THE EXPERIENCES OF TWO CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY: A CASE STUDY

Adele Bleazard

BA, HDE, BEd, MEd

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Supervisor: Dr Rona Newmark

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

ABSTRACT

In the literature on research about children with disabilities, special education and inclusion, the voices of the children with disabilities are seldom heard. Historically research about disability and children has been framed within the medical or charity models of disability with prolific accounts of characteristics and treatment of disability, where professionals and caregivers respond on their behalf. In this case study the views are elicited of two ten-year old learners who are at a school for learners with special educational needs. They are invited to represent their experiences of both mainstream and special schooling, friendship, family and disability.

The case study is a participatory research project, located within an interpretivist paradigm, influenced by the social model of disability and a feminist perspective. It makes use of a purposive sampling technique, interviews, observations and school documents and records. The interviews are mainly used to reflect the views of the learners on the life areas of schooling, friendship, family and disability. The learners are regarded as the insiders and seen as fit to represent their own meanings, and thereby make a contribution to the field of intellectual disability and childhood.

OPSOMMING

In die literatuur wat handel oor gestremde kinders, spesiale onderwys en inklusiwiteit, word die stemme van die gestremde kinders self nie dikwels gehoor nie. In die verlede is navorsing oor gestremdheid en kinders binne die raamwerk van mediese of welsynsmodelle van gestremdheid geplaas, wat aanleiding gegee het tot baie verslae oor die eienskappe en behandeling van gestremdhede, met professionele persone en versorgers wat namens die kinders praat. In hierdie gevallestudie word die menings van twee tienjarige leerders gevra. Hulle woon 'n skool vir leerders met spesiale leerbehoeftes by. Hulle is uitgenooi om hulle ervarings van beide hoofstroom- en spesiale onderwys, vriendskap, familielewe en gestremdheid weer te gee.

Die gevallestudie is 'n deelnemende navorsingsprojek wat binne die interpretiewe paradigma hanteer is en wat deur die sosiale model van gestremdheid en 'n feministiese perspektief beïnvloed is. Dit maak gebruik van 'n doelbewuste selekteringstegniek, onderhoude, waarnemings en skooldokumente en –rekords. Die onderhoude word hoofsaaklik gebruik om die leerders se idees oor skool, vriendskap, familie en gestremdheid te weerspieël. Die leerders word gesien as die kundiges wat bevoeg is om hulle eie menings weer te gee, om sodoende 'n bydrae te kan maak tot die veld van intellektuele gestremdheid en kindwees.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

WCED	Western Cape Education Department
DNE	Department of National Education
EMDC	Education Management and Development Centre
OT	Occupational Therapy
TST	Teacher Support Team
SNE	Special Needs Education

CHAPTER ONE

RELEVANCE, STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, AND OBJECTIVE

1.1   INTRODUCTION

In the current international and South African climate of inclusive education, there is an increase in research in the areas of inclusive education and in special needs education (Farrell, 2001:3-9; Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000:201). At the heart of research endeavours are concerns about providing better educational services for all learners, yet it is seldom that the learners as educational service users are consulted.

Traditional research on disabled children has been framed within the medical or charity models of disability, with prolific accounts of characteristics and treatment of disability, where professionals and caregivers respond on behalf of the children. In this case study, the views are elicited of two 10-year-old learners who are at a school for learners with special educational needs. They are invited to share their experiences of both mainstream and special schooling, friendship, family, and disability.

This chapter contextualises the study assignment with the discussion of the relevance of the study, the problem statement, research question and the research aim. The chapter provides an overview of the research design, clarification of key assumptions of the study, central terms and an outline of the structure of the presentation of the study. The chapter concludes with some reflections.

1.2   RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Alldred (1998:149-155) argues that in traditional research and writings about disabled children, their own perspectives on their experiences of exclusion, special education, and life in general are not brought to the domain of public knowledge. What we know and learn about children is what adults have claimed to be knowledge

about children, and the children's role in producing this knowledge has seldom been elevated above that of marginal subjects.

The voices of disabled children are glaringly absent from research on disability and childhood. Baldwin and Carlisle (1994:33-35), write that there is an absence in the literature of studies that focus on "children's experiences of pain, discomfort, dependence, and daily life". While there is a wealth of literature where health and education professionals debate the problems of "childhood disability" at length, there is little room given to the children's perspectives on these matters. Bines (1995:51) makes the point that the views of professionals have been prioritized and this perpetuates the belief that professionals' definitions of childhood and disability are more significant than those of the learners.

Consistently, Wade and Moore (1993:viii) write that their work with children with special educational needs has led them to believe that the children were never consulted and that the literature confirmed this belief. There is a paucity of educational literature that focuses on the views of learners with special educational needs.

In policy directives informing educational practice, evidence of learners' contributions is either obscured or absent. As a key focus of social transformation, education has profoundly been reconfigured within the context of major sociopolitical changes in South Africa. The new government has set education as a chief focus for social policy, with the rights of learners with difficulties and disabilities being an important policy priority (Csapo, 1996:34-35). Post-apartheid South Africa has produced a range of education policy documents, Green Papers, White Papers, and Acts with the aim of protecting the rights of all citizens and promoting the rights of people with disabilities.

Key documents include:

- The White Paper on Education and Training (1995), which emerged as the first policy document on education and training of the new government's Department of National Education (DNE). The principles of equal access, redress and equity are stressed. The importance of addressing the rights of learners with special needs in both mainstream and special schools is highlighted.

- The SA Schools Act (1996), which legislates for non-discrimination, the right of parents to choose, and the right to claim learning support for learners who are in need. The rights of parents in decisions on the educational placement of their children are emphasised. The Act also recommends that schools accommodating learners with special needs should have personnel with the relevant expertise.

- Quality Education for All: Report of the National Commission on Special Education Needs and Training and the National Committee for Education Support Services (DNE, 1997). This report expresses a commitment to the integration of learners with disabilities and to the fostering of inclusion of all learners within schools. The report places emphasis on accommodating the diverse needs of the learner population of South Africa.

- Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education (2001), which affirms the government's commitment to inclusive education and outlines its strategic plan for implementing an inclusive educational system. The role of Special Schools in the transformation of education is discussed.

Inclusive education is a means towards the ends of social transformation and reconstruction. As Engelbrecht, Lazarus and Daniels (1999:46) state, the purpose of inclusive education is to contribute towards the development of an inclusive society where "all members of society are able to fulfil their potential and participate optimally, and where respect for and valuing of diversity in the context of social integration is an active value".

Inclusive education has rapidly gained momentum from conceptualization, to policy, through to practice. Policy states that learners with special needs should be accommodated in an integrated way into mainstream education (Csapo, 1996:37). The purpose of inclusive education is to restructure schools and schooling so that a needs driven and effective quality of education is assured. Instead of the learner having to adjust to a curriculum, the inclusive orientation of education provision means that schools should adjust and adapt to meet the diverse needs of learners. This implies that where, traditionally, learners were shifted to specialised services, these services will be afforded within mainstream schooling.

An inclusive educational policy brings with it a complex set of demands, and the challenges are felt throughout the system – in school districts, school organisations, educators, learners and parents. New knowledge, attitudes and practices are pre-requisites for the successful implementation of an inclusive educational policy (Engelbrecht & Forlin, 1997:4-5; Giangreco, 1997:195; McLeskey & Waldron, 1996:151-156).

Locally, within school districts, our Western Cape Educational Management and Development Centres (EMDC's), with their satellite Education Support Centres, have the task of managing the various aspects of the implementation of the inclusive education policy. Naicker (1999:21) states that schools are pivotal in creating the conditions for success. Inclusive educational policy makes organisational demands on the school, where schools have to reshape their ethos and mission to give voice and deed to the inclusion philosophy.

To the same end, Engelbrecht and Forlin (1997:1-6) argue that the attitudes of teachers towards learners with disabilities are paramount in the successful implementation of the inclusive educational policy in South Africa. Wishart and Manning (1996:56-65) identify a positive attitude on the part of teachers as the single most important factor in determining the success or failure of inclusive education.

On the point of teacher importance, Engelbrecht and Forlin (1997:5-6) also argue for the restructuring of the curricula of teacher training so as to confront issues of inclusive teaching and the accommodation of diversity in education. This is of particular significance, given the history of fragmented education in South Africa. Inclusive educational policy inherently makes a host of demands on those who deliver the service of education; and without adequate training programmes for teachers to cope with the demands of inclusive educational practices, there is the danger of inclusive education becoming "one more psychosocial problem that teachers will not have the ability to cope with" (Engelbrecht & Forlin, 1997:1). Lemmer (1996:337) and Du Toit (1996:17-18) make the point that professional development for restructured and inclusive education involves a paradigmatic shift from traditional pre-service and in-service training models.

Research endeavours have generally been directed at teachers and administrators who are the service providers in education. Ascertaining the views of service users is increasingly being seen as an essential element in service provision (Ali, Fazil, Bywaters, Wallace & Singh, 2001:949). But despite elaborate policies, implementation plans and the growing literature on inclusive education and special educational needs, the service users – the learners themselves – are rarely consulted. Even less so are the views of intellectually disabled learners represented in any significant way. Morris (1997:244) claims that researchers from a variety of disciplines are recently acknowledging their failure to consider the views of children. This study represents an attempt to reflect the voices of intellectually disabled learners, who have been excluded from mainstream education, concerning their experiences of schooling, friendship, family and disability.

1.3   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

During a discussion in the junior class at a Special School for learners with intellectual disabilities, one of the learners shared her perspective on each of her ten classmates for being placed at the special school. She went full circle, sparing no-one. Of one boy she said: "They didn't want him at his old school anymore because he was too stupid." She herself came off fairly lightly: "I know that I'm not mad, but maybe there is something wrong … I think I can't learn … but I know numbers and some letters. I shouldn't actually be here." This unleashed a dialogue, where accusations and defenses were exchanged, both by those who were able to talk and those who utilised alternative ways of communication.

As an educator in a School for Learners with Special Educational Needs and as a prospective educational psychologist in a South African context, I am interested in the learners' own perspectives on their educational experiences and their lives in general.

The context of the problem addressed in this study is multidimensional. In order to appreciate the process of placement or displacement of these learners at a school for learners with intellectual disabilities, attention must be given to those systems that profoundly affect South African learners on their course through the educational system.

Research in special education has historically excluded the experiences of the subjects of research, that is the learners with disabilities and special educational needs (Clough & Barton, 1995:1-5; Barton, 1998:30-31; Wade & Moore, 1993:2-3). According to Chappel, Goodley and Lawthom (2001:45-50), children with an intellectual disability are further excluded, as they are generally located at a position of lower standing in the spectrum of disabilities, even within the progressive disability movement. The prospect of including the experiences of children with an intellectual disability in research is further reduced due to their problematic alignment with language and knowledge.

Alldred (1998:150) asserts that childhood research has generally treated children as passive objects of studies, where the focus is largely on what happens to them rather than on what they do or say. Shakespeare and Watson (1999:18-21) add that disabled children are further objectified in research and it is in this objectifying of disabled children that they are silenced and seen as not mattering.

Giving heed to the above, this study asks what it is that children with an intellectual disability themselves have to say about their experiences of schooling, friendship, family and disability. The research problem will be discussed in fuller detail in Chapter Three.

1.4   RESEARCH AIM

In this study the lives of two learners will be explored within the dynamic interplay of the contexts of their community, education, family and identity, in order to gain a clearer understanding of *their* experiences of their schooling, friendship, family and disability. An attempt is made to glean the lived experiences of these learners, rather than that of caregivers, teachers, administrators or parents, *as they* speak of their experiences of schooling, family, friendship and disability. This is essentially an effort to add the voices of these two learners to the knowledge that is produced about disabled children, and intellectually disabled children in particular.

1.5   RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is, in Herndl and Nahrlwold's (2000:258) terms, a "situated activity", which means that the process will be shaped by my personal, material and ideological

position as a researcher with multiple roles of student, teacher and administrator. I write in the first-person in the context of this qualitative study, encouraged by the view of Richardson (1998:346-367), that writing from "our Selves" strengthens the individual voices in research and we, as writers, are demystified, more fully present, more honest and more engaged in the writing of our work.

Educational enquiries are not neutral and there are important questions to ask about the justification of research (Potts, 1998:16-17). Herndl and Nahrwold (2000:26) contend that researchers have to answer the question of "Whose interest does this work serve?" Clough (1998:138-140) adds that we do not come innocent to the research process, indeed the process becomes an expression of ourselves and is driven by our own psychic and social histories.

Bearing the above in mind, the following are the aspects of the research design:

Physical location	The research takes place at a special school for learners with intellectual disabilities, and is situated on the campus of a large psychiatric hospital, in the Western Cape.
Units of analysis	Primarily the learners.
Techniques and data generation	Interviews, observations, and consulting records and documents.

Traditionally, qualitative research is classified according to its place in a set of research paradigms identified by their ontology and epistemology. Herndl and Nahrwold (2000:258-297) argue that research should not be determined by philosophical paradigms, but by commitment to specific forms of social action. They propose a model for qualitative research practices that offers a continuum from research as "maintenance" to research as "change".

Mertens (1998:6) defines a paradigm as "a way of looking at the world. It is composed of certain philosophical assumptions that guide and direct thinking and action." If research is "social action" then the form of social action that research takes is informed by one's paradigm.

The theoretical framework that guides this qualitative research process, from conceptualisation through to implementation and reporting, will be embedded within

a frame of reference that includes my assumptions about the world, about human nature, and about disability in particular. These beliefs, values and assumptions find resonance in a particular paradigm.

In terms of the categorization of research endeavours by Denzin and Lincoln (1998:25-28) and Mertens (1998:12-15), this study can be located in the interpretive paradigm. The basic assumptions that guide the interpretive paradigm are that knowledge is socially constructed by people active in the research process and that researchers should attempt to understand the "complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt, 1994:118). The interpretive paradigm also stresses that research cannot be independent of the values and beliefs that researchers hold (Mertens, 1988:11). With this study, there is an attempt to do what Schwandt (1998:225-227) describes as the business of an interpretive social scientist; that is, to understand the way human beings understand and experience their lives.

Accepting Dyson's (1998:3) argument that the research process "constitutes the object of its inquiry both through the categories through which it seeks to understand that object and through the relationships it institutes between researcher and the research subjects", I go about this assignment conscious of an obligation to engage with these learners in a way that will not "reduce the richness and complexities of human lives to a few selected characteristics" (Dyson, 1998:3). My attempt is to do research with people with intellectual disability, rather than on them. The premise in this study is that these two learners should be accepted as the experts on their own experience. I see myself as an inquirer who learns from these experts, rather than as an objective researcher testing a hypothesis on passive research subjects.

As a researcher conducting a study of these learners' lives, I adopt an interpretive paradigm and employ principles of feminist research, which will be discussed in Chapter Two. A common aspect in both these orientations is the consideration that people are shaped by and are active shapers of their lives within their social and cultural contexts (Morris, 1995:211-215; Mertens, 1998:161). Armstrong, Armstrong and Barton (1998:33-39) urge that researchers make explicit their values and assumptions that underpin and inform their practice. Consequently key assumptions informing the study and common to both approaches follow.

1.6   KEY ASSUMPTIONS OF THIS STUDY

- Knowledge is socially constructed by persons involved in the research process (Riddel, Brown & Duffield 1995:30; Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002:41-43; Mertens, 1988:11).

- Research cannot be independent of the researcher (Clough & Barton, 1995:1-5; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998:24).

- The researcher and the researched are engaged in an interactive process and at no time is there personal distance or independent objectivity in the research process (Potts, 1998:19-21; Vlachou, 1995:115-116).

- Activities in qualitative research should at least attempt to understand the complex world "of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt, 1994:118).

1.7   DISABILITY LANGUAGE

At this point a reflection on the use of disability language in this study is called for. Gabel (2001:32) indicates that there is an ongoing debate among international scholars about how to talk and write about disability. She writes, as the editor of *Disability, Culture and Education* (2002:3), that:

> Within disability studies, disability has been conceptualized in numerous ways: as an identity, as a symbol of oppression, as a marginal social status, as membership in a minority group, as an embodied experience, as something distinct from impairment, as something inextricable from impairment … Generally disability study scholars agree to some distinction between disability (as a social experience imposed upon one) and impairment (as innate limitations of the body or mind).

She offers her view on the use of disability language, which I found useful and congruent with my orientation and approach to disability studies.

Do I, as a non-disabled adult, write about "children with a disability" or about "disabled children"? I adopt the position of Gabel (2001:32): I use disability-first language in my scholarship and with other disability studies scholars, since I believe

that disability can be a source of pride and affirmation, as the terms "black" and "gay" can be. Disability-first language is also symbolic of the oppression and discrimination that disabled people face. In professional and interpersonal conversations where disability-first language can be misunderstood or offensive, the preference would be for person-first language.

Mike Oliver (1992; 1996; 1997) and Morris (1992; 1995; 1997; 2001) who are respected academics and who have a disability, use disability-first language in their scholarly writings.

Thus, for the purposes of this study, which is essentially a scholarly endeavour, I maintain disability-first language.

Disability

Consistent with the social model of disability, disability in the context of this study defocuses on the individual impairment and considers the social, cultural, economic and educational material world that constitutes an individual as disabled. Disabled people are those people with impairments who are disabled by society (Oliver, 1990:82-83; Morris, 2001:2-5). Oliver (1990:11; 1996:33) speaks of disability as the disadvantage caused by contemporary social organization which takes little or no account of people with impairments. This disadvantage experienced by disabled people is considered to be institutionalised throughout society.

Intellectual disability

Congruent with the above discussion on disability, it would follow that intellectually disabled people are disadvantaged by the way in which society responds to persons who are varied in intellectual capacity. The use of the term "intellectual disability", while acknowledging this aspect of human diversity, does not focus on the diversity of human intellect, but on the negative social, cultural, political, educational and economic meanings that accrue and weigh in on personal lives (Mulvany, 2000:584-592; Benjamin, 2002:4-6).

Special needs education

A definition of special needs education determines what we describe, interpret and explain about special needs education. Dyson and Gains (1995:50-52) argue that there is no agreed definition of special needs education. Some debates and writings on special needs education have been concerned with issues of disability, diversity and discrimination, while others focus on description and impairment.

Special needs education is about providing appropriate education for learners who experience difficulties in learning, and this provision must be viewed as an essential element in the drive towards education for all. Children who experience difficulties with learning are recognized as providing a stimulus that can encourage developments towards a richer overall environment for learning (Ainscow, 1995:147).

Inclusive education

Inclusive education has the aim of restructuring schools, curricula and educational practices in order to respond to the diverse needs of all learners (Hall, 1997:188-190). In the South African context it implies that "those things in schools which prevent effective learning should be removed or altered, whether it is the curriculum itself or the curriculum delivery system" (Theron, 1998:1). Inclusive education is essentially about educational provision that is accessible to all learners, where learners with and without disabilities are involved in learning and teaching activities with their peers in the same physical environment (Giangreco, 1997:194). In Chapter Two, different definitions of inclusive education are discussed.

1.8   STRUCTURE OF PRESENTATION

Chapter One is an account of the motivation for the study as well as a statement of the problem. My own research paradigm and theoretical orientation is clarified, and there is a brief discussion of the research design. An explanation of disability language used in the study is also given here.

Chapter Two will present a review of the literature on inclusion and disability research, and will provide the theoretical framework for the study. In Chapter Three the methodology will be discussed. Chapter Four will report on the process of the

implementation of the study. Chapter Five will discuss the findings, and conclusions are drawn in Chapter Six.

1.9   REFLECTION

Chapter One has left me on the sharp edge of doing research in education and disability areas. It raised important questions about the process of doing research, forms of research, and assumptions about education and disability.

I have a responsibility of doing research in a way that departs from traditional disability research that leaves research participants alienated and that perpetuates the stereotypes of disabled children.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In much the same way as I do not come cold and neutral to the process of doing this study, I do not come as a "tabula rasa" to the literature relating to the topic of this assignment. Having recently completed the coursework part of this Master's programme, I have had numerous opportunities to critically read the literature on special needs education and disability. I have also had the opportunity of working with people who have disabilities and have been part of a project called Intellectual Disability, Quality Lifespan Development. As a result, I have gained some insight into the current thinking around special needs and disability.

In using a search engine on an electronic database, the results list for the keywords or subject indices related to the study inevitably spewed out hundreds of articles and recommended books. As with any study of the literature on a particular area, it all seemed overwhelming and I ran the risk of drowning in the sea of literature.

After heeding the advice of Silverman (2000:227), I sped-read, depth-read and "filleted" publications and documents in terms of my own agenda. My agenda was to know what knowledge about inclusive education, special needs education and disability had been produced out there; and also to ascertain the value that this study would have in contributing to that knowledge.

Another focus of my literature review agenda was to hear and read what has been documented on the views of disabled children: what research has been done where intellectually disabled learners are directly consulted about their experiences.

The literature review will thus be organised broadly around special needs and inclusive education, disability, and disabled children's views on their educational experiences and their lives.

2.2 INTERPRETIVISM

The guiding principle of my activity of engaging with the sources of information about special needs, disability and their representation in research, is a critical reflection on the production of knowledge in these areas. At this point in the study it may be useful to consider some aspects of interpretivism.

According to Alvesson and Sköldberg (2000:110-147), critical theory is characterized by an interpretive approach combined with a pronounced interest in critically analyzing social realities. A dialectical view is consistently maintained, with insistence that social phenomena always be viewed in their historical contexts. Critical theory maintains that social conditions are historically created and heavily influenced by the asymmetries of power and special interests. Research then is the act of drawing "the attention to the political dimension in research. Social science cannot maintain neutrality and objectivity in relation to social phenomena" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000:143).

Schwandt (1998:221) characterizes proponents of interpretivist persuasion as working towards the goal of understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it.

2.2.1 Interpretivism and the Social Model of Disability

Proponents of the social model of disability are in agreement with an interpretivist approach on matters of disability and special needs education (Barton & Tomlinson, 1984:1-12; Hill, 1995:97-99; Swain & French, 1998: 40-42; Richardson, 2000:138-155; Davis & Watson, 2001:671-687). The social model of disability would argue that the social status of disabled people must be viewed in its historical and material context. Dyson (1998:6) clearly articulates the view: "The constructions of such *(disabled)* groups are commonly hidden by hegemonic 'truths' of their oppressors, truths which are used to maintain existing inequalities and hence perpetuate the oppressor-oppressed relationship."

An interpretivist approach would hold, as the social model does, that concepts of disability are socially constructed and mean different things to different people (Mertens, 1998:11). Dyson and Forlin (1999:26) argue that different cultures have

historically constructed disability in various ways, but as modern states have developed, governments have found it necessary to develop social policies that guide national responses to issues concerning disability, and that such policies have constructed disability in terms of an affliction from which a minority of individuals suffer.

A strong case is made for researchers to be reflective in their research endeavours, for instance, Clough and Barton (1995:4) state that: "Critical reflection on the relationship between self and the research process involves exploring and exposing the hidden and taken-for-granted aspects of social relations of research production." Bines, Swain and Kaye (1998:76) stipulate that in the context of research with disabled learners, the "research has to be purposefully constructed in the face of institutionalized discrimination and hierarchical power-relations". It is in this light that priority must be given, as positive discrimination, to the voices of disabled learners.

In order to grasp the complexities of disability and special needs, it is essential to examine the discourses of special needs and disability.

2.3   THE DISCOURSES OF DISABILITY, SPECIAL NEEDS, AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

2.3.1 The Medical Discourse

Within this discourse, disabilities are conceptualised as impairments and geared towards the states of individuals. The processes of assessment, diagnosis and treatment are the focus areas for professionals working with disabled people. Slee (1997:411) gives a description of the "defective individual" being subjected to diagnostic classification, regulation and treatment. Rowitz and Gunn (1984:157-159) argue that labelling or diagnosing a client allowed professionals to gain closure on difficult cases; and that the process of labelling diverted focus away from the complex sociological and ecological conditions that might need social reform. Naicker (1999:13) mentions that in the medical model, disability is conceived of as an "objective attribute, not a social construct". The processes of assessment and diagnosis confer a label on the individual and this label precedes the person. The

onus and responsibility for the cause and cure of disability is placed on the individual (Poplin, 1988:40).

Naicker (1999:13) points out that the medical discourse links impairment with disability. This is in contrast to disability scholars' thinking, that distinguishes between "impairment" and "disability".

Gabel (2001:42) refers to an impairment as a condition creating some kind of limitation. She argues the same point as Morris (2001:3), that once one becomes discriminated against due to one's limitations, then one becomes disabled. Only when the limitation affects the social status of a person, does that person become disabled.

Naicker (1999:13) makes the point that within the medical discourse, disability is seen as an objective attribute, not a social construct. Disability is seen as a "natural and irremediable" characteristic of an individual. Disabled people are then marginalised and excluded from mainstream social, economic and educational life. The medical model hinged on the notion of biological determinism (Erevelles, 2000:26), that prescribed the educational destiny of disabled children. The influence of the medical model is evident in the existence of categories of separate special schools where learners, after being diagnosed and labelled, are placed in segregated special schools that are defined according to medical categories.

Armstrong, Dolinski and Wrapson (1999:27-36), Barton and Moody (1981:125-129) and Corbett (1998: 55-58) cite professionalism as a leading factor in disabling rather than enabling persons. Bart (1984:108) refers to the vested interests of workers whose professional existence depends on the identification and "servicing" of a disabled population. Criticism here is aimed at the professionalism, rather than the skills and expertise of professionals. The effects of this professionalism are that the disability becomes separated from the person, and the disability becomes the sum total of the individual. The authors do acknowledge that educating children with special needs is complex, and that medical and psychological concerns are important considerations in any educational planning. However, the necessity of considering medical and psychological factors in the education of special children

"need not result in the indiscriminate application of other fields' epistemological models" (Bart, 1984:108).

On the same point, Hall (1997:103) argues that Special Needs Education has languished in the medical and the charity discourses whereby Special Needs Education reinforces the "sick role" by describing its interventions as "therapeutic", rather than "educational". It is explained that the "therapeutic" orientation of SNE is marked by attention to functional deficits in learners, linked to a "treatment" approach. This results in a largely futile attempt to "fix" that which is essentially non-fixable. SNE focuses on the perceived need to "cure rather than to educate" (Hall, 1997:104). Bart (1984:108-110) suggests that special education should strive to attain educationally-based curricula and teaching practices, rather than engaging in practices that contribute to the "medicalisation of special education".

