterprise of teaching". (Armstrong, 1976, p. 2). Armstrong reiterated this kind of criticism later in 1980 in relation to the work of Galton et al (1980a).

Another criticism concerned Bennett's 'teaching styles'. Bennett stated that initially he had developed twelve teaching styles "rather than the ubiquitous traditional/progressive dichotomy". (Bennett, 1976b, p. 19). However, during the course of the research these styles were reduced to three "for the sake of simplicity and reliability". (p. 19). However, this action seems to be in direct contradiction to Bennett's earlier plea for the need for a wide range of categories. (See also Marriott, 1985, p. 57).

Others saw Bennett's research in a more positive light. Reedy, for example, believed that the findings of Bennett's study:

"... challenge the untested theories of those whom Colin Richards, editor of 5-13 has called 'the more articulate progressive minority'."

(Reedy, 1976, p. 15)

He argued that the "British public's view of what happens in the informal school has been conditioned by this small minority". Reedy considered that informal teaching is misunderstood and mispracticed. He visited forty schools in Cheshire, Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, Cumbria, Edinburgh and County Down in Northern Ireland, and found:

"... non-consistent concept of informal teaching". Reedy also pointed out that research was available which suggested that what goes on "is not what the public thinks goes on". (Reedy, 1976, p. 15).

Other writers had criticised the idea that teaching style alone

affected attainment and had argued that Bennett's study could be measuring the effect of socio-economic class. (Rogers, V., and Baron, I., 1976). Wright suggested that other factors could affect attainment, such as the nature of home background, parents' attitudes and length of teaching experience. (Wright, 1977, p. 42).

In 1981 Bennett himself accepted the earlier criticism concerning statistical techniques, and using new ones on the same data found that differences between teachers were greater than those between teaching styles so that there could be effective and ineffective teachers using 'formal' or 'informal' styles. (Aitken, Bennett, and Hesketh, 1981, p. 170-186).

Another more recent study which looked at teachers' classroom practice and the effectiveness of different styles was the 'Oracle' project. The first study 'Inside the Primary School' (Galton, Simon and Croll, 1980) was funded by the S.S.R.C. to study primary schools as was a later study concerned with pupils' transfer from primary to secondary school. (Galton, M., and Willcocks, J. (eds) 1983).

The first study was concerned with discovering what forms of teaching were coming into being as a result of the swing away from 'streaming' in primary schools which was said to have taken place in the 60s. Its:

"Long term interest was to throw light on the relative effectiveness of different teaching styles to learning by different types of pupils in different subject areas."

(Galton, M., and Simon, B., 1980b, p. 18)

The methods used in this study (and the other 'Oracle' studies) were described as being "prolonged and systematic observations of both pupils and teachers in different subject areas". (p. 18). The method used was an adaptation of Boydell's observation schedules. The focus

of the study was on fifty-eight classrooms studied over a single year.

The age range of the pupils was eight to ten.

Galton and Simon stated that:

"The main findings of the 'Oracle' research into primary education give the lie to much of the rhetoric that has bedevilled discussion of this issue over the last decade."

(p. 80)

They argued that as a result of the Black Papers and the media:

"a general picture has gained credence of way out teachers failing to control their pupils who wasted their time in irrelevant and unstructured activities."

(Galton and Simon, 1980a, p. 80)

Their study came up with conclusions that indicated a very different picture in primary schools. Galton and Simon first of all presented evidence which suggested that a high proportion of time was spent on the 'basics', that is skills related to language and maths. About one third of a 'typical' pupil's time was reported to have been spent on skills relating to literacy, and a further third to numeracy. Secondly, it was found that there appeared to be tight teacher control. A 'typical' pupil in the sample was found to be:

"fully engaged in his task [one approved by his teachers] for well over half his time in normal teaching/learning sessions."

(Galton and Simon, 1980a, p. 80)

It was also found that forms of teaching were primarily didactic in style. It was also reported that children spent most of their time "working individually" on their own, interacting with neither the teacher nor other children. There was said to be 'individualism' in terms of work and teacher attention, and that teachers varied in the particular pattern they used, i.e. class teaching, group work or individual work.

The research also used 'cluster analysis' to "identify groups of teachers whose behaviour differed from one another". The same sort of analysis was carried out for children. Four main teaching styles and four main pupil styles were identified. (Galton and Simon, 1980a, p. 80).

What emerged from this study was that much of the recent debate on primary schools had been conducted without reference to the reality of classroom life and that:

"This picture of the lonely daily grind in the classroom [is] a stark contrast to the ideas of modern education."

(Wilby, P., 1979, p. 14)

Galton and Simon themselves considered that the results of the study called into question the distinction between 'progressive' and 'traditional' teaching and that in practice the situation was much more complex. They also commented on the constraints that teachers work under, and argued that:

"Our analysis reveals a picture of teachers working conscientiously but often under considerable pressure."

(Galton and Simon, 1980b, p. 19)

Many questions have been raised about the research of Galton et al, particularly in relation to the methods. (See also Armstrong, 1980; Thompson, 1980 and Gray, 1980). Armstrong for example argued that:

"despite the richness and variety of their material, the technique of systematic observation ... is almost as remarkable for what it conceals as for what it reveals."

(Armstrong, 1980, p. 4)

Thompson, too, questioned the suitability of the methods used and stated that:

"The nature of the research has led to an emphasis on those elements of classroom interaction that can be tested or tabulated. In its pursuit of the quantifiable, it categorises teaching style or pupil types."

(Thompson, 1980, p. 16)

Armstrong claimed that the methods used in the study provided little

information about the nature of classroom activities or the resources they used, or about the "character of the children's work". It was also argued that conversation was de-contextualised. Armstrong in light of these criticisms called for "new methods" in which "one or two classrooms" are studied, ones in which Plowden is taken seriously. He considered that systematic observation was not necessarily the best way of studying such situations and that furthermore:

"Techniques are required which focus more closely on the intentionality and significance of children and teachers' conversation and action."

(Armstrong, 1980, p. 4)

Armstrong's comments will be returned to again when looking at other developments in research into primary and other schools, for they raise an important issue about the relationship between different areas of research, about how open different areas are to one another, and outsiders not working in that particular field.

The second study to come out of the 'Oracle' project, 'Progress and Performance in the Primary Classroom', was a sequel to the aforementioned one. It set out to assess the performance of primary school children in a range of study skills, as well as maths, language use and reading. It was found that the more 'successful' styles were used by experienced teachers. The findings suggested that there was a need to examine how far present teaching in the junior school was sufficiently stimulating and challenging while at the same time it acknowledged the difficulties of trying to improve the situation because of certain constraints, such as class size. (Galton. M., and Simon, B., (eds) 1981).

This study was criticised on various grounds. In particular it was argued that the tests tested what was measurable. (Thompson, 1980 and Gray, 1980). It was also questioned whether being observed affected the teacher. "It may be that the knowledge of the presence of the observer led to the kinds of lessons encountered by the team." (Thompson, 1980, p. 17).

Thompson also questioned the study's validity and whether the methodology was "appropriate, the classification ... meaningful". (p. 17).

What the study does indicate is that the questions about 'effective' teaching styles and how these can be defined are complex issues.

It can be seen so far that by the early eighties a picture of primary schools emerged from primary school research which was very different from the 'progressive' image presented by the Black Papers for example.

Barker-Lunn in an N.F.E.R. study more recently also came to similar conclusions as did Galton, Simon and Croll in 1980. It appeared to show progressive practice as defined by Plowden was not widespread in primary schools and that there was a high degree of teacher control, and a large amount of time devoted to basic subjects. (Barker-Lunn, 1984).

The picture of primary education presented in these studies has been confirmed by various reports, including, for example the H.M.I. Primary Survey in 1978. This report looked at some aspects of the work of 7, 9 and 11 year old children in 1,127 classes in 542 schools (p. vii). It noted that 'teachers' varied their approach according to circumstances. It also argued that because of this variety it was "misleading to categorise teaching methods". (D.E.S., 1978, p. 27). However, for "the purpose of the survey".... "two broad approaches to teaching were postulated ... defined as 'didactic' and 'exploratory'." The former was defined as including the teacher directing children's work "in accordance with relatively specific and pre-determined intentions". Within the exploratory style broad objectives of work were discussed with the children, and the emphasis was on children "finding their own solutions and making choices about the way in which they should be tackled". (p. 26).

According to the survey about three-quarters of the teachers used a

"mainly didactic approach while less than twenty [teachers] relied on an exploratory approach" [and] "In a further one fifth of classrooms a mixed approach was used." (p. 27). The report indicated that priority was given to "basic skills". (D.E.S., 1978).

Both the D.E.S. reports of 1982 and 1985 revealed a similar picture of primary schools, although the former was specifically concerned with practice in the "First School (5-9) and the latter with primary and middle schools". (D.E.S., 1982; D.E.S., 1985).

Like the 1978 report the D.E.S. report of 1982 noted that teachers used a range of approaches (p. 48) but also that the emphasis appeared to be on the direction of activities by teachers with little time given to work which children organised themselves. (p. 49).

The 'First School Report' noted that in a few schools the teaching programmes for 5-8 year olds:

"... are reminiscent of practices in old fashioned junior schools and are highly dependent on narrowly conceived exercises in English and Mathematics."

(D.E.S., 1982, p. 11)

This report also noted the findings that while in one fifth of the schools there was a good balance between learning how to perform calculations and actually using them in practical situations that in the remaining four fifths such a balance was not achieved and that skills were practiced in isolation. Children were, it was stated:

"Required to use abstract ideas without the practical experience necessary for a working understanding of them."

(D.E.S., 1982, p. 49)

The D.E.S. report of 1985 distinguished between primary and middle schools, "at their best in England and Wales", and other schools which were "weak in various aspects". (D.E.S., 1985, p. 5). In the good schools pupils were said to be well motivated "towards active ... directed enquiry rather than passive learning". (p. 5). Like the previous reports

mentioned it indicates that much teacher directed work takes place in 'primary' classrooms. It was found, for example, that in almost half the classrooms' work was closely directed by the teacher, and that pupils were not given enough responsibility for pursuing their own enquiries. (p. 6). Like the 1982 report, that of 1985 found an emphasis on basic skills and that such skills were not related to the context in which they were needed.

It was interesting to note that an H.M.I. survey by the Scottish Education Department in 1980 revealed a similar situation to that reported by Surveys of English schools. The education system is not organised in precisely the same way as the English one, but the particular survey does relate to primary age children : Primary 4 (first stage) and Primary 7 (final stage) of primary education. The report indicated that the Scottish primary school appeared to have changed little from the 1950s. It pointed to a narrowing of the curriculum as did the English reports, and stated that whilst this was sometimes due to lack of resources it was also due to deliberate restriction on the teachers' part. Teachers in the survey saw the curriculum as falling into two areas - "basic skills" and "other aspects". The latter was assigned a minor place in the curriculum. (S.E.D., 1980, p. 46).

The Scottish report showed that an "expository style was widely practiced as the principal method of instruction" and that teachers were sceptical of methods which encouraged children to work by themselves. (p. 41). This emphasis was of great concern to the writers of the report who considered that:

"Primary education ought to be concerned with more than the acquisition of basic skills as they are narrowly conceived."

(D.E.S., 1980, p. 46)

The image presented in the various reports outlined does not appear to conform very closely to the practice in 'good' primary schools advocated

by Plowden but their findings do match those of some of the primary studies outlined in this review.

Thus so far this second part of the section has examined research which has looked at the nature of ideas which inform primary practice. It has been shown that on the one hand certain educationalists accepted the notion that child-centred, progressive ideas informed primary practice. It gave the impression that such ideas were the norm in primary schools. It was accepted by some 'educationalists' that such ideas represented good practice, and by others that such methods were responsible for declining standards. (See also Black Papers). Richards and Delamont pointed out that little empirical evidence existed until the 1970s about what primary schools were actually doing in their classroom. (Richards, 1982; Delamont, S., 1987).

Other research indicated that few teachers had in fact adopted innovations advocated by Plowden, and that evidence for a dramatic transformation was hard to find. There was little sign of a substantial use of child-centred methods.

It has been indicated that some of the research outlined so far used quantitative methods. Some of this research involved the analysis of relationships and regularities between selected factors which enabled the researchers to indicate a statistical relationship between the operationally defined variables. Other research was shown to be more descriptive.

One criticism of some of the research, particularly that associated with some large scale surveys, was that they did not give insight into why teachers engaged in the practices they did, and how for example forms of organisation worked in practice, and the social processes involved. This could however, have been attributed to the particular design of the individual surveys, rather than of the general method. Such criticism cannot be applied wholesale. As Hargreaves and Woods pointed out, Barker-

Lunn's study on streaming indicated that teachers made a contribution to children's failure, and that whether classes were streamed or not made little difference to children's achievement. What mattered most were the teachers' attitudes. Thus pro-streaming teachers in officially non-streamed classes still effectively operated, streamed ones using grouping within the classroom. (Hargreaves and Woods, 1984). However, in general the criticisms outlined do apply and therefore it was decided for the purposes of this present research to use 'qualitative' methods. The nature of 'qualitative methods' is described in detail in the following chapter.

It was indicated in the first section of the review that some studies used "scheduled observation techniques". (See also Galton and Simon, 1980a). However, similar criticisms apply to the use of 'scheduled observation' as with the use of surveys. It was indicated that such research is still basically concerned with what is quantifiable and provides little information about the nature of classroom activities, the nature of inter-action within it, or why teachers and children act as they do.