2.3.2 The Charity Discourse

This model of disability shares much in common with the medical model, where disabled people are viewed as "in need of assistance, as objects of pity and eternally dependent on others" (Naicker, 1999:13). The charity discourse is informed by aspects of humanitarianism, such as compassion, nurturing, and protecting.

Vlachou (1995:117) argues that the dominant ideologies have associated disability with feelings of pity, fear and guilt, and with situations of dependence, cure and care. The charity discourse has increased the marginalisation of disabled persons as it entrenches the perception of their subordinate status in society. Dyson and Forlin (1999:27) maintain that social services, with their provision of financial and material resources, serve to increase the image of disabled people as "deficit-laden" and dependent on the rest of society. Oliver (1988:14-17) argues the same point, stating that social policy towards disabled people is part of a process of social control and that special schools, day care centres and sheltered workshops are essentially about controlling disabled people by removing them from the mainstream of society.

Vlachou (1995:115-118) argues that images of disabled people have been surrounded by patronizing ideologies of charity that promote the association of disability with feelings of pity, fear and guilt, and with situations of dependence and care.

Engelbrecht, Naicker and Engelbrecht (1998:101), argue that the "charity" approach to disability in South Africa in the past, that of "benevolent humanitarianism", has essentially disempowered disabled people and thus increased their marginal status in society.

The premise of arguments from a charity discourse perspective is based on the benefits that can accrue to disabled children: protection from the harsh realities of mainstream school, provision of additional resources, and access to professional expertise and skills.

2.3.3 The Lay Discourse

Naicker (1999:14) describes the lay discourse as relating to "prejudice, hate, ignorance, fear and even paternalistic tendencies". These aspects of the lay discourse are derived from basic aspects of social thought. Baron and Byrne (1997:213) offer the social psychological concept of "outgroup homogeneity and illusionary correlation" as an explanation of prejudice. Outgroup homogeneity they define as "the tendency to perceive members of other groups as more similar to one another than the members of one's own group". The illusionary correlation is defined as the perception of a stronger association between two variables than actually exists (Baron & Byrne, 1997:213). It can be argued that it is the illusionary correlation that is fuelled by portraying disabled people as pitiful and negatively different. Illusionary correlation also has its roots in cultural taboos, or "beliefs that a child's disability derives from a curse, or signifies punishment" (Lansdown, 2001:23).

The media play a significant role in strengthening the illusionary correlation, by linking disabled children with negative attributes and portraying them as "victims" and "objects of pity" (Lansdown, 2001:23); and as "diseased organisms" (Hall, 1997:93).

2.3.4 Reductionism in Special Needs Education

Poplin (1988:389) argues that the one immutable feature in the landscape of learning disabilities and special needs education is 'change'. The field of learning disabilities has gone through a number of stages in its short history in an attempt to develop the field, as it has moved from medicine to psychology and education.

In contrasting four theoretical models of learning disabilities that have been predominant historically, Poplin (1988:389-400) reflects on the theoretical and methodological orientation of special needs education as being reductionistic.

She categorises the models as the Medical model of the 1950s, the Psychological Process model of the 1960s, the Behavioural Model of the 1970s and the Cognitive/learning Strategies Model of the 1980s. She points out that these models showed important differences and variations, but essentially they were based on assumptions arising from the same paradigm. There is thus the illusion of a fundamental change in values, attitudes and beliefs about learning and learning disabilities (Poplin, 1988).

Among her critiques of the models (Poplin, 1988:394-396) are:

1. Learning disabilities are seen as a discrete phenomenon, rather than an explanation of a phenomenon. Here there is an assumption of a discrete verifiable reality called learning disabilities.

2. The onus of responsibility for the cause and cure of learning disabilities is placed directly on the learner.

3. The models are learner deficit driven and presuppose a diagnosis.

4. Teaching techniques and strategies in each model assume that the teaching and learning is most effective when it is most tightly controlled, which leaves the learner predominantly passive.

5. The intervention is informed by the diagnosis.

6. School goals, rather than life goals, are promoted in each model.

7. Each model supports the categorisation and segregation of learners into different "deficit" categories.

Although Poplin's (1988:394-396) models relate more to the conceptions of professionals involved in special education and the different discourses speak of the broader conceptualizations of society with regards to special needs education, the

critiques of the four models can be justifiably made of the Medical, Charity and Lay discourses of disability.

2.3.5 The Human Rights Discourse and Inclusive Education

Internationally and locally the human rights discourse has recently permeated debate regarding special needs education and inclusion. Naicker (1999:15) states that the rights discourse is "committed to extending full citizenship to all people. It stresses equal opportunity, self-reliance, independence and wants rather than needs."

Dyson (1998:5-7) argues that it is the rights-orientation, which is concerned with identifying and articulating inclusion as a human and social justice issue, that is the crucial propelling force in the movement towards inclusive education, as is evidenced by supportive legislation and affirmative action.

At an international level, the United Nations General Assembly and conventions and conferences such as the 1990 World Conference on Education for All have encouraged the articulation and promotion of the rights of children with regard to educational needs (Lansdown, 2001:11-13).

In 1995, the South African Federal Council on Disability (SAFCD) asserted that "learners with special educational needs have the right to equal access to education at all levels in a single inclusive educational system that is responsive to the diverse needs of all learners." Subsequently the South African Constitution (1996:16) made a firm commitment that "every person shall have the right to basic education and to equal access to educational institutions".

The rights argument is based on the view that human rights are the fundamental concern in every debate about inclusion (Cole, 1999:220). The rights argument entails the notion of duty, where education authorities, teachers and parents have the responsibility or duty to ensure that the rights of disabled children are upheld within the education system. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (1997:235-237) argue that inclusion is a key component of educational systems as it entrenches the rights of children to have their needs met within the mainstream as far as possible.

Fulcher (1990:349-358) has a concern that the discourse on rights is likely to be submerged or compromised unless, as in Denmark, the medical model is outlawed in official policy and the focus remains clearly on children's entitlement to equal education. She claims that it is only then that authentic efforts can be made to explore ways of making education accessible to all.

In the South African context, it is difficult to see this happening. What seems promising, however, is that White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001) sees that the role of inclusion is to support children's right to education – not focusing primarily on the child, but also on the wider socio-political context in which inclusive education has to happen. South African policy thus speaks about the rights of all children to equal education in an inclusive system, and the White Paper is clearly informed by the notion that disability has both social and individual aspects. This reflection on the dynamics of disability is a shift from the medical model to include social aspects; and this in turn informs the model of service delivery advocated by White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001).

The Draft Guidelines for Implementation of Inclusive Education (October 2002:17) state clearly that "the first step is to move away from an understanding of disability that is shaped by the medical model to an understanding underpinned by the rights model". Disabling barriers to learning are identified as including "poverty, ideology, physical access, inflexible curriculum, inappropriate language, communication channels and inaccessible built environments". This is a definitive move away from individualizing disability and an attempt at including broader social factors that may negatively impact on children's learning.

At this point it is appropriate to discuss definitions of intellectual disability. The American Psychiatric Association in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV (1994) provides definitions and discussion of a number of disabilities that have an impact on mental and cognitive functioning. They fall into numerous broad domains that include learning, developmental, psychiatric and neurological disorders. However, "mental retardation" is defined in the following way:

A. Significantly subaverage intellectual functioning: an IQ of approximately 70 or below on an individually administered IQ test (for infants, a clinical judgment of significantly subaverage intellectual functioning).

B. Concurrent deficits or impairments in present adaptive functioning (i.e., the person's effectiveness in meeting the standards expected for his of her age by his or her cultural group) in at least two of the following areas: communication, self-care, home living, social/interpersonal skills, use of community resources, self-direction, functional academic skills, work, leisure, health and safety.

C. The onset is before age 18 years."

(Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 1994)

This definition of "mental retardation" still enjoys strong prominence and status in the areas where services are provided for people with intellectual disability. In the education system this definition serves as the measure and benchmark for the construction of the group of learners who are labelled as intellectually disabled (Archer & Green, 1996:126-127).

The social model of disability is forceful in its critique of any explanation that implies that disability is solely located within the individual person. The social model acknowledges that intellectual disability is in part an internal condition, but reasons that the incapacity to function is largely related to a disability-hostile environment. Society erects barriers that exclude people who are considered different. Disability is considered as part of the diversity of the human condition and not as an undesirable trait to be cured or fixed (French Gilson & Depoy, 2000: 207-208; Olney & Kim, 2001:563-566).

Shakespeare and Watson (1997:294) argue for the promotion of the social model of disability as there is evidence in the media, medical profession, educational and academic disciplines that disability is still viewed as a personal medical tragedy.

2.4 THE LANGUAGE OF INCLUSION, DISABILITY, AND SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

To understand the language of inclusion, disability and special needs education, one needs to appreciate the multidimensional contexts in which thoughts about these areas are communicated. Todd and Fisher (1988:1-19) emphasise the relationship between language and ideology: ideology being a force that shapes an individual,

that develops consciousness and that determines how people live. When conversations about inclusion, disability and special needs are held and when writings on these issues are produced, the language is rooted in the worldview of the speakers and writers. Zionts (1997:14-21) and Todd and Fisher (1998:7-12) point out that language is not merely a vehicle for communication, but is embedded in an historical, political, ideological and economic context.

It is at the micropolitical level of communication that ideas and meanings of disability and special needs are constructed and perpetuated. Lather (1991:124) argues that language is "particularly powerful in producing categories"; and in special needs and disability discourses language has been instrumental in shaping and constructing meaning around being disabled.

Hall (1997:54-58) speaks at length on the issue of language in special needs education and inclusion, stating that the term "special" is a funny, but deceptively lethal word which seems to confer "privilege", but actually means "misery". He says that professionals speak condescendingly of children with special needs and their demeanor takes on a patronising manner, reflecting an essentially negative view of children with special learning needs.

Corbett (1996:3) remarks that:

> There is the sentimental language of 'special need' which is embodied in the imagery of protection, care, tenderness and love ... this language needs to be examined and revealed for the sugar-coated poison that it is.

At another level debates about inclusion are inconsistent in their use of language. This is prevalent in the literature as well as in the conversation that professionals, parents and teachers become engaged in when talking about inclusion.

When Norwich (2000:9-29) writes about inclusion, he unpacks the term systematically. He refers to inclusion as having two key concepts: firstly, physically being in the same place and doing the same things as other learners; and secondly, social acceptance and belonging. Here inclusion is contrasted with integration. The school needs to accommodate and restructure to respond to the needs of students.

Donald *et al.* (1997:20) see inclusion and inclusive education as a commitment to providing education which is appropriate to the needs of all children, whatever their origin, background and circumstances. These authors see inclusion as going beyond what physically happens in the classroom, extending to the acceptance of diversity of educational needs and meeting those needs.

Hall (1997:114) on the other hand, speaks of a high and a low definition of inclusion. He describes a high definition of inclusion as being equal to full inclusion that has a number of key requirements: that the learner attends the local mainstream school; that the learner be age-appropriately placed; and that the learner shares the majority of the class lessons with classmates. The learner should also be socially integrated at school. This would be what Zions (1997:167) calls a "zero reject model", where all learners are accommodated and the physical setting is the same for same-age learners of the neighbourhood. Learners with disabilities are placed in general classrooms at a rate consistent with disability statistics.

A low definition of inclusion would satisfy a less demanding set of criteria. This could be offered by a special school or a special class in a mainstream school, where the child spends most of the time with a disability-specific group and has occasional limited opportunity to be with other children. Zions (1997:172) sees selective inclusion as operationalising a low definition of inclusion. The included learner is fundamentally part of a segregated group within a mainstream school or a special school, but has the opportunity to associate with peers in a regular class setting.

Hall (1997:120) suggests a definition of inclusion as the following:

> Being a full member of an age-appropriate class in your local school doing the same lessons as the other pupils and it mattering if you are not there. In addition you have friends that spend time with you outside school, plus others who care for you, work hard to ensure that you are fully included in the mainstream community life and have generic services along with other citizens.

At a local level, the Directorate of Special Education Needs speaks of inclusive education as necessitating the removal or adaptation of "those things in school that prevent effective learning" (Theron, 1998:1). Nationally, Education White Paper 6 (2001) characterises inclusion by contrasting it with integration or mainstreaming:

Mainstreaming or Integration	Inclusion
Mainstreaming is about getting learners to 'fit into' a particular kind of system or integrating them into this existing system.	Inclusion is about recognising and respecting the differences among all learners and building on the similarities.
Mainstreaming is about giving some learners extra support so that they can 'fit in' or be integrated into 'normal' classroom routine. Learners are assessed by specialists who diagnose and prescribe technical interventions, such as the placement of learners in programmes.	Inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The focus is on teaching and learning actors, with the emphasis on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners.
Mainstream and integration focus on changes that need to take place in learners so that they can 'fit in'. Here the focus is on the learner.	Inclusion focuses on overcoming barriers in the system that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs. The focus is on adaptation of support systems available in the classroom.

(Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education, DNE, 2001:17)

The body of literature concerned with educational practice and research reveals a strong emergent theme of the value and the social and educational benefits of inclusive education, where learners with disabilities receive their education in mainstream classes along with their peers (Cole, 1999:216; Leicester, 2001:252-259; Giangreco, 1997:194; Engelbrecht, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1998:96-103; Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 1997:239; Dyson, 2000:85-99).

The Draft Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education (DNE, 2002) provide policy guidelines for the implementation of Education White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001). Ironically, the Draft Guidelines document says in its preamble that it was produced "through a broad consultation process involving all stakeholders" (DNE, 2002:2), but nowhere does it mention the opinions of those who are at the receiving end of the policy – the learners. The absence of their input implies that they are not considered to be stakeholders.

2.5   THE LITERATURE ON DISABILITY AND SPECIAL NEEDS RESEARCH

Early research in special needs education traditionally assumed a charitable stance. A range of approaches, techniques and well-intended evaluation studies and surveys were undertaken with learners in special educational settings. Much of the research was strongly influenced by positivist assumptions and the claim of scientific objectivity: positivist research being underpinned by an epistemology that assumes the independence of the researcher and the researched "objects" (Guba & Lincoln, 1998:204). The focus of research activities internationally and locally centred around descriptive studies of disability categories (Brock, 1995:188; Bailey, 1998:44; Riddell, Brown & Duffield, 1995:36; Bredberg, 2001:198-201). Research in special needs education comes under attack as being acontextual, in that the studies were not rooted in their social, economic and political contexts. These research projects generally argue for "good practice", and the merits and demerits of inclusive educational practices and policies (Giangreco, 1997:193-197; Theron, 1998:1-4; Farrell, 2001:5-8; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995:22-26; Leicester, 2001:258).

With regard to practices, there is a common understanding amongst various researchers such as Engelbrecht and Forlin (1997:12), Bothma, Gravett and Swart (2000:204) and Lipsky and Gartner (1996:762-79), that educators are at the grassroots of implementing inclusive educational principles, strategies and policies, and that as a group, they are central to translating policy into practice.

Extensive accounts of research into teacher and administrator perceptions are reflected in the literature, whereby investigation is made into the attitudes, perceptions and other variables of school personnel regarding inclusive education or aspects of inclusive education. There is evidence of ambiguity being signalled in educators' and administrators' professional opinions regarding inclusive education in the South African and international educational context (Bothman, Gravett & Swart, 2000:203-204, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Newmark, 1997:81-84; Roll-Pettersson, 2001:50-54).

Research into Special Needs Education is inevitably "disability research", as it is that very category of learners who are labelled as having a disability that invariably qualify for special school placement. Traditional research on disability reflected a

clear distinction between the researcher and the researched, where the researcher is viewed as the informed expert and the researched regarded as dependent and passive objects of research. The vast majority of research into disability matters has been largely clinical or experimental research relying on scientific procedures, where the subjects of research have been portrayed as passive subjugated research objects (Clough & Barton, 1995:2-3; Goodley & Moore, 2000:880; Oliver, 1992:102-104).

What appear to be glaringly absent from special needs and disability research are the views of those who are termed disabled and are the recipients of powerful professional categories and special needs education. Indeed, there are numerous research activities that speak on behalf of those who are disabled. Clough and Barton (1995:1-3) assert that "special educational need is variously constructed through research". Stone and Priestly (1996:699) assert that the "dominant sociological and cultural representation of disabled people is underpinned by a conceptualization of disablement in terms of tragedy, the impaired body and Otherness."

Commenting on research on issues of disability, Oliver (1992:105), in a seminal paper, contends that research has become part of the disabling barriers in society, in that it is conducted in ways that have been alienating. He argues that research about disabled people has been "a violation of their experience, as irrelevant to their needs and as failing to improve their material circumstances and quality of life". Oliver (1992:106-114) contends that the traditional expert model of research represents a "rape model of research" that is alienating and disempowers, and that research disenfranchises disabled research participants by placing their knowledge into the hands of the researcher to interpret and make recommendations on their behalf .

Darlington and Scott (2002:103), propose three precepts to individuals who plan to undertake research with people with intellectual disability:

> Undertaking qualitative research with people with an intellectual disability thus requires at least three things. First, that we value the experiences of those who are not as articulate or verbal as we are; second, that we accept their experience of themselves and their world as valid – and not as either inferior or a threat to our own way of being in the world; and finally, that we find ways to elicit their experience, for their voices to be heard.

A social model of disability is proposed as being a viable starting point from which to conduct research into disability issues as the guidelines above are integral to the model (Oliver 1992:101-114; Goodley, 1998:124; Chappell, 2000:41). The social model can be contrasted with the traditional understanding of disability. In social model terms, disability is seen as a construct of the social and economic structures of a society at a particular historical juncture. The social model locates disability not in the individual, but firmly within the structures of society. The social model of disability brings a growing politicisation and challenge to the task of research in the area. Emancipatory research, which is as much a form of political action as it is research, emerged from the social model of disability (Walmsley, 2001:195).

Oliver (1992), Zarb (1992) and Morris (1992) provide the core criteria of emancipatory research:

- Research should be used as a tool for improving the lives of disabled people.

- There should be greater opportunities for the disabled people to be researchers.

- Researchers must adopt a more reflexive stance regarding their work.

- The democratic organisation of disabled people should act as commissioners and funders of research.

- Researchers should be accountable to the democratic organisations of disabled persons.

In much the same orientation as Oliver (1992:101-114), Zarb (1992:125-138), Morris (1992:157-166) and Stone and Priestly (1996:699-716), in an attempt to destabilise the inherent inequalities in the power relationships within traditional research production, suggest the following core principles of an emancipatory research endeavour:

- The adoption of a social model of disablement as the epistemological basis for research production.

- The surrender of claims of objectivity through overt political commitment to the struggles of disabled people for self-emancipation.

- The willingness only to undertake research where it will be of practical benefit to the self-empowerment of disabled people and/or the removal of disabling barriers.

- The evolution of control over research production to ensure full accountability to disabled people and their organisations.

- Giving voice to the personal as political, whilst endeavouring to collectivise the political commonality of individual experiences.

- The willingness to adopt a plurality of methods for data collection and analysis in response to the changing needs of disabled people.

Bines (1995:45) states aptly that research on special educational needs can be one of the most difficult and demanding processes. The foregoing criticisms of traditional special educational needs research pose tremendous personal, academic and political challenges. Clough and Barton (1995:143) take non-disabled researchers to task, stating that "it is important that researchers, recognizing their limitations, endeavour to be more open and self-aware with regard to their own values, priorities and processes of interpretation".

Bearing this in mind, essential methodological questions are raised by my attempt to study "disablement" and specifically the lives of two learners with an intellectual disability in a special school for "severely mentally handicapped learners". I encountered a particular dilemma in that, in my role at the school as a teacher, intern psychologist and administrator, I inherently engage in the very social relations in which special educational needs are constructed. I have a commitment to special education in that it is my vocation. Thus I cannot obscure that I am positioned as colluding with the production of an intellectually subordinated group of persons.

In the light of the debates in disability theory around representing the views of disabled people, I asked myself whether I had any right to investigate issues relating to intellectual disability, when I have no claim to a "disabled identity" myself? These dilemmas left me in an uncomfortable position on many occasions. A notion that could be read into the writings of academics with a disability, is that it is only they who have an authentic right to pronounce on matters of disability. Lewis (1998:102) offers a response where he argues that "you cannot hold on the one hand that

disablement is ... an oppressive constructed category which should be deconstructed, whilst on the other hand state that there are people who authentically belong within it". However, the intention of disabled disability scholars like Oliver (1992; 1996), Shakespeare and Watson (1999:13) and Morris (1995:213-218) in their cogent attacks on traditional acontextual research, is not to alienate non-disabled researchers, but to call for a stronger awareness and consciousness of the potentials in their roles as researchers in the lives of disabled people.

I would like to view this study as a voice from the site where special education happens, adding to a body of knowledge that critically appraises special needs education and the experiences of disabled children.

On the issue of doing research with children, Alldred (1998:147) asks unsettling questions: "What claims to represent children's voices can adult researchers legitimately make? ... What meanings may we unwittingly reinforce as we make such public re/presentations?" These are similar to the questions that Clough and Barton (1995:3) ask of persons involved with disability research, examining issues relating to self and the research act: "What assumptions about Special Needs Education/disability do I have which are inevitably present in the way I conceive of the study? ... What assumptions about 'how the world operates' are given with these methods?"

These questions problematise research activity and do not leave the researcher to go about the research work in a detached way. Alldred (1998:148) raises a concern that "particular ethical and political dilemmas arise in representing the lives of people who are marginalized within, and by, the domain of public knowledge." She speaks of children as a category of marginalised people. Both these groups of persons – children and disabled people – are marginalised and the learners that I work with belong to both these groups, which intensifies their marginal status in society.

In the process of this study, my own ability to meet the challenges of academic rigour and the criteria for emancipatory research comes into question. In keeping with Chappell, Goodley and Lawthom (2001:45-50), this study adopts a narrower definition of accountability to disabled people than suggested by the emancipatory paradigm. Chappell *et al.* (2001:45-50), argue that participatory research has

positive potential in the lives of people with learning difficulties. "Within the constraints of the material relations of research production, it can be an important way of enabling greater involvement for people with learning difficulties in the research process."

In reflecting on the relevance of the social model of disability in learning difficulty research, Chappell (2000), Chappell, Goodley and Lawthom (2001) and Walmsley (2001) raise a number of important points. They argue that the larger part of disability research has neglected to use the social model of disability as an approach for analysing the views and experiences of people with learning difficulties. The focus of research had been on people with sensory and physical impairments, with learning difficulties being "tagged on only as an afterthought within much of the literature generated by the social model" (Chappell *et al.*, 2001:46). Walmsley (2001:189) argues that academics in disability studies have marginalised learning disability and that the embracing of learning disability into the broader field of disability studies appears to be an afterthought.

This study, as an effort in intellectual disability studies, would suffer severe shortcomings in the application of the criteria of emancipatory research, particularly in terms of transforming what Oliver (1992:102) calls the "social relations of research production", and what Zarb (1992:128) refers to as the "material relations of research production". This study satisfies one criterion of the emancipatory paradigm, as reflected by Mertens (1998:18), in that it brings to center-stage the lives and experiences of the members of diverse groups that traditionally have been marginalized.

This study cannot claim to rise to the challenge of revolutionising the social and material relations of research production by "challenging and ultimately eradicating them", as Oliver (1997:26) suggests; but it does attempt to improve the nature of the social relations of research production. In this sense, this study is more of a participatory research endeavour.

At this point it is necessary to state that this study is not participatory action research, but draws on the principles of participatory research as characterized by Collins (1999:118):

- The research process is locally based.

- Own experience provides data for the study.

- The topic of research is important to ordinary people.

Participatory research is based on the premise of a sympathetic and committed researcher attempting to make a positive contribution to the lives of people with learning difficulties. Cocks and Cockram (1995:25-37) highlight the characteristics of participatory research methodology, depicting it as an exciting development in learning difficulty research, offering more opportunities for people with learning disabilities to be involved in the research process. Collins (1999:118) also maintain that in a South African context participatory research has advantages. A summary of what Cocks and Cockram (1995:25-37) and Collins (1999:118) suggest, would include the following points that would be useful for doing research in the area of disability and special needs education:

- The research problem may be identified by disabled people or by non-disabled people, who then bring it to the attention of the constituency of disabled people.

- Disabled people and researchers work together to achieve a collective analysis of the research problem.

- Alliances are formed between disabled people, researchers and other experts, although these alliances must be under the control and primarily in the interest of disabled people.

- People who are disadvantaged need to be empowered by research activity.

- Research is carried out at grassroots level, ensuring that local people have their say and that local conditions are taken into account.

- Participatory research has the potential for destroying stereotypes.

Participatory research offers a gainful approach to research with children with an intellectual disability, as the principles of the social model of disability are inherently upheld in a participatory research endeavour.

2.6   REFLECTING ON THE POWER RELATIONS IN RESEARCH

Stone and Priestly (1996:700) point to the inherent power relationships between researcher and researched being accentuated by the unequal power relationships that exist between disabled and non-disabled people in the wider world. As I am an adult teacher and administrator and a non-disabled person, this study inevitably carries with it unequal power relations on more than one level. How do I make sense of my role in this process?

Clough and Barton (1995:143-147) offer a number of ways in which researchers may (re)define their role in the research process. I take up a few for myself in an attempt to make meaning of the research process:

The researcher as learner:

I journeyed humbly into this project and every interview, observation and conversation with the learners was an occasion for learning about and respecting whatever was observed, communicated, and implied.

The process challenged my existing values, assumptions and expectations. The emotional experiences of the study are not highlighted in any significant way, but remained a prominent aspect of the reflective process. I found it useful to follow Gilbert's (2001:12) guideline that: "it is essential that researchers maintain a reflexive stance. Indeed, unless the researcher is self-reflective, a danger exists where the researcher's private affective meanings may cloud understandings of the participant's construction of meaning …"

The process was professionally, as well as personally, an invaluable learning opportunity. The study was inherently a process of self-education.

The researcher as subject:

"Researchers too, are subjects within their 'own frame(s) of reference'" (Clough & Barton, 1995:146). While I tried to understand social realities and experiences from the learners' frames of references, it is inevitable that my own "weave of personally lived values and experiences" has constructed, identified and mediated the study. Thus as much as this study is a representation of the lived experiences of learners

who have been excluded from mainstream education, it is also an expression of my own experience with these learners.

The researcher as teacher:

In this sense I consider myself as charged with the obligation of raising consciousness and "not as a mere reporter" (Clough & Barton, 1995:146). Being part of the management team of a school for LSEN brings with it a responsibility to explore and raise concerns and issues around social justice and equity. The educator, care-giving, and parent sectors have crucial roles to play in advocacy issues affecting the lives of intellectually disabled learners. In my experience, it can become a comfortable and an easy option, as one goes about ones daily duties, to buy into the dominant views and stereotypes of intellectually disabled children.

The process of engaging in research production within an institution is in itself also not a neutral activity: the framing, doing and reporting are all politically charged and researchers have a responsibility to be reflective throughout.

The researcher as change agent:

This study does not satisfy the criteria for emancipatory research, which is by definition change-inducing. However, what could perhaps be hoped for is that the research actions and procedures provided some means of change at least for the learners involved, and perhaps for the adults working in the area of intellectual disability. The way in which the participants were involved in the study, in a sense legitimized their experiences and their stories. This is what Kitchin (2000:26) refers to as "empowering … seeking positive individual change through participation."

2.7   FEMINIST RESEARCH AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

There are many connections and common themes between the feminist agenda and disability research agendas. The connection is captured in the following statement by Hill Collins (1990:26) in *Black Feminist Thought*: "Groups unequal in power are correspondingly unequal in their ability to make their standpoint known to themselves and others." Women and disabled persons are in a subordinate and oppressed position in society and their potential to give expression to their views and

standpoints are thus compromised by their status. As the feminist research agenda is that of empowerment, and personal and political liberation (Edwards & Ribbens, 1998:16-17; Morris, 1995:215-216; Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002:64-66), so the agenda of those doing disability research can also be empowering and liberating (Oliver, 1992, 1996; Zarb, 1992; Clough & Barton, 1998). Both disability and feminist research draw attention to the political dimensions in research.

Self and Joyappa (1996:16-24), feminist academics, provide in their critique of traditional research paradigms, similar critiques to those that disability scholars level at traditional research as argued by Clough and Barton (1995; 1998), Barton (1996); Oliver (1999; 1998) and Stone and Priestly (1996).

Morris (1995:209-219), herself a feminist and disabled academic, has four important points to make concerning the relevance of feminist theory and methodology for empowering disabled people.

Firstly, she speaks of the role of research in *personal liberation*. While feminist research has as a charge the personal liberation of women, disability research has the responsibility of personal liberation of disabled persons. She comments that feminist research has impacted in this way but "unfortunately very little disability research does anything other than confirm oppressive images of disability" (Morris, 1995:215).

Morris (1995) then discusses the personal experience of disability as being worthy of counting as knowledge. Here she expresses concern that with attempts to counter and challenge the medical and the 'personal tragedy' models of disability, there is the tendency to deny personal experience of disability. She argues that to experience disability is to experience the frailty of the human body and that "if we deny this we will find that our personal experience of disability will remain an isolated one; we will experience our differences as something peculiar to us as individuals – and we will commonly feel a sense of personal blame and responsibility" (Morris, 1995:216).

Speaking of the role of non-disabled researchers, she qualifies the role of the non-disabled researcher in a similar way to Cocks and Cockram (1995): the task is one of challenging direct and indirect discrimination by involving disabled people more meaningfully in research, thus making research less alienating.

Doing research with children and doing research with children who are disabled are politically and socially charged activities on more than one level. Doing the research using the social model of disability and a participatory approach, will hopefully advance the prospects of this study becoming one where disabled children are directly consulted about their experiences on life matters, rather than a non-disabled adult's conceptualization of their life experiences.

Finally Morris (1995:218) argues that as black peoples' experience of racism cannot be studied separately from the underlying social structure; and as women's experience of sexism cannot be separated from the society in which it takes place; so disabled people's experience of disability and inequality cannot be divorced from the society in which we all live. She claims that disability research and disability politics are of general relevance to all, not because disability is found among all social groups, but because the experience of disability is part of the wider and fundamental issues of prejudice and economic inequality.

The following broad feminists research principles are incorporated in the study:

- Research cannot be objective and value-free.

- All human experience is worthy of being acknowledged, documented and analysed.

- Research is a quest for valid knowledge of social realities by a knowing subject.

- Reflexivity in the research process: being explicit about power relations, being accountable for knowledge produced and being aware of the researcher being socially situated (Self & Joyappa, 1996:16-24; Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002:41-59).

It is thus in drawing from the social model of disability research, interpretivism, and feminist research principles that this study is facilitated.

2.8 REFLECTION

Chapter Two, traditionally devoted to reflecting on the literature of a chosen topic and research question, necessitated the exploration and examination of literature on disability and special needs. As first person accounts by intellectually disabled children are rare, an extensive review of the literature on this issue had to be done. Considering the number of disabled persons in the Western Cape and the progressive agencies and advocacy groups, it was difficult to find accounts of disabled peoples' views on issues that affect their lives.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

As set out in Chapter One, the central aim of this study is to give precedence to the lived experiences of two learners with intellectual disability, to do research *with* them in a special school, and to give them centre-stage in producing knowledge about disability and special needs. In doing this, there is awareness that the task of attending carefully to the details, complexity and situated meanings of the life world of these two children can be achieved through a variety of methods. Schwandt (1998:222) remarks that "although we may feel professionally compelled to use a particular language for these procedures, at base, all interpretive inquiries watch, listen, ask, record and examine". Methodology is essentially the way in which we facilitate and conduct this process of inquiry, it is concerned with procedures for making knowledge valid and authoritative (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002:9).

In this chapter the research methodology of the study will be discussed with elaboration and clarification on the research design, research method, research question, data production and data analysis.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is a qualitative interpretivist design that was adopted for its potential for an in-depth portrayal of human endeavours, interactions, situations, and perceptions. The design allowed the flexibility required to learn first-hand from the two learners who participated in the study.

Collins (1999:42) and Yin (1984:28-29) explain that a research design is the action plan that considers carefully the research question, the relevant data, the gathering of data and the analysis of the data.

Using Miles and Huberman's (1994:203-205) discussion of the aspects of design, the following is a representation of the dimensions of the research design decisions of this study:

Purpose

To establish what children with intellectual disability have to say about their lives.

Paradigm

Interpretivist & drawing from feminism.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Context

*Schooling
Friendship
Family
Disability*

Methods and Techniques
*Case Study
Purposive sampling
Interviews
Observations
Records*
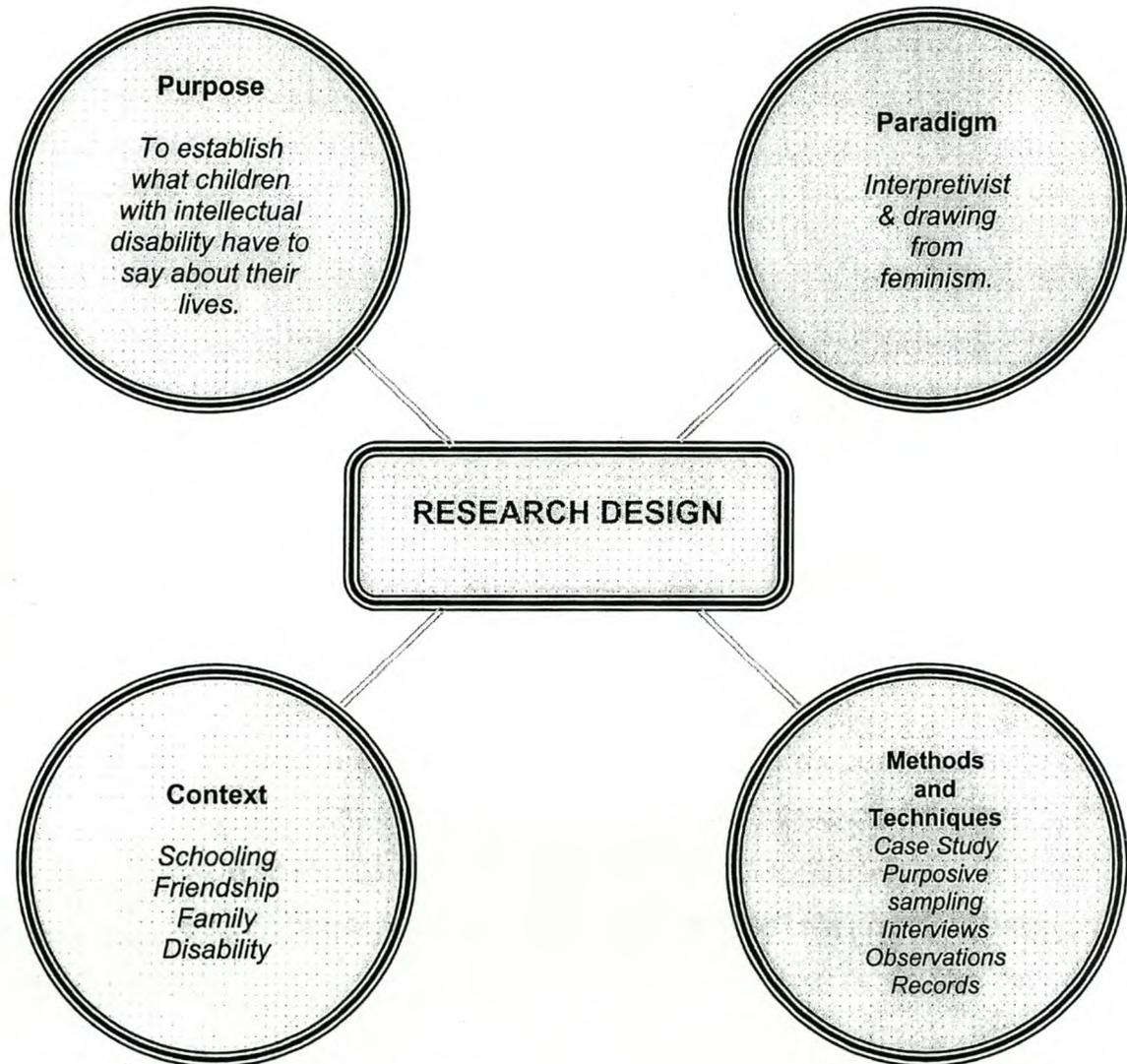
Figure 3.1:   Dimensions of Research Design Decisions

3.2.1 Purpose

3.2.1.1 Research Question

As discussed in Chapter One, research on disability has generally excluded the views of the research subjects. More so, it is rare to find research that reflects the everyday life experiences – of schooling, family, friendship, and disability – of disabled children from their own perspectives (Davis & Watson, 2001:672;

Shakespeare & Watson, 1999:13-14). This study is concerned with what it is that these two learners with an intellectual disability have to say about their experiences, in the life areas of schooling, friendship, family, and disability. Restated, the question can be phrased as, "How do these two intellectually disabled learners experience schooling, family, friendships, and disability?" The two learners are invited to the research project as active participants; and in this, there is recognition that they have distinct and valuable perspectives of the world.

3.2.1.2 Research Aim

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the primary objective is to share the experiences of schooling, family, friendships, and disability of these two intellectually disabled learners. A focus is to highlight the lived experiences of two learners who have been excluded from mainstream education and placed in a school for learners with "severe mental handicap".

This study is an opportunity for the versions or the voices of persons who are intellectually disabled to be documented and heard, and to contribute towards the establishment of an active social presence of people with intellectual disability. As related, there is a dearth of research that gives voice to people with intellectual disability and even less research is documented that focuses on the view of children with intellectual disability (Baldwin & Carlisle, 1994:33; Westcott, 1999:129-139). Alldred (1998:150-151) states that the focus of childhood research has been on what happens to children rather than on what they say about their lives. She claims that it is only when children are seen as people in their own right that they can be thought of as participants in research.

In Stake's (1995) broader terms, this study wishes to elaborate on the complexities of the life experiences of these two learners whose knowledge is traditionally not regarded as authoritative enough to count in academic literature, as the expressions and opinions of powerful professionals talking about disability are listened to with more serious attention than those of disabled people themselves (Corbett, 1998:55-56).

At a macro level, this study would like to contribute to the ascendance of voices of disabled people generally and to children with an intellectual disability in particular,

as it is children like Anna and Christy who run the risk of remaining invisible in society.

3.2.2 Paradigm

Guba and Lincoln (1998:200) define a paradigm as "... a set of *basic beliefs* (or metaphysics that deals with ultimates or first principles. It represents a *worldview* that defines, for its holder, the nature of the 'world', the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts."

3.2.2.1 Interpretive Paradigm

Schwandt (1998:223-238) sees interpretivists as having a goal of understanding the complex world of lived experiences from the point of view of those who live it. There is a basic belief that there is no objective reality. The ambition of an interpretivist study is to grasp the actors' definition of their situations or experiences. "The world of lived reality and situation-specific meanings that constitute the general objective of investigation is thought to be constructed by social actors" (Schwandt, 1998:221).

In terms of method, Schwandt (1998:222) contends that although we may feel compelled to use a particular language for the procedures, all interpretivists watch, listen, ask, record and examine. Mertens (1998:13) states that interpretivist research opts for a more personal, interactive mode of data production. For this study, interviews and observations as personal and interactive methods were used, which will be addressed in more detail later in this chapter.

The study is qualitative in nature, as the focus is to gain insight into two learners' accounts of their experiences. It was essential that a methodological approach be chosen that would enable the children's voices to be distinct and discernable. A qualitative, contextual and interpretivist design has the potential for an in-depth portrayal of human endeavours, interactions, situations, or perceptions as this study sets out to do. Miles and Huberman (1994:10) state that qualitative studies "are fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives".

Stone and Priestly (1996:705), in discussing qualitative and quantitative approaches, offer the insight that those who are critical of existing disability research, have generally expressed a preference for the use of a qualitative over a quantitative approach. They conclude that it is neither the qualitative nor the quantitative nature of the research, but the theoretical paradigm, that informs the research.

A central issue in research is that of ontology, the way in which the study "specifies the nature of something" (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002:11); and epistemology, the way of "specifying how researchers know what they know" (Ramazanoğlu & Holland:2002:12). Alvesson and Sköldberg (2000:4) agree that "it is not methods but ontology and epistemology which are the determinants of good social science." In this study the "watching, listening and asking" work that Schwandt (1998:222) refers to, and its ontological and epistemological position, is better suited to qualitative research.

Ramazanoğlu and Holland (2002:154) summarize that quantitative methods offer limited access to accounts of experiences, nuances of meaning, the nature of social relationships and their shifts and contradictions, while qualitative methods offer limited means of generalization. Considering the research question, a qualitative method will best serve the purpose of gaining access to the learners' accounts of their life experiences.

Mertens (1998:161-162) reports that qualitative research allows for the immersion of the researcher into the social setting and it facilitates intersubjective understanding between the researcher and the participants. She argues that qualitative methods have been useful in gaining insights into cultural values, institutional practices and interpersonal interactions that influence special education practice. This is of particular significance to this study with two children with an intellectual disability in a special school.

Within this qualitative interpretive study, and in keeping with the social model of disability and principles of feminist research, as mentioned in Chapter Two, (Potts 1998:24; Oliver 1992:105; Morris 1995:215), the approach adopted aims to minimize the potentially alienating and oppressive nature of traditional disability research. The roles of the learners are maximized as far as possible and they are viewed as the

experts while I am the enquirer, learning from them, and hoping to give a voice to their experiences of education, family, friendship, and disability.

3.2.3 Context

In this study there is an interrogation of the dominant meanings of disability and special schooling. There is an intention to make explicit the meanings of education, family, friendship, and disability that these two learners assign to those life areas. In order to understand that world, one has to interpret it. This interpretation is in itself a construction of the meanings that the social actors give to a particular event or situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998:31-32).

The two learners are enrolled at a school for learners with intellectual disabilities in the Mitchell's Plain area of the Western Cape. Both come from historically disadvantaged backgrounds and have been in mainstream education before being placed at a special school.

Christy is a 10-year-old Afrikaans speaking boy who has attended a special school for learners with "severe mental retardation" since January 2000, after spending two years in mainstream education. He was involved in a motor vehicle accident in January 1999. He lives with his biological family in Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town. He has siblings and extended family members who attend mainstream schools within walking distance from their home.

Anna is a 10-year old girl who is able to communicate in both English and Afrikaans. She prefers to speak English to the teachers at the school, but speaks Afrikaans on the playground. Anna attends the same school as Christy. She attended a mainstream school for the first two years of her schooling and was placed at the special school from January 2000. She currently lives with her second set of foster parents in a family with other fostered children and her foster parents' biological daughter.

A more detailed discussion of the context of the learners is provided in Chapter Four.

3.2.4 Methods and Techniques

3.2.4.1 Methodology

Methodology in social science research is concerned with procedures, rules and strategies for doing social investigation (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002:9-11; Mertens, 1998:174-180). Denzin and Lincoln (1998:3) describe the qualitative researcher as *bricoleur,* employing a variety of strategies and methods to do research. In agreement, Mertens (1998:174) argues that there is no one correct method for conducting qualitative research, and therefore recommends that qualitative researchers describe their methodology in detail. The author sees case study as a strategy in qualitative research, and as a useful means for intensive and detailed study of individuals.

3.2.4.2 Case Study Research

Case studies are widely used and have an esteemed history in educational and social research (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Gilgan, 1994; Yin, 1984).

About case studies, Yin (1984:14) says:

> As a research endeavour, the case study contributes uniquely to knowledge of individual, organizational, social, and political phenomena. In all of these situations, the distinctive need for case studies arises out of a desire to understand complex social phenomena. In brief, the case study allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events.

The nature of this study is an attempt to understand and represent experiences of two learners that are inevitably embedded in complex social phenomena. In this endeavour there is also the desire to know these individual learners in their educational, social and political contexts.

Stake (1995:xi) makes a similar point: "A case study is expected to catch the complexity of a single case. A single leaf, even a single toothpick, has unique complexities – but rarely will we care enough to submit it to case study."

Case study research "recognizes the complexity and 'embeddedness' of social truths, allows for interpretation and is a potential 'step to action'" (Cohen & Manion,

1994:123). For the purposes of this research about these two learners' experiences of education, family, friendship, and disability, the case study inquiry appears to be the best fit. Clough and Barton (1995:2), in their appeal to researchers to reflect on the relationship between self and the research process, quote Shotter (1993:38) as saying that:

> by our insistence upon the use of certain professional textual practices we do not allow ourselves to be influenced by our identities, the academic professionals we are. Thus no matter how benevolent we may be towards those we study – the fact is that 'we' do not make sense of 'their' lives in 'their' terms. While what 'they' say is treated as 'data', they themselves are not treated seriously as being able to speak about their own lives …

Case study provides an opportunity for those who are generally spoken on behalf of, to speak for themselves.

3.2.4.3 Types of Case Study

Stake (1994:237-239) distinguishes between an intrinsic and an instrumental case study. The intrinsic case study he describes as being undertaken primarily because the case in itself is interesting. There is the intention of better understanding the case itself.

In a subsequent publication Stake (1995:3) gives an example of an intrinsic case study, and says an intrinsic case study happens when, for example, a teacher decides to study a student having difficulty or when we have curiosity about a particular agency. The objective here is to learn about that particular case.

The instrumental case study, on the other hand, is where a particular case is examined to provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory. The author states that with the instrumental case study, the case plays a "supportive role" in that it assists in exploring an external interest. An instrumental case study has a research question and a need for general understanding, where the studying of a particular case might lend insight into the research question.

It could be argued that the notion of a purely intrinsic case study is difficult to sustain. This kind of case study suggests an a-contextual approach to situations. This is not

consistent with Stake's own account of how case study research can advance our understanding of the social world which is being studied.

In Stake's (1995) example of a teacher studying a student with difficulties, the question of why the teacher decided to study that particular child can be asked. Certainly specific issues must arise in the mind of the teacher and those issues are informed by or embedded in theories or the worldview that that teacher holds. To distinguish between intrinsic and instrumental case studies in the sense that Stake (1995) does, is contradictory as most decisions to study particular cases are generally generated by a "research question". In this work, the decision to study the lives of these two intellectually disabled learners is motivated and informed by a research question.

Interpretivism precludes an a-contextual consideration of any issue or consideration of an issue solely for the sake of the issue in and of itself. No case can be studied purely for the value of the case itself, in the sense that Stake (1995:3) describes. In the case of these two learners, there is the effort of valuing the case in itself, but that valuation has an agenda of making a political, social and academic statement about the lives of children with intellectual impairment. Their stories are generally not heard in the political, social and academic arenas.

3.2.4.4 Concerns about Case Studies

A common criticism raised against case study research is the question of generalisability of the case, as case studies by their nature are difficult to generalise. "'How can you generalize from a single case?' Is the frequently heard question" (Yin, 1884:21). The author reflects on the issue by stating that:

> case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a single 'sample' and the investigator's goal is to expand and generalize theories (analytical generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalizations) (Yin, 1884:21).

Jensen and Rogers (2001:232-247) argue that case studies to some extent trade *detail* for *generalisability*. They say that critics of case studies believe that detailed information is of little worth, as it is never clear whether findings are generalisable to

other "units of study" or "entities" (Cleary, 1992:55-61; McCurdy & Cleary, 1984:49-55). On the other hand, critics of large-sample studies object that rich details of each "unit" or "entity" in large samples are overlooked or simply assumed away. Jensen and Rogers (2001:232-247) argue that the solution lies in the *cumulative study* of case studies. The foundations for criticisms cannot hold, as the generalisability of each study is addressed while the richness of detail of the "units" remains preserved with cumulative studies.

The cases of Anna and Christy will provide richness of detail and if their cases are added to the body of knowledge produced by "voices" of other disabled and marginalized children, to a *cumulative study* of cases, then both the possibility of satisfactory *generalization* and satisfactory *detail* is reached as argued by Jensen and Rogers (2001).

3.2.4.5 Sample

Purposive sampling strategies were used to identify these learners. Studies working in the interpretivist paradigm typically select their samples with the goal of identifying information-rich cases that will allow for in-depth study (Mertens, 1998:261). Crowley (1995:59-60) concurs that the logic behind purposeful selection of samples in qualitative research is to identify information-rich informants who can supply the data required to answer the research question. The strategies for identifying these two learners were concerned with the diversity of information the participants were willing and able to share.

In Mertens' (1998:262-263) terms, the sampling strategy used in this study can be described as both intensity sampling and as criterion sampling. The strategy satisfies the definition of intensity sampling in that individuals who were able to provide rich information on the research question had to be identified. Intensity sampling requires knowledge on the part of the researcher as to which individuals meet the specified criterion. I knew these two learners and was fairly confident that they would be able to provide information on their lives.

For the purpose of this study the following sampling criteria were set. The learners had to:

- be below 18 years of age,

- have been labeled as "intellectually disabled",

- be willing to be part of the study,

- be able to communicate verbally,

- have had experience of mainstream and special needs education.

As the study intends to gain insight into children's views, the participants needed to be younger than 18 years, the legal and developmental period that marks the end of adolescence and the beginning of adulthood (Santrock 1999:18). The learners are both 10 years old.

The focus of the study is to represent the views of children with an intellectual disability and this dictated that the learners should have been labeled as "intellectually disabled" or as "mentally handicapped" in the context of the dominant discourse in education. This was not a difficult task, as the system in which I work categorises disabilities and provides education along those categories in special schools.

The willingness of the participants is a general ethical point that needs to be observed. Their unwillingness or hesitancy would compromise the study process, but they had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage.

As a central method of data production would be through interviewing the two learners, the learners needed to be able to communicate verbally, although non-verbal behaviour in the interviewing process was observed as well. A large proportion of learners who have been labelled as intellectually disabled, experience problematic communication (Santrock, 1999:289). Given the problematic relationship that learners with an intellectual disability have with language, it was thus important to ascertain the learners' communication competencies. This was done by reflecting on my relationship with the learners during my sustained pre-research contact with the school. Classroom observations and their teachers were also useful in establishing their verbal abilities. Anna was supported in therapy with the death of her foster mother and during this time she demonstrated relative competency in expressing herself.

In order for the learners to give a fuller picture of schooling, they were required to have had experience in mainstream schooling and special schooling. This experience base would provide a more comprehensive sketch of the kinds of difficulties that learners with an intellectual disability encounter in schools. Given the context of inclusive educational policy drives, it would also give insight into the children's experience of inclusion and exclusion in education. Both Anna and Christy were at mainstream schools previously.

Smythe and Murray (2001:195-199) state that privileging certain voices is a vexing issue, as other voices are consequently excluded. They suggest that the problem can be resolved by taking into account the special circumstances of individual cases, and I would include the researcher here as well as the learners. Given the limited scope of the study and the limited experience of the researcher in representing voices of intellectually disabled learners, approaching and selecting these two learners seemed to be justifiable and purposive.

3.3   STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

The data was produced over a period of approximately twelve months, through conversations, interviews, classroom and playground observations. Permission to undertake research at the school was negotiated with the school principal as a representative of the Western Cape Education Department and manager of the research site.

The parents of the learners were approached for their consent and the aims and procedures for the study were thoroughly discussed and outlined. Two sessions were spent where the purpose and the procedures of the study were explained to the two learners.

The procedure for implementation will be discussed in Chapter Four in more detail. The intake interview, anamnesis and the learner profile were consulted to obtain a fuller picture of each learner. Five recorded interviews were planned each with Christy and Anna. The observations were ongoing as I encountered the learners on the playground and in class, at least once a week.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Mertens (1998:23-25) states that ethics in research should be an integral part of the research planning and implementation process. The maintaining of reflexivity throughout this study hopefully will increase the critical reflection on the processes and procedures in doing this study. The following considerations are of particular significance:

- The privacy and confidentiality of the research participants. This aspect was explained at length to the children, their parents and the principal.

- Obtaining informed consent. This was adhered to. A simplified consent format was used to gain the learners' formal decision to participate in the study.

- Debriefing and support was provided where necessary. This was significant for both children, as they have experienced trauma in their lives.

Feminist writers and disability scholars have a comprehensive approach to issues of ethics (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002:157-158; Riddel, Brown & Duffield, 1995:25-41). Feminists request researchers to reflect on their ethical positions in relation to the researched. Reflexivity in the research process is a means of making explicit the play of power relations during the research endeavour. Disability scholars see ethical issues as part of every aspect and facet of a research project, from the choice of a study area to methodology, to data analysis, conclusions, and formulating recommendations (Bines, 1995:51-53).

3.5 METHODS OF DATA PRODUCTION

According to Yin (1984:19-20), the unique strength of the case study is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence – documents, artifacts, interviews and observations. In this assignment the data was produced primarily by interviews, observations in the classroom and on the playground, and this was supported and augmented by consulting learner records and documents at the school.