This part of the section has also shown that some accounts of primary school were essentially 'descriptive' (see also Gardener and Cass, 1968; Hilsum and Cane, 1971 and Bassey, 1978). Most of these studies did not attempt to offer any 'explanation' for their findings.

What was most striking about most of the research outlined so far was the scant attention paid to the infant schools. The majority of the studies were concerned with the primary school, as a whole, or more with the junior age range (7-11) though this was not always the case. (See also Bassey, 1978; D.E.S., 1982). It will be shown in Section Two of this review however, that the infant school did begin to come under closer scrutiny particularly in the 1980s. However, at the time when this research began in 1980, apart from the work of Sharp and Green (1975) and King (1978) there appeared a research gap.

SECTION 2 :

'INSIDE THE PRIMARY SCHOOL', 'ETHNOGRAPHY' AND ACTION RESEARCH

The next section of this chapter discusses research guided by sociological perspectives which looked at primary schools.

It was stated earlier that Armstrong (1980) argued that there was a need for research which focused on the classroom processes of classroom life, and the intentions and experiences of actors within the school. He argued that little was known about "the intellectual life of classrooms". (Armstrong, 1980). Such a comment seems odd in the light of developments within the sociology of Education in the early seventies in which just these issues had been the focus of research. There were also developments within 'Action research' or teacher based research, which started in Britain with the work of Stenhouse in the 1960s. Armstrong's comment may well indicate a lack of communication between researchers within different paradigms. This gulf appears to exist between some 'Action' research and 'ethnography', for example. This will be discussed later in the final part of this section.

This section first looks at those 'New Developments' and the range of studies these encompassed. The work within the 'New Sociology of Education' began to emerge in the early seventies. Various writers point to an increased concern at about this time onwards with 'what goes on in the classroom' with teachers and pupils' understanding and interpretation of actions, and with the social processes of classroom life. (See also Gleeson, 1977; Hammersley and Woods, 1984; Woods, 1979, 1980, 1986). It is stated for example that:

"In the late 1960s and early 1970s the sociologists working on education came to question much of the body of assumptions that characterised prevailing analyses. An area of exploration commonly referred to as 'New Directions Sociology' was developed which ... sought to challenge the framework of positivistic science."

(Gleeson, 1977, p. 1)

Interest in the classroom and on the issues just outlined goes back further than the early seventies in America. (Willard Waller, 1932; Smith and Geoffrey, 1968; Jackson, 1968; Becker, 1952). This was also the case even in Britain (Hargreaves, 1967 and Lacey, 1970). Walford suggested that interest was expressed earlier in the 1960s by Floud and Halsey who, he stated, "expressed their disappointment in the lack of sociological work in the curriculum". (Walford, 1987, p. 4). Likewise Hammersley indicated that classroom research was by no means new and that for example:

"There was a well established social psychology tradition going back before the Second World War."

(Hammersley, 1980a, p. 48)

The 'New Directions' drew upon a number of theoretical developments within an 'interpretive' tradition, such as cultural anthropology, the 'Action' theory of Weber, phenomenology, Symbolic interactionism, and ethnomethodology. Hammersley referred to "a baffling array of approaches", (Hammersley, 1980b, p. 198). It could also be said that a baffling array of names exist to describe sociological research methods, such as 'ethnographic', field research, interpretive and qualitative, for example. This problem together with the theoretical underpinning of this 'style' of research, is discussed in Chapter One when looking at methodology. It is briefly pointed out here that a concern common to most research within this style is with how individuals in a social setting make sense of their world. Thus, there is an interest in how individuals interpret the actions of others and relate their own actions to these interpretations.

The second part of this section looks at ways of classifying ethnographic studies.

With the development of what has been termed the 'New Sociology of Education', a range of topics was opened up for investigation, including the nature of teachers' perspectives and classroom interaction. Teaching came to be seen "not just as a natural normal activity" but "as an activity

requiring analysis" and an activity which conveys "different kinds of possible orientation and operation by teachers and built upon different sets of assumptions". (Hammersley and Woods, 1976, p. 2). However, such a view creates the impression that such issues had not been considered before. As indicated research in primary schools outside the 'Sociology of Education' did to some extent consider some of these issues. In particular it raised the question of whether terms like 'progressive' and 'traditional' truly represented teachers' practice.

Many studies which followed on from the 'New Directions' came to call themselves 'ethnographic'. It is difficult to classify 'ethnographic' studies. They can be classified in a number of ways, according to their theoretical framework, according to the setting in which such research takes place, and according to the concerns they deal with.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to give a detailed account of the theoretical framework of the many 'ethnographic' studies which are available, just to give the range. Willis, for example, works within a 'Marxist' framework. (Willis, 1977). Sharp and Green, whilst allegedly starting with a 'phenomenological' perspective appear to have changed to a 'Marxist' one during the course of the study. (Sharp and Green, 1975). Hargreaves et al in 1975 used what Hargreaves termed a "dynamic interactionist model". (Hargreaves, 1977). Nash, mentioned earlier in Section 1, also used an interactionist approach. He states that:

"In the end this research has worked its way towards an interactionist view of the classroom."

(Nash, 1973, p. 121)

Both King (1978) and Hartley (1985) said that they worked within a Weberian framework. Davies describes her study as 'ethnographic' and states that:

"Out of a multiplicity of potential approaches I have chosen the ethnographic perspective. (Harre and Secord, 1972; Harre, 1979)."

(Davies, B., 1982, p. 15)

Ethnographic studies can also be classified according to the setting in which they are done. A large number have been done in the secondary sector. Hargreaves undertook his study in a secondary modern school. (Hargreaves, 1967). Lacey did his study in a grammar school (Lacey, 1970). A number of studies were also done in comprehensive schools, (Balls, S., 1981; Burgess, B., 1982 and Turner, 1983). Other studies have been undertaken in the state, secondary sector by Corrigan (1979) and Woods (1979) and in public schools. (Walford, G., 1986). The middle school has also been studied. (Measor and Woods, 1984).

At the time of the start of the research it could be argued that there were four ethnographic studies of the primary setting, although Nash, as stated earlier, used an "interactionist" approach to some extent. Nash, (1973) and Pollard's study (1980) were available. The number has increased during the 1980s, for example Berlak and Berlak (1981), Nias (1981, 1984) and Pollard (1985, 1987).

The infant school too, which in the seventies, as stated, was under-researched (see also King, 1978) apart from Sharp and Green (1975) and King (1978) and to some extent Nash (1973) whose work covered the primary school (infant and junior), has attracted more attention during the 1980s. (Lee, 1984; Pollard, 1985 and Jackson, M., 1987). King, however, did not view his study as "wholly ethnographic". (King, 1987, p. 241).

Another area of interest has been the nursery school setting. One particular study by Cleave et al was not strictly 'ethnographic', but it did focus on what went on inside the nursery setting. The authors agreed that previous research on nursery provision paid little attention to:

"... what goes on within various nursery settings."

(p. 3)

and to children's experience of transfer from the nursery setting to the infant school. The research therefore set out to describe in detail

children's experience of such transfer and also to examine differences in the types of activities provided in the two settings, and the nature of teaching approaches. (Cleave et al, 1982).

This present research did not initially set out to explore the nursery setting, or differences between this setting and the infant school. However, it became evident as the research progressed that differences did appear to exist between Moorland nursery and Moorland infant school. Subsequently, a search was undertaken to find out what research had been done on nursery schools. It was at this point that similarities were found between the findings of Cleave et al and this research.

Other more recent research has also looked at the nursery setting. Hartley looked at the 'bureaucratic' features of the nursery school - "pre-school". (Hartley, 1987, p. 58-73).

The concerns of the different 'ethnographic' and 'Interpretive' studies have been various. Such concerns include teachers' educational perspectives. (Keddie, 1971; Sharp and Green, 1975; King, 1978; Woods, 1979; Hartley, 1985); teachers' views of pupils, (Ball, 1981; Nash, 1973; King, 1978; Woods, 1979) and pupils' views of teachers, (Corrigan, P., 1979; Nash, 1973; Ball, 1981; Furlong, 1976 and Woods, 1979). Research has also looked at teachers' 'coping strategies', for example Hargreaves (1978), Woods (1977a and 1979), Burgess (1983) and Pollard (1980 and 1982). Another area of interest has been 'pupil strategies'. (Denscombe, 1980; Delamont, 1976; Hargreaves, D., 1972; and Woods, 1979). Other research has been concerned with aspects of 'negotiation'. (Pollard, D., 1979; Turner, 1983 and Woods, 1979).

It was noted earlier that Cleave et al (1982) looked at children's experiences of transfer from the nursery to the infant school. Other research has looked at transfer between other stages. Measor and Woods,

for example, examined the transition from primary to secondary school. (Measor and Woods, 1984). Galton and Wilcocks were also concerned with this aspect. (Galton and Wilcocks, 1983). This study was mentioned briefly in Section 1. As stated the main methods used in this study were "systematic observation" or "interaction analysis" (p. 16). However, another research technique was also used; an 'ethnographic' one of participant observation (p. 16) to look at, for example, pupils' views of the transfer to secondary school. More recently the transfer from the infant to the junior school has also been the subject of research. (Woods, P., 1987). This study:

"... provides an analysis of the development of a class of children in their transition from infant to 'the juniors' [and] ... traces the personal challenges which were presented and the changes in skills, attitudes and identities which were made."

(Pollard (ed) 1987, p. 6)

Much attention has been paid to secondary schooling with regard to the issue of sex stereotyping. The study of Whyte, though not 'wholly ethnographic', showed clearly that sex-stereotyping begins at an early age, and that "social stereotypes learned at home" are reinforced when children start school. (Whyte, 1983, p. 20). Both Hartley (1977) and King (1978) indicated that infant teachers differentiated between boys and girls: "Boys and girls were defined as having different interests". (King, 1978, p. 68).

The most recent research of Clarricoates looked at "the ways in which girls and boys behave towards each other in primary schools". (Clarricoates, 1978, p. 188). The issue of gender differentiation was not really examined in detail in this present research. Teachers on one or two occasions did make comments which indicated differentiation between girls and boys as will be shown in later chapters. However, there was not time to follow up their statement in much detail.

Ethnographic studies, more recently have looked at the notion of teachers' careers. Ball and Goodson, for example, looked at different aspects of teachers' lives and careers using 'qualitative' and 'life history' methods. (Ball and Goodson, 1985). Sikes et al also studied teachers' careers and developed a model of the life cycle of the teacher and indicate how critical incidents affect the passage through it. They looked at how teachers cope with problems and constraints, and how they adapted to these. Sikes et al also examined institutional contexts for their effect on teachers' careers. (Sykes et al, 1985).

Thus so far this part of the section has attempted to show the 'range' of ethnographic/interpretive research available and to indicate some of its concerns. It was indicated that prior to the eighties there were few such studies of primary schools and even fewer of infant schools, although during the eighties the number of studies of infant schools has increased.

It was shown in the first part of this chapter that some research into primary education paid little attention to what actually went on in the classroom. In the first part of this second section other 'sociological' developments have been examined in which closer attention was paid to interaction in the classroom, teacher/pupil relationships, staff-room culture, pupils' perspectives, teacher and pupil strategies and negotiation and teachers' careers.

Hargreaves and Woods argued that with the development of the 'New Sociology' there was talk at the theoretical level about knowledge, its organisation, selection and availability to different kinds of pupils. (See also Young, M. F. D., 1971), but few empirical studies of the school curriculum or school subjects in the broader sense. (Hargreaves and Woods, 1984).

The final part of this second section outlines another form of research which is very much concerned with classroom practice and the school curriculum.

The primary school has received much more attention in the 1980s from what is known as 'Action research' or teacher based research.

In the process of attempting to keep up with the research in primary schools, the work of 'Action researchers' was examined in the light of interest in what teachers and children do in the classroom, and the nature of the 'curricula. It is just such issues, e.g. the nature of the curriculum, particular aspects such as reading, and maths, the nature of storytime and its social organisation, how activities are structured that 'Action research' appeared to deal with.

According to Cohen and Manion 'Action' research has a number of features. First they claimed that it was situational, concerned with diagnosing a problem in a specific context and attempting to solve it within this context. Secondly they said that it involved collaboration with teams of practitioners and researchers who work together as a project, though this does not always happen. Thirdly, Action research is said to be "participatory" in that team members themselves take part directly or indirectly in implementing the research. Finally it is said to be "self evaluative", in that modifications are continually evaluated within an ongoing situation. The objective of 'Action' research is to improve practice in some way. (Cohen and Manion, 1987, p. 208). Thus it involves teachers looking at practice in their own classrooms, sometimes in collaboration with others, and then reflecting on this practice.

The term 'Action research' "... was originated by Lewin (1946). His model for change was based on Action and research". (Pollard and Tann; 1987, p. 25).

Further development of the idea as teacher as researcher developed with the work of the Humanities Curriculum Project in the 1960s and early 1970s which was further developed in the work of the Ford Teaching Project (1972-4). Since then a number of projects have developed at the Cambridge Institute and the University of East Anglia. (Webb, R., 1988, p. 51). There have also been developments at Leicester, for example the Leicester 'Insights and Learning Project' and also at Manchester Polytechnic.

A number of projects have been undertaken in the primary school, for example Burgess, H., (1985, Cummings (1986), Desforges and Cockburn (1987) (though these are hard to classify), and Payne and Cuff (1982) and Rowland (1986). Hilary Burgess focused on primary maths and in particular the way one scheme 'Fletcher Maths' is used by teachers. She looked at the aims and objectives in teaching maths. The starting point was how teachers define and interpret the maths curriculum in the primary school following on from King's work in infant schools on this issue. (See also King, 1978).