Preference is given to the term "data production" over the term "data collection", in agreement with Ramazanoğlu and Holland's (2002:154-156) argument that "data

production" implies that information gathered by the researcher is produced in a social process of giving meaning to the social world, as opposed to "data collection", which implies that "facts" are available out there and ready for collection. The intention with this study is the production of knowledge about the experiences of these two learners, where they are instrumental in producing that knowledge. As stated in Chapter Two, there are vast bodies of knowledge out there that are constructed and presented as indisputable facts about disabled people. But there is a dearth of knowledge about disabled people, and especially about disabled children, where they are extensively consulted.

3.5.1 Interviews

Kvale (1996:1) offers sound advice to researchers: "If you want to know how people understand their world and their life, why not talk with them." He explains further that "in an interview conversation, the researcher listens to what people themselves tell about their lived worlds, hears them express their views and opinions in their own words. The qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the subject's point of view" (Kvale, 1996:1).

Holstein and Gubrium (1997) speak of the interview method as an active meaning-making process:

> Meaning is not merely elicited by apt questioning, not simply transported through respondent replies; it is actively and communicatively assembled in the interview encounter. Respondents are not so much repositories of knowledge – treasuries of information awaiting excavation, so to speak – as they are constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997:114).

The attempt to construct knowledge about the lived experiences of Anna and Christy will be situated mainly in conversations with these two children. Fortunately the hurdle of gaining trust and building rapport is not an issue, because, as mentioned earlier, these two learners know me. I had the opportunity of working with them in a classroom as one of their teachers during their first year at the school.

The interviews over the study period of about 12 months mainly took the form of semi-structured interviews, whereby the learners would freely answer questions and

were encouraged to express their feelings. The learners were also consulted and briefed about the objectives of the study and what I hoped to achieve with their involvement.

Mertens (1998:323) alerts researchers to the challenges that interviewing people with intellectual disabilities can present, because of the abilities or communication needs of the respondents. Her point is pertinent to this study. Anna and Christy do experience some difficulties with communication, but their relationship to written language is more problematic than with spoken language. In this sense, interviewing seems to be an appropriate way of generating data.

The point that Benjamin (2002:3) makes about intellectual impairment in terms of the social model of disability was borne in mind throughout the interviews and the data analysis stages of the study. She states that although committed to a social model of disability, it is difficult to claim that intellectual disability is merely a social construction. What is undisputed is that the attendant meanings and practices are socially and politically constructed in ways that discriminate against people with intellectual disabilities.

Other experienced researchers such as Porter, Ouvry, Morgan and Downs (2001:12-16), who have worked with people with an intellectual disability, recommend that a person well known to the informants may be useful to clarify language difficulties. Other researchers, like Booth and Booth (1994:415-424) and Biklen and Moseley (1988:155-162), warn about the pitfalls of having this significant other, in that the presence of this person may constrain the respondents' reports and the children's views may become embellished with the person's own experiences.

Goodley (1998:117-118) comments that some literature (Sigelman et al., 1980:479-486; 1982:511-518) that deals with drawing information from people with learning disabilities has suggested that leading questions are inappropriate, as learning disabled people have a tendency to respond affirmatively to questions, regardless of their content. Leading questions or "probing" are a necessary part of the exchange of information between two people, and the interview is not regarded as a collection of verbal responses, but as conversations that arise in an interpersonal relationship

(Kvale, 1996:157-159). Accordingly, I did not refrain from using leading questions in the interviews. For example, when I asked Anna about class activities:

I: Would you like to plan what you must do?

S: Yes.

I: Like what kinds of things would you like to do?

S: I ... to draw stuff like ... buttons and stuff. You put it together and then you make, and then you make circles from it.

Here she was referring to the making of a collage, an activity she particularly enjoyed doing the previous week.

On another occasion with Christy:

I: Hou jy van die skool?   [Do you like this school?]

S: Ja.   [Yes.]

I: Watter dinge hou jy van in die skool?   [What things do you like about the school?]

S: Die juffrouens. Die teachers slaan nie vir my nie.   [The teachers. The teachers do not hit me.]

I: Het hulle jou by die ander skool geslaan?   [Did they hit you at the other school?]

S: Ja ... hulle slaan.   [Yes ... they hit.]

The five interview sessions were each approximately 40 minutes long. Each interview was recorded and transcribed. I generally tried to maintain a sequence of themes to explore with the learners, but at the same time remained open to changes in the sequence and flow, as determined and indicated by the direction they steered the conversations.

3.5.2 Observations

According to Darlington and Scott (2002:76), "combining interviews and observation is a common approach in research with children and with people with learning disabilities." I used observations in class and on the playground during flexitime and formal learning and teaching time to corroborate and inform my understanding of their experiences. This is also a measure to safeguard against making incorrect

assumptions about what was said during the interviews. The two learners are children, both have a disability and experience difficulty in their verbal skills, thus the combination of the in-depth interview and observation technique is particularly useful for the study.

Darlington and Scott (2002:74-91) see observation as a data production method that affords access to events as they happen. In a sense my observation of my work environment preceded the formulation of a study project topic, where I had the opportunity of exploring the possibilities for research. Adler and Adler (1998:88-89) speak of observation as the least noticeably intrusive of all research techniques and one that has potential for adding rigour to research activities when combined with other methods. In this study, observation – where interactions of these learners with their environment and with those in their environment are observed – complements the in-depth interview that demands intricate involvement. My presence in the settings, in the classroom and on the playground, is where I am usually found as part of the course of my work. This minimized the possibility of the learners altering their behaviour in my presence.

As observation is not the primary method of data production, the value of the observations lies more in verifying my interpretations of the interviews and in gaining insight into the sub-themes of friendships and social interaction in the lives of these learners.

3.5.3 Documents and Records

Mertens (1998:354-325) reminds us that all organizations leave trails of documents and records and that the qualitative researcher must consult these documents and records to provide background information that would give insight into the dynamics of everyday functioning. Hodder (1998:110-113) refers to documents and records as "mute evidence" that is always socially and ideologically embedded and that yields new meanings in different contexts. Mindful of the purposes and contexts of official documents and texts, the school documents and learner profiles were used to provide historical and contextual insight and supplementary information about the life histories of Anna and Christy.

3.6   ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

As Miles and Huberman (1994:22-23) state, the production of data and data analysis should exist interactively with one another and represent a dynamically interactive cyclic process. They assert that data analysis is a complex process of making meaning that involves moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract conceptions, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation. Papadopoulous, Scanlon and Lees (2002:273) also comment that qualitative data analysis is a pluralist, cyclical, continuous process that goes through data organization and data interpretation.

In their discussion of an Interactive Model of Data Analysis, Miles and Huberman (1998:181) see data analysis as linked to three subprocesses: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. They explain that the processes occur before, during and after data collection. The model is illustrated in the following way:
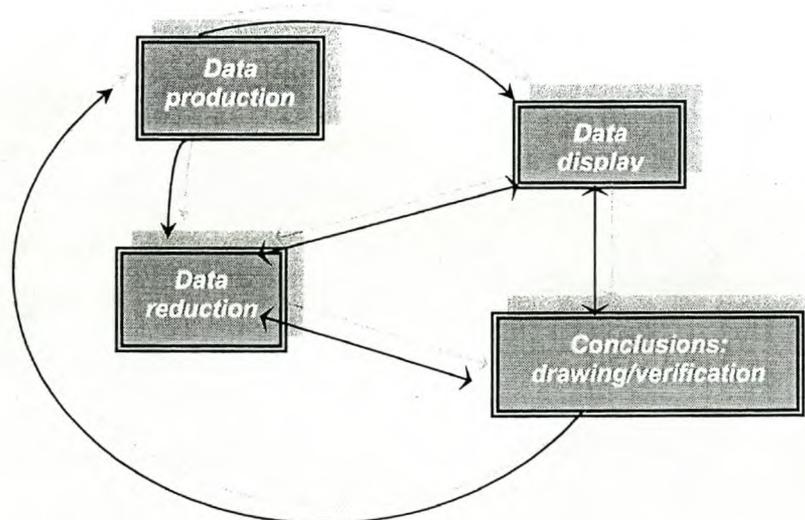
Figure 3.2:   The Interactive Model: Components of Data Analysis
(Miles and Huberman, 1998: 181)

Considering the limited nature of the study, the model will be applied in a limited way. A brief discussion of the aspects of the model follows.

Data Production

This was attained though interviews, observations and accessing records and documents. These methods of data production have been discussed, and the procedure is detailed in Chapter Four.

Data Reduction

The research question, research aim and conceptual framework of the study determined the data reduction. The intention of gaining the views of learners about aspects of their lived experiences reduced the potential universe of data to that of the interviews with the learners. Potentially their parents, friends, professionals, teachers and family could also have been interviewed. As Miles and Huberman (1998:180) point out, once the interviews and observation notes have been obtained, the summaries and coding and writing are also instances of data reduction.

Although the actual interview transcripts were not reduced, the information from records and documents was not used in its entirety, as some aspects did not pertain to the study directly. For example, the contents of Christy's and Anna's mothers' visits to the school that are included in the official documents and all the notes of an incident report form that teachers are required to fill out were not directly pertinent to the study.

The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed to facilitate the interpretation of the data. The data from all the sources – interviews, observations, field notes and records and documents – were analyzed, and emerging themes from the data were mapped.

The data analysis proceeded using the following guidelines:

- The data were divided into units of paragraphs or lines.

- The main sifting question was: "Does the text tell of the lived experiences of the two learners?" This was asked of all sources of data – the interviews, observation notes, and the records and documents.

- The data were organized into life areas and themes that emerged from all sources of data for these areas.

A start list of codes was devised to guide the analysis of the data as suggested by Mertens (1998:351), who quotes Miles and Huberman (1994) as recommending an initial list of category codes. The following is the start list of codes for this study that was constructed from the life areas that the learners would share their experiences about.

Life Areas

SC:	schooling
FA:	family
FR:	friendship
DI:	disability

For each of the life areas, the aspects of the life areas were subsequently coded. For example, the following codes were used for aspects of the life area schooling:

Aspects: Life Area – Schooling (SC)

SCGNRL:	schooling in general
SCMS:	mainstream
SCSS:	special school
SCLR:	learning
SCS:	self and schooling

A further set of codes was developed as the themes emerged from across the different life areas. For example:

Acc:	Acceptance
Alien:	Alienation
Ambv:	Ambivalence
Angr:	Anger
Def:	Deficiency
Dvnt:	Deviancy

These were coded for the entire interview transcript. See Annexure 3 for a detailed list of the codes used for the data analysis.

Data Display

Data display is defined by Miles and Huberman (1998:180) as an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing. There were five interviews with each learner and this did not necessitate an elaborate data display. The interviews were read and the text was coded in keeping with the codes assigned to the different themes. The data display in for the themes occurring in the text can be seen in Annexure 5.

Conclusion Drawing / Verifying

From the data display, the frequency of the dominant themes for Christy and Anna were discussed and written into the different life areas for Christy and Anna respectively. The conclusions were verified from the observation notes and the records and documents. These are discussed in Chapter Five.

3.7   DATA VERIFICATION

Mertens (1998:181) provides a list of aspects for judging the quality in qualitative research, which is a summary of Lincoln's (1989) criteria for judging qualitative research. Her criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability parallel the criteria of internal validity, external validity, and reliability, respectively, used for evaluating quantitative research. They are considered below.

3.7.1 Credibility

There are concerns about the credibility of data generated from direct interviews with people with intellectual disabilities. Rodgers (1999:425-426) speaks of acquiescence and regency, where a person chooses the last in a series of options. She offers a method of ensuring credibility that can be built into interviews, even when they are held as structured interviews. Using the guidelines proposed by Rodgers (1999:425-426) and Mertens (1998:181), the following will be considered:

- *Prolonged and substantial engagement:* there is sustained engagement at the site of the study, where I work.

- *Peer debriefing:* regular conversations were held with two peers, one in higher education strategic planning and management, and one a teacher in special needs education.

- *Progressive subjectivity:* my own developing constructions were monitored in meetings with my supervisor where I shared my statement of beliefs with an open mind, to be challenged if necessary.

- *Triangulation:* The records, documents and the different methods of data production were used to cross check biographical details and information about family structures.

3.7.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the applicability of the study to other contexts and settings. In terms of transferability, the researcher has the responsibility of providing "thick description". This is extensive and careful description of time, context, place and culture (Mertens, 1998:183). Enough detail should be provided for the reader to judge whether the case can be generalized to other settings.

In this study the details of the school context, special education provision and mainstream educational provision are described. The description of the process of the study is provided in detail. My responsibility, in terms of transferability, lies in providing a rich and adequately dense description to provide adequate information for making comparisons with the experiences of other children with intellectual disabilities.

3.7.3 Dependability

Dependability of a qualitative study is the equivalent of 'reliability' in quantitative methods. Reliability refers to the degree to which the same results would be obtained if the study were to be repeated. In a qualitative study, the focus shifts from "reliability" to dependability. In this study, where meanings are constructed as the

process of research is embarked on, change is to be expected. Mertens (1998:184) suggests that this change should be documented, tracked and inspectable.

Merriam (1991:172) suggest that an audit trail needs to be left that would describe in detail how data was collected, decisions made and how the data was analysed.

For this study a detailed description will be provided of the process of data generation and analysis. Transcripts, tapes, notes, records and documents will be retained if the original data need to be consulted.

3.7.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the qualitative parallel of objectivity. This means that the influence of the researcher's judgment is minimized and the data are not figments of the researcher's imagination (Mertens, 1998:184).

To strengthen the confirmability of the data, I have shared observation notes, transcripts and review school reports, records and documentation with a peer in special educational needs.

3.8 REFLECTION

Representing the lived experiences of children with an intellectual disability will not be a simple matter of adopting a method of data production and analysis unproblematically. Corbett (1998:55) warns that the issue of voice in research is complex and multi-layered, with a need to provide a means of expressing beyond the conventional, which most accurately conveys the perceptions and experiences of vulnerable people.

The following chapter deals with the implementation of the study. The study is located, the details of the learners and the school are provided, the methods of data production are described, and the themes and patterns from the interviews, observations and records are presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the implementation of the study is presented in detail. The study is located, where the history and the nature of the research site is given. The learners are introduced, mainly from the information of the school documents and records. The process of the study implementation is described with a diagrammatic representation of the dominant themes that emerged for Anna and Christy.

4.2 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted at a special school for learners with "mental handicap". The school is situated in the Mitchell's Plain area on the premises of a large psychiatric hospital in the Western Cape. The school is a result of a historical partnership between the Department of Health and the Department of Education. The school was established to cater for the needs of learners with a "severe mental handicap" in the area, with an initial enrolment of 67 learners in 1987. The school also serviced a large number of the learners who were institutionalised at the hospital.

The current enrolment stands at 250 learners, who all live with their families in Mitchell's Plain, Khayelitsha or Philippi. The learners are transported to and from school with a fleet of five buses. The staffing consists of one principal, one deputy principal, two occupational therapists, one psychologist, one nursing sister, 16 class-based educators, two receptionists, one foreman and three general assistants. This staff sector is directly employed by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED).

The governing body further employs five drivers and nine general assistants. The governing body employees are responsible for the transporting of learners and their duties commence at 06H00 with the first learner being picked up as early as 06H20. Once the learners have been transported to school, the drivers and the assistants work as assistant class teachers until the end of the school day.

The learners are organised into classes based on age cohorts. There are four phases: the Junior Phase caters for learners between the ages of 7 and 9; the Middle Phase has learners between 10 and 13; the Senior Phase has learners between 13 and 15. The Prevocational Phase provides for learners from 16 to 18 years old. Each of the Junior classes has in addition to their class teacher, a permanent assistant teacher. The Middle phase also has an assigned class assistant, but this staff rotates, depending on organisational needs. The Senior and Prevocational classes each have a class assistant for at least three days a week. The average enrolment per class is 13 learners, with the Senior and Prevocational classes having about 16 learners per class.

The 16 classes are two Afrikaans classes, one English class and one Xhosa class in each of the four phases. The Afrikaans speaking learners are thus in the majority. Afrikaans is also the dominant language of the Mitchell's Plain area.

The process of admission of learners to the school has changed since 2001. The WCED policy requires that learners be assessed and authorisation for the learners to be exempted from mainstream schooling be obtained from the Directorate of Special Education Needs. The learners who participated in the study were assessed in April 2000 by an assessment panel consisting of a school psychologist from the Mitchell's Plain School Clinic, an occupational therapist, a nursing sister, and an educator from the school.

Learners are typically routed from the major children's hospital, the local psychiatric hospital, other local hospitals, school clinics, schools, Cape Mental Health Organisation, and parents. The psychologists attached to the school clinics each service approximately 20 schools and rarely have the capacity to do formal psychological testing or extensive interviewing for admission purposes. Their recommendations are largely based on the developmental, scholastic and family history of the learners referred for admission, as well as observation during the interview.

The school follows the mainstream curriculum as far as possible, with adaptations made to suit the pace of the learners. The same learning outcomes and the same assessment standards are applied as per the Curriculum Policy Document. The school is in training to support educators in translating the Revised National

Curriculum Statement for the needs of the learners at the school. Typically a class will have learners at different grade levels for the different learning areas as well as learners who are at different grade levels for the outcomes per learning areas. For example a learner may be at a Grade 1 level for the Learning Area: Language, but at a Grade R level for the Learning Outcome: Language Structure and Use, and at a Grade 1 level for the Learning Outcomes: Speaking and Reading and Viewing.

The school has a strong sport and cultural activities component. The learners are actively encouraged and trained for different sport codes, with the school successfully entering learners for local sport competitions and for international disability Olympic events.

4.3 INTRODUCING THE LEARNERS

4.3.1 Christy

School Record and Documents

The school maintains four sets of records for each learner. The main record, in the principal's office, contains the intake information as well as other confidential information. The nursing sister has her own set of records, pertaining to the medical concerns of each learner. The occupational therapist will have her set of records, that capture the occupational therapeutic information of the learner. The class teacher has a profile that constitutes a panoramic view of the learner's scholastic history and biographic details.

Christy is a 10-year-old Afrikaans-speaking boy, who lives in Mitchell's Plain with both his parents, who are married. He has four siblings: three sisters and one brother. He is the second youngest in the family. In addition, his parents also care for his late sister's two children of five years and two years. His brother is married and lives with the family in their backyard in a wooden house.

Christy was involved in a motor vehicle accident in January 1999 where he was hit by a taxi on the first day of Grade 2, at his mainstream school. He sustained a head injury and received medical attention at the local day hospital. He has had no further medical investigation. His father is disabled after a spinal cord and right hand tendon injury, sustained in a stabbing incident in September 2000. His father is unable to walk and uses a wheelchair. Christy's sister was murdered in November 2001.

He was admitted to the school in 2001 on recommendation of the assessment panel. He was referred to the school clinic by his teacher. The intake records describe him as "slow" and "not being able to think", "not being able to write his name", "unable to recognise numbers", and as having "weak writing skills", with an "average language development". His personality is described as "solitary, sitting, shy and not cattish, with no fighting" (Anamnesis, 2000).

His mainstream teacher's records describe him as starting to speak only in August 1998. He repeated Grade 1 and was still unable to write his name in his second year in Grade 1. "Kan nie sy naam skryf nie, of enige ander aktiwiteit doen nie want hy skryf nie, knip nie, kleur of teken nie." And "Verseg om te skryf / te praat i.v.m werk". [Cannot write his name or do any other activity because he does not write, cut out, colour in, or draw. / Refuses to write or speak about work.] Further comments were that he was unable to follow instructions and was reluctant to talk about schoolwork. The teacher described him as passive, with no self-confidence and reluctant to attempt any tasks. It is noted that the school had contacted his mother to discuss Christy's "problems" (Learner Profile, 1999).

The occupational therapy report (OT Report, 2001) described Christy as developmentally delayed by two years in the areas of fine motor ability and perception. The assessment of his gross motor functioning described him as age appropriate. All new learners are assessed by the school's occupational therapists and in his case, group or individual therapy was not recommended as "further development will be stimulated through class activities such as drawing, colouring in, painting, threading, and cutting" (OT Report, 2001).

He is in the Junior Phase at the special school and his teacher describes him as a helpful, neat and curious learner who is willing to try tasks with conscientiousness and diligence. She reports that Christy has made progress in the areas of writing and reading although he has not reached appropriate grade levels for his age in most Learning Areas.

Interviews

The first meeting with Christy was not easy. I was not sure whether I initially succeeded in clarifying the intention of the study. After a second session where I explained to him that he was not in therapy but that he is was going to have

conversations with me about his schooling, family and friends, he seemed more willing. Initially it was a challenge to get him to enter into a focussed conversation with me. A strategy I used was to bring up the topic of his pigeons, which I knew he had a keen interest in. Once the conversation was more fluid, I would then focus on the interview. He found the tape recorder intimidating and allowed me to record only two of the five interviews. He spoke slowly enough for me to write what he was saying. I also asked his class assistant to verify the information, where necessary, as he spoke more spontaneously with her on the bus and in the class.

Observations

I saw Christy every day and speaking to his teacher and assistant teacher was part of my core responsibilities at the school. I observed his class activities and his playground activities. In Spradley's (1980) terms, as quoted in Mertens (1998:318), the observation can be thought of as "moderate participation", as I observed both learners; but my role as a staff member on the playground and in the classroom necessitated my interaction with them.

4.3.2 Anna

School Records and Documents

Anna is a 10-year-old girl also living in the Mitchell's Plain area with her foster parents of about one year. Prior to that she had lived with her former foster family and their three biological children since the age of 11 months, for nine years. With the death of her foster mother Anna was subsequently removed from that family and placed with a different family. Her current foster family consists of her foster parents and four children, of whom one is their biological daughter. Anna's younger foster sister, from her previous family, has moved with her to the new family. In addition, the family fosters a girl of 14 years old who has multiple disabilities. Both Anna's foster parents are not in permanent employment.

The intake record gives the following information. Anna was referred for placement at a special school by her mainstream class teacher. She presented with "general scholastic delay, struggling in reading and numeracy" (Anamnesis, 2000). Her writing and long-term memory were reported as being "weak".

Her biological parents were both described as "alcoholic" and her developmental history was stated as being "Foetal Alcohol Syndrome". It is also reported that she

had had a "broken left hand and broken right leg" before the age of 11 months. At the time of supporting her with her foster mother's death, she had disclosed to the social worker and the psychologist that her foster father had sexually abused her. The district surgeon confirmed that she had been sexually abused for a prolonged period. According to Anna the abuse happened between 1998 and 2001.

Her personality was described as "friendly, spontaneous and attention-seeking" (Anamnesis, 2000). Her behavioural problems were identified as "abnormal sexual behaviour when dancing" (Anamnesis, 2000). In terms of her response to disciplining, it was noted that her mother had to "speak ten times and then first hit" her before she "listened" (Anamnesis, 2000). Her medical contact record at the school evidenced that she had been to the nursing sister's office at least 16 times for medical attention, which is significantly more than the average learner visits per year. The reasons for her visits ranged from sores, lacerations, bruises, boils, eye infections, scalp infections, to fevers and vitamin supplements.

The school has no record of correspondence from her mainstream teachers, but a note was made about her distractibility and her problems in all learning areas, as reported by the mainstream teacher (Learner Profile, 1999).

Anna adjusted reasonably well to her placement in special school, but her behaviour remained a challenge to the teachers. Her teachers reported that Anna was distracting the other learners and that she took things without asking. The stealing was a focus of brief therapy with Anna. She was also in therapy to support her during the loss of her foster mother.

Her initial placement with the Junior Phase was short. She was recommended for placement with the Middle Phase, after being with the Junior group for six months, as she seemed more mature than most of the learners in the Junior Phase. This progress to the Middle Phase was fruitful in that the group dynamics were more conducive to her learning and her behaviour became less challenging.

Interviews

The first session set the tone for the subsequent interview sessions, where she seemed excited at the prospect of having conversations with me about her life. Anna conversed easily during the five interview sessions. She did seem to have a slight stammer when she became excited. During the interview sessions she was confident

and observant. She often commented on my activities during the interviews and sometimes found it exciting to be recorded and to hear herself on the tape recorder, when played back to her.

In support of Goodley's (1998:117-118) point regarding the contrived notion of common acquiescence of learners with intellectual disability during interviews, I found that Anna and Christy did not simply acquiesce. Anna did not hesitate to pull a frown to indicate, as most children would do, that she did not follow my questions and at times she insisted on completing her stories when I mistook a pause as a conclusion. She also found no problem with disagreeing with some of my statements or rephrasing of her responses. Christy, on the other hand, had reflected longer and took more time to respond. From my experience of working with him in a classroom, I felt confident that he simply needed more time to process my questions or my comments.

There were stages, with Anna, as she had been in a previous therapeutic relationship with me in my internship year, that the sessions evolved to a level that she required therapeutic support. She became distressed when referring to the sexual abuse she had suffered, and support was provided for her at the time.

Observations

As with Christy, I saw Anna every day and spoke to her at least three times a week. I also saw her class teacher daily and she would bring to my attention any concerns about Anna, or anything she thought might be useful for the study.

I observed Anna in class as well as on the playground. As mentioned previously, my presence on the playground was unobtrusive as I am intermittently, as part of my work, present on the playground and in the classroom. As with Christy, the observation can be described as moderate participation.

4.4   STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

4.4.1 Procedure

The data was produced over a period of approximately 12 months, by means of conversations, interviews, classroom and playground observations. Anna was the focus for the first six months and Christy the focus for the subsequent six months. I had planned to work with both of them simultaneously, but my workload increased

significantly and I had to make decisions about practicalities that would not compromise the study or my work obligations at the school. This decision made the study manageable, as being a novice qualitative researcher, I found that the data and the processes of reflection in working with Anna sometimes overwhelming.

In January of 2002 permission to undertake research at the school was obtained from the school principal. Ramazanoğlu and Holland (2002:156-157) and Miller (1998:64-66) refer to this process as "negotiating with the gatekeepers". The process of negotiating access, fortunately, did not require much persuasion of the value of the research. The notion of "giving voice" and "offering the perspectives of intellectually disabled learners" appealed to the principal teacher. She felt confident that the school did their best they could for the learners and communicated a commitment to the provision of "education" and not a "child-minding service" nor a "day-care center" to learners with intellectual impairment. As manager of the school, she willingly agreed that the research could be undertaken at the school.

The parents of the learners were approached for their consent and the aims and procedures for the study were discussed and outlined. In this respect part of my responsibilities was to liaise with the parent community. Prior to the formal commencement of the study I had obtained verbal consent from Anna's foster mother in 2001.

With the death of her foster mother, and the commencement of the study, I negotiated with her new foster parents. This proceeded without any objections after concerns about confidentiality and the learners' rights were clarified. Anna's new foster father seemed keen to assist Anna and the school in any way that he could.

Christy's mother only came in after the third appointment was scheduled. She consented and seemed to think that it was not necessary for me to have called her in especially for consent, as she did not have taxi fare to travel back home. She came to school on the school bus for the purpose of the appointment, and used the contact meeting to provide extensive information about the family and their financial difficulties.

The two learners gave their verbal consent after a session of explaining the purpose and the procedures of the study.

4.5   ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Mauthner and Doucet (1998:38-39) describe data analysis as a critical stage in the research process, for it carries the potential to decrease or amplify the volume of our respondents' voices. It has the potential of being a deeply disempowering part of research, in which respondents have little or no control. It is also the part of the study project where I was starkly confronted with power dynamics: I had to make choices and decisions on how to interpret their words about their lives, realising that their words and stories could be interpreted in different ways.

The goal of the data analysis was to gain an understanding of these two intellectually disabled learners' views and their experiences of schooling, family, friendships and disability. Subsequent to an interview, at the start of another interview session the contents were summarised where there was opportunity to ascertain the authenticity of the identified themes.

4.5.1 Transcription

As mentioned, the five audio recordings of Anna's interviews and two of the five interviews with Christy were transcribed. These involved careful and repeated listening to recordings during which there were opportunities for "repeated and detailed examination of events of interaction" and the organisation of talk, and also extending the range of the observations which were made (Heritage, 1984:238).

Although her mother tongue is Afrikaans, Anna is in an English class and Christy in an Afrikaans class. Christy preferred to speak Afrikaans and Anna spoke mainly in English, but defaulted to Afrikaans when she needed to and also when she became emotional. Christy's interviews were not translated into English, so as to preserve the subtleties and dialogue that enhance meaning and might have been lost in the translation. (See Annexure 1 for examples of transcribed interviews.)

Their status as intellectually disabled learners may put them in a problematic position in terms of language and communication, given the centrality of language in living and making one's meanings known (Atkinson & Walmsley, 1999:203). Their difficulties were more significant in the reading and writing aspects of communication. They experienced minimal difficulty with talking and were able to, through their talk, reflect their versions of their experiences.

On the issue of language Fulcher (1995:17), in keeping with the social model of disability, says: "the idea that communication difficulties are one-sided and belong to the individual with a … disability is not *culturally literate*"; the difference is better understood as a cultural gap in communication, as a cultural divide between the person with a disability and other persons. In terms of these two learners, the experience of a cultural gap in communication, at least on my part, was not obvious. This could be due to extensive working years in the community as well as a knowledge of the contexts of the learners at the school.

Anna and Christy's experiences and responses will be dealt with in separate sections in the themes that emerged from the data produced. I attempted to organise the interviews and observations around the topics of schools and learning, family, friendships, and disability.

4.5.2 Reflecting on the Process and Procedures of the Study

Bines, Swain and Kaye (1998:64) speak of the comfortable rug of neutrality and assumed progress through research being pulled away through the development of more self-critical approaches to research. The study has been a profoundly significant point in my own understanding and appreciation of research and disability issues. Barton (1998:31) states in agreement that:

> This is not a smooth linear process. It is disturbing, complicated, contradictory and extremely demanding on time, thought and emotions. For the researcher, recognising oneself as a learner, cultivating a sense of humility in the light of the richness and profundity of the human subject and one's own limited skills and understandings, appreciating that one's work is never final or beyond criticism and thus always partial and incomplete, are crucial elements of the critical self-awareness that is being advocated.

As discussed in Chapter Two, heed is paid to the call for researchers to reflect on their particular roles in the research process (Clough & Barton, 1995:1-5). Throughout I attempted to remain mindful of the power relations within the study where knowledge was produced about special and mainstream education and about disability.

I remained acutely aware of my ambiguous status: as one problematising special needs education and at the same time being engaged in the very processes that construct special education in Clough and Barton's (1995:3) terms. I had as an

agenda in the study, the intention of raising the status of these two learners in a context where their opinions are usually questioned and where they are not seen as fit to represent their own meanings and contribute to the social history of intellectual disability and childhood. I worked at re-presenting their experiences of special school placement, which potentially could critique special schools. At the same time I had contractual obligations to the Western Cape Education Department as an employee in special education. A part of my core responsibilities is educational placement of learners. I often found this a difficult position to be in.

Another issue concerning the dynamics of power relations that confronted me was "doing research with children". Children are a socially silenced group. Their position is intensified when they are disabled children. In the same way that disabled persons are represented by others, their realities and experiences have been made known through adults speaking on their behalf (Alldred, 1998:149-167).

There were no clear solutions to these dilemmas that I faced, but becoming and remaining aware, critical and reflexive, enforced a sedulous consciousness that guided my ways of working with these two learners. "Reflexivity means reflecting upon and understanding our own personal, political and intellectual autobiographies as researchers and making explicit where we are located in relation to our research respondents" (Mauthner & Doucet, 1998:121). It was in maintaining a reflexive stance that these difficulties were at least, made more manageable.

4.6   DATA VERIFICATION

4.6.1 Credibility

As set out in Chapter Three, I adopted Mertens' (1998:181) guidelines to enhance credibility if the study.

- *Prolonged and substantial engagement*: As mentioned, I am employed at the site of research and the daily contact with the learners and their teachers and their assistant teachers was useful and added an element of consistency and confidence to the study.

- *Peer debriefing*: The conversations with peers, one in higher education and one in special needs education, were useful in discussing my own assumptions and values during the process. Mertens (1998:182) recommends a disinterested peer,

which the person involved in higher education planning played throughout the study.

- *Progressive subjectivity*: In sharing my beliefs and constructions with my supervisor, many of my ideas and thoughts were clarified. It provided the necessary thrust to remained attentive to and focussed on the aims of the study.

- *Triangulation*: I used the records and documents and consulted significant people in the learners' lives to verify and confirm information from the interviews and observations. I remained aware of the challenge to triangulate in a non-discrediting way what these learners shared in the interviews. They were relatively reliable in their versions of sequences of events and persons.

4.6.2 Transferability

I saw my obligation in this regard as providing enough contextual information so that whoever needs to can decide whether comparisons can be made in other settings.

4.6.3 Dependability

Following the recommendation of Merriam (1991:172) to leave an audit trail, discussion about the data analysis is given in this chapter. The transcripts, tapes, notes and documents are retained and the original data are available. Annexure 1 is an example of transcripts of interviews.

4.7 THEMES FROM THE DATA

Ramazanoğlu and Holland (2002:159-161), state that just as data are not simply lying around to be collected, so meaning is not simply lying around in the data, waiting to be found. It is the work of the researcher to immerse herself in the data and decide on meanings, categories and patterns.

At meta-level, data analysis and meaning making does political work (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002:116; Mertens, 1998:22). In the same way as being mindful of the process of data production with these two learners, careful consideration must accompany the data analysis phase, so as not to reinforce stereotypes of learners with an intellectually disability.

Everyday life and the world is organised and categorised to make the complexity of life manageable (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002:160). I used familiar and emergent categories to make sense and manage the data produced.

A start list of codes was identified prior to the data production phase and examples are given in Chapter Three and the list is given in Annexure 2. These were broad topics of schooling, friendship, family and disability that the learners provided information on in the interviews. The start list is drawn from the research questions and research aims and the conceptual framework (Miles & Huberman, 1994:58-59). The initial list of codes was for: schooling, family life, friendships, and disability.

In exploring these life areas with the learners, themes were noted for each area and codes were developed for the emergent themes.

Themes that were identified across the various life areas included: powerlessness, abandonment, poverty, struggling, displacement, rejection, betrayal, survival, abuse, anger, resilience and fortitude, caring and support, violence, ridicule, acceptance, prejudice, otherness, and ability.

Conceptualised Life Areas and Aspects of Life Areas			
Life Areas	**Code**	**Aspects of life areas**	**Codes**
Schooling	**SC**	General	**SCGNRL**
		Mainstream	**SCMS**
		Special School	**SCSS**
		Learning	**SCLR**
		Self	**SCS**
Family	**FA**	General	**FAGNRL**
		Place in family	**FAPL**
		Relationships	**FAREL**
		Socio-economics	**FASE**
		Leisure	**FALEIS**
Friendship	**FR**	General	**FRGNRL**
		Special School	**FRSS**
		Mainstream	**FRMS**
		Current	**FRCF**
Disability	**DI**	General	**DIGNRL**
		Others	**DIOTH**
		Self	**DISF**
		Identity	**DIID**

Themes generated in life areas	
Themes in life areas	**Codes**
Ability	**Able**
Abuse	**Abuse**
Acceptance	**Acc**
Alienation	**Alien**
Ambivalence	**Ambv**
Anger	**Angr**
Betrayal	**Btray**
Bullying	**Bully**
Caring	**Care**
Connectedness	**Conn**
Deficiency	**Def**
Deviancy	**Dvnt**
Displacement	**Dspl**
Helping	**Help**
Medical	**Med**
Mocking/ridicule	**Mock**
Otherness	**Othnss**
Passivity	**Pass**
Playing	**Play**
Poverty	**Pov**
Powerless	**Powl**
Prejudice	**Prej**
Pride	**Pride**
Rejection	**Rej**
Resilience	**Resil**
Resistance	**Resist**
Sharing	**Share**
Support	**Supp**
Survival	**Surv**
Stigma	**Stig**
Struggle	**Strg**
Trauma	**Trau**
Violence	**Viol**

This is also provided as Annexure 3.

The texts and documents for each of the learners were re-read and the words, phrases or sentences that illustrated or represented a conceptual category were highlighted and coded.

The sections of the texts relating to the various categories were copied and pasted into categories on separate files. This exercise was effective in creating a visual display of the data. It was also invaluable in charting an overview of each learner's world. Annexure 6 represents an example.

Oscillating between the raw data, the data analysis and the aims of the study, some choices and decisions had to be made. For example, the themes that emerged were reduced to a smaller number of dominant themes by clustering them into cognitive frames informed and conceptualised by my experience, the data and the literature. This also facilitated neater discussion of the data. For example: although there were themes of ability, acceptance, care, connectedness, poverty, pride, sharing, struggle, support, trauma and violence in Christy's family life area, it was decided to highlight all the themes using the dominant theme categories of Violence and Trauma; Connectedness; Ability and Pride; and Poverty as they were dominant in his conversations of his family.

The dominant themes in Christy's life which emerged from the study were:

- Powerlessness: in the sense as having no influence or agency in his own life and being dominated by others.

- Poverty: the result of lack of material and financial resources.

- Otherness: in the sense of being different from peers.

- Alienation: in the sense of being removed or distanced.

- Violence and Trauma: as having experienced distressing and painful events in his life.

- Ability and Pride: as experiences of positive worth.

The dominant themes in Anna's life which emerged from the study were:

- Powerlessness: in relation to her social and educational position of having no influence on her life course.

- Deviancy and Otherness: as depicting her marginalisation in being different to her peers.

- Abuse: as relating to the assault on her as a person.

- Displacement: referring to her dislocation and dislodging experiences.

- Survival: as depicting her endurance and resilience.

The diagrams below depict the dominant themes associated with the life areas of Anna and Christy. The themes will be referred to in the discussion of the findings, in the next chapter, in the context of the respective life areas of Christy and Anna.

CHRISTY
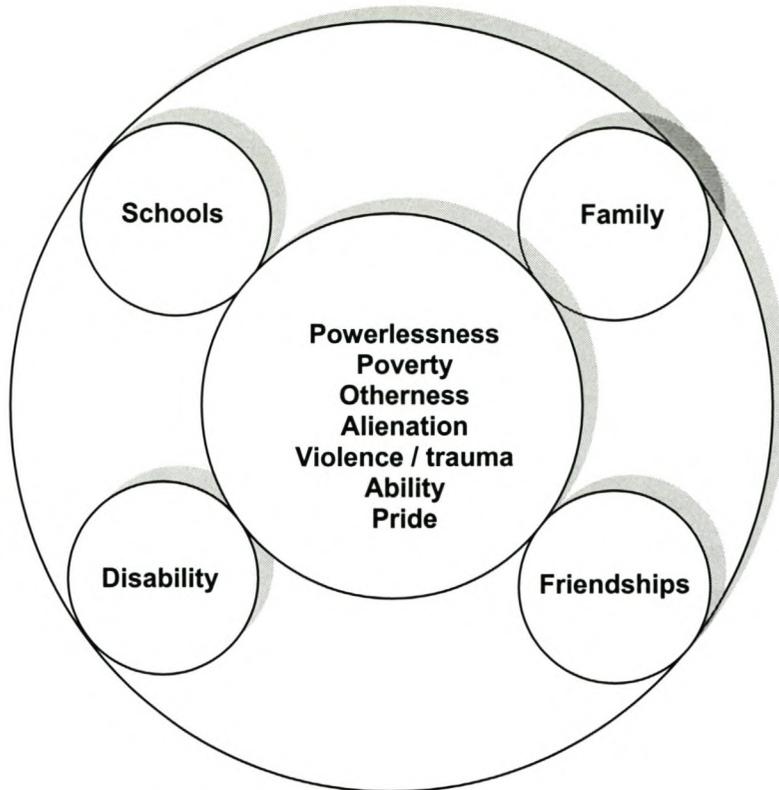
Figure 4.1: Dominant themes in Christy's life areas

ANNA
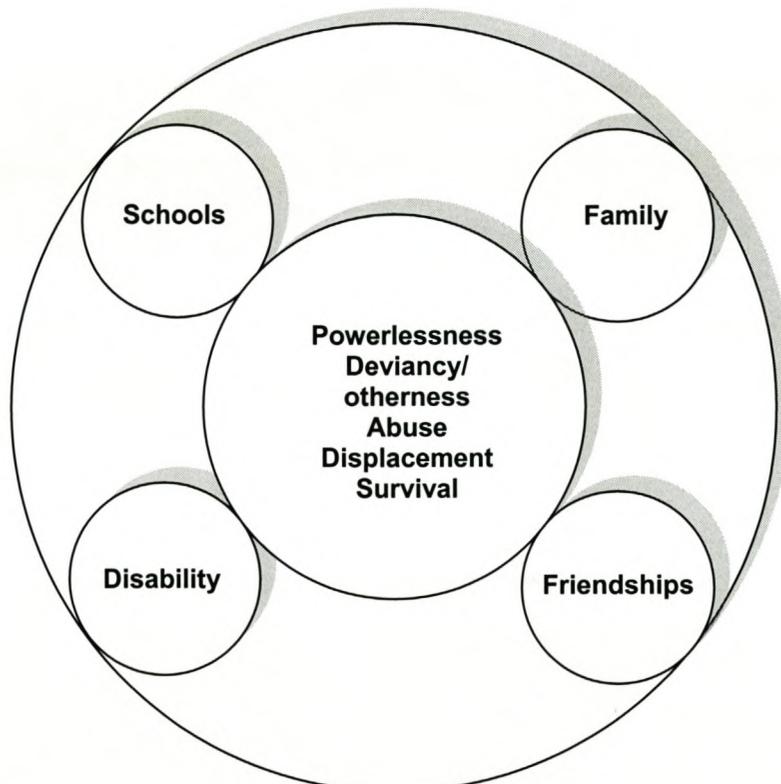
Figure 4.2: Dominant themes in Anna's life areas

Although for both Anna and Christy, the themes that emerged were relevant across the life areas, some were more pertinent to one life area than to another. In Chapter Five, consequently, the life areas are discussed with the pertinent themes for each life area.

4.8   REFLECTION

In writing on the implementation of the study, the insight of Edwards and Ribbens (1998:16-17) becomes pertinent as they emphasise that dilemmas occur at every stage of the research process. The dominance and authority of the academic discourses and conventions extend to how the research is written up and at the same time caution has to be taken to do justice to the voices of the two learners as interpretive authority is brought upon the data.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section of the study the findings will be discussed, and the themes constructed in the different life areas of the learners will be detailed. This section of the study is undertaken with the acknowledgement that interpretation and discussion of the findings are key processes in the exercise of power and that knowledge and understanding are contextually and historically grounded (Dyson, 1998:3-4; Edwards & Ribbens, 1998:17). The process is one where I am confronted with choices about meanings attributed to these learners' words, knowing that their words and actions could be interpreted in different ways.

Anna and Christy, a girl and a boy with intellectual disability, share some common experiences: they have both been excluded from mainstream school and in a sense from mainstream society. The curriculum, despite the policy of inclusive education and outcomes based education, could not support learners like Anna and Christy. Their rejection by mainstream education has profound effects on their experiences of school, family, friendships, and identity.

5.2 CHRISTY

5.2.1 On Schools and Learning

5.2.1.1 In the Mainstream School

General

Christy defines schooling in much the same way as it is defined in the literature. Packer and Greco-Brooks (1999:134) observe that "the commonsense view of schools is that they are places where knowledge and skills are taught". Says Christy: *"'n Skool is 'n plek waar kinders leer … Om te lees … en skryf … om ook 'n werk te kry as hulle groot is".* [A school is a place where children learn … to read … and write … also to find a job when they are big].

He has a clear idea of the learning areas, as he identified the areas of reading, writing and mathematics as the focus learning areas of the Foundation Phase (Grades 1 to 3).

Christy tried to make sense of his learning environment as he described the learning process and the struggles he had with the curriculum.

Passivity and Alienation

Christy's perception of his own role in schooling seems a passive one: *"Die juffrou staan daar voor; Ek sit …"* [The teacher stands in front there; I sit …]. Christy gives information on the spatialised nature of his classroom, where the roles of people in the class are subtly regulated by the spaces they occupy. Gordon, Holland and Lahelma (2000:4) remark that space is social and mental and, like language, it is never neutral. Christy's experience seems to be that learning is something that happens to children when the teacher stands in front of the class and the learners sit in their desks. It was constituted for him as such by the position that his teacher took up in the classroom. Somehow he never got it, it passed him by and it had a mythical element. *"Ek kannie daai leergoed gedoen het nie".* [I couldn't do that learning stuff].

Christy experienced his mainstream schooling as an alienating, disempowering struggle. *"Ek het gesukkel … goed van my ander skool … dit was swaar … somtyds is almal klaar, dan's ekke nog once besig".* [I struggled … stuff at my other school was difficult … sometimes everyone was finished, but I was still busy]. He was punished for his struggling with the work. He was deprived of his play during the breaks: *"Pouses maak ek my werk klaar by die ander skool. Ek was stadig … toe gaan die anders buite".* [During breaks I finished my work at the other school. I was slow … so the others went out].

Christy, like many other learners, received hidings from his teachers for not being successful and for being naughty. *"As ons stout is".* [When we are naughty].

He seems to constitute learning as having the privilege of going out during breaks, of finishing on time, not getting hidings from the teacher and not having your mother called in to school. Christy never gained membership of the learning club of his peers.

Powerlessness

Christy has been the victim of bullying at his mainstream school. Typically the learners share one playground, with the younger children occupying the same space as the older children. *"Die kinders baklei met 'n mens; die groottes maak die kleintjies seer. Hulle't goed afgevat".* [The children fight with a person; the big ones hurt the small ones. They took things].

Disabled children are often the targets of physical and emotional abuse in mainstream schools (Wade & Moore, 1993:85). At Christy's mainstream school he has been labelled as different. His reduced opportunities for socialization during breaks, while he finished his work in class, diminished his status on the playground and increased his difficulties in dealing with challenging situations on the playground.

In addition to his being labelled as different, academically, Christy does not conform to the image of "tough boy". He has a problem with fine movement control, as evidenced in the classroom and from his documents and records. Christy's deviation from the dominant scheme of "tough boy'" marked him out as a target and had negative consequences. Culturally, stereotypical characteristics associated with maleness accentuate toughness and physical strength (Baron & Byrne, 1997:183-185). Christy appears physically small for his age and he experiences muscular difficulties. Whittell and Ramcharan (2000:21-22) note that those who are positioned as vulnerable and different are often victimized by others.

Self as Deficient

Much of his learning experience was enough for him to believe that the reasons for his failure and struggles at his mainstream school were situated within himself. *"Ek kan nie geskryf het nie. Ek was stadig. Ek kan dit nie gedoen het nie".* [I couldn't write. I was slow. I couldn't do it]. He speaks of the others that tried, found it easy and got it right. *"Ja … maklik, en sometimes try hulle en dan kry hulle dit reg".* [Yes … easily; sometimes they try and they get it right].

The context for his experience of himself as deficient could be embedded in the class dynamics. The teacher's response to his difficulties exacerbated his problems. He was told that he was slow, she called his mother in, and he was deprived of playing times.

After his accident, he felt more alienated from learning activities, his interaction with the curriculum changed. His perception was that this was due to something that went wrong with him. His accident and his subsequent experiences in the classroom militated actively against him seeing himself as competent in the class.

Self as Negligibly Able

Although his main story of himself is as struggling and deficient in the areas considered the main enterprise of schooling, he mentioned his abilities, after repeated probing. He could count and he knew his colours and he helped in his mainstream class. *"Tel en die colours … soms … en help in die klas".* [Counting and the colours … sometimes … and helping in the class].

The overwhelming experience of failure in his mainstream schooling seems to dominate his value of himself in that context, and the positives appear to be few and far between. His abilities come across as counting for little in the face of the norms associated with progress in schooling. Failure seemed to have dominated in his educational experience and this might have impacted negatively on his expression and recollection of his capabilities, where he repeatedly mentions his struggles: *Ja … maar ek het gesukkel. Ek kannie al daai leergoed gedoen het nie.* [Yes … but I struggled. I couldn't do all that learning stuff]. He struggled with reading and writing and with sums.

His teacher deprived him of valued playing-time and he described the teachers as having been rude to him and scolding him. Camilleri, a disabled person, voices a similar experience: "For most of my life I have been influenced by educators … to see myself as somehow lesser than anyone non-disabled" (Camilleri, 1999:845).

5.2.1.2 In the Special School

General

Christy reflected on his current schooling experiences at a special school in a positive way. He speaks proudly of his abilities in aspects of the lessons in contrast to his reflections of powerlessness, alienation and struggles in his mainstream school experiences. He was ambivalent in the conversations comparing the experiences in the mainstream and special school context.

He observes that the main difference between his special school and his mainstream school is that there were stairs at the mainstream school, and no buses. He also observed that at the special school the day ends earlier, there is no corporal punishment, no bullying, big buses, fewer in classes, adults always watching, lots of parties and food. He mentioned that the children at the special school were not "normal".

Self as Able and Proud

Christy positions himself as able and active in the classroom at the special school. He reflects on his learning in an empowered way. *"Ja … ek ken al die woorde uit my kop uit. Ek maak altyd my werk klaar hier; … is maklik hier."* [Yes … I know all the words from memory. I always finish my work here; it's easy here].

He eagerly tells of his improvement with his handwriting, where he sees himself as central to that progress. *"… Ek het ook myself geleer om beter en beter te skryf … Ek het gepractice."* [I also taught myself to write better and better … I practised].

Observations of his interactions and participations during classroom activities tell of a learner who enjoys school and the activities that take place in his class. He shows an eagerness to please and seems to find intrinsic satisfaction in engaging with learning tasks. Christy seldom stays away from school and makes a point to others who stay absent: *"Nou weet jy nie wat ons gister gedoen het nie … but ek kan jou wys."* [Now you won't know what we did yesterday … but I can show you].

He speaks of being recognized and being acknowledged at the special school. At his old school, he says, *"Daar's te baie kinders daar … en die lang lyn …"* [There were too many children there … and a long line]. His insignificance in his old school seems to be prominent in his recollections. He was hurt, beaten, left in class; and he struggled. At his current school he is recognized, counted in and counted on by his teacher: *"… Hulle ken ook my naam. Sy kan sien en ek wys vir haar. Ek bring ook hulle kosbakkies vir hulle as hulle moet eet."* [… They also know my name. She can see and I show her. I bring their lunch boxes when they must eat]. He tells of the school that knows his name and he knows almost everybody else's name on his bus and on the playground. He eagerly shows his work to his teacher, who positively acknowledges his efforts and engages with him about his work. He has the task of

handing out the lunch boxes three times a week. This he does with diligence and a sense of importance.

His positive experiences of special school could be attributable to factors such as favourable learner-teacher ratio, lower expectations of learners, and emphasis on non-academics in special schools (Hall, 1997:104; Wade & Moore, 1993:43-45). This does not negate his expressions of self-worth in this context.

Mixed Feelings about Special School

He speaks enthusiastically about his friends at his old school and says that he misses those friends. He says that his current school is a place for children who are not "normal" and that the children at his previous school were "normal". *"Ja, die kinders hier is nie normal nie, en daar … die kinders is normal. Hulle sit jou in dié skool as jy nie normal is nie."* [Yes, the children here are not normal, and there … the children are normal. They put you in this school if you're not normal].

He occupies the same educational space that children whom he describes as not "normal" occupy, in the sense that he goes to the same school. Where does this leave Christy? Most likely, with ambivalent feelings about being placed in the special school. He is essentially at a point where he has to make sense of this contradiction: He has been dispensed of by mainstream education and has been relegated to a place inhabited by children who are not "normal" and he has difficulty in including himself in the category he sees as "not normal". It could be argued that this dilemma might translate into issues of identity conflict, as suggested by Craig, Craig, Withers, Hatton and Limb (2002:61-72). These issues of identity are explored in the following section.

5.2.1.3 On Disability and his Placement at a Special School

Christy provided scant information about the process of being transferred to the special school. The conversations were thin in the sense that he shared limited information about the logistics of the procedure as well as to the reasons for his transfer. He sees the principal agents for his transfer as his mother and his teacher:

S: *"My ma het my uitgehaal en toe sit sy my hier … ek weet nie. My juffrou."* [My mother took me out and she put me in here … I don't know. My teacher].

He said that his teacher put him in the special school and that this happened after his mother was called in to fetch a paper, probably in connection with his transfer. The reason for his transfer he conveys as being related to aspects of himself as a person. *"Ek was te stadig."* [I was too slow]. He partly conceives of the problem as being personal and private, which resulted in the alienation of the curriculum and the learning process.