The methods used in this project were observation, unstructured observation and documentary evidence (Burgess, H., 1985, p. 178). It is argued that these methods were selected in relation to the problem posed and took account of the character of the researcher and researched. (p. 179).

Cummings, once an infant teacher and now a deputy head in a primary school, worked in collaboration with Hustler who worked in the School of Education, Manchester Polytechnic. They focused on how children of different ages participated in the classroom, and how activities were differentially structured by the teacher and other children. Cummings stated that the study used both 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' methods. (Cummings, 1986).

Desforge and Cockburn work in the 'School of Education', East Anglia. Like Burgess. M., (1985) they were also concerned with the maths curriculum. This study did not appear to be strictly an 'Action' research project, but it did appear to be concerned with the 'small setting' and the experience of teachers. The study reports the analysis of a two year in-depth study of the practice of seven experienced first school teachers. It attempted to increase understanding of why teachers adopt contemporary practice, and to understand why the teachers taught maths as they did, and to grasp the effect of *their actions on* pupils. (Desforges and Cockburn, 1987).

Another area which has been the focus of research has been 'reading' and 'storytime'. Payne and Cuff, for example, were concerned:

"... as analysts of practical everyday settings ... with the social organisational machinery - systematic, pre-suppositions, commitments, procedures, conventions, rules - which make the teaching of reading possible."

(Payne and Cuff, 1982, p. 39)

They stated that their research was informed by 'ethnomethodology'. (Payne and Cuff, 1982).

Rowland is co-ordinator of the Leicestershire 'Insights into Learning' project, and was concerned with the relationship between learning, teaching and understanding children. He emphasised the importance of interpretation of actions, language and writing and understanding, to "understand how they [children] understand subject matter and review our own understanding of it". (Rowland, 1986, p. 27). Rowland also stated that he was concerned with "teaching as an interpretive approach". (p. 28).

Rowland argued that the enquiry starts with the teachers's experience of the children and their activity. He argued that this subjective way of interpreting children's activity:

"... has been considered by many educational researchers to be something to be avoided at all costs"

(p. 30)

He also stated that:

"Unreliable accounts by teachers are dismissed in favour of such devices or observation schedules which list categories of behaviour to be noted and ticked off at regular intervals and use questionnaires and tests whose results can be readily subjected to statistical analysis."

(p. 30)

Rowland argued that the explanations of learning should be concerned with children's interpretation of their activities and that teachers are able to get close enough to do this. (Rowland, 1986, p. 30).

Rowland, like Armstrong earlier, seems to ignore the strong 'ethnographic' tradition developed in the 1970s, outlined earlier, which does deal with these issues. Hustler, however, does refer to this tradition although he uses the term 'interpretive' rather than 'ethnographic'. He refers to the:

"... well established tradition within the social sciences which stress the small scale, the need for involvement in the situation one is studying, the importance of gaining access to people's perceptions, the virtues of qualitative data, as opposed to quantitative data, the need to generate theory These traditions are somewhat loosely labelled 'interpretive' or 'phenomenological'."

(Hustler et al, 1986, p. 146)

Some 'Action' researchers are committed to 'Interpretive' research.

Tranter, for example, stated that:

"The way forward seemed to be linked with what has been called the naturalistic or interpretive paradigm." (p. 107)

He suggested that such research is "concerned with the collection of qualitative data" with "theory arising from the data". He added that:

"In order to get access to that data the researcher must get close to the area of life under study, become a part of it and enter into the sorts of interaction that her subjects encounter."

(Tranter, D., 1986, p. 107)

Payne and Cuff cited earlier were also committed to such an approach in their use of 'Ethnomethodology'. (Payne and Cuff, 1982). This is what ethnography is generally committed to.

An examination of 'ethnographic' research and 'Action' research indicates that they appear to share, to some extent similar concerns, such as interest in teachers' and pupils' understanding and interpretation of events. As has been shown, however, such similarities are not always recognised by Action researchers. There is another communication gap, like that indicated in the comment by Armstrong mentioned earlier.

A recent book by Pollard and Tann, however, seemed to be bridging this gap in relation to ethnography and 'Action research'. In fact they clearly indicated a commitment to action research:

"This book has been designed to support both teachers who wish to enquire into their own practice The book makes considerable use of self-evaluation and action-research approaches."

(Preface)

and discuss "different approaches to research". (p. 22). Its aim appeared to be to encourage teachers (and students) to reflect on different aspects of classroom practice, classroom relationships, what is being taught, classroom organisation and management, and communication for example. (Pollard and Tann, 1987).

Section two of this chapter has examined both 'ethnographic' and 'Action' research approaches and indicated some of the concerns of both, and has indicated too that both to some extent share similar concerns. The next section discusses two studies which relate particularly to infant schools namely those of Sharp and Green (1975) and King (1978) and refers also to more recent 'Interpretive' studies of primary and infant schools as stated in the introduction to this chapter.

SECTION 3 :

A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF TWO STUDIES OF INFANT SCHOOLS

SHARP AND GREEN (1975), KING (1978)

1. General Concerns

The first part of this section gives a brief outline of the general concerns of Sharp and Green and King.

Sharp and Green's study looked at three infant classes in a primary school in a working class area. They attempted to show not only what teachers do but their reasons for what they do. Their stated intention was to:

"focus ... upon the 'child-centred' approach to education ... [and] to attempt to study and demonstrate some of the more or less subtle ways in which wider social structural 'forces' [affect] the pedagogy and other social processes at the level of the classroom and the school."

(p. vii)

The main themes concerned the child-centred approach and "the application of methods grounded in this approach" (p. vii) and also:

"the adequacy of certain theoretical developments in sociology generally and recent developments within the 'Sociology of Education' in particular. We refer to the group of perspectives, which very loosely we admit, we categorise under the rubric [of] 'social phenomenology'."

(Sharp and Green, 1975, p. viii)

King's study, like that of Sharp and Green, was a study of infant classrooms. King looked at three infant schools; Burnley Road, a social priority school; Seaton Park, whose catchment area was less working class than Burnley Road; and Langley, a school described as one with "a more middle class intake". (King, 1978, p. 115).

Like the study of Sharp and Green, King's study was also concerned with the progressive 'child-centred' approach and the nature of infant teachers' "ideologies". Sharp and Green used the term 'ideology' and 'perspective'. (Sharp and Green, 1975, pp. 68-9). At a later stage in the writing up of this thesis it was decided that these terms were so complex that they required a separate chapter. During the course of

reading it was found that other writers noted that these terms were ambiguous, for example Apple, M., (1979), Meighan, R., (1979), Gibson, R., (1980) and Marriott (1985). It was also noted that different definitions existed. (Cosin, B., 1972 and Watson, 1979). More detailed discussion of those terms is therefore found in Chapter Four of this thesis.

King's stated purpose was to examine how teachers' actions and practices related to their definitions of young children and their social origins.

With regard to his theoretical stance King stated that this was "based upon the Sociology of Max Weber ... action theory of a fairly simple kind". (p. 131). He also claimed to incorporate some of Schutz's ideas into his research but he argued that he did not use a phenomenological approach wholeheartedly as in his view "it tends to be ahistorical and ignores the constraints of social structure". (King, 1978, p. 13). A similar criticism was also made by Sharp and Green (1975).

The first part of this section then attempted briefly to give an overview of the research of Sharp and Green and King. The second part of this section looks in greater detail at some theoretical concerns referred to in the overview.

2. Theoretical Issues

This part of the section examines the theoretical perspectives of Sharp and Green, and King, in particular the former's presentation of 'social phenomenology' and the latter's use of the Weberian perspective.

Sharp and Green began a review of the literature they thought relevant to their research by giving a brief resume of the concerns of the 'old' and 'new' sociology, and then turn to their main area of interest, which was classroom interaction. The main issue for them was the relation-

ship between the construction of pupil identities and the practice of the teacher within the context of social structure in the classroom and wider society. (Sharp and Green, 1975). Various studies were considered at length. Sharp and Green were critical of earlier work in the 1950s and 1960s which they claimed was generally structural-functional and empiricist. In the first section of this review a similar point was made. Sharp and Green saw the work they reviewed as largely taking for granted "the dominant institutional arrangement of education". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 4). *Walford said that such a criticism of structural functionalism was unjustified, and noted that:*

"Floud and Halsey, back in 1961, had expressed their disappointment at the lack of sociological work in the curriculum."

(Walford, 1987, p. 4)

Sharp and Green were critical of the way the social system was presented in structural functional approaches as external to the individual. They then noted the symbolic interactionist, social phenomenological critique of this structural-functionalist model of research. They claimed that they were sympathetic to this critique, with reservations. They considered that "Structural factors other than symbolic may be involved in interaction" and that such factors could "structure opportunities for action" in "complex ways". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 6). Such influences on teachers it was argued might not be recognised by the teachers themselves. However Sharp and Green failed to provide evidence for such a view.

Sharp and Green noted the 'phenomenological' work, as they saw it, of Hargreaves and Lacey as having helped to throw light on the "intra school processes" which in their view provide the link between "structured inequality and the wider social structure". (p. 11). Sharp and Green considered that this work laid the foundation for much of the 'New Sociology of Education' which they saw as based on phenomenological

sociology which was seen as sharing features with symbolic interactionism. An account of the features of 'phenomenology' and other 'Interpretive' approaches is given in the following chapter on 'methodology'. Sharp and Green looked at the work of Esland and Keddie which dealt with labelling and the self-fulfilling prophecy. Sharp and Green's criticism of such work was that concentration on the teachers' consciousness tended to leave unexplained "the processes whereby prophecies are fulfilled", nor was it made clear, they said what the conditions were in which such prophecies were generated. (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 12).

Thus, Sharp and Green though sympathetic to criticisms of earlier structuralist approaches considered that, as they saw it, concentration of the new sociology on social actors' consciousness left much to be explained. They argued that though interaction processes through which, for example pupil identities were established were important, by concentrating on these the 'new' had either "assumed" the power of reality definers (teachers) or have ignored it altogether and assumed that "interaction takes place democratically as between equals". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 12).

Sharp and Green summarised the problems of a phenomenological approach. First they argued that it concentrated too much on subjective meanings, and secondly that it failed to pay attention to the issue of power, and thirdly that it ignored the issues of externality and constraint.

King likewise made similar criticisms of phenomenology, and both argued that it was ahistorical. This last issue is considered when looking at Sharp and Green and King's treatment of child-centred ideas and infant teachers' practice.

On the first issue of subjective meanings Sharp and Green considered that phenomenology was concerned with issues relating more to social

psychology than sociology. They considered that it was important not to confuse the two levels, the social and the individual. They believed the individual level to be important but that it was also necessary to see social life as reflecting more than individual actions. They pointed out that societies have structures which cannot be reduced to the "sum of actions of individuals" (p. 17) and that it was necessary to consider the connection between the individual and the social context, whilst not losing sight of individuality. The implication of Sharp and Green's arguments about phenomenology is that it is not concerned with macro issues, and that it is concerned with "an extreme subjective idealism". (p. 21). They go on to state their own position as depending:

"... on the Marxian notion that the problem of how a society understands itself in the forms of social consciousness which are operative ... and which permeate the consciousness of individual actors needs to be distinguished from how society exists objectively."

(Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 22)

What they were concerned with was whether particular social structures gave rise to particular forms of 'consciousness', that is whether the:

"... systems of meaning of the acting subject are limited and shaped by the structural arrangements in which the individual is located."

(p. 24)

Sharp and Green rejected social explanations based solely on the individual and claimed that one needed to look beyond the individual to "constraints" imposed on his actions by circumstances. They thought that what needed to be considered was "the social distribution of opportunities to be self-determining" and how individuals come to see the social structure as "external". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 27).

Sharp and Green were thus concerned with practical and material constraints which might affect classroom management. They wondered how, given such constraints, teachers could actually act differently. This

aspect, the question of constraint, is referred to again later in this section, and also was looked at during the research.

Thus so far it can be seen that Sharp and Green's major criticism of phenomenology is that it tends to be based on the subjects here and now and is unable to consider wider issues or macro issues.

This criticism has been voiced by other writers including Williamson (1974), Whitty (1974) and Gleeson (1977). Hargreaves, however, spoke of the "growing awareness of the necessity to reconcile alternatives, and to create a synthesis of the broadest explanatory value". (Hargreaves, 1980, p. 63). Likewise Douglas, an ethnomethodologist, did not dispute the need for macro analysis and a study of individuals' understanding to go hand in hand.

"We must continue to do macro-analysis ... we must always begin with the members' understanding of their situations [and] ... as we increase our understanding we must seek to transcend ... members' understandings to create trans-situational (objective) knowledge."

(Douglas, J., 1974, p. 44)

There are those who consider that ethnography can deal with macro-issues. Hammersley argued that since the inception of the 'New Sociology' various splinter groups have emerged such as Neo-Marxists and Neo-Weberians whose main criticism of 'Interactionism' was that it was empiricist, a point Sharp and Green made about structural functionalism. By 'empiricist', Hammersley meant:

"... in part the tendency of interactionists to neglect macro level theory"

and not just a gap to be filled but "an inherent defect of the approach". (Hammersley, M., 1980b, p. 199). From this viewpoint both 'structural functionalism' and 'Interactionism' have a blind spot. The former might be thought to have taken 'society' for granted, but so might the latter, so both criticisms were justified. However, in Hammersley's view the critique applies more to "interactionist rhetoric than practice". (p. 199).

It is believed that in interactionist studies the actor is not treated as completely autonomous, for:

"The situations actors face are assigned a considerable role in shaping their perspectives."