At the same time there is evidence of Christy externalizing his difficulties as he does not take complete responsibility for his placement. This could be indicative of the confusion that he might experience about his placement at the special school. He does feel anger about what he sees as the "real" cause for his placement at the special school. He is angry as he declares the driver of the taxi to be the primary reason for his being sent to the special school. *"Ja … dit is sy skuld dat ek hier is by dié skool."* [Yes … it's his fault that I am at this school].

The mainstream curriculum had little tolerance of him as a slow learner and he was dislodged from the mainstream. Consistent with Sewell's (1982:1) critical analysis of the basis of special education, it could be said that Christy was cast out as the deficient being, while his teacher takes up the role of expert who diagnosed his deficits and determined his future. Van der Merwe (2000:8) quotes Engelbrecht (interview) as saying that "teachers are trained to teach in the mainstream and as soon as they perceive a problem, the children are referred to a specialist and taken out of mainstream".

5.2.2 On Family

General

Christy speaks relatively easily about his family members and shares information about his extended family as well. He gives an accurate account of his family constellation in terms of names, ages, grades and jobs, as well as of the trauma and violence that he and his family have experienced. The school records contained information that corroborated his account of his family history and data.

Violence and Trauma

Christy has experienced intense trauma in his young life. He was involved in a vehicle accident in 1999, where he was knocked by a taxi on the first day of his Grade 2 year. The only medical attention he received for his head injuries was from

the local day hospital. He is angry about this episode, that transformed his entire social and schooling experiences.

S: *Die taxi het my omgestamp.*	[The taxi knocked me.]

In September of that same year, his father was stabbed and sustained a spinal cord injury as well as a tendon injury of his right hand. This left his father physically disabled. This also meant that the only permanently employed person in the family was left unemployed.

I: *Ok, en jou pa?*	[And your father?]
S: *My pa is in 'n rystoel.*	[My father is in a wheelchair]
I: *Hoekom is hy in 'n rystoel?*	[Why is he in a wheelchair?]
S: *Gesteek.*	[Stabbed].
I: *Wie?*	[Who?]
S: *Weet nie wie's dit nie.*	[Don't know who it was].
I: *Nou, wie werk vir julle?*	[Now who works for you?]
S: *Niemand nie.*	[Nobody]

His father's unemployment had profound effects of the family life, and added to the already struggling family's burdens. The only sources of income are his father's disability grant of less than R900 a month, and his mother's char job that pays on average R300 a month.

In 2001 his sister was murdered, which left his mother and father to care for her children of six months and three years at the time. Although Christy mentioned that his sister died, he was not comfortable speaking about her death. His mother informed the school that she had been murdered.

I: *Wie bly almal in julle huis?*	[Who lives in your house?]
S: *Al vier susters, ek, my ma en my pa. En die twee kinders van my suster wat dood is … ek slaap langs die een.*	[All four sisters, me, my mother and my father. And the two children of my sister that died … I sleep next to the one].
I: *Weet jy wat met haar gebeur het?*	[Do you know what happened to her?]
S: *(Long pause) Nee*	[No].

The violence and trauma in Christy's life relates directly to the socio-economic circumstances of the region. The Western Cape, and particularly the Mitchell's Plain

area where Christy lives, cannot be described as a safe community. On many occasions the school buses are unable to transport the children from his neighbourhood due to the violence of gangsterism and taxi conflicts. Lorgat and Rustin (2003:1-3) describe the Cape Flats of the Western Cape as killing fields, where violence is rooted in the "poverty and hopelessness of the region".

Connectedness, Ability and Pride

Christy, his father and his brother all have a keen interest in racing pigeons. It is an area where they share time and effort and where he situates himself as an expert. He is familiar with the world of pigeons and he knows about "homing" and racing pigeons. He gives an elaborate explanation of the names and characteristics of different types of pigeons.

I:	*En … nou watter soorte duiwe kry 'n mens?*	[And… what type of pigeons are there?]
S:	*Jy kry Racies, Commons, Fantails … daai duiwe was so 'pose'.*	[You get Racies, Commons, Fantails … those pigeons that pose]
I:	*Fantails. En die anders?*	[Fantails. And the others?]
S:	*Commons.*	[Commons]
I:	*Watter soort duiwe is hulle?*	[What kind of pigeons are they?]
S:	*Hule sit net daar op die dak. Hulle vlie nie.*	[They just sit on the roof. They don't fly.]
I:	*En die kleure van die duiwe? Die colours?*	[And the colours of the pigeons?]
S:	*Checks, Whites, Grisslies, Dark check 'pies'.*	
I:	*Hmm.*	
S:	*En Chokkas.*	
I:	*Nou wat is 'n Chokka?*	[Now what is a Chokka?]
S:	*Bruin duif.*	[Brown pigeon]
I:	*Is sy hele lyf bruin?*	[Is his whole body brown?]
S:	*(Nods) Net sy kop is wit … Chokka 'pies'…*	[Just his head is white … Chokka pies].
I:	*Wat is daai?*	[What is that?]
S:	*Heeltemal bruin, met wit kop met wit penne.*	[Completely brown, with white head with white feathers.]

Pigeon racing is an area that he and his family excel in and they have trophies to acknowledge their achievements. His father builds the pigeon cages and he and his brother feed, race and breed the pigeons.

In Christy's family life, the project of pigeon keeping is an area that harnesses the skills of the males in the family. There is an alliance between the male members of the family that serves as a strongly empowering and affirming activity. It separates them from the women and serves to build their status in the family. In his family, Christy is counted in on the activities of the males. His father built the cage and Christy and his brother are involved in the caring and training of the pigeons. He buys the "mielies" and he goes with his brother to pigeon racing events and to the pigeon club. His sisters and his mother are not mentioned as being involved in the pigeon activities.

Although the males are concerned with the pigeon activities, I would not argue, though, that sexism is strongly entrenched in the household. Christy provides evidence to the contrary.

I:	OK. Nou wat doen jy in die middag as jy by die huis kom?	[What do you do in the afternoons, when you get home?]
S:	Vee die huis uit.	[Sweep the house.]
I:	En dan?	[And then?]
S:	Was ek die goetes op.	[I wash the dishes.]

He is expected to be active in areas that are traditionally assigned to women members of the family. Although his mother and sisters are home, he has been allocated a role in the kitchen. He also positions his father as able and active in traditionally female areas.

S:	Hy kan hom koffie maak en eiers bak.	[He can make himself coffee and fry eggs.]

These experiences of connectedness and ability that cut across conventional gender roles, offer Christy emotional security and promote his sense of self-worth and also cultivate a sense of inclusion. Baker and Donelly (2001:71-85) argue that the experience of secure family relations, facilitated by a solid commitment to

recreational activities, offers a good foundation for children's exploration of their social environment. Christy gains from these experiences in his family.

Poverty

Dowling and Dolan (2001:21-35) note that families with disabled children experience a range of inequalities that families with children without disabilities do not suffer, and some of these inequalities are directly related to poverty. Lansdown (2001:7) remarks that "disabled people are disproportionately represented amongst the poorest strata of society." Lorgat (2003:1) declares in a publication for teachers, that poverty is one of the major challenges facing children in South Africa.

Christy's father's disability grant is the only source of permanent income. His mother does 'char work' only on a casual basis. Christy speaks indirectly about their poverty and material deprivation. There is no money for bread and his parents have to support a family of nine people. The lack of financial resources is evident in the absence of material items that would signal financial sufficiency. Mutua (2001:289) argues that many disabled children live at an oppressive intersection of disability, poverty and class. For Christy this is the case, and in his position his disadvantages are intensified: the socioeconomic status of his community and family is depressed, he comes from a historically disadvantaged community, and he attends a school for learners whose prospects for employment are diminished.

5.2.3 On Friendships

The experience of friendship has long been recognized as an important element in a satisfying and enriching lifestyle for persons with intellectual disability. Knox and Hickson (2001:277) state that firsthand accounts of friendship experiences and their meanings for people with intellectual disabilities are rare.

For Christy friends are people that one likes and plays with. He typifies good friendship as relationships where there is no fighting, no rudeness, and no mocking. *"Dit is jou vriende ... mense wat jy van hou en speel. Nie baklei, onbeskof wees, vloek mekaar en name skree nie."* [They are your friends ... people you like and play with. Not fighting, being rude, swearing at each other and calling names]. Firth and Rapley (1990:27) reason that the way in which relationships are made, sustained and broken is no different for people with disabilities than they are for people without disabilities. Vlachou (1995:112) challenges this view and argues that interactions

between disabled and non-disabled persons have different processes from those in the social encounters among non-disabled persons.

Christy's friendships are confined to his special school. He is not allowed to play with children at home, not because he is unable to, but because the social context is not conducive to a healthy lifestyle.

S: *My ma wil nie hê ek moet met ander kinders speel nie.*   [My mother doesn't want me to play with the other children.]

I: *Hoekom nie?*   [Why not?]

S: *Kannie buite speel nie, kan net in die jaart speel.*   [Can't play outside, must just play in the yard.]

I: *Waarom?*   [Why?]

S: *Die kinders rook entjies.*   [The children smoke cigarettes.]

His preference to frame the reason for his not being allowed to play with the children at home could be a measure of avoiding the unhealthy social habits of the children in the neighbourhood. But the notion of him not wanting to wear his disability label could possibly have an impact on his version.

Disabled children are often the victims of bullying and teasing (Lewis, 1995:33-35). Christy alludes to social ostracism at his mainstream school, where he was never counted in as he was slower and had to remain in class during breaks to finish his work. Christy is small for his age level and was bullied at his mainstream school. Closs (1999:118) comment that there is insufficient recognition by schools of disabled children's particular vulnerability on the playground.

During breaks at the special school the opportunities for bullying are reduced, as there are always adults around to supervise the break session, and in a sense they are policed.

S: *"Nee … daar is grootmense wat dophou."*   [No … there are adults who watch.]

Although Christy speaks favourably about his friendships at the special school, his confinement of his friendships to a special school setting has disadvantages. As Kemp and Carter (2002:393) maintain, children in special school will miss the gains

to be made in social interaction with typically developing peers; so too Christy runs the risk of missing out on the advantages of social interaction in mainstream schooling.

5.2.4 On Disability

General

His first response to questions on disability is related to dependency and individual dysfunction:

I:	*Weet jy wat beteken die woord "disability"?*	[Do you know what the word "disability" means?]
S:	*(Nods) Jy kry geld. My pa kry disability.*	[You get money. My father gets disability.]
I:	*Hoekom?*	[Why?]
S:	*Hy kan nie werk nie … Hy is verlam.*	[He cannot work… He is paralysed.]
I:	*Wat beteken disability … Nie die geld nie?*	[What does disability mean … not the money?]
S:	*Daar is iets verkeerd met jou, jy kan nie werk nie.*	[There is something wrong with you, you can't work.]

Christy frames disability not very differently from the way the broader society views disability. Disability is regarded as a corporeal inferiority and a state of dependency. He positions his father as one who cannot inhabit the status of fit, healthy and independent – the very values, according to Garland-Thomson (2002:5), that society prizes.

Christy aptly sees the relationship between disability and economic dependence. He is aware that his father's disabled status has deprived him of the ability to work and that this has had dire consequences for the family. Christy views disability in the same way as French Gilson and Depoy (2000:208), as interfering with the capacity to work and to make economic contributions.

He also defines disability as not being "normal", like the children who attend his special school. This view relates to the conception that there is something wrong with the person who has a disability.

I:	*Jy sê mos die kinders by die skool is nie 'normal' nie. Hoekom dink jy so?*	[You say that the children at this school are not normal. Why do you think so?]
S:	*Michael, hy kry stuipe, hy vloek en gaan aan en raak deurmekaar … en Rashaad ... hy skryf skief. Juanita … sy bewe.*	[Michael, he gets seizures, he swears and carries on and gets confused … and Rashaad … he writes skew. Juanita … she shakes.]

Christy spends a large part of his day in a special school setting. Despite concerted efforts, in policy directives (DNE, 1996, 1997, 2001) to de-focus on labelling children, Davis and Watson (2001:672) argue that children at special schools are inherently labelled by virtue of their being in a special school environment.

Own Disability

Christy's view of his own disability is consistent with research on disability and identity. He is aware of the stigma attached to this categorical identity and states his disability in comparison to more severely disabled learners. Craig, J., Craig, F., Withers, Hatton and Limb (2002:70) report that people with intellectual disabilities manage the discomfort of the disability label by comparing themselves favourably to less able persons.

S:	*Soos Ricky, hy kan nie eers tel nie … hy sê alles is rooi.*	[Like Ricky he can't even count … he says everything is red.]

Christy is also angered by his disability, which he sees as someone else's fault. He understandably blames the taxi driver for his placement at the school. He conceptualizes that disability has two etiologies: either something could have happened to a person or the person could be born that way. Of the two reasons for disability, he sees himself as more favourably positioned. There is a sense of him detaching himself from his disability and having no part in it. It is the taxi driver's fault that he is at the special school. Others were born with a disability, a less favourable position than his.

S:	*Gebore … Seker so gebore. Daar's baie goete verkeerd met haar.*	[Born … probably born like that. There are many things wrong with her.]

Craig *et al.* (2002:70) confirm that many people with intellectual disabilities struggle to come to terms with being intellectually disabled. Christy does experience some

conflict in assuming an intellectually disabled identity as a consequence of negative social evaluations and the stigma attached to the label. He frames the reason for other children's placement at the school as being due to them not being "normal": "*Die kinders hier is nie 'normal' nie*". He refers to another learner as "being born like that … there are many things wrong with her" *[Sy is so gebore … daar is baie goete verkeerd met haar]*. He sees his placement as being due to the taxi driver: "*Ja, is sy skuld dat ek hier is by die skool*", and he sees his positive difference to the other learners being confirmed when he shares that the occupational therapist said that he was "clever": "*Daai ander OT het gesê ek is te slim*" *[That other OT said that I was too clever]*.

5.3   ANNA

5.3.1 On Schools and Learning

5.3.1.1 In the Mainstream School

General

Anna speaks of school as a place where there are "teachers and children and where they learn a lot of things. They also look for the children when they go to work." The relationship between school and work was perhaps more clear to her, as she was in the class while her mother was working in the school grounds. She added: "The children play at the school and the mommy is by the work."

Her experience of mainstream schooling was for the most part, punitive and not pleasant as she related threats, punishment and melees within that context.

Learning as Alienating and Hostile

Although Anna portrays herself as active in the learning process in her mainstream class, she fundamentally experienced alienating encounters with the curriculum and devaluing interactions with her teacher.

I: What do you do when you learn?
S: You see what the teacher do and then you do it … and then you must know the answer.
I: Did your teacher in your old school also show you how?
S: Yes. (Long pause)
I: Did you learn when she showed you?

> S: (Nods) She go too fast and then she can get cross. Then I dunno what to do, then she shout … "Anna, you must listen … what is in your head?"

Benjamin (2002:16-17) reasons that in schools, the proximity of the curriculum, the actions of important others and the inherited social meanings of these actions, call individuals like Anna to recognize themselves as particular kinds of persons. The pace of the curriculum and the reason for her failure, directly attributed to what is "in her head", all contribute to her being cast as a calamity and one for whom redemption is clearly beyond the capabilities of her teacher. Ironically, this is so despite claims that policy is directed at assisting struggling children in mainstream education (Van der Merwe 2002:8).

Self as Deviant

The arrangement of her foster mother on the premises was problematic for Anna, as she recalls that her teacher threatened to call her mother if she did not "listen".

> I: Did you like your old school?
>
> S: My mommy was there … (sighs) … I don't know.
>
> I: Did you learn at your old school?
>
> S: Yes … mmm. I did. But I did not listen. Then that teacher say she will call my mommy. Then my mommy will scold me out or smack me.
>
> I: Did she call your mommy?
>
> S: Yes … then she come and talk hard to me in class. I did listen … but the teacher didn't see and then if she was looking, she did think I was naughty and then she put me in the corner.

Anna is an energetic girl and she has the tendency to walk about in class and this presented a number of obstacles to good governance in her class.

> S: … She say I got worms.
>
> I: Why do you think she said so?
>
> S: They say I can't sit still and I make a noise and I'm stupid.
>
> I: Did you make a noise?
>
> S: I scold the children, they tease me … from my work. That big boys what sit so there.
>
> I: What happened when you scolded the children?
>
> S: … and when my work not right. I must go into the corner … Then the other children can see that I was rude, then they can get scared, 'cause they can also come here … to the corner. The other they get they work right, the

other they get they work wrong. She did help them 'cause they don't make a noise, they didn't walk around in class … like me. She say I'm rude.

A strong sense of non-acceptance rings in this account of the way that Anna is made an example of, and this sent a signal of the consequences of not conforming to the norms of classroom behaviour. She was not able to conform and perform like the majority of children in her class on a scholastic level, as well as on a behavioural level. Being made an example of in a negative way could be a profoundly disempowering and non-affirming experience. Donald *et al.* (1997:206-207) would probably argue that Anna's case of repeated rejection and negation could be taken as a form of abuse.

It is axiomatic that the teachers, as authority figures in the classroom, are powerful role models for other members of the class (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 1997:125-129; Wade & Moore, 1993:161-163; Ainscow & Florek, 1989:63-100; Baker & Donelly, 2001:77-79).

Hall (1997:91-97), in his discussion of the notion of deviancy, says that a child is seen as deviant if she/he is perceived to be sufficiently different from others. Anna's behaviour in school was significantly different from her classmates. She was reported to have demonstrated "inappropriate sexualised behaviour" (Anamnesis, 1999); she presented with challenging behaviour in the classroom; she was physically slightly different from her peers, and she had difficulties with learning and scholastic tasks.

The causes for these "deviances" were attributed to Anna herself. The adults who had a significant role in her life distanced themselves from her behaviour. Her foster mother said during the placement interview: "I don't know why this child is like this … it can be something in the blood, you know. Maybe the mother … I don't know."

Hall (1997:92) argues that "being perceived as deviant also means being cast into a role which creates strong expectancies in others, so that they behave towards the 'deviant' individual in ways likely to elicit responses in line with their deviancy expectations; this in turn becomes self-fulfilling because the individual learns to respond in accordance with what is expected … All this means is that people learn to play the roles they are assigned." Anna was assigned the role of "menace and diseased organism". Anna had a mysterious condition that the adults in her world

could not make sense of; and the measured failure in school made her a strong candidate for special school placement. Her continued existence in mainstream school was doomed. In an ironic sense, she sees her placement in the special school as heralding a significant positive change in her school experience: "I want to live at my school ..."

5.3.1.2 On special schools

Special School as Caring

During Anna's loss of her foster mother, she experienced the special school as a caring environment. "My teacher ... you ... my friends ... the driver ... all asked every time for me, ... 'How you?'" At one stage, when foster placement was not finalised and it became clear to Anna that the social worker was not keen for her older foster sister to become her foster parent, she asked whether she could not stay at school until the following day. She told her teacher: "I don't wanna go in the bus ... I'll wait here for you till you come back." Her teacher, in an interview as part of Anna's support, was visibly moved and wept as she told of an overwhelming sense of helplessness.

Anna was scheduled for grief therapy sessions, a service that would have been less available to her, if at all, in her mainstream school. In a context of overcrowded classes, curricular and policy change, Anna would probably have become lost in the mainstream system and engulfed by her own personal and wider social difficulties.

I: It's better here?

S: Yeah.

I: What makes it better?

S: .... At this school the people loves me, like aunty Hellen, Mrs Brown and all.

I: Do you like to talk to your teacher?

S: Yes, they all love me here ...

Special School's Better Disciplining

There had been occasion for Anna to be reprimanded at her special school too, but her story of discipline at the special school is different: "... I did go in the corner, but I can come back ... My teacher says five minutes and I can say I want to go back to my friends." In the general organisation of a mainstream school, typical of the one that Anna attended, her position in the corner could have been for an extended time.

The chances are that the removal of an "unruly and disruptive slow learner" in a classroom of 45 other learners, all competing for the teacher's attention, might well ease the pressure for the teacher.

At this special school there are fewer learners in a class and prolonged and repeated exclusionary punitive measures are less likely to go unnoticed by school management staff. An efficient system of teacher and learner support is maintained in the form of a Teacher Support Team (TST) forum, as well as in the weekly school departmental meetings, where teachers have the opportunity to discuss learners and seek advice or support from colleagues. It is insisted upon at these meetings that learner successes are as important a point of discussion as are their difficulties. In my working relationship with staff at the school, there seems to be a perception of being connected to and supported by school management.

Anna has the tendency to leave the class without permission. This practice increased with the death of her first foster mother. She speaks of those occasions as naughty instances with the reassurance that she will always be found:

> S: Then my teacher look for me … they find me … Aunty Hellen know where I;
> then she take me back to class.

Anna likes to visit the toilet. Her teacher says that she requested to do this more frequently with her foster mother's death. She seemed also to have increased her toilet requests at the time she got a new teacher. Her teacher felt that the requests where not genuine and might have signalled her difficulty in coping with the class' preoccupation with her mother's death. Her frequent toilet requests have continued to the point beyond her teacher's tolerance and she is labelled as attention seeking.

> I: Why do you run from the class?
> S: I dunno … (shrugs) I go to the toilet … then I want to see what's going on.

Benjamin (2002:100) says: "For children and young people at school, going to the toilet is of particular significance. In schools, the toilet is the most surveillance-free space, and student toilets are the place for escaping adult supervision." Anna is constructed and produces herself as attention seeking.

Ambivalence about Special School

While Anna had many positive and self-affirming narratives about her special school, a sense of ambivalence lurked in her conversations: "Aunty Jane (her new foster

mother) did ask what I doing in this kinda school, and my sister is in another school." In a contact telephone conversation with Anna's new foster mother, she mentioned that she was surprised to learn that Anna was at a school for "such children": "Miss, you know there isn't anything wrong with Anna, but she is difficult … her behaviour." Anna's new foster parents did not contest or question further her placement in a special school.

Anna says in reply to being asking why she was at the special school: "The teacher says so, she don't know what's wrong with me. I wasn't sick, sick, sick like Jane … so sick. I dunno." When asked whether she could go back to her old school, she says:

S: "I dunno … there childrens still there like me."

I: Like how?

S: Like me … right.

Essentially she feels that she is not in the right place in a special school.

She first denied that the teasing by her peers in the community bothered her, but it became evident that it did cause her some worry.

I: Your friends ever say anything about your school?

S: No! (Emphatic)

I: You sure?

S: That boy, he making fun of my school.

I: What does he say about your school?

S: He say, he say I go by a mad school. Then I get cross.

I: Then you get cross?

S: Then I pick up a stone, then I throw it maar again down.

I: Ok. And … and when does he say that?

S: When he, when he outside and I go to the shop.

I: And then, en dan wat sê hy?

S: Then he say "mal hospital, mal hospital, mal hospital".

I: Why do you think he says that?

S: I dunno. Because he think I'm not by a normal school. Actually I think this is a normal school.

The school being situated on the campus of a large psychiatric hospital does complicate matters. The school's location intensifies the stigma attached to

intellectual disability, as implies a relationship between "illness", disease and disability. This is consistent with and reinforces the medical discourse, where disability, as Erevelles (2000:32) argues, is associated with conceptions of disease, a condition which has, in turn, been associated with inconvenience, nonproductivity, weakness and incapacity.

Anna has to reconcile her position of asserting that there is nothing wrong with her, that she is "right", and her inhabiting the same physical terrain as those whom she portrays as having "something wrong" with them.

5.3.1 On Family

General

Anna has had to face displacement on many levels. She has been deprived of a family life, the foundation with the most potential for constancy in a child's life. Her early childhood is characterized by physical uprooting, abuse and loss. It is essential for all children's development and progress that they experience a sense of permanence, which may provide a foundation from which to develop relationships (Phillips, 1999:157).

Displacement

Anna entered the social service sector at the age of 11 months, due to her biological parents' inability to provide for her. Her physical abuse marked her entry into the care system. By the age of 11 months she had sustained a fractured leg and hand and was taken from her biological parents and placed with foster parents.

> I: Tell me a bit about your family. Who's your family?
> S: It's Debra, Rhoda, Tickey, Devan and Wanda, Melicia. She's actually my sister. And uhm … they're not my real family.

Not having a "real family" has a potent bearing on identity issues. It may set Anna, at yet another level, apart from other children, reinforcing that she has departed from the norm. Anna marks minimal connection to the people she mentions as her family and not her real family, and she astutely remarks that, "They get money for me from my social worker." Phillips (1999:155-156) says that the literature features scant accounts of the views of disabled children in substitute families, and argues that is important for children in substitute families to have information regarding their family histories.

Anna can relatively accurately give an account of her fragmented family life.

I: Where were you first?

S: By my real mommy. So my mommy and daddy did fight … so I …

I: Who's your real mommy?

S: Janie … and my daddy's name is Jacob. And so they did fight. And the others came … to other people. So I must go to other people.

I: Who's the other people?

S: Uhm … Uhm … what do they call them, uhm? Frankie and Mrs Naylor. I must stay there by them.

I: How long did you stay there?

S: Ten years.

I: Did you like that?

S: So she died. So I go stay by Attie and Jane.

I: So where's your real mother?

S: She's staying in, what is the place's name … in ehm … (shrugs)

Phillips (1999:163) claims that a vital aspect of children's identity is the means to understand and accept their history. Anna has had the opportunity to work through her life history with concerned adults in her special school and hopefully this process has supported her in understanding and coping with her situation.

Hartman and Laird (1990:228) speaking of children in substitute families, argue that they are intensely disempowered as they have no opportunity to participate in decisions that profoundly shape their lives and identities. Anna's exclusion on central issues pertaining to her life is portrayed when she says that, while her mother and the social worker spoke in the office "Me and my brother was outside, so they did talk". When asked if she was told about the conversation inside the office, she replied, "She didn't tell me … they didn't tell me … **they** (emphasis) talk".

Abused in the family

Anna disclosed her sexual abuse by her first foster father during her grief therapy sessions and the process of finding family placement. It is possible that she disclosed at that particular time as her foster mother's death ended the silence for her. Glasby (2003:25) argues that people with intellectually disabilities are at risk of not gaining access to counselling and the chances are thus high that their needs go unmet. Fortunately for Anna, being in a special school environment increased her

chances of access to counselling, which is not readily available in mainstream schools. School psychologists at the Education Support Centers are thinly spread and are not always readily available for the luxury of individual therapeutic support for learners.

During the study interview she alluded to the abuse with considerable difficulty, and the issue surfaced in the conversation about her foster mother's funeral.

> S: We did wait and wait … the body did not come … We had the lyk again later. I dunno really. Die kis was … ek weet nie waar nie, en Frank he was gone with the money. [The coffin was … I don't know where].
>
> I: Who is Frank?
>
> S: Mrs Naylor's husband … They gonna put him in jail. The police, they looking for him … you know about him. I did tell you.
>
> I: What?
>
> S: (Long silence) You know … from the police … what he do to me.
>
> I: Yes I know.
>
> S: The doctor still … (Shakes her head)

Westcott (1999:129) asserts that being disabled increases the risk of victimization, and the overall incidence for abuse among the disabled is higher that the incidence for non-disabled people, as society in its reaction to disability, creates a context for the vulnerability of disabled children. Vulnerability is created by disempowerment (Glasby, 2003:25).

The Child Protection Unit of the local area has been investigating the case. The total investigation process was a medical examination by "that big doctor", followed by a conversation initiated by the school. The investigating officer promised to keep the school informed. There was no indication of further support for Anna and the process ended there. The school gave support and in the experience of the school staff, myself included, there was little hope of the foster father being successfully prosecuted. This situation leaves Anna once again deserted.

5.3.2 On Friendships

Anna values the time spent on the playground with her friends. She sees friends as people who care for each other. The caring aspect of the friendship is formulated as physically assisting others, like pushing wheelchairs. This seems to see herself as superior to those who are less mobile then herself, which is embedded in the ethos

of charity that pervades the school culture. She says that in class, "I did help for Cathy", and during breaks she says, "We like to push the wheelchairs if she want to go".

Anna likes displaying her talent during break time.

> S: Did you hear all of us … we sing interval.
> I: Did you enjoy that?
> S: Yes, we sing for the teachers outside after we play.
> I: Who sang?
> S: All … the one in the chair … the wheelchair … yes, he did sing also and the small ones. Mary can sing nice. She must be in the concert … and me … I won't run around.

Anna's friendships are confined to the other children in the special school. She is not able to carry her friendships into her life outside of school, as her school friends live far from her. Her friendships at school remain concealed from the children in her neighbourhood. Hall (1997:130-130) asserts that being excluded from the neighbourhood school increases the chances of being excluded in the community and that special education renders the learners isolated and hence vulnerable to marginalisation and social devaluation.

She is often aware of her isolation in the neighbourhood. This is intensified by the neighbourhood children teasing her about her school. She speaks of old friendships being resumed if she were to go back to her old school.

> I: What would happen if you went back to your old school?
> S: I will see my other friends … in my street … I live near they now.

The range of opportunities for self-agency, identity development and the development of social competence are limited in the special school setting (Hendry, 1993:39). Anna's environment for trying out of different self-presentation and social styles is restricted.

5.3.4 On Disability

General

In her response to a view on disability she answers in a way that personifies disability.

I: Anna, do you know what disabled is?

S: No, what is disabled? Who is it?

She continues to mention other children who have physical impairments.

S: I know they are sick children … they did burn, they did get sore, they foot off, arm off.

Anna has a sense that intellectual disability is different from a physical disability.

S: Not all of them … not like that … so bad. All isn't like that … you can't see what's wrong with them.

I: Like who?

S: Jamie. If you look … just to him … he look … he look … everything right.

I: But?

S: He, he … he can't write his name … he's old already.

I: What wrong with him?

S: In his head … I dunno.

I: Do you have a problem?

S: They say so … I got a problem.

I: Who said so?

S: My social worker … my teacher, so now I'm here. I like it here.

She speaks of "the other child … what can't do anything". Yet in the face of the enduring perception, of the dominant discourse of disability, she is able to speak of the severely disabled as able in other respects:

S: He can't talk, but he can walk and sing. Xabisa (another child) know a lot of things also. He can speak Xhosa and English.

Anna is doing what the social model of disability advocates, and what goes powerfully against the dominant tendency of society. She refuses to consistently consent to the dominant notions of disability. She de-emphasises pathology and constructs her fellow learner by what he is able to do and also make inferences about the barriers that mainstream school poses for learners.

I: Would some of your old friends not like to push Xabisa in his wheelchair?

S: Maybe yes. Monica, they can also know Xabisa. If they know him they, they will like him … maybe. It can … so … but they got steps there also … he can fall.

Expressions of prejudice and disadvantage are evident in the way that society ignores human diversity. French Gilson and Depoy (2000:208) argues that disability is a diversity of the human condition, but society has responded in ways that do not take human diversity into consideration, and renders barriers that interfere with the development of disabled individuals' potential

Own Disability

Anna is ambiguous about her identity as a disabled person. She readily positions herself as non-disabled, but also classifies herself as disabled.

> I: Tell me … Do you think there is anything wrong with you?
> S: Uhm, No.
> I: Hm?
> S: No!

At another point:

> I: What is your problem?
> S: I dunno … I got problems with school … the work, man. It's heavy … big things. But I can do some now … almost right … some right … still wrong also.

Anna resists taking on the disability identity but concedes that she has a problematic relationship with schoolwork and confirms that others have said that she has a problem: "They say so … I got a problem." Ali, Fazil, Bywaters, Wallace and Singh (2001:960) contend that research has shown that children display fluidity in claiming disability as an identity.

Although Anna did not offer any specific description of her disability, her response in conversation about her own disability were consistent with the notion of Richardson (2000:148), of the diverse nature of intellectual disability, as well as confusion about the construct of intellectual disability.

Olney and Kim (2001:564) assert that people with physical disabilities are often recognized as belonging to the class of people that we call disabled; and that people with intellectual disabilities are often seen as non-disabled or minimally disabled. These are highlighted in Anna conversation about disability:

S: Not all of them … not like that … so bad. All isn't like that … you can't see what's wrong with them.

I: Like who?

S: Jamie … if you look to him … just to him … he look … he look … everything is right.

I: But?

S: He, he … he can't write his name. He's old already.

I: What's wrong with him?

S: In his head … I dunno.

Intellectual disability is not generally apparent to others, and therefore people like Anna may exist in a "netherworld", belonging solidly neither to the 'disabled" nor 'non-disabled' class of people.

5.4   REFLECTION

Through sharing their experiences, it becomes clear that although these two learners are from the same community, their circumstances and the challenges they face are very different and their responses to the challenges are unique. Richardson (2000:14) points out that people seen as disabled are often lumped together as belonging to a homogeneous group and their disability status obscures any uniqueness. The conversations with Anna and Christy effectively draw us to the diversity of human experience.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter a brief summary of the preceding chapters will be given. A synopsis of the main themes that emerge from the voices of the two learners will be given, the limitations of the study are considered and some tentative conclusions suggested.

6.2   SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter One provides a general introduction to the study, with a discussion of the relevance of the study, the problem statement, the research question and the research aim. In this chapter Anna's role as a motivating factor to undertake a study with learners with intellectual disabilities is accentuated.

Chapter One points to the shortage of evidence of voices of disabled children in knowledge produced in the area of disability research and in research in special education. There is also an explanation of how the study attempts to explore the views of children with intellectual disabilities.

The research design and research paradigm of interpretivism is briefly outlined and key assumptions are clarified. At that point I also state my position regarding disability-first language and person-first language in conversations and writing on disability matters.

Chapter Two is introduced with a fleeting reflection on the process of doing a literature review. The interpretivist paradigm of the study is discussed and related to the social model of disability. The discourses on disability, special needs education and inclusive education are deliberated on, where the medical model, the charity model, the lay model and the human rights model of special needs education are discussed with relevance to the South African context.

Feminist research and disability research is briefly discussed and related to the study. Some guidelines for doing research in areas of disability are provided in the section, that also reflects on the power relations in research.

Chapter Three gives a detailed account of the research methodology, where the research design is discussed along the dimensions of purpose, paradigm, context and techniques. The value of interviews, observations and records and documents is discussed, with reference to the relevance of these data production techniques to this case study. Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as aspects of data verification are also discussed in Chapter Three.

In Chapter Four the implementation of the study is given. Here the learners are introduced and the study site located. The processes of interviewing and observation and consulting documents and records are reflected on. The data analysis and verification procedures are also clarified. The main themes in the experiences of the two learners are discussed.

Chapter Five discusses the findings of the study for each learner respectively. The dominant themes in the lives of these two learners are put forward and discussed.

6.3   MAIN THEMES EMERGING FROM THEIR VOICES

This case study is an attempt at representing the voices of intellectually disabled children concerning their experiences in important life areas. It explicitly critiques entrenched and traditional practices in the field of research with intellectually disabled individuals, that have marginalized the status of disabled people.

Accepting that children growing up with disability have important views and knowledge to share about their lives, Christy and Anna offered valuable insights into their lives.

6.3.1 Christy

In Christy's life area of mainstream schooling, the following themes were noted: passivity and alienation, powerlessness, deficiency and his negligible ability. His experiences of mainstream schooling were essentially passive, as his definition of learning reflected his subjugated role in the process. His deficiency in mainstream

education is highlighted as he tells of his struggles in the classroom, where his abilities counted for little. Christy also tells of bullying and his deprivation of socializing opportunities during breaks, when he was made to stay in class to finish his work.

In his reflection on special schooling the following themes came forward: his ability and pride, his ambivalence about his special school. In terms of his placement at a special school the theme of anger was noted. When communicating on his placement at special school, Christy externalizes the cause for his placement there, and he feels anger towards the taxi driver responsible for his accident. Christy's conversations about his current experiences of special school portray a less negative impression. In this context, he speaks with pride about his successes in learning.

In the life area of family, the following themes emerged: violence and trauma, connectedness, ability and pride, and poverty. Christy's dialogue about his family reveals many incidents and episodes of violence and trauma. Although he was initially hesitant to talk, he eventually gave an account of his father's stabbing that left the father paralysed. His father's disability has had a profoundly negative impact on the lives of Christy and his family. In addition, Christy's sister was killed and the family was left to take care of her two children.

Despite the trauma in their lives, Christy speaks of family activities that are remarkably enriching and affirming.

In his talk of friendship, the following themes were noted: caring, sharing, alienation and bullying. Christy shares his understanding and experiences of friendship as caring and sharing activities. It also becomes evident that Christy's friends are confined to his peers at his special school, which might have deprived him of valuable interaction with a more diverse group of children.

In his conversations on disability, the following themes surfaced: otherness, ability, prejudice, deficiency, ambivalence and anger. In Christy's talking about disability he shifts the focus from himself and readily describes other children whom he perceives as less able than himself.

6.3.2 Anna

In Anna's recollections about her mainstream school experience, the following themes were noted: alienation and hostility, deviancy and otherness. Anna's cumulative experience of her mainstream education is largely about her being different to her peers. This was reinforced by the modelling of her teacher who frequently verbalized Anna's otherness. She was often punished, either for unsatisfactory progress or for deviant behaviour. Anna relates her alienating struggles with a curriculum that became increasingly unable to support her.

Her conversations about special school reflected the following themes: caring, acceptable discipline, ambivalence and stigma. In stark contrast to the alienation and punitive nature of her mainstream schooling, Anna speaks of her special school environment as being caring and affirming. Anna feels ambivalent about being at a special school and she tells of how the neighbourhood children tease and ridicule her for being at a special school. In terms of her own identity as a disabled person, she has difficulty in accepting the label and her own identity as a person with an intellectual disability is thus problematic.

Anna's dialogue about her experience of family reflected the following themes: displacement, abandonment, abuse, betrayal and rejection. She speaks of having no real family. In her conversations about family life she communicates a feeling of displacement from her biological family to different foster families. In her young life she has had to face many challenging situations.

In her talks about friendships, the following themes emerged: caring, sharing, playing, acceptance and helping. In her experiences of friendship, Anna related the importance of helping, sharing and caring. She recounts important times of enjoyment where her singing ability had been a source of joy to her friends and to adults.

The following themes were noted in Anna's reflection on disability: prejudice, ability, otherness and ambivalence. She initially personifies disability by asking "who" it is and later she continues to explain disability by referring to other learners in the school whom she sees as being examples of disabled people. Anna shares the

insight that children with learning problems have a disability that is not apparent. She explains that when an older learner who seems to have "nothing wrong with him", cannot write his name, he may have "something wrong with him in his head". She continues to say that those learners who cannot walk can be seen using wheelchairs.

6.4   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As discussed in Chapter Three, this is a case study, and therefore one needs to remain cautious about drawing conclusions and remain modest as to the significance of the conclusions. The strength of this case study would lie in the rich detail of the case studied. But its weakness, methodologically speaking, lies in the difficulty of generalizing from the case studied to a broader population.

The argument advanced in Chapter Three is that this difficulty can be overcome through an accumulation of cases. The more the voices of disabled learners are heard, the more likely it becomes that valid generalizations can be made from the reality of their experiences.

Although this study is an attempt to shift from the potentially alienating process of traditional research endeavours in the areas of disability, it falls short of satisfying all the criteria for participatory research. Christy and Anna were not full participants at every stage of the research process. In keeping with the social model of research, it can be said that the two learners have not had equal input into defining the research question and deciding on and implementing the research design.

6.5   RECOMMENDATIONS

Research activities are inherently activities where knowledge is constructed, and they reside predominantly in the academic terrain. It is the very areas of academia and knowledge that have remained inaccessible to people with intellectual disabilities. The challenge for researchers working in the field of disability studies, who adopt the social model of disability and share the agenda of disability movements, is to make research processes and products accessible to people with intellectual disabilities. There is a need for devising ways of reconstructing the task

of doing rigorous academic work and doing work of value to disabled people. In terms of this study, the incorporation of creative activities like drawings, drama and play could have increased their participation.

6.6   REFLECTION

In concluding this study, it is important to bear in mind the nature of the study and the theoretical framework within which it has been undertaken. This is a case study, pursued within a framework informed by the social model of disability and an interpretivist paradigm.

The study is about hearing the voices of members of a vulnerable group in society – intellectually disabled children. The voices of disabled children are not always listened to with respect or trust. Their opinions and stories are often rejected as lies, confusion, fantasy, and inconsequential ramblings (Corbett, 1998:59). This study argues that the voices of intellectually disabled children deserve to be heard.

Since teaching and learning are such complex procedures, we lose a valuable resource if we fail to listen to the insights of learners who are, after all, the users of educational services. By taking their insights into account, educators and policy makers can create new knowledge to improve the services provided. Through having their voices heard, learners with special educational needs can develop a sense of agency about their learning experiences and environment.

In terms of the legislative background sketched in Chapter Two, it is clear that South Africa is moving increasingly towards an inclusive educational policy. The pressure to include learners with disabilities in mainstream schools will grow in future. As indicated in the discussion of the various discourses of disability, this is consistent with a welcome shift away from the medical and charity models of disability towards a human rights model or a social model of disability.

As Benjamin (2002:55) argues, it is entirely appropriate to talk of "removing barriers" to the inclusion of learners in mainstream schools, in the case of learners who experience physical and sensory difficulties.

> But while the rationale for applying a similar term in relation to students experiencing learning difficulties is understandable, its use in this context is more problematic. The social and political meanings still attached to 'learning difficulties' are overwhelmingly negative, and the notion of removing barriers cannot adequately explain the complexity of the task facing educators and the students themselves (Benjamin, 2002:55).

In the voices of Christy and Anna, as reflected in this study, some of the complexity of the task can be heard. Indeed, a tentative conclusion that might be drawn from their stories is that inclusion within mainstream schools is not desirable in all cases, particularly when mainstream education is unclear about the kinds of barriers that intellectually disabled learners face.

The case study of the lives of Christy and Anna brings into sharp focus the need for participatory research in the life areas of disabled children in general and intellectually disabled children in particular. As noted in Chapter Two, there is a stark scarcity of accounts by children of their experiences of disability (Phillips, 1999; Ali *et al.*, 2001).

Alli *et al.* (2001:960) note that we need to guard against the creation of a composite and singular disabled child. Encouraging disabled children to tell their life stories to researchers will provide a growing body of accounts grounded in personal experience that can reveal new insights into the personal and collective identity of people with learning difficulties (Dowse, 2001:138).

Professionals in the field of education provision need to pay careful attention to the issues that children regard as salient for them. We need to take into account how they perceive and respond to sources of satisfaction and stress.

In the field of disability studies, the voices of disabled children are still waiting to be heard. The challenge for researchers is to explore new ways of making their experiences and opinions count as we use research to contribute to a clearer understanding of disablement.

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ANNEXURE 1

EXAMPLES OF INTERVIEW TRANSCIPTS

Interview 1

Anna

I	What is a school to you, Anna?	
S	Is a place … Where the teachers and the children … and where they learn a lot of things. They also look for the children when they go to work.	
I	When who goes to work?	
S	The mommy and the daddy.	
I	Then what happens at the school?	
S	The children play at the school and the mommy is by the work.	
I	What happens in the classroom?	
S	The teacher talks and the children must listen. The children must learn there. All the children got their own class and they friends. My mommy did work by my old school … outside.	
I	Did you like your old school?	
S	My mommy was there … (sighs). I don't know.	
I	Did you learn at you old school?	
S	Yes … mmm. I did. But I did not listen. Then that teacher say she will call my mommy. Then my mommy will scold me out or smack me.	
I	Did she call your mommy?	
S	Yes … then she come and talk hard to me in class. I did listen … but the teacher didn't see and then if she was looking, she did think I was naughty and then she put me in the corner.	
I	Could you tell the teacher that you where listening?	
S	But the other one make a noise and laugh. My teacher she get cross for me.	
I	Why does she get cross with you?	
S	I can't get the stuff right … what's on the board, what she say we must do … writing and things. She say I got worms.	
I	Why do you think she said so?	
S	They say I can't sit still and I make a noise and I'm stupid.	
I	Did you make a noise?	
S	I scold the children they tease me … from my work. That big boy what sit so there … (points diagonally opposite from her)	
I	What happened when you scolded the children?	
S	… and when I work not right. I must go in the corner … then the other children can see that I was rude, then they can get scared 'cause they can also come here … to the corner. The other get they work right, the other get they work wrong. She did help them cause they don't make a noise, they didn't walk around the class … like me. She say I'm rude.	
I	Did you learn something in your school?	
S	Yes, I did. I learn to write my name. I write a whole page full at home.	
I	What do you do when you learn?	
S	You see what the teacher do and then you do it … and then you must know the answer.	

I	What it hard for you to learn?	
S	Some days. Then I dunno know what to put there.	
I	Where?	
S	On the board.	
I	What must you put on the board?	
S	The word…and the other numbers.	
I	Do you know some words.	
S	Yes. I can read all the children's names from my own class now.	
I	How did you learn to read their names?	
S	They names on they pencils and I must give it to them. My teacher say that is what I must do … and the names is on the books and by the place they must put they bags. The lunch boxes also have the names.	
I	Did you just look and know the names? How did you get their names right? What did the teacher and you do?	
S	My teacher showed me the pencil and take it to the boy and then another one and then another one … everyday she do that. I walk with her to the boy and give his pencil. She also showed me the names by the bags … and Justin's name is almost like June and January … Then I do it alone. Cindy and the other children can also read the others' names … my teacher showed them to learn.	
I	Did you look at the letters in the names?	
S	The months in the year … some is the same what stand in the name … and in my name. My teacher show us for Justin's name and then we look for the others. My name is long … and the day of the week have letters. Like we do in the morning … we read the days of the week go quick, quick, quick: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday we stay at home.	
I	Did your teacher in your old school also show you how?	
S	Yes … (long pause)	
I	Did you learn when she showed you?	
S	(Nods) … she go too fast and then she can get cross. Then I dunno what to do, then she shout "… Anna you must listen … what is in your head?"	
I	Did the other children learn in your old school?	
S	Yes.	
I	How do you know that they learnt?	
S	Cause they listen and they also did pass.	
I	Did you pass?	
S	The teacher said no. So I come to here … here by this school …	
I	How is it here?	
S	I like to be here … I'm not so struggling here, like the other ones … with the stuff.	
I	What stuff?	
S	The work … you know that work in the class.	
I	What kind of work?	
S	The pictures, the colouring in, playing with the counting stuff … there is a bag full. I know all of the colours.	
I	What do the other ones struggle with?	
S	All of the work … Rosalind she's clever, cause she was also by the other school … there where my sister go. You know that school, I was also there?	
I	You told me about it. And your sister's work?	
S	She's in front of me … past me … they doing the other kind of work, but I know some of it.	

I	Like what?	
S	The easy sums … like two plus two and that.	
I	Does your sister do homework?	
S	Yes … and me … I also do homework.	
I	Do you get homework?	
S	Sometimes.	
I	What kind of homework?	
S	Colouring in … and some words also.	
I	Who helps you with your homework?	
S	My sister and others.	
I	Can she do your homework?	
S	Yes, she say it very easy.	
I	Can your sister read?	
S	Yes … and I can read some words ... Some small ones … the big words is not for me. She got a reading book.	
I	Can you read her book?	
S	Not all the stuff in there.	
I	Would you like to be able to read better?	
S	Yes.	
I	Why do you think you can't read so well?	
S	The children too … slow here … so, so, so … it … the reading is hard. I can just say and talk the stuff … I know it, but read, uh, uh … too hard. My teacher from the other school say I won't learn. I did learn a little … maybe is something not right. I dunno. But I think I can when I'm get bigger.	
I	Were there other children form your other school that also had problems with the work?	
S	Yes … but they stayed there … no Debbie is also coming from that school.	
I	Why do you think the children come tot his school?	
S	They can't learn … something wrong with they … in they head maybe. (laughs)	
I	How do you know that?	
S	You can see. If you look for Justin … he got a funny head and the other one is walking so … some fall.	
I	Do you think they can go to other schools?	
S	No.	
I	Do you think they must go to other schools if they want to?	
S	No.	
I	Why not?	
S	They make gaai … and the children oh, they make gaai … like for Mandy … cause of her eye, you know it's a little broken, here … All the children's what's something wrong and sick … and stuff.	
I	The children in your street, where do they say your school is? What do they say about it?	
S	"mal hospital …"	
I	Why do they say hospital?	
S	Cause here by the hospital … we here by the hospital. They put the school by here for the sick ones, hey?	
I	I'm not sure, what do you think?	
S	Yes … there a lot of sick children. Sister … OT bring they tablet in the morning … and Stanton, he go with the driver to the hospital over there.	

I	What will happen if we put all these children in the other school?	
S	They will cry … there will be nobody to look after them.	
I	There are teachers at the other school.	
S	Yes, bu, bu, bu … but they don't know what's, er, wrong.	
I	Were you sick?	
S	No?	
I	Now why are you here?	
S	The teacher say so, she don't know what's wrong with me. I wasn't sick, sick, sick like Jane … so sick. I dunno …	
I	Can Jane go to your old school?	
S	No, no, no … too lot of stuff and thing wrong with her.	
I	Can you go back?	
S	I dunno … there children's still there like me.	
I	Like how?	
S	Like me … Right.	
I	Would you like to go back?	
S	No.	
I	Why?	
S	I like this school.	
I	Why?	
S	The teachers … they, they nice. They love you …	
I	Are there children that don't like this school in your class?	
S	Thabid … he say this is a junk school … he's friends did laugh him out.	
I	And your friends?	
S	They all not know …	
I	What?	
S	Where I go school.	
I	But don't they see the bus?	
S	The bus come lekker early … they sleeping still … it's dark. Then I jump in the bus.	
I	Do you want them to know where you go to school?	
S	I dunno … they make fun … and laugh.	

Interview 1

Christy

I	What is a school to you, Christy? Wat is 'n skool?	
S	'n Skool is 'n plek waar kinders leer …	
I	Wat leer hulle?	
S	Om te lees … en skryf … om ook 'n werk te kry as hulle groot is.	
I	Wat maak 'n mens nog in 'n skool?	
S	Die kinders leer … en 'n mens kry huiswerk.	
I	Wat gebeur in 'n klas?	
S	Die juffrou staan daar voor … en om die klas en doen werk.	
I	Dan wat maak die kinders?	
S	Dan try hulle ook om die werk te doen.	
I	Wat soorte werk?	
S	(long pause) Lees en skryf en tel … en anner goete.	
I	Het jy gewerk by jou ou skool?	
S	Ja … maar ek het gesukkel. Ek kannie al daai leergoed gedoen het nie.	

I	Wat kan jy gedoen het?	
S	Skryf… ek kan nie geskryf het nie.	
I	Wat kon jy gedoen het?	
S	Tel en die colours … soms … en help in die klas.	
I	Het jy daarvan gehou om te skryf?	
S	Nee. Dit het nie mooi gelyk nie … soos daar in my boek.	
I	Kan jy lees?	
S	'n Bietjie … som woorde in Afrikaans. Die klein woorde wat ons hier gedoen het … en die dae van die week. Ek ken die meeste name in my klas … net som.	
I	Kan jy nou skryf?	
S	Ja.	
I	Hoe het jy geleer om te skryf?	
S	Saam met OT … en my juffrou, juffrou Williams (the class assistant). Ek het sulke lyne en games gemaak met OT … ek het ook myself geleer om beter en beter te skryf … ek het gepractice. Ek het vir juffrou Williams gewys en vir jou … Sy kan sien en ek wys ook vir haar. Daar is maar 'n paar kinders in die klas. Sy kan ons almal sien en sy kan hoor as iemand dit verkeerd kry.	
I	By jou ou skool, Christy, het jy jou werk vir jou juffrou gewys?	
S	(Shrugs) Daar's te baie kinders daar … en die lang lyn en daar was te baie werk om te doen. Ons was baie kinders in die klas … My juffrou het my somkeer gehelp.	
I	Het jy van jou ou skool gehou?	
S	Ja … is naby die kerk.	
I	Gaan jy kerk?	
S	Ja … Sondagskool.	
I	Wat het jy daar gedoen?	
S	Baie dinge daar gedoen en ons het van God geleer en ook wat in die Bybel gebeur het. Ons het ook gesing … som van die goed wat ons hier sing. Ek ken som van die goed. Is op 'n tape in my klas.	
I	Lyk jy om te leer, Christy?	
S	Ja.	
I	Wat maak 'n mens as 'n mens leer?	
S	Die teacher sal jou iets leer.	
I	Maar wat doen jy as jy leer?	
S	Ek sit …	
I	Wat doen jy as jy sit en leer?	
S	… jy luister en dan try jy … en jy kan dink. Jy moet ook kyk … en dan sê jy dit.	
I	Is dit maklik om te leer?	
S	Som goete … Goed van my ander skool … it was swaar. Ek het al my werk geken toe sit hulle my in 'n noge klas.	
I	Het die ander kinders geleer in jou klas?	
S	Ja … maklik en sometimes try hulle, dan kry hulle dit reg.	
I	Wat kry hulle reg?	
S	Die werk. Ek het ook die werk daar geken. Toe sit hulle my oor na 'n ander klas toe.	
I	Hoekom is jy nie meer by daai skool nie, Christy?	
S	(shrugs and looks down to his hands) My ma het my uitgehaal en toe sit sy my hier … ek weet nie.	
I	Hou jy van die skool?	
S	Ja.	