(p. 199)

Also it was argued that it had not been demonstrated that interactionists were necessarily empiricist. (Hammersley, 1980b, p: 199).

However, Hammersley nevertheless believed that 'ethnographic' work "does display empiricist tendencies" (p. 200) and that for example little use is made of Weber. This is not necessarily the case since both King (1978) and Hartley (1985) made use of Weber. The main point Hammersley made is that empiricism is "not an inherent feature of ethnographic work". (Hammersley, 1980b, p. 209).

An examination of various ethnographic studies since Sharp and Green appeared to indicate that they were concerned with macro-issues and attempted to locate their own work in a wider context. Thus Ball in a study of a comprehensive school stated that the research set out to:

"... describe and understand the social system of the school in terms of the actors' interpretation of the situation"

but that:

"... analytically the study addresses the task of placing perceptions of teachers within a wider social context and does not rely solely upon the interpretation of the teachers and pupils' utterances."

(Ball, S., 1981, p. xviii)

Burgess, also in a study of a comprehensive school, argued that whilst his theoretical framework was "based broadly on symbolic interactionism" (p. 3) that he also took account of decisions and definitions external to the school. He believes that schools do not exist in a vacuum and that they are "products of the past and of the social context in which they are located". (Burgess, R., 1983, p. 9).

Likewise Turner attended to the macro-micro issue but did argue that

integration is difficult and believed that attempting such a synthesis was too ambitious a project for a single researcher. (Turner, 1983).

As far as studies of primary schools are concerned the research of Lee (1984) and Pollard (1985) dealt with wider issues, and attempted to place interaction in a wider context. The former was concerned with teachers' perspectives and practice in an inner city infant school, the ways in which they defined primary aims and practice, and the ways in which they responded to the 'progressive' trend as teachers in an inner city. It was because of this latter concern that the study was initially read and because it had been done in an inner city school similar in some respects to Moorland. Lee stated that she was also concerned with wider issues, within a socio-historical perspective, and with the:

"Interaction between structural and situational features on teacher ideology within a particular unified form of schooling and to discover the possibilities and limitations of change within this educational context."

(Lee, J., 1984, p. 235)

This research is referred to again when discussing Sharp and Green's treatment of 'progressive child-centred' ideas and infant teachers' practice.

Pollard's research whilst focusing on the school, also looked at the "wider context in which schools are located". (Pollard, 1980, p. xiv). Like Sharp and Green he saw phenomenology and symbolic interactionism as being limited in some respects "because of its small scale focus" and that it did not explain "what produces the context in which action takes place", (p. 85) factors such as "the distribution of wealth and power in society" and the same of the "way in which schooling relates to such an unequal society". (p. 96-8). Pollard looked at issues such as centralisation and "pressures towards accountability". Pollard also considered the historical development of primary education and assessed its influence today. (Pollard, 1980). This last issue is referred to in this chapter.

The second issue raised by Sharp and Green is the question of power. This part of the section considers how they treat this, particularly the power of the head in relation to teachers, and that of teachers in relation to children, and also King's treatment of the issue of power.

Sharp and Green saw power as an important issue. They argued that:

"Actors engaged in the social interchange of education are not free and equal participants ... together negotiating and building up ... mutually acceptable definitions of reality"

(p. 34)

but actors with differential power to define reality. Power was defined as the "ability to control others, and bring sanctions to bear" and they stated that it was derived from the "distribution of power and authority in the macro-structure". (p. 34). Sharp and Green, as noted, claimed that phenomenology ignores the issue of power.

However Hargreaves vigorously contended that the idea that phenomenology ignores the power issue was "arrant nonsense". He argued that Becker and himself deal with the issue and further that:

"Labelling theory and studies of negotiation would be meaningless if they did not assume that some members of society had the power to impose labels and definitions on others."

(Hargreaves, 1978, p. 11)

Hargreaves considered that whilst some interactionists may have ignored the power issue, "it is untrue that all have done so". (Hargreaves, 1978, p. 140).

Becker too, was concerned with the issue of power. He wrote about it in relation to discipline and pupils. (Becker, 1970, p. 142). He also looked at limitations on teachers' power. (p. 146).

Sharp and Green thus argued that differences existed between the head's power and that of the teachers. Heads were seen as the important reality definers. Sharp and Green held that this unequal distribution of

resources had an effect on "social processes in micro-situations". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 34). They were concerned with the degree of autonomy that teachers were able to "negotiate in their classrooms given the heads' power" and argued that heads were actors with the power to define reality for others. It could be argued, however, that because of differences in views heads have to negotiate, to compromise in order that chaos does not ensue. Negotiations may of course break down.

King also stressed the power of teachers in the classroom. He defined power as "The chance of a teacher realising her own will in the classroom". (King, 1978, p. 48).

However, the nature of power and authority in the wider setting of the school is only briefly alluded to in his study which seemed surprising in view of King's commitment to Weber, and also that his stated theoretical position was "based upon the Sociology of Max Weber". (p. 3). In a later article King elaborated on this aspect of Weber. He argued that:

"The Schutzian primacy of everyday life with its stress on the negotiated nature of reality tends to reduce the importance of power in social relationships and implies more consensus than conflict."

(King, 1980, p. 11)

In the same article he also argued that power was important and recognised by some phenomenological studies, e.g. Keddie (1971) and also that:

"Power is arguably always an element in the relationship between teachers and taught."

(King, 1980, p. 11)

It is also argued in this thesis that it is also 'an element in the relationship between heads and teachers, and parents'.

King mentioned the concept of bureaucracy in this paper. He stated that:

"The legal basis of bureaucratic authority of maintained school head teachers was quite clear, as are the laws, statutory instruments, circulars and regulations that operate at the central and local authority level."

(King, 1980, p. 12)

He also saw it as important to see bureaucracy "from an action perspective" (p. 13) and that in this respect:

"... the substantially bureaucratic organisation of schools can be seen as the outcome of the actions of the head teachers who have the legal authority to structure the behaviour of teachers and pupils."

(King, 1980, p. 13)

He referred to secondary schools in this respect. King stated that in the study of infant schools that he drew on:

"Weber's concepts of power, authority, bureaucracy, ideology, social action, class, status, and party and some of these are used in this study."

(King, 1978, p. 3)

The issue of the head teachers' authority and power is raised in King's research. It was shown, for example, that the head can be an 'important reality definer' in the infant school. There are references throughout the book to head teachers as being this, particularly Miss Fox of Langley Infant School. There were frequent instances of the way in which she acted being seen as strongly influencing teachers in her school. For example she decided when a child was ready to proceed to another reading book in a scheme rather than its teacher. Sometimes teachers' definitions of this 'readiness' differed from that of the head teacher, and in this instance, the heads' view tended to prevail showing that relative to head teachers, teachers had less power, as King defined this.

King argued that Miss Fox:

"... attempted to exercise a higher control of her teachers than either Mrs. Brown or Mrs. Baker."

(King, R., 1978, p. 122)

and that there was a pressure on teachers to maintain high standards of work and behaviour. (p. 123).

In contrast, at Burnley Road, Mrs. Brown, the head teacher, unlike the other heads:

"... exercised only light control over their [teachers'] teaching methods and activities."

(King, 1978, p. 167)

Other references are made to the authority and control of head teachers over teachers and pupils. It was:

"... demonstrated in the way they could stop or redirect activities when they came into the classroom, their involvement in the reading programme ... and their part in assembly or prayers."

(p. 52)

The heads of Langley and Seaton School expected teachers to produce work plans 'for each half term' (Langley) and 'weekly reports' (Seaton). The reports were said by King to be used in heads' evaluations of the authority of teachers.

Thus, King provided evidence on the nature of the authority of head teachers in the schools he visited, and to some extent about the manner in which this was exercised, but not how, head teachers perceived the nature of such control themselves, their own perspective on their role as heads, and how they spoke about their educational perspectives.

Sharp and Green provided more detail on how the head "characterised the school's functions and aims" and "school approach to pedagogical methods" (p. 47) and also the head's justification for these, and how he viewed the children in the school and his relationship with parents. Sharp and Green indicated how some of the teachers' views differed from those of the head.

Sharp and Green noted, like King, that the head was "an important reality definer". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 47). However, unlike the latter they did not show in practice how the head attempted to exercise this function. Neither Sharp and Green or King directly mentioned how infant head teachers perceived their role as 'head teachers' placed in an

authority position or how far head teachers were aware of this aspect of their role.

Pollard made direct reference to this aspect for he wrote that:

"... the influence of head teachers on institutional bias is bound to be great because their status and position normally legitimise any initiative which they may take and because of their power to counter other proposals. They are thus well placed to set and maintain the parameters of routine action and conventional practices within a school."

(Pollard, A.. 1985, p. 133)

In the present research, even in the 'pilot study', it was soon evident that head teachers were very aware of the official nature of their position, that they were legally and officially placed in a position of authority, and that they also expressed individual interpretations about what their job entails which to some extent reflect the situation, that is the nature of the schools they teach in. As it became apparent that head teachers did reflect in this way a further review of the literature was undertaken, first to find out what research had been done on primary heads, and secondly if the legal aspect of the head teacher's role had been examined by the writers. A detailed study of the head's influence was that of Burgess, already referred to, who wrote specifically about the power and authority of the head teacher. He stated that:

"Considerable power and authority is vested in the office of the head teacher."

(Burgess, R., 1982, p. 26)

Whitaker (1983) also referred to the responsibility of the head, and to his or her strong powers to shape the curriculum. Waller, too, discussed the 'official' nature of the head's position and how such authority was delegated from above. (Waller, 1932, p. 34). It was thus found therefore that a chapter devoted to head teachers was necessary. Therefore, these writers are referred to again in Chapter Four.

As stated, King did provide some details about the head teachers' activities but this was an aspect not examined by Sharp and Green. In this

present research one of the heads provided an account of a 'typical' day. This was not initially included in the chapter concerning head teachers. However, at a very late stage during the 'final writing up' a reading of Hall and Mackay et al's account of head teachers threw into relief the importance of the daily work of the head. So as a result of reading this study the 'daily account' was incorporated into the chapter on head teachers.

Thus far the issue of power (and related concepts such as authority) have been discussed in relation to head teachers, vis a vis teachers. However, both Sharp and Green wrote about this issue at another level. They discussed the power of the teacher in relation to pupils.

Sharp and Green saw it as a concern in relation to teachers' structuring of pupils' identities and were concerned with how the teachers' power may be affected by pupils' roles, and with the knowledge used by teachers to "categorise" pupils. (p. 53). They were also concerned with the "interrelationship" between teachers as a whole and parents in terms of what may appear to be "opposed interests". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 34).

King discussed the power of the teacher vis a vis pupils. The teacher was described as an important reality definer, not the pupils. (King, 1978). King, in a later discussion of Weberian perspectives argued that:

"Power is arguably always an element in the relationship between teacher and taught."

(King, R., 1980, p. 11)

He also referred to the legitimisation of such power. He also stated that there was a "chance element in the power relationships between teachers and pupils". He stated in "an analysis of social control in infants' classrooms" that "its slightly tenuous nature was well recognised by the teachers....." (King, R., 1980, p. 12). King stated that Weber defined power as:

"The chance of a man or a number of men to realise their own will in communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action."

(King, 1978, p. 48)

King rephrased this in relation to the teachers, as thus being:

"... the chance of a teacher realising her will in classroom activities against the resistance of children."

(p. 48)

King also wrote of the latter's willing compliance and power, legitimisation and legitimised power ... authority". (King, 1978, p. 48). King did however state that even infants were capable of challenging teachers' control of the classroom, but at the same time stated that children did not resist much. He gave examples of such challenges (p. 49) but stated that on the whole the children accepted the teacher's authority.

The present research also looks at issues such as power and authority, and in particular the idea of pupils' 'willing compliance', indicating that pupils may not, even at this age, be 'willing compliers' but more 'unwilling acquiescers' in some circumstances. Several studies were found to attend to this issue of the attempt by teachers to control events and the possibility of non-compliance by pupils, for example Hargreaves et al (1975), Gannaway (1976), Woods, P., (1979) and Denscombe (1980). Most of the studies were found to be of secondary schools. Pollard, in a study of primary schools, made some important points. First, he identified different groups of children and their views concerning teacher behaviour, and identified different attitudes to teachers ranging from strong support to active resistance, with a range of opinions in between. Pollard believed that pupils and teachers meet in the classroom with different interests and perspectives which do not necessarily coincide, so that conflict is an inherent feature of classroom life (p. 2). Nevertheless both groups have to negotiate ways of coping (p. 158). Pollard examined the 'process of negotiation'. (Pollard, 1985).

In this present research a range of attitudes was found to be exhibited towards teachers' authority. These are examined in greater detail in Chapter Eight.

It was stated earlier in the general review of Sharp and Green's structural concerns that they were critical of phenomenology because in their view it ignored the issue of constraint. This is now examined in greater detail. In their view the actions and meanings of individuals are "limited and shaped by structural arrangements in which the individual is located". They argued that what needs to be considered is the "social distribution of opportunities to be self-determining" and how individuals come to see social structure as "external". (p. 24).

Sharp and Green stated that one of their aims was to study the 'teachers' world within the context of social and physical constraints' which may or may not be perceived by the teachers but which impose limits upon their actions. Such constraints include as stated, material and physical constraints such as teacher/pupil ratios, overcrowded classrooms, and also the architecture and layout of the classroom and materials within it.

Sharp and Green related Schutz's concept of a contemporary/consociate continuum to the idea of constraints, of which, "physical ones are no less important than the social". (p. 31). They considered that the division was related more closely not to whether "the other", in his case children, were seen as remote by the "subject", (in this case the teachers) but to:

"The appropriateness of the knowledge of the other as an object to work with and upon in the context of immediate constraints."

(Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 31)

In other words, pupils are likely to be treated as 'consociate' or 'contemporary' depending on whether or not teachers see them as worth expending limited resources on. Gurwitsch stated that Schutz defined the consociate relationship as a face to face relationship, "one in which members share a community of space during a certain length of time" and a "vivid present". (Gurwitsch, 1966, p. xxiv). Infant classes in this sense may contain consociate relationships where family grouping operates. By family

grouping is meant the situation where a group of children stay with one teacher for either two or three years. However, the larger the class the more it mitigates against the development of close relationships of the 'consociate' kind. Gurwitsch argued that:

"Except in face to face relationships we do not deal with consociates but rather with typified individuals to whom a typical role or socially approved function is assigned."

(Gurwitsch, 1966, p. xxv)

Sharp and Green argued that pupils can be a constraint in that they are not passive and can exert some influence upon the teacher. Thus this present research attempted to describe this area.

It is unclear from Sharp and Green's account of how far teachers were aware of the aforementioned constraints. Their account adds little in the way of proof either of the awareness or unawareness, a criticism which Hargreaves made of Sharp and Green. He accepted Sharp and Green's argument that teachers were subject to constraints, but argued that Sharp and Green failed to examine teachers' awareness of these. He considered that to do so was crucial, for if teachers were not aware, and if the consequential nature of such constraints could be established, then Sharp and Green would have been correct in assuming that they had exposed a limitation of symbolic interactionist and phenomenological approaches. However, if teachers were aware of constraints, then Sharp and Green's assumption of such an exposure would have been false, for their structural analysis would consist of no more than re-ification of teachers' experience. Hargreaves believes that phenomenology can explore teachers' understanding of constraints and their consequences, and that it is interested in such issues. (Hargreaves, 1978). As phenomenology is one strand in 'interpretive' sociology, this research is also concerned with this issue.

Sharp and Green's approach seems to have been based on some pre-conceptions about the nature of phenomenology. Their contention seems to be that only a Marxist approach can deal with the issue of constraint.

However they fail to prove that phenomenology cannot deal with this issue.

King similarly argued that phenomenology ignored the issue of constraint and it was not clear from his account whether his criticism applied to past phenomenological research or whether it was directed to phenomenology as a theoretical approach, which seems the most likely interpretation. In so far as his research used a partly phenomenological approach he appeared to contradict himself. He did indicate, as shown, that head teachers could have a constraining effect on teachers although he did not appear to consider issues such as class size, or availability of resources. He did refer to children and the way they behave to teachers as being a constraint, in that they affect what teachers can or cannot do. He also noted that teachers' ideologies may constrain teachers..

"The ideologies of infant education are human products, the acceptance of which constrained teachers and through them the children they taught."

(King, R. A., 1978, p. 132)

The present research attempts to show that teachers were aware of many constraints upon their activities. According to one teacher such constraints "are an obvious feature of classroom life". (Teacher : Rushside).

Other writers have looked at the immediate origins of teachers' classroom problems, the school itself, the local school system and the local community. Denscombe, for example, focused on the work context of teaching. He looked at why teachers work in the way they do and at factors which teachers themselves recognise as influencing their styles of teaching, and the practical organisational features of work settings. (Denscombe, 1980). Woods described the effects of conflicting demands upon teachers as a threat to survival. (Woods, P., 1979). Also Becker much earlier in 1951 looked at teachers' relationships with pupils, colleagues and principal and how these generated problems for teachers. (Becker, 1951).

This part of Section Three has discussed the theoretical perspectives of Sharp and Green and King and raised some questions about the use of these.

The next part of the section looks at an issue with which both Sharp and Green and King were concerned; that is teachers' definitions of pupils. It looks at the different treatment that each gives the issue.

3. Teachers' Definitions of Pupils

Both the work of Sharp and Green and that of King was concerned with teachers' perspectives on children and their home backgrounds.

Sharp and Green (1975) explored how the head of Mapledene characterised the clients, that is the pupils and their parents. They also considered class teachers' perspectives on children and their home background. Sharp and Green compared the head and the teachers' conceptions of the school's aims in relation to such characterisations and perspectives. (p. 75).

Sharp and Green looked first at the head teacher's views of the children and their home background. The children were for the most part seen as "seriously deprived" both "emotionally" and "cognitively" and as coming from unstable homes and so therefore in need of "direction" at school. (p. 52). Many of the children's school problems were attributed to their 'unstable' home backgrounds. The head also said that much distress was caused by the home conditions, and that a large number of the pupils were at risk. It was argued by the head of Mapledene that the parents did not have very high aspirations for their children and did not prepare them for starting school. It was stated that they did not use reading and writing skills at home.

Sharp and Green looked at the head teacher's view of the aims of his school in relation to his definitions of the children and their home

background. The head emphasised compensation and socialisation. First, he argued that he saw one of his main aims as being to compensate for the children's difficult home backgrounds.

" '... much of what we do here is like compensatory education, we are trying to make up for, and compensate for this kind of deprivation'."

(Head Teacher cited in Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 56)

The head of Mapledene saw the school as a:

"... socialising institution if you like a civilising institution".

(p. 61)

He argued that the teaching of skills was not the main aim (p. 61) but instead the development of the whole child's physical, intellectual and emotional development and a concern for the children's "welfare" (p. 49). He distinguished the school from "traditional more formal schools" where the emphasis is on "skills, information and knowledge and that sort of thing" (p. 61) and stressed the 'informal' nature of Mapledene as a school, one in which the children were treated as individuals with their own needs. (pp. 61-2). The school "environment" is viewed as one in which each child 'difficult', or 'bright', is free to develop in his or her own way, and was seen as an environment which the teacher organised in order that the children within it could learn. (p. 60)

Sharp and Green looked at how three teachers at Mapledene defined the pupils, and their orientation to the school and its ethos. They compared the teachers' views with those of the head of Mapledene.

Mrs. Carpenter, the first teacher, viewed the pupils in her class as "thick", "disturbed" and "emotionally insecure" and also of "low intelligence" as well as "deprived". She saw the mothers as being unable to cope and incompetent. (p. 71). Like the head, she considered that the homes did not provide the 'right kind of experience'.

Sharp and Green showed that Mrs. Carpenter, like the head, shared his concern that the school should compensate for the children's difficult home background by providing a "stable and supportive environment". Like the head, Mrs. Carpenter also argued that literacy and numeracy should not be the school's main aim but that it should attempt to cater for the children's present needs, whole personality and development and try to counteract "the adverse consequences of the instability of home background". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 75). Mrs. Carpenter believed that an "open environment" should be provided where the children can choose what work they want to do. (p. 76).

Mrs. Lyons, the second teacher interviewed by Sharp and Green, also shared similar views with the head about the pupils and their home background. The children were viewed as the "products of unstable backgrounds". The parents were viewed as "irresponsible, incompetent, illiterate" and "clueless" and who failed to prepare their children for school. (p. 83).

"In a broad sense Mrs. Lyons identified with the school ethos as it is presented by the head."

(p. 89)

She is said to be committed to a child-centred approach but that her position was closer to a "more traditional approach". She rejects "informality" and "permissiveness" and "affirms the need for discipline". (p. 89).

Mrs. Buchanan, the third teacher, was shown to have a different view of the pupils to the head teacher. She saw them as ordinary children who happen to come from working class backgrounds. (p. 99). Sharp and Green stated that whilst Mrs. Buchanan recognised that the children's background was different to that of the middle class that she was reluctant to evaluate it. (p. 99).

Mrs. Buchanan not only did not share the head's view of the pupils

but also did not have his views about the aims of the school. Sharp and Green stated that:

"She sees the headmaster as representing a tradition in educational thought with which she cannot identify."

(p. 102)

Mrs. Buchanan stated that if she had a free hand that she would be more directive (p. 10) and that for her it was important to get through to the individual child.

Thus far this section has looked at how the head and the three teachers at Mapledene characterised the pupils and parents, and also at how the head and these teachers conceived of the school's aims and differences between these views.

Sharp and Green also analysed the three teachers' typifications of a small number of children. The main issue for Sharp and Green was the relationship between the construction of pupil identities and the practice of the teacher within the context of social structure in the classroom and the wider society. Sharp and Green argued that "the teacher does operate with a notion of hierarchy with regard to the available activities".(Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 134). They argued that in spite of the teachers' 'rhetoric' which stated that the children should be treated as individuals, the teachers in fact typed pupils on the basis of their differing involvement in this 'hierarchy' of activities in the classroom as 'bright', 'dull', 'average' and other categories such as 'peculiar'. Sharp and Green claim that these categories are used by the teachers to justify giving children different degrees of attention and help. Sharp and Green argued that these processes, which were in opposition to the official ethos (the head's) of the school functioned to reproduce the existing class structure within the classroom. The authors claimed that the reason why this occurred was due to the various external pressures which affected what teachers could do in the classroom. Sharp

and Green claimed that teachers' 'typifications' and their consequences were a means of coping with such pressures. The teachers at Mapledene were not seen as free to choose such typifications, for it was said:

"She operates within systems of available and legitimised categories"

which were legitimised within the community of colleagues and which thus affected her actions. (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 117). Sharp and Green have a habit of switching from the plural 'they' to the singular 'she', often in the same sentence.

Sharp and Green stated that they were interested in the 'process' of typification. However, it was not clear whether they regarded such typification as 'normal practice' or not. Phenomenologists following Husserl and Schutz argue that building up commonsense categories or 'typification' is necessarily part of the intersubjective negotiation of meanings between social actors who come to define the situation in the same way through their interactions. They would be interested in how this was done. In other words a phenomenologist would seek to discover how teachers built up such categories. They would thus report, for example, staffroom conversation and try to analyse the criteria which teachers used to define such categories as 'brightness', 'peculiarity', 'maladjustment', seeking to find out the source of such ideas. Even if the categories used by Sharp and Green's teachers are taken for granted by them, it is not clear how these teachers typify actions as falling into such categories. There is little precise evidence of the nature of interaction between teachers and pupils and the activities in order to show the 'working' of these ideas in practice. Thus, for example one would need to know what constituted doing mathematics, writing activities and what children were expected to do within the various classroom activities. Sharp and Green do not provide examples of classroom talk of children

and the teacher. They also do not consider whether children typify teachers or rank themselves as Nash (1973) referred to in Section One and Section Two found children in his study did. It was shown, as stated, that in spite of the good attempts by the teacher to hide grouping, that children ranked themselves accurately in spite of good group teaching.

A different approach was advocated by Hargreaves et al who also observed teachers in classrooms. Hargreaves and his colleagues were concerned with how deviance and deviance imputations were constructed and recognised by the teachers and pupils and were concerned with the underlying rules of classroom interaction. How these authors studied this was by repeating back to the teacher something he had said in the classroom situation to a pupil and asking him to comment on it. They asked direct questions about particular acts and the meanings attached to words such as 'bullying' for example, in terms of what would count as this. They also reported on inter-staff 'accounting' through gossip. They indicated quite clearly the process of typification. They saw this as going through three stages; "speculation", "elaboration" and "stabilisation". These fuse into one another. (Hargreaves, Hestor and Mellor, 1975, p. 145).

Sharp and Green seemed to be dealing with similar ideas to those of Hargreaves et al but do not relate typing so clearly to context. Hargreaves and his colleagues used a phenomenological approach, which, according to Sharp and Green, cannot throw enough light on classroom practice. Sharp and Green also stated that pupils were not passive and that they could exert some influence on the teacher but no evidence was presented to support this view. It was argued that the teacher interacted with the 'successful' children with whom 'consociate' relationships were established but no evidence was presented about this type of interaction or the possible consequences of such identities for children's careers. A static picture

is presented of teachers' definitions of pupils rather than attempting to show it as a 'process'.

King in his study of infants' classrooms also examined the notion of 'typification' and the teachers' definitions of pupils. Unlike Sharp and Green, he did not separate the head teacher's definitions of the pupils and their home background from the definitions of the teachers on this aspect. Views concerning definitions of the pupils and home background were obtained by examining individual records, public utterances and private accounts. King stated that as the children spent as long as two years with one teacher this enabled the latter to build up a picture of each child. King citing Schutz, referred to this as the process of typification. He argued that such typification formed part of the teachers' "personal stock of classroom knowledge" (King, 1978, p. 58) and that, "these typifications were also the way the children were to the teachers". (p. 58).

King argued that the process of typification was inseparable from the process of assessing the behaviour and work of individual children. Typification, assessment and control were said to be "all aspects of the same flow of action and interaction in the classroom". (King, R., 1978, p. 59).

Therefore, King examined the process of typification. He noted when it started and then looked at the assessment and typification of individual children. He indicated first the ways in which teachers typified children arising from the teacher's own experience of the child in the classroom situation. (p. 50). Next he looked at those aspects of classroom behaviour which were assessed and incorporated into pictures of typification. These included compliance with classroom rules, relationships with other children and learning progress. Thirdly, he indicated that typifications were not absolute but varied over time. (p. 60).

King also examined the consequences of such definitions but noted the difficulty in doing this. In particular he argued that teachers' definitions affected such things as the way teachers arranged their classrooms and the manner in which they dealt with number, writing and other tasks. He also argued that the definitions of individual children were real to the teacher. The consequences were also real for both teacher and child. Thus typification could have "real consequences for individual children". (King, 1978, p. 67).

The process of typification and the consequences outlined were those that King believed to be shared by all the teachers observed. He also elaborated on the process of typification by looking at each of the three schools. He looked at aspects of typification which related specifically to the individual school, and the 'consequences' of such 'typification' in each of the three schools; Burnley Road, Seaton Park and Langley Infant School.