I	Watter dinge hou jy van in die skool?	
S	Die juffrouens. Die teachers slaan nie vir my nie.	
I	Het hulle jou by die ander skool geslaan?	
S	Ja … hulle slaan.	
I	Wanneer slaan hulle?	
C	(Does not answer)	
I	Wat was lekker by jou ander skool?	
C	Lekker vrinne.	
I	Onthou jy nog jou vriende van Mayflower?	
C	Ja … Natsy, Elridge, Sally … hulle was in my klas (animated). It was lekker.	
I	Dit moet seker goed gewees het. Wat is die lekkerste ding by die skool?	
S	Die busse … om in die busse skooltoe te ry.	
I	Watter ding lyk jy nie by die skool nie?	
S	Slaap … Ek willie slaap in die middag nie … is boring.	
I	Wat dink jy van die kinders in die bus?	
S	Ek hou van hulle, maar hulle maak geraas.	
I	Wat beteken vriendskap vir jou?	
S	Dis is jou vriende … mense wat jy van hou en speel …	
I	Wie is jou vriende?	
S	Rashaat, Ramiz, Mark en Reyaaz … ons speel saam en hulle baklei nie.	
I	Hoe moet vriende met mekaar wees?	
S	Jy moet nie baklei en onbeskof wees met mekaar nie, snaaks wees nie.	
I	Wat moet jy nie aan jou vriende doen nie? Hoekom?	
S	Baklei, onbeskof wees, vloek mekaar en name vir mekaar skree nie.	
I	Wie is nie jou vriende nie?	
S	Yakkem … hy is onbeskof en vloek.	
I	So jy hou nie van kinders wat onbeskof is nie?	
S	Nee, hulle steek jou aan met hulle onbeskoftigheid.	
I	Noem 'n paar dinge waarvan jy hou.	
S	Ek hou van om bike te ry en met die hond te speel.	
I	Hou jy van diere?	
S	Ja. Ek kan saam met hulle speel … ek hou baie van duiwe.	
I	Gaan jy met jou ma en pa uit?	
S	Nee … net somtyds na my antie toe … of beach toe.	

ANNEXURE 2

INITIAL LIST OF CODES AND SUBSEQUENT CODES FOR THE ASPECTS IN THE DIFFERENT LIFE AREAS

LIFE AREAS	START LIST OF CODES	ASPECTS OF LIFE AREAS	SUBSEQUENT CODES
Schooling	**SC**	General	**SCGNRL**
		Mainstream	**SCMS**
		Special School	**SCSS**
		Learning	**SCLR**
		Self	**SCS**
Family	**FA**	General	**FAGNRL**
		Place in family	**FAPL**
		Relationships	**FAREL**
		Socio-economics	**FASE**
		Leisure	**FALEIS**
Friendship	**FR**	General	**FRGNRL**
		Special School	**FRSS**
		Mainstream	**FRMS**
		Current	**FRCF**
Disability	**DI**	General	**DIGNRL**
		Others	**DIOTH**
		Self	**DISF**
		Identity	**DIID**

ANNEXURE 3

COMPLETE LIST OF CODES USED IN DATA ANALYSIS

Table A			
Conceptualised Life Areas and Aspects of Life Areas			
A	B	C	D
Life Areas	Code	Aspects of life areas	Codes
Schooling	SC	General	SCGNRL
		Mainstream	SCMS
		Special School	SCSS
		Learning	SCLR
		Self	SCS
Family	FA	General	FAGNRL
		Place in family	FAPL
		Relationships	FAREL
		Socio-economics	FASE
		Leisure	FALEIS
Friendship	FR	General	FRGNRL
		Special School	FRSS
		Mainstream	FRMS
		Current	FRCF
Disability	DI	General	DIGNRL
		Others	DIOTH
		Self	DISF
		Identity	DIID

Table B	
Themes generated in life areas	
A	B
Themes in life areas	Codes
Ability	Able
Abuse	Abuse
Acceptance	Acc
Alienation	Alien
Ambivalence	Ambv
Anger	Angr
Betrayal	Btray
Bullying	Bully
Caring	Care
Connectedness	Conn
Deficiency	Def
Deviancy	Dvnt
Displacement	Dspl
Helping	Help
Medical	Med
Mocking/ridicule	Mock
Otherness	Othnss
Passivity	Pass
Playing	Play
Poverty	Pov
Powerless	Powl
Prejudice	Prej
Pride	Pride
Rejection	Rej
Resilience	Resil
Resistance	Resist
Sharing	Share
Support	Supp
Survival	Surv
Stigma	Stig
Struggle	Strg
Trauma	Trau
Violence	Viol

ANNEXURE 4

EXTRACTS OF GROUPING OF TEXT INTO LIFE AREAS

LIFE AREA - SCHOOLING: SC

Interview extracts: ANNA

I	Did you like your old school?		
S	My mommy was there … (sighs). I don't know.		
I	Did you learn at you old school?		
S	Yes … mmm. I did. But I did not listen. Then that teacher say she will call my mommy. Then my mommy will scold me out or smack me.	SCS	Dvnt
I	Did she call your mommy?		
S	Yes … then she come and talk hard to me in class. I did listen … but the teacher didn't see and then if she was looking, she did think I was naughty and then she put me in the corner.	SCS	Dvnt
I	Could you tell the teacher that you where listening?		
S	But the other one make a noise and laugh. My teacher she get cross for me.	SCS	
I	Why does she get cross with you?		
S	I can't get the stuff right …what's on the board, what she say we must do … writing and things. She say I got worms.	SCS/LRN	Strg
I	Why do you think she said so?		
S	They say I can't sit still and I make a noise and I'm stupid.	SCS	Def
I	Did you make a noise?		
S	I scold the children they tease me … from my work. That big boy what sit so there … (points diagonally opposite from her).	SCS/GNRL	Mock
I	What happened when you scolded the children?		
S	… and when I work not right. I must go in the corner … then the other children can see that I was rude, then they can get scared 'cause they can also come here … to the corner. The other get they work right, the other get they work wrong. She did help them cause they don't make a noise, they didn't walk around the class … like me. She say I'm rude.	SCS	Dvnt
I	Did you learn something in your school?		
S	Yes, I did. I learn to write my name. I write a whole page full at home.		Able
I	What do you do when you learn?		
S	You see what the teacher do and then you do it … and then you must know the answer.	SCGNRL	
I	Was it hard for you to learn?		
S	Some days. Then I dunno what to put there.	SCS	Strg

I	Where?		
S	On the board		
I	What must you put on the board?		
S	The word … and the other numbers.		
I	Did your teacher in your old school also show you how?		
S	Yes … (long pause)		
I	Did you learn when she showed you?		
S	(Nodds) … she go too fast and then she can get cross. Then I dunno what to do, then she shout "… Anna you must listen … what is in your head?"	SCS	Alien
I	Did the other children learn in your old school?		
S	Yes.		
I	How do you know that they learnt?		
S	Cause they listen and they also did pass.	SCGNRL	
I	Did you pass?		
S	The teacher said no. So I come to here … here by this school …	SCMS/S	Dspl
I	I want to ask you again about your previous school. Do you remember the name?		
S	Alderview	SCMS	
I	Ok. Fine. You can some and sit closer. I want you to tell me how it was at that school. How was it there?		
S	It wasn't nice. They swear you out … and push you away.	SCMS	Abuse
I	Uhuh.		
S	When tis interval, the children run, then they pull the other one over.	SCMS	
I	Ok. And your teacher. Do you remember your teacher?		
S	Teacher Simmerman		
I	Hm.		
S	She was nice teacher in the school.		
I	And the one that you said that sent you to the corner.		
S	Yes		
I	How did they punish you there?		
S	They punish me, they give me first a hiding, then to the corner.	SCS/MS	Abuse
I	First gave you a hiding?		
S	Yes		
I	With what?		
S	With a stick. Then I didn't talk to the girls … they take me out.	SCS	Bully/ abuse

LIFE AREA - DISABILITY: DI

Interview extracts: Christy

I	Weet jy wat beteken die woord "disability"?		
S	(Nods) Jy kry geld. My pa kry disability.	DIGNRL/FAG NRL	
I	Hoekom?		

S	Hy kan nie werk ie … hy is verlam.	DIGNRL	Med/pov
I	Wat dink jy van ons skool?		
S	Hulle sit jou by die skool as jy nie 'normal' is nie.	SCSS	Othnss
I	Hoe meen jy 'normal'?		
S	Soos Abigail … bly naby ons. Sy kry ook 'disability'.	DIOTH	Othnss
I	Wat beteken 'disability'… nie die geld nie.		
S	Daar is iets verkeerd met jou, jy kan nie werk nie. Soos my pa.	DIGNRL	Med
I	Jy sê mos die kinders by die skool is nie 'normal' nie. Hoekom dink jy so?		
S	Mark, hy kry stuipe, hy vloek en gaan aan en raak deurmekaar ... en Reyaaz ... hy skryf skief. Jacqueline … sy bewe.	DIOTH	Med/ othnss
I	Hoekom sukkel jy nou?		
S	Weet nie … die taxi het my gestamp … ek was nog net besig … om te leer. Toe kom ek hier.	DISF	Med/trau
I	Was jy in 'n ongeluk gewees?		
S	Ja		
I	Vertel vir my van daai ongeluk. Hoe het dit gebeur.		
S	Ek het skooltoe gegaan to stamp 'n taxi my om.	DISF	Trau
I	En toe?		
S	Gaan ek hospitaal toe.		
I	En toe?		
S	Toe was ek nie in die skool nie.		
I	'n Lang tyd?		
S	Ja … toe gaan ek skooltoe. Toe sit hulle my hier.	DISF	Dspl/ ambv
I	En jy?		
S	Die taxi het my omgestamp … op die eerste dag van skool. My kop het seergekry. Toe skel my ma my suster uit.	DISF	
I	Wat het hulle vir jou by die hospitaal gegee?		
S	Net pille.		
I	Het jy oop plekke gehad?		
S	Nee …. Net my kop het gekap.		Trau
I	Waar het die ongeluk gebeur?		
S	By die 'robots'.		
I	Is jy kwaad vir die man wat jou omgestamp het?		
S	Ja … is sy skuld dat ek hier is by die skool. By daai skool was ek in Juffrou Camphor se klas en toe Juffrou Cuttings.	DISF/SCSS	Angr
I	Vertel my van die kinders by die skool, hoekom is hulle hier?		
S	Iets kan ook met hulle gebeur het … toe kom hulle ook hier.	DISGNRL	
I	En Sharon?		
S	Gebore … sy was seker so gebore. Daar's baie goete verkeerd met haar.		othnss

I	Soos wat?		
S	Sy gaan so aan …		
I	Hoe?		
S	Sy kannie reg praat nie … En sy skree vir niks.	DISOTH	Def
I	Was sy altyd so?		
S	Ja … Maar sy skree nie meer so baie nie.		
I	Hoe voel jy as sy so skree?		
S	Niksie …		
I	Wat gebeur as sy so skree?		
S	As 'n mens nout vat, dan hou sy aan. Sy sal dit weer môre doen, en die next dag. Sy't die juffrou gevloek … vir 'n lang tyd.	DIOTH	
I	Toe wat maak die juffrou?		
S	Vattie nout nie … sê net "Ja" en gaan aan met die werk.		
I	Dink jy die juffrou moet haar geslaan het?		
S	(Shakes his head)		
I	Wat het gebeur? Het sy toe opgehou?		
S	Ja … sy try nog so 'n bietjie ... sy kry pille ook … en Rustim.		Med
I	Dink jy die pille help?		
S	Ja.		

ANNEXURE 5

DATA DISPLAY

CHRISTY

SCHOOLING

Mainstream
passivity   alienation
powerlessness
abuse   bullying
deficiency
struggle

Special school
acceptance   ability
pride   supportive
ambivalence
displacement

FAMILY

trauma   violence   survival

acceptance   otherness   poverty

connectedness   pride   ability

FRIENDSHIP

caring   sharing   helping

playing   acceptance

bullying   alienation

DISABILITY

medical   prejudice   ability

otherness   ambivalence

deficiency   anger

ANNA

SCHOOLING

Mainstream
deviancy otherness
struggle rejection
alienation

Special school
caring   helping
supportive   ridicule
acceptance   ability
ambivalence

FAMILY

displacement   trauma

abuse   betrayal   alienation

rejection   otherness   powerlessness

FRIENDSHIP

caring   sharing

playing   acceptance

helping

DISABILITY

prejudice   ability   medical

otherness   ambivalence

ANNEXURE 6

EXAMPLE OF CODED TRANSCRIPTS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Interview 5

Christy

		Life area	Aspects	Themes
I	Wat kan jy my vertel van jou familie?			
S	(Quiet)			
I	Hoeveel susters en broers het jy?			
S	Ek het vier susters en een broer.	FA	FAGNRL	
I	Waar bly hulle?			
S	My broer bly weer agter by ons in die wendy house. Hy het nie lig gekoop nie toe sit my ma vir hom die eerste keer uit. Hy't twee kinders en 'n vrou.	FA	FAGNRL/REL /SE	Pov
I	Wie bly almal in die huis?			
S	Al vier suster, ek, my ma en my pa en die twee kinders van my suster wat dood is ... ek slaap langs die een.	FA	FAGNRL/PL	Conn
I	Weet jy wat met haar gebeur het?			
S	(Silent) Nee.			
I	Hoveel jaar oud was jy?			
S	Tien.			
I	Het jou ma vir jou vertel wat gebeur het?			
S	Nee			
I	Wat kan jy my vertel van jou pa? Is jy lief vir hom?			
S	Ja, want my pa gee my die pak nie. Hy's in 'n rystoel. Hy kan nie loop nie.	FA	FAREL	
I	Waarom is jou pa in 'n rystoel?			
S	Hy was gesteek met 'n mes in sy sy ... in die huis. My ma was daar en ek was nog klein.	FA	FAGNRL	Trau
I	Sal jy daarvan hou as jou pa weer moet gaan werk?			
S	Ja. Hy't my altyd geld gegee.	FA	FAREL	Care
I	Hou jy nog van die skool?			
S	Ja.	SC		
I	Hoekom?			
S	Ja. Die bus kom my optel.	SC	SCSS	
I	Is daar 'n verskil tusen die skool en 'n ander skool.			
S	Ja. Cornflower het nie busse nie, ... en hier is ook nie 'stairs' nie.	SC	SCMS/SS	

I	Is daar 'n verskil tussen die kinders by die skool en die kinders by Cornflower?			
S	Ja, die kinders hier is nie 'normal' nie en daar … die kinders is 'normal'.	SC	SCSS/MS	Othnss
	Future			
I	Wat wil jy doen as jy eendag grootword?			
S	Werk.			
I	Watter soort werK			
S	Polisie werk.			
I	Hoekom wil jy werk?			
S	Is lekker om te werk, want 'n mens kry geld.			
I	Hoekom wil jy polsiewerk doen?			
S	Dit is lekker om skelme mense te vang.			
I	Hou jy van 'guns'?			
S	Nee, dit is gevaarlik, jy kan jouself skiet en ander mense.			
I	As jy eendag groot is en jy werk, sal jy nog altyd by jou ma se huis bly?			
S	Nee, dan is ek groot dan koop ek my 'n huis.			
I	Wil jy eendag trou?			
S	Ja.			
I	Wil jy ook kinders het?			
S	Nee.			
I	Soos wie wil jy wees as jy eendag groot is.			
S	My broer.	FA	FAREL	
I	Hoekom?			
S	Want hy werk.			Able
I	Wat doen jy naweke, Saterdae en Sondae?			
S	Ek gaan na my anties toe.	FA	FAREL/LEIS	
I	War bly hulle?			
S	Hanover Park, in die Centre, Westridge en Colorado.			
I	Watter een is jou favourite?			
S	Die een wat in Westridge bly.	FA	FAREL	Conn
I	Hoekom?			
S	Sy 'spoil' my as ek daar kom, sy gee my klomp geld.	FA	FAREL/PL	Care
I	Het sy kinders?			
S	Ja, vier kinders. Drie is klein en een is getroud, die meisie. Hulle is my nefies en niggies.	FA	FAREL/PL	Conn
I	Gaan jy kerk toe?			
S	Ja. Met my ma.			
I	Watter kerk behoort julle aan?			
S	Old Apostollic.			
I	Hou jy darvan om by die huis te wees?			

S	Ja. Ek kan speel, ry … bike … en my duiwe.	FA	FALEIS	
I	Skel jou susters met jou?			
S	Jan somtyds, as ek Lorenzo … Sedley terg, dan kan ek nie buite gaan speel nie, dan straf hulle my.	FA	FAREL	
I	Weet jy wat beteken die woord "disability"?			
S	(Nods) Jy kry geld. My pa kry disability.	DI/FA	DIGNRL/FAGNRL	
I	Hoekom?			
S	Hy kan nie werk ie … hy is verlam.	DI	DIGNRL	Def
I	Wat dink jy van ons skool?			
S	Hulle sit jou bu die skool as jy nie 'normal' is nie.	SC	SCSS	Othnss
I	Hoe meen jy 'normal'?			
S	Soos Abigail … bly naby ons. Sy kry ook 'disability'.	DI	DIOTH	Othnss
I	Wat beteken 'disability' … nie die geld nie.			
S	Daar is iets verkeerd met jou, jy kan nie werk nie. Soos my pa.	DI	DIGNRL	Med
I	Waar het jou pa eers gewerk?			
S	By Coke. Hy't die kiste reggepak.			
I	Wie is jou vriende hier by die skool?			
S	Mark. Ek en hy speel elke dag saam … en Reyaaz. Ons drie speel elke dag … pouses saam.	FR	FRSS	Play
I	En die ander kinders … speel julle nie met hulle nie?			
S	Somtyds			
I	Jy sê mos die kinders by die skool is nie 'normal' nie. Hoekom dink jy so?			
S	Mark, hy kry stuipe, hy vloek en gaan aan en raak deurmekaar ... en Reyaaz … hy skryf skief. Jacqueline … sy bewe.	DI	DIOTH	Med/othnss
I	En jy?			
S	Die taxi het my omgestamp … op die eerste dag van skool. My kop het seergekry. Toe skel my ma my suster uit.	DI	DISF	Med/trau
I	Wat het hulle vir jou by die hospitaal gegee?			
S	Net pille.			
I	Het jy oop plekke gehad?			
S	Nee …. Net my kop het gekap.			
I	Waar het die ongeluk gebeur?	DI	DISF	Trau
S	By die 'robots'.			
I	Is jy kwaad vir die man wat jou omgestamp het?			

S	Ja … is sy skuld dat ek hier is by die skool. By daai skool was ek in Juffrou Camphor se klas en atoe Juffrou Cuttings.	DI/SC	DISF/SCSS	Angr
I	En hier?			
S	Die eerste jaar was ek in juffrou Bleazard se klas … en Lucille was ook hier.	SC	SCSS	
I	Watter juffrou het jy van gehou.			
S	Jufffrou Bleazard … sy was nie onbeskof met 'n mens nie. Juffrou Camphor was ombeskof … sy bly skel.	SC	SCSS/MS	Care/acc
I	As sê nou terug kan gaan Cornflower toe, sal jy gaa?			
S	Nee, ek sallie. Issie meer so lekker daar nie, my suster het my gesê.	SC	SCMS	
I	Wat sê jou suster van die skool?			
S	Niks, hulle vra net wat is die kinders in my klas se name. My pa het gevra wat is die juffrouens se name.	SC/FAM	SCSS/FAMREL	Conn
I	Hou jy van jou juffrouens.			
S	Ja			
I	Waarvan hou jy by die skool?			
S	Parties en die lekker kos wat ons kry.	SC	SCSS	Care
I	Van wie hou jy die in die klas nie?			
S	Yakeem, hy is ombeskof. Hy vloek en baklei.	FR	FRGNRL	

Interview 5

Anna

		Life area	Aspects	Themes
I	How are you today?			
S	Fine … I'm fine.			
I	Anna, can you tell me what good manners are?			
S	Yes. You greet the big people … and the others.			
I	And then?			
S	Then they, they like you.			
I	Do you like to be liked?			
S	Yes. They like me here … yes they do.	SC	SCSS	Care/Acc
I	All the time?			
S	Yes … sometimes I'm naughty … then, then they tell me to run out the class.	SC	SCSS	Dvnt
I	Who?			

S	The other children in my class … then my teacher look for me … they find me … Aunty Helen know where I, then she take me back to the class.	SC	SCGNRL	Care
I	Why do you run from the class?			
S	I dunno … (Shrugs her shoulders) I go to the toilet … then I want to see whats going on in the, in the … other classes … or there by Mrs Green … I want to see what OT doing.	SC	SCSS	Resist
I	What does she do?			
S	She work with the children … play, and on the big balls … she let the children roll on the ball. That's nice.	SC	SCSS	Care/supp
I	Do you want to go to OT?			
S	Yes … I dunno. I's for the sick ones, they can't do right stuff … like walk, and colours, and stand. She helping them to come right.	DI	DIOTH	Other/med
I	And you?			
S	I'm … right … not sick, Like Ruby. She go so (shakes her body) soos, like fits. Sister was also here to help her. Nogal a lot of sick ones … the children here … sick, sick, sick … but they can still play outside … in the pouses. Aunty Helen keep the sick children inside sometimes.	DI	DISF	Othnss Med Supp
I	Were you sick?			
S	(Pause) Sometimes. They did take me to that big doctor … from Frank … Mr Naylor. You know that time …	FA	FAREL	Abuse
I	What time?			
S	He touch … my private … so, so, so … now the police want to catch him.			Abuse
I	Do you want them to find him?			
S	Yes … and put him in the jail … he's gone now … and Aunty Rena's dead … she couldn't breathe. You writing stuff?	FA	FAREL	Ang
I	Yes.			
S	My social worker go … she also writing from me … and talk. Did you hear all of us … we sing interval?	SC	SCSS	Able
I	Did you enjoy that?			
S	Yes … we sing for the teachers outside after we play.	SC	SCSS	Conn
I	Who sang?			

S	All … the one in the chair … the wheelchair … yes, he did sing also and the small ones. Mary can sing nice … she must be in the concert … and me. I won't run around.	DI	DIGNRL/OTH	Acc Able
I	What else do you do during intervals.			
S	We play.	FR	FRSS	Play
I	And what else?			
S	Singing.			Able
I	And what else?			
S	Share the stuff … like sweets.			Share
I	Do some children get teased?			
S	Yes. But aunty Helen is there … she, she can see them if they rude … and the other ones? Aunty Helen know all the children … they names. Some of the big ones … over there … on the bus in the morning … they can also be sometimes rude. Like swearing and scratching in bags … for the nice things.	SCSS	SCGNRL	Supp Conn
I	Do they bully you?			
S	Sometimes … they say I must shut up … be quiet. I will tell the teacher … I won't shut up … they can't come and vertel me … I'm sorry. I will just say again … my thing what I want to for them. This big girls, they rude "… Anna, go sit on your place and keep your mouth", … but they can do everything what they like … on the bus. I won't listen to them.	SC	SCSS	Bully Resil
I	Oh. And at home?			
S	I listen … sometimes. But if Rose is rude … I want to tell her sommer … Her mother will skel her. But she's so busy … busy with the children and she … "Moenie nou kom weer kla nie, kan jy nie sien ek is besig nie?"	FA	FAREL	Rej
I	What is she busy with?			
S	With the other child … that can't do anything … she also go to a other kind of school … or she stay at home … with the kombi … she go.	DI	DIOTH	Othnss
I	What kind of school?			
S	Little bit like this … what they can't talk … or can't walk … lot of things they can't do there.	SC	SCSS	Med Def
I	And here?			
S	Also … some children is like her.	DI	DIOTH	Othnss/def

I	Do you like such children all around you in your school?			
S	Not all of them ... not like that ...so bad. All isn't like that ... you can't see what's wrong with them.	DI	DIGNRL	Def
I	Like who?			
S	Jamie. If you look ... just to him ... he look ... he look ... everything is right?	DI	DIOTH/GNRL	
I	But?			
S	He, he ... he, can't write his name ... he's old already.	DI	DIOTH	Def
I	What is wrong with him?			
S	In his ... head. I dunno ...	DI	DIOTH	Dvnt/def
I	Do you have a problem?			
S	They said so ... I got a problem.	DI	DISF	Def
I	Who said so?			
S	My social worker ... my teacher, so I'm now here ... I like it here?	DI	DISF	Powl
I	What is your problem?			
S	I dunno ... I got problems with school ... the work, man. It, it's ... heavy ... big things. But I can so some now ... almost right ... some right ... still wrong also.	DI/SC	DISF/SCLRN	Def/strg
I	Do you think children in wheelchairs should go to schools like your old schools?			
S	No ... they will call they names ... and hurt they ... make them sore.	DI	DIGNRL	Mock
I	Would some of your old friends not like to push Xabisa around in his wheelchair?			
S	... Maybe. Yes ... Monica, they can also know Xabisa ... if they know him, they, they ... will like him ... maybe. It can ... so ... but they got steps there also ... he can fall. He's from a home, hey?	DI	DIOTH	Acc Alien
I	Yes.			
S	The home was full ... for me. I wanted to see the home ... yes. My social worker said it was full ... too full. A lot of children there ... they mommies and they daddies ... they not also got mommies and daddies.	FA	FAPL	Displ
I	What do you think about yourself?			
S	I'm happy here. They all love me.			
I	What else do you think about yourself?			

S	I can do a lot … a lot of stuff … I can learn also … the teacher, the teacher, there by the, the other school, she cannot learn me … she don't know.			
I	And here?			
S	They sit with you … two or three … Mr Kay, that driver … he sit and work with me alone by my table … and sometimes I can help for Faldielah.			
I	That's good.			