King argued that at Burnley Road the children were typified in each class, and by extension so were children in the school. Children at Burnley Road were seen as making less than expected progress in learning and were not really compliant with classroom rules. King examined how such definitions came to be made. He argued that while the ideology held by the infant teachers defined children as they ought to be, that the teachers at Burnley Road:

"... acted in such a way as to try to make children as they ought to be, to fuse the ought with the is."

(King, 1978, p. 90)

King claimed too that unfavourable changes in progress or behaviour were attributed to home background.

King examined the consequences of teachers' definitions of children and their home background at Burnley Road, in terms of organisation of the school, actions of the teachers in the classroom and the policies of

the head teacher.

Teachers' definitions of children at Burnley Road were contrasted with those of children at Seaton Park, and Langley Infant School, and the consequences of teachers' definitions in these schools were also examined. King argued that at Langley he was unable to identify consequences of teachers' definitions of children. It was argued that in the first two schools, Burnley Road and Seaton Park, that teachers' definitions were at variance with the teachers' child-centred ideologies and that therefore:

"The consequent actions on the part of teachers were attempts to reduce the variance, to make the children and their experiences correspond more closely to the children of their ideology, to bring the is and the ought together."

(King, 1978, p. 122)

At Langley this was said not to be the case, so that "no special conscious actions were necessary" because "the children of the teachers' experience and their ideology were nearly identical". (p. 122).

Various other writers refer to teachers' perspectives of pupils. As the research progressed this area was examined although initially teachers' perspectives about children and their home background was not an issue. During the pilot study, which is discussed in the 'Methodology' chapter, the question of teacher typifications did not really arise. However, the initial visit to Moorland, the site of the main research, it became clear that this was an important area in that particular school. It was at this point that more reading was undertaken into work in typification, and of those studies which had examined teachers' perspectives, in particular the work of Murphy (1974), Leigh (1977) and Hargreaves (1977). The first two argued that teachers in their definitions of pupils distinguished between behaviour and performance. Hargreaves argued, as noted, that teachers' definitions of pupils were not static. Delamont (1976) indicated that teachers operated on a number of levels in discussions of

children. Further references to aspects of teachers' perspectives of children, parents and home background are referred to in Chapter Five of this thesis.

This section has considered the treatment by Sharp and Green and King of teachers' perspectives of children and typification.

The fourth part of the section concerning Sharp and Green and King considers their treatment of the child-centred ideology and its relationship with practice in the infant school.

4. The child-centred 'ideology'

One of the main concerns of both Sharp and Green and King is the relationship between child-centred ideas and infant teachers' classroom practice. This fourth part of Section Three first examines these authors' definitions of the 'child-centred, progressive' ideology and points to their failure to indicate the difficulties in defining such terms.

Secondly, this section refers to Sharp and Green and King's brief reference to the historical development of infant schools. It notes some problems raised by such a short mention most particularly in relation to Sharp and Green's explicit interest in wider 'social structural forces' and their influence on infant schools, and in the light of their criticism of phenomenology as being 'ahistorical'. The work of Pollard (1985) is referred to at this point because he did deal with such historical development of primary schools. Like Sharp and Green he stressed the importance of wider structural issues such as the historical setting which in his view influenced infant schools today.

Thirdly, the section looks at Sharp and Green and King's view of the relationship between child-centred, progressive ideas and practice, and indicates differences in views regarding this relationship. At this point the research of Lee (1984), Pollard (1985) and Hartley (1985) is referred

to as this also deals with the relationship between progressive ideas and practice.

Finally the section looks at the treatment given by Sharp and Green and King to actual classroom practice, how activities are organised, the nature of these activities, and interaction between teachers and children.

In this section as elsewhere reference is made to research such as that of Lee, Pollard and Hartley, for example, which was read after the research was started, and also to historical references which were also read afterwards, partly as a consequence of some of the findings.

Both Sharp and Green and King were concerned with the relationship between 'progressive' 'child-centred' ideas and teachers' practice. They both outlined what in their view were the main features of such a 'progressive' ideology. This is referred to in Chapter Three. Briefly, this 'ideology' is said to involve a concern for the whole child and the idea of the child being allowed to follow his or her own interests. Its central themes are said to be 'readiness', 'individual choice', 'needs', 'play', 'discovery' and individualism. Sharp and Green referred to various sources for their ideas including Boyce (1945), Blythe (1965), Perry, L. R., (1965), Ridgeway and Lawton (1965) and Howdle (1968). Both Sharp and Green and King agreed that such ideas received official support from Plowden. Neither writer referred to work on primary schools published during the sixties and early seventies such as that of Jackson (1964), Gardener and Cass (1966), Blackie (1967), Barker-Lunn (1970) or the 'Primary Schools Today Project' (1972). King did refer to Moran (1971) however.

Both writers appeared to accept that there was general consensus regarding the meaning of terms like child-centred progressive and that defining such terms was unproblematic, although Sharp and Green do refer once to the ambivalent nature of such concepts. (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 217).

Other writers, however, indicated that terms like 'progressive' and others like it, such as 'open education' are difficult to define.

Vandenberg, for example, argued that:

"A philosopher of education ... is not likely to find concepts of teaching and learning that are by his standards clearly articulated."

(Vandenberg, 1975, p. 35)

Myers writing about "open education" and "progressive education" distinguished between them but also stated that both are "vague and multidimensional". (Myers, 1977, p. 230). Tunnell, looking at 'open education' cited Spodeck as stating that no one definition presents a full characterisation. (Spodeck cited by Tunnell, 1975, p. 2). Taylor agreed that current educational language is inadequate involving over-simplified contextualisation and bold unreal dichotomies". (Taylor, P. H., 1975). In his study of primary schools Taylor discussed the difficulty of definition and the diversity of terminology in this area.

Both Sharp and Green and King traced the origins of the child-centred progressive 'ideology' back to certain 'great education' namely Rousseau, Froebel, Pestalozzi and Dewey. King also mentioned the McMillan sisters. Sharp and Green considered that while "there may be significant differences", that there is "a nucleus of ideas upon which would all agree". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 40).

King wrote of "the institutionalisation of ... child-centred ideologies with English infant education" (King, 1978, p. 15) and did not indicate other 'traditions' or conflict. Sharp and Green, however, referred to other influences and mentioned "the interplay" of different traditions which have developed during the history of "British Education" namely "the 'developmental', 'elementary' and 'preparatory' traditions". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 40). However, 'British Education' is a wide field. In view of Sharp and Green's interest in structural features which influence the infant system, and their criticism of phenomenology as being

ahistorical it seems odd that more attention was not given to the particular historical development of infant education and infant schools. As indicated earlier, Pollard did consider, like Sharp and Green, that structural features did influence primary education. In particular he looked at aspects of its historical development. He went further than Sharp and Green by pointing not so much to an 'interplay' of different traditions but a "struggle" between them. (Pollard, 1985, p. 98). He argued that these traditions were "still evident today". (p. 98). Pollard's research was not read until after the first drafts of the historical chapters in this thesis were completed, however. Davies pointed to the importance of reading at various stages during the process of doing research. She stated that at one particular stage one hunts out parallels with other research. This then gives greater credibility to one's own intuition. (Davies, 1982, p. 185). The conclusions Pollard drew about the importance of the historical development of primary education were similar to those found in this research in that it showed a conflict between different views of what primary schools should be doing. Pollard, however, argued that looking at the historical development is a structural issue to which phenomenology could not attend. (See also Sharp and Green, 1975; King 1978). However, a feature of 'interactionist' perspectives is a concern for 'definitions of the situation' from the actor's point of view. Thus the historical chapters were concerned with various definitions of what infant schools should be, and what they were. They were concerned with the definitions of various political groups, educationalists or H.M.I.s for example, who can also be considered as actors, and with understanding the process of development, and in what circumstances various ideas about infant schools developed. An attempt was made to look specifically at references referring to the historical development of 'infant schools'. These included, for example, Raymont (1937), Whitbread (1972). Blackstone focused on the development of pre-school provision but also referred to the historical development of infant schools as well. (Blackstone, 1971).

These showed, as do others which are referred to in much more detail in Chapters Nine and Ten, how different 'traditions' were interwoven in the development of infant schools and infant education, especially a 'missionary' approach to the education of 'working class' pupils.

The initial impetus for considering the historical issues arose partly from the empirical work, and partly from reading Silberman who wrote of an 'infant tradition'. (Silberman, C., 1970). He appeared to imply a separateness from other areas of the education system. It seemed useful to examine if this was the case.

So far it has been argued that Sharp and Green and King did not appear to find terms such as 'progressive' difficult to define. Also it has been noted that only brief attention was paid by them to historical aspects of the development of primary education.

The third issue discussed in this part of Section Three is Sharp and Green and King's treatment of the relationship between progressive ideas and practice. King considered that:

"The special ideologies of infant teachers are those labelled progressive and endorsed by the Plowden Report 'Children and Their Primary Schools' (1967). The official ideology of the report is child-centredness."

(King, 1977, p. 73)

and that:

"Child-centred progressive education is fairly securely 'situationalised in infant schools and departments"

(King, 1977, p. 74)

However, as pointed out in Section One of this chapter, there was a lack of research on classroom practice until the early 1970s and the research that then emerged began to indicate that the position in schools did not necessarily match the rhetoric. Berlak and Berlak (1975) regarded previous work as unsatisfactory, and considered that schools were more complex than previous accounts had indicated. The research of Berlak and Berlak raised questions about the nature of practice in primary schools.

King argued that the Plowden report did influence practice because head teachers in the schools observed had copies of it in their rooms. Further "Two of them spoke most enthusiastically" about it. (King, 1978, p. 11). He stated that the child-centred ideology received official support from Plowden.

King argued that infant teachers are a "status group ... with shared perspectives", a point referred to in Chapter Three. However, he claimed that there were teachers who, although occupying "a similar class position" nevertheless "do not accept all aspects of the child-centred ideology". Such teachers were described as "deviants". (King, 1978, p. 131).

Sharp and Green offered a rather different view to that of King. They put forward a view of conflict rather than consensus. They considered that infant teachers at Mapledene were subject to "conflicting expectations and ambivalences" and that while the rationale for practice was progressive "the practical implications of the child-centred ideology were not clearly articulated", (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 216), and that the "high level of theory ... has superficial connections with teachers' operational philosophies". (p. 212). Like King they argued that child-centred ideas received official support from Plowden but that such ideas were only held by a "progressive minority".(p. 45). In contrast King argued that while in junior schools such methods were not pervasive that amongst infant teachers he studied that "the child-centred approach was axiomatic". (king, 1978, p. 14). The question of 'consensus' or conflict is discussed in Chapter Three.

Sharp and Green also indicated that there was a conflict between the views of the head teacher and some members of the staff. They did not all share "the dominant views of the school and its ethos as articulated by the headmaster". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 102). King on the other hand appeared to argue that the views of the headteachers regarding the child-

centred ideology, and as reflected in 'The Notes for Teachers' represented the views of the teachers as well. This was one of the reasons for devoting a chapter to head teachers in this thesis.

More recent research on infant schools such as Lee (1974), Pollard (1983) and Hartley (1986) also referred to in Chapter Three in the issue of consensus and conflict, have examined the relationship between progressive ideas and infant teachers' practice. Lee in her study, argued that the progressive philosophy offers a potential for change, such as allowing greater autonomy, promoting individual development, and challenging the social relations of learning. She stated that the infant stage of education offered the greatest potential for radical change to be realised, but this was not necessarily the case in practice. Like Sharp and Green, she saw a conflict between teachers over "pedagogy and practice", a conflict between the head and younger members of staff committed to the progressive ideology and generally older members of staff who were opposed to this, and were more "traditional" in outlook. (Lee, P., 1984, p. 242). She stated that this conflict was in relation to basic skills, classroom organisation and whether teaching should be 'teacher controlled' or 'self-controlled'. Such conflict was manifested in the nature of the teacher/pupil relationship, the nature of the learning process and the aims of educational practice. (Lee, 1984). Pollard, in a study of primary schools indicated that one of the schools, Summerlands Infant School, was recommended by advisers because it was a "good formal school" and that teachers had faith in "formal pedagogy" and "shared routines". (Pollard, 1985, p. 126).

As noted, both Sharp and Green and King stated that they were concerned with the relationship between the progressive ideology and practice. The point at issue is whether the description of 'practice' provided enough evidence to judge what this relationship was.

Sharp and Green argued that they provided a detailed description of "teachers' classroom work". (Sharp and Green, 1975, p. 77).

When writing about teachers' perspectives, Sharp and Green mentioned an aspect they referred to as "working in the classroom". In line with a phenomenological approach they examined the teachers' definitions of what they did in the classroom, and their views about classroom organisation, and categories such as 'work' and 'play', for example. Their descriptions of 'working in the classroom', in the case of one teacher, included a brief description of the daily routine, and the apparatus used. They stated that many activities were available, and that there was a high degree of pupil choice. (Mrs. Carpenter in Sharp and Green, 1975).

Of another teacher, Mrs. Lyons, Sharp and Green stated that she was of "crucial importance in organising what the children were doing". (p. 97). However, with both these teachers there was little evidence presented about the nature of the activities provided or what teachers and children actually did, nor of how teachers organised the activities, and how the children 'chose' them. The main emphasis seemed to be, as stated on the teacher, although from a phenomenological point of view they are not the only 'actors' in the classroom situation. A similar criticism was made of Sharp and Green by Hartley (1985, p. 150).

Sharp and Green expressed interest in "teacher-pupil interaction" but there did not seem much evidence of such interaction in the study as presented.

King on contrast to Sharp and Green, gave a more detailed account of classroom activities. (See also Gibson, 1979). King did focus on what infant teachers did, and on the nature and content of various activities such as 'work', 'play', 'reading', 'writing', number work, and painting, together with examples of teacher and children interaction. A reader gains a clear impression that children as well as teachers exist

in this 'world' of the infant classroom. Nevertheless it would have been even more interesting to know in more detail how activities were organised and to have more detail about the nature of the activities, and more examples of teacher and pupil interaction. Pollard's account, for example, gives an even clearer picture. He looked at interaction in greater detail. He showed in particular how teachers and pupils established and negotiated a 'working consensus' and he described different phases of an actual lesson. Clearly, in the case of the infant schools King observed, 'lessons' as such did not occur, although King did point to different phases of the day such as "coming into class time", and "news" time. He did give details about what counted as doing 'writing', 'news' and 'stories'. (King, 1978, Chapter Three). Given the constraints of a book (and also perhaps publisher) King did on balance give a detailed account of classroom practice, while Sharp and Green focused more on teachers' 'perspectives'.

As indicated previously, during the 1980s Action research has increasingly focused on specific areas of the curriculum such as maths, reading, storytime and how children participate in these. Pollard presented examples of recent research on infant schools which deal with aspects such as how five year olds 'make sense' of school, and the rules, relationships and procedures. (Jackson, M., 1987 in Pollard, 1987). However, because of the date it was published this research was not read in detail.

So far a number of points have been made concerning Sharp and Green and King in their treatment of the child-centred, progressive ideology and relationship with practice. First, it was stated that they appeared to find the terms unproblematic, and underemphasised the complexity of these. Secondly, they were both said to criticise phenomenology as being ahistorical. Sharp and Green specifically stated that they were concerned with wider-structural issues. However they treated the historical

development of primary education very briefly. Thirdly, while King claimed that child-centred progressive ideas were axiomatic in the infant school he observed, Sharp and Green, in their observations revealed a different pattern, one of conflict in that not all infant teachers held the same views. Finally, it was argued that while King did provide a picture of the nature of activities, and what goes on in the infant school, Sharp and Green, despite their claim to provide a description of practice, in fact fail to do so. It is thus difficult to assess whether their teachers' practice was progressive.

It was stated in Section One that reading the studies of Sharp and Green and King had prompted a closer examination of research in primary schools post-Plowden because both made little mention of such research. It was shown that there were few classroom studies done until the 1970s. On the one hand some research promulgated the idea that primary schools were progressive, whilst other research challenged this view and revealed a rather different picture. Sharp and Green stated that they started their research in 1970, and King did his actual research between 1973 and 1974. At the time the former were doing their research, the research of Gardener and Cass (1965), Blackie (1967), Barker-Lunn (1970) and Jackson (1964) was available. While the work of Gardener and Cass as shown, did not question taken for granted assumptions about infant schools, the work of Jackson and Barker-Lunn revealed a different picture of primary practice as shown. Sharp and Green's latest reference is in 1973. Bealing's research was also available at this time and this too indicated as shown that the 'rhetoric' of 'progressive' education did not necessarily match practice in the primary school. King's study was published in 1978, and he included references up to as late as 1977. He mentioned Bennett and Jordan (1975) but not other research on primary schools such as those mentioned, and also Berlak and Berlak (1975) briefly referred to in this section. When both started their research

there was little work in primary schools; but in the case of King more was available which did raise questions, as stated, about the relationship between progressive ideas and practice. The growth of research on primary schools is shown in the work of Pollard (1985) and Delamont (eds) (1987). Whether this reflects a greater concern generally with education is not clear but it is a possibility. At the time Sharp and Green, in particular, did their research it could be said that such issues were just beginning to emerge as matters of public concern. It could be argued that in the 1980s clearer patterns began to be visible which was not the case at the time that Sharp and Green and King did their research.

This final part of Section Three has discussed the views of Sharp and Green and King on the relationship between 'progressive' ideology and teachers' practice, and has pointed out some of the problems that their taking this term as unproblematic presents for any judgement of their findings in this respect. It has pointed out that there was some literature available even at the time of their studies which might have led them to query the view that infant schools were 'progressive'. It also pointed out that some consideration of the historical development of infant education might not only have been possible phenomenologically, and necessary 'structurally' but would also have been useful for their understanding of 'the progressive' ideology and its relation to practice. This part has noted the existence of more recent research focusing more on the processes of negotiation and of typification, and on the detail of classroom activities, and on what constitutes certain areas of the curriculum.

The conclusion of this final part of Section Three also brings to an end the main body of this review of the literature.

The final section of this review attempts to provide a justification for undertaking the research, and for the issues with which it deals.

SECTION 4 :

A JUSTIFICATION FOR THE SUBSTANTIVE AND METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS OF THIS THESIS

Having reviewed the literature this section attempts to provide a justification for beginning the research, based on the substantive and methodological issues discussed in the review. It first discusses the difficulties of the process of justification initially. Secondly, it outlines the reasons for beginning the present research. Thirdly, it then tries to give some justification for concentrating on some of the other concerns of the thesis noting the difficulty of doing this.

A particular piece of research can originate from a variety of sources, including personal experience, and may initially only be a vague general interest which is hard to justify. It is also hard to justify why certain features are picked out for study, as with the research process there is an element of 'serendipity' in what comes to the attention of the researcher, especially in the 'ethnographic' style of research. 'Serendipity' used in relation to developing concerns in research also applies to reading research.

In relation to the difficulty of justifying research Steadman argued that whilst explaining how a study is done is relatively straightforward trying to go beyond this " ... in order to disentangle ... why we did the research in the way we did, is a less obvious task". (Steadman in Walford, 1987, p. 32). Entwistle, likewise states that the ideas concerning the research topic alone: " ... arrive in the mind in a rather fuzzy and vague form". (Entwistle, 1973, p. 32).

A possible explanation for this difficulty is that there are a number of interrelated factors influencing not only the subject matter, but also the theoretical stance and methods. This seems to be clearly shown in a recent collection of articles edited by Walford which deal particularly with the practical and personal influences on doing research

of various kinds on the Sociology of Education. Reading this collection was in a sense reassuring as it highlighted the difficulty that other researchers had found in attempting to justify their research. At the time this researcher was trying to grapple with this issue and thought the difficulty was partly idiosyncratic.

There were various reasons for starting the present research. The subject of research, and the way it is carried out depends upon the interests and attitudes of the researcher. Such interests and attitudes are influenced by the researcher's previous working or 'career' experience, sociological training and the climate of opinion in which such training was done and the research done by others. In fact a combination of all these may influence the topic of the research.

Various writers have argued that their 'interests' were affected by their experience as teachers. Burgess, for example, argued that this experience: "... influenced my focus on school organisation". (Burgess, R., 1987 in Walford, D., 1987, p. 75), and Hargreaves argued that he drew on his experience as a primary school teacher. (Hargreaves, 1987, p. 20 in Walford, 1987).

Writers, such as Burgess, for example, have pointed to the influence of training and he stated that his "interests in the 1970s were shaped by sociological training" and "by debates that are taking place within Sociology and Educational studies". (Burgess, R., 1987, p. 75). King, too, considered that the climate of opinion "is important for the choice of methods, in that it can limit or extend possibilities". (King in Walford, 1987, p. 233). The factors affecting the choice of methods and the theoretical position of this research are, however, dealt with in more detail in the following 'Methodology' chapter.

The research done by others, can also be an influence. Miriam David, for example, cited Neil Gross' model of research as an influence on her research topic, amongst other things. (David, M., in Walford op. cit. p. 273).

None of these factors operates in isolation, however, but are generally interrelated.

This researcher's interests in relation to the present research began first as a consequence of 'experience' as an infant teacher. This influenced the choice of field of research.

Secondly, during a B.Phil. course done at the University of Exeter (1976-8) this researcher was first introduced to what at the time was referred to as 'The New Directions in the Sociology of Education'. It was within this climate of opinion that interest in 'ethnography', its principles and methods was first developed.

As an infant teacher there was an interest in research that had been done in infant schools. The work of Sharp and Green and King which focused on infant schools was first read during the B.Phil. course and appealed because of infant teaching experience. As a student of Dr. King there was an interest both in his book and his Weberian approach.

So far it has been argued that one's research interests are affected by a number of factors, and some of the ones affecting the start of this research have been noted. However, the particular justification for the present research developed from the reading of Sharp and Green and King's studies, and subsequently other research on primary schools, the review of which formed the main body of this chapter.

There seemed various reasons why a study of infant schools could be justified.

First, as indicated in Section One of this chapter, most of the research was done in primary rather than infant schools. Further, as previously stated, such research did not look in detail at classroom life in the primary school. It was mainly descriptive and quantitative and concerned with providing a broad picture about the activities and approaches of a large number of primary teachers, rather than providing a detailed picture of classroom activities and their organisation, classroom processes or teacher/pupil interaction. Thus, there seemed to be a research gap that this present research might fill.

However, as indicated in Section Two of this chapter, from the early 1970s onwards certain research, namely 'ethnographic' interpretive research dealing with aspects of schools were concerned with just the issues outlined above, but as stated much of this type of research was done in secondary schools. Thus there still appeared to be a research gap. At the time of the start of this research there were few 'ethnographic', 'interpretive' studies of infant schools apart from those of Sharp and Green and King. Thus, research into infant schools seemed in King's words to be "... a good prospect". (King, R., 1984, p. 119).

In relation to the two sociological studies of infant schools (Sharp and Green, 1975; King, 1978) outlined in Section Three, there were specific questions which this research might help to resolve. There were in the first place reservations about Sharp and Green's theoretical position, and consequently over their information on school practice. Such reservations concerned their presentation of social phenomenology, mainly their criticism that it could not deal with certain issues such as power and constraint. It was considered as indicated that if Sharp and Green had used a phenomenological approach they would have looked in greater detail at how teachers perceived constraint, and at the way teachers worked in the classroom, and actual teacher/pupil interaction,

and also at other settings in the school such as the staffroom. It was considered therefore that a study based more on an interpretive account might allow a different interpretation of infant schools.

In the second place it was thought that at the time the way King dealt with the issue of power was unsatisfactory, and that an account was required which examined in greater detail how an infant head teacher viewed his or her position as being 'in authority' and whether he or she defined the position as a powerful one. Also King stated that whilst teachers' definitions prevailed, children could resist in various ways. This was not an area, however, that King appeared to explore in detail so this and the other issues just restated were ones which seemed worth following up in this research, and whether an interpretive approach could deal with such issues.

Thirdly, the account of 'progressive' education in both these studies of infant schools seemed unsatisfactory. In particular it seemed useful to try and discover what 'progressive' education meant in practice in infant schools, if it did mean anything to head teachers and teachers, and also what the general nature of this ideology was and whether in fact there was an ordered system of beliefs which guided teachers' practice.

Fourthly, as a consequence of doubts about how these two studies as accounts of 'progressive' education, and especially their assumptions about the influence of Plowden, an interest was generated in the origins of infant education. Thus some historical analysis seemed to be called for concerning the nature and development of the 'infant tradition', if indeed there was one tradition.

Thus far the justifications for starting the research have been outlined. The final part of the section attempts to give some justification for concentrating on some of the other concerns in this thesis which

developed while the research was being carried out. As indicated at the beginning of this section this kind of justification is difficult because there is an element of serendipity in what comes to the attention of the researcher.

A number of issues developed during the research which related to the power of the head, problems concerning terminology, typifications and differences between the nursery and infant schools, and which have already been referred to in this chapter.

Whether or not Sharp and Green and King had looked at head teachers the issue still would have been important in this research, for from the beginning of the research itself teachers noted the importance of the head. Thus, because teachers themselves mentioned the influence of the head it was considered justified in looking in more detail at how head teachers considered their position.

At a late stage, during writing up, it was realised that while an account had been given of what teachers and children actually do, an account of what head teachers did, the nature of their daily routine, was missing. Research by Hall et al (1986) threw into relief the importance of the daily routine of 'primary' and 'secondary' head teachers but did not look at infant head teachers and thus there again seemed a research gap.

Some difficulties in terminology were noted, again at a fairly late stage in the research, relating to words such as ideology, perspective and shared ethos; terms which were used by Sharp and Green and King. It was decided that such terms should be discussed in a separate chapter, rather than considered, first in relation to head teachers and then teachers as had been done originally. This seemed justified in order to avoid repetition of explanation.

Sharp and Green and King both, as stated in the last section, dealt with teachers' definitions of pupils and typification. However, whilst it was an issue of these writers, it was not one found to be immediately important in this research but one which developed later. Only when research began at Moorland did this issue become important. The nature of the children and their home background was mentioned by the head teacher of Moorland Infant School and by some of the teachers, and because they themselves referred to it, it was considered justified in following up the issue in more detail.

A fourth issue with which this research was not initially concerned was with differences between the nursery and infant school in terms of approach and activities for example. At Moorland the site contained both an infant school and a nursery block. During initial observations the nursery was visited and differences noted, for example, types of materials available. A search was undertaken of literature on nursery schooling and at this point the research of Cleave et al was found which dealt with children's experience of transfer from nursery to infant school, (Cleave et al, 1982), as stated in Section Two. Cleave et al pointed to differences between the two settings. Such differences appeared to show up in observations of the nursery and infant school at Moorland and so these were followed up. Other research had thus highlighted differences in this researcher's observations of the nursery/infant setting and thus justified further research on the issue.

These issues and others will be referred to again in the following 'Methodology' chapter, for in one sense justification for the focus in particular aspects is also a methodological issue.

The discussion of justification in the fourth section of this chapter concludes the review of the literature. The final section of this chapter outlines the conclusions, section by section.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

In this final part of the review the main points derived from reading the research literature are outlined section by section, because of the length of the review. It ends with a summary of the issues with which the rest of the thesis is concerned.

Section One

The first part noted that much earlier research was guided by either structural functionalism or no particular theoretical perspective. Most did not focus on the primary school.

That work which did concern itself with primary education was mainly concerned with social institutional factors such as home background and selection, and associated streaming practice.

The second part of this section discussed literature concerned with the relationship between primary school ideas and practice. It pointed out that a division existed between those who accepted that progressive ideas were part of the 'reality' of primary classrooms, and those who argued that no necessary relationship existed. It was also pointed out that most of this strand in the research literature was not specifically directed at the infant school.

Section Two

Part One of this section noted the emergence of New Directions in Sociology in the early 1970s and that these New Directions drew upon a number of theoretical strands within an 'interpretive' approach.

Part Two pointed out that 'ethnographic studies' embodied a number of theoretical viewpoints with various antecedents, and covered a range of concerns. These studies were done in various settings, but again, the majority paid little or no attention to the infant school. Most in fact were carried out in the secondary school. It was pointed out

that this situation is now changing.

Part Three of Section Two described the emergence of certain research which involves teachers examining their own practice often in collaboration with others. Some of this had taken place in primary schools. It was pointed out that this style of research shares many concerns with the 'ethnographic' approach, although Action research has focused more on what constitutes the activities within the classroom, on the precise details of these, while 'ethnographic' studies have frequently, though not entirely, focused more on the interaction between teachers and pupils, and how these perceive each other.

It was pointed out that there appears to be something of a 'communication gap' between some researchers in the two styles.

Section Three

The first part of this section outlined in very general terms the concerns of Sharp and Green (1975) and King (1978).

The second part of Section Two has pointed out that the criticism of Sharp and Green, and to some extent King, that phenomenology cannot deal with structural issues such as power and external constraints upon teachers is not necessarily the case, because Sharp and Green did not appear to use a phenomenological approach sufficiently well to justify such claims. They did not show, for example, whether teachers were aware of constraints. They did not show either how the head exercised his authority. With regard to power in relation to the pupils, Sharp and Green did not show how pupils actually acted to constrain the teacher.

Certain aspects of King's use of a Weberian approach have also been criticised, in particular in relation to power and authority in relation to the role of the head. He did not show how head teachers perceived their own authority.

The section also noted that some recent research has dealt with some of these issues while using an 'interpretive' approach.

The third part of Section Three discussed heads and teachers' definitions of pupils. It considered what Sharp and Green and King said about how heads and teachers defined pupils.

Also in this part the authors' treatment of the concept of typification was noted. It was pointed out that Sharp and Green gave little evidence of how teachers came to construct the categories that they used, nor the interactional processes involved, that is, what actions of pupils caused them to be classified as 'bright' and so on. There was also little evidence of the nature of the classroom educational tasks which children were engaged in. Thus it was shown that, unlike Hargreaves, Sharp and Green did not contextualise the typification of pupils.

It was also shown that King was concerned with the process of typification and pointed out that these varied over time. It was stated that King claimed that typification had consequences for children. Where teachers' definitions of individual pupils were at odds with the 'progressive' ideology they were said to have, teachers acted in such a way as to bring these into congruence.

It was pointed out that the present researcher became interested in teachers' typifications, and their perspectives on children and their home background, and the work of others in this area was noted as a consequence.

In Part Four of Section Three, the question of the relationship between the child-centred' progressive 'ideology' and primary schools practice was raised. It was pointed out Sharp and Green and King seemed to take the concept of 'progressive' as given, and failed to point out

the complexities of the terms.

It was also stated that in the case of Sharp and Green too little evidence of classroom activities was given to allow any judgement of whether or not their teachers' practice could be termed 'progressive'. They appeared to focus more on the teachers. King, on the other hand, did give a reasonable picture of classroom life.

It was noted that while King held that a 'progressive ideology' was "axiomatic" in the schools he studied, Sharp and Green did note the existence of conflicting views amongst their teachers.

It was pointed out in this part that even at the time Sharp and Green carried out their studies, there was some research literature available which challenged the view that primary schools were progressive. More recent literature which also makes this point was mentioned.

This part also showed how a concern with historical aspects of infant education arose. It pointed out that Sharp and Green saw phenomenology as being 'ahistorical'. It was considered that a form of phenomenology might be practised by looking at the expressed views of past actors in the educational 'situation' by referring to easily available secondary sources. The interest in historical antecedents, it was also pointed out, arose from the research findings as well.

Section Four

This final section was concerned with providing a justification for doing research in infant schools.

In Part One of this section, the difficulties concerning the process of justification were noted, and the views of Steadman and Entwistle (1973) on this issue. It was shown that it is hard to justify why certain issues are chosen for study because a number of factors influence the choice of research topic, theoretical stance, and methods.

The second part of the section looked at the reasons for starting the research. It was indicated that the topic for research, the way research is carried out, is influenced by various factors, including career experience, sociological training, and the climate of opinion in which such 'training' was undertaken. The views of various writers were noted in this respect and then factors affecting the start of this research.

This part of the section also looked at the particular justification for starting the present research which arose from a review of the literature and in particular the research of Sharp and Green (1975) and King (1978). It was noted that there appeared to be a research gap which this present research *could fill*.

The third part of the section noted some of the issues which developed during the research and tried to give some justification for concentrating on these issues and noting the difficulty of doing this and also that justification of this kind is a methodological issue.

This review of the literature has thus covered a range of research related to primary schools in some way and to infant schools where possible. It has identified a 'research gap' in the work on infant schools, and thus its initial justification, and also the issues with which this thesis is concerned, as they developed.

The issues which have been identified in the course of this review of the literature fall into nine broad areas although these have cross links.

First, there is the question of the effect of 'power' and 'authority' on the beliefs and practices of head teachers in relation to teachers, parents and pupils, as the heads themselves see it. (Chapter 4).

Second, there is the question of the actual interaction between groups such as between heads and parents and other external bodies, between heads and teachers, and teachers and pupils, in relation to the concepts of control and freedom, and also with whether children are necessarily willing compliers with teachers' requests and wishes. A related issue is the nature of the 'authority' relationship in infants' classroom and nursery settings. (Chapters 4, 6, 7 and 8).

Fourth, there is the question of first the nature of educational beliefs and their relationship to the infant and nursery school, and second the relationship between such beliefs and classroom practice. (Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 10).

The fifth issue is that of heads and teachers' definitions of children and their home background and the consequences, if any, for their practice of such definitions. (Chapters 4 and 5).

The sixth issue concerns the question of what teachers and pupils actually do in the classroom, how activities are organised, and the 'routine' of infant and nursery 'classroom' life. (Chapters 7 and 8).

The seventh issue concerns the nature of constraints which affect what teachers can or cannot do in the classroom, the particular circumstances in which infant teachers work, and teachers' awareness of constraints. (Chapter 6).

Eighth, there is the question of the relationship between institutional features of society and infant schools. These features include social class and the place of infant schools in the educational system in the light of their historical development, and the residual effect these may have, especially in relation to working class pupils. (Chapters 5, 9 and 10).

Ninth, and finally, there is the question of 'methodology' and the capacity of an 'interpretive' approach to deal with 'structural' issues such as power, authority and constraint, and also give a reasonably clear picture of infant school life. The whole thesis is really concerned with this issue.

All these issues are the subject of the following chapters.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CONCERNS OF CHAPTERS

This overview briefly describes the concerns of each chapter. As each of these is preceded by a detailed introduction, no more than an outline is given here.

Chapter One

This chapter sets out to justify the methods used in this study and attempts to describe those methods. Part One reiterates the major concerns of this thesis, already stated in the Review of the literature. Two different styles of research and their associated strategies are discussed, and some of the problems associated with these, together with reasons why one style, 'the ethnographic' or 'interpretive' was considered as appropriate for this research. The chapter goes on to outline why particular schools were chosen in which to do the research and how access was gained. A brief overview of the whole research process is given, including such aspects as timing and this is followed by a more detailed account of the actual methods and recording of data and analysis and particular problems associated with these that this research encountered. An historical analysis of the development of infant schools was included in the thesis and a section of this chapter looks briefly at why this historical dimension was added. The final sections of the chapter look at the personal and social problems in doing this particular ethnography, and reflects upon these issues in order to assess how far data provided in the following chapters can be considered as either 'reliable' or 'valid'.

Chapter Two

This second chapter, 'Setting the Scene', discusses the origins of the term 'setting the scene', and the way it is used in this chapter. The main body is concerned with the physical description of the schools visited during the research, together with a description of their immediate environment. In the case of 'Moorland' a 'history' of that environment using documentary material such as 'record' books kept by the school, and local newspapers dating back to the 1930s, is added.

Chapter Three

The third chapter is entitled 'A Reference Point'. As stated in the 'Review of the Literature'; it was considered that certain terms such as 'ideology' and 'perspective' and 'shared ethos' were best discussed separately from the main body of the empirical work to avoid repetition of explanation. The first part looks at the term 'ideology' as it is discussed by various writers, and provides reasons why it seems a difficult concept. The second part of the chapter then considers the term and its relationship to ideology and why the former term was used in this thesis in preference to ideology. The third section discusses the term 'shared ethos' as used by various writers and its relationship with ideology and points to arguments about whether this concept applies to infant schools.

The following four chapters form the main body of the empirical work and are variously concerned with different aspects of head teachers' perspectives, teachers' perspectives and classroom practice in the infant schools observed.

Chapter Four

This chapter is devoted to head teachers. It first looks at external definitions of the head teacher's role and then considers how heads themselves interpret their own role. The chapter then considers how head teachers see their relationship with their staff. The chapter

also examines head teachers' educational and social perspectives. A more detailed outline of what is meant by these terms is given in the introduction to Chapter Four. The chapter also looks at head teachers' perspectives of their relationship with parents and concludes with a summary of the head teachers' position vis-a-vis 'important' others and the consequences of heads' views for relationships within and outside the school.

Chapter Five

This chapter is concerned with teachers' social perspectives, that is their perceptions of the pupils they teach and their home background. The chapter also considers briefly the behaviour of children which is gender-related, and teachers' perceptions of this.

Chapter Six

This chapter discusses teachers' educational perspectives, that is their views of what should be taught and how the teaching of this should be organised. It starts by looking at the nursery and reception teachers as seen by the teachers themselves in order to highlight the aims of the infant school. It considers what teachers see as the main elements of the infant curriculum and also looks at the basis themes which emerged from discussions with teachers on how children learn and how teaching should be organised. The chapter also looks at what teachers see as the main influences in the development of their perspectives and what they consider to be the main constraints.

Chapter Seven

This chapter is concerned with the material content and pedagogical structure in the infant classroom. It is a detailed account of practice in the classroom. It looks at the nature of the materials and activities in infant classrooms, and at the nature of the daily routine. The chapter also looks at the notion of 'structure' in the infant classroom,

a term which is explained in the introduction to Chapter Eight. The final part of this chapter is concerned with aspects of language in the infant classroom. First the development of language as one of the aims of infant teachers is discussed and second, the language used by the teachers in their interaction with children and that used by children in their interaction with each other.

The final two chapters of this thesis are concerned with the historical development of infant schools in order to show the influence of various ideas in their development. They are thus concerned with the wider context in which infant schools are located.

Chapter Eight

This chapter is one of two chapters concerned with classroom practice. It looks at the issues of teacher control and pupil compliance in the infant classroom. It looks briefly at what other writers say about 'pupil compliance' and 'non-compliance'. It next looks at the attempts by teachers in the classroom to control 'social' and 'work' related behaviour. The chapter also looks at the nature and extent of pupil compliance in the infant schools observed.

Chapter Nine

This chapter entitled 'Social Discipline and Social Welfare Aspects of the Infant Tradition' examines how far infant schools in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries have been concerned with social discipline, and social welfare. It looks at how ideas concerning social welfare are still important in infant schools today.

Chapter Ten

This chapter continues with a discussion of another aspect of the historical development of infant schools. It deals with the development of educational ideas in relation to infant schooling and attempts to assess the influence of progressive child-centred ideas on this

development. The first section concerns the Nineteenth Century. It deals with the nature of 'official support' for the development of infant schools, and the views of some HMIs. It also looks at the position of women as infant teachers and views concerning this position. The effects of the 'Revised Code' and the monitorial system on the development of infant schools are assessed, and the issue of training is examined.

The chapter continues with an examination of the historical development of infant schools in the Twentieth Century and looks at official support for the notion of a separate infant school whose approach was different to that of schools for older children. It also looks at the effects of factors such as the 11+ which is shown to have had constraining effects on infant practice. This part of the chapter also looks at training and also the effects of an increased concern for standards and accountability in infant school practice.

The overall aim of the two historical chapters is to try to show that while there is evidence of a separate infant tradition having developed that there is also evidence to indicate that throughout the history of infant education there has been a conflict over what infant schools should be doing and their purpose.

This last part of the chapter has briefly outlined the main issues with which this research is concerned and the order in which they are treated in the thesis. The overview sets out to give a general outline of the concerns of each chapter. A more detailed account is provided in the introduction to each chapter.

This chapter has in a sense been concerned with setting the scene for the thesis as a whole; the next chapter is, as stated, concerned with various aspects of 'Methodology' and how this particular research was carried out.