Fostering Children's Capacity for Empathic Reasoning: The Role of Community of Inquiry in an Empathic Pedagogy

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Abstract

Empathic concern for others is a desirable quality in an increasingly diverse global society. The development of citizens of an ethical society concerned for the emotional wellbeing of its members needs to begin early in life. Parents and families are primary socialisers for young children's moral and ethical development, however schools have a responsibility for providing children with opportunities for Social Emotional Learning (SEL) intended to foster empathic concern for others. Research has demonstrated that the Community of Inquiry can be used in schools to develop children's critical, creative and caring thinking (Trickey & Topping, 2007; Fair et al., 2015); however most research has been concerned with older children's critical and creative thinking. Furthermore, Hoffman's (2000) theory of empathy development claims that children under the age of 12 are unable to empathise with others beyond their immediate social context. There is growing support from research (Daniel, Pettier & Auriac-Slusarczyk, 2011; Daniel & Delsol 2004) suggesting that engagement with dialogue supports young children's emotional development, caring thinking and empathic concern for others in ways that move beyond Hoffman's claims. The age at which children can develop these dispositions has not, to date been actively explored in Australia. This research engaged with children aged six to nine years attending a South Australian primary school.

The use of Community of Inquiry has proven successful in fostering ethical practice with children, and some SEL programs have been successful in supporting young children's social emotional development (Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014); the combination of human experiential stimuli and dialogic encounter about emotions within an Empathic Pedagogy has not previously been researched. Empathic Pedagogy is here defined as a mode of the teaching-learning relation in which identification and engagement with feelings is central. My original contribution is through the design and iterative refinement of the Empathic Pedagogy implemented in this research over three school terms, which intended to foster young children's empathic reasoning. Children engaged with an experiential human stimulus in the form of Stimulus Lesson visits from a mother and her baby over time, as well as Bridge Lesson activities that progressively linked ideas between each Community of Inquiry session.

An Educational Design Research methodology was employed as an appropriate approach for examining the implementation and impact of the Empathic Pedagogy in this research. Data were gathered in the form of the dialogic exchanges offered by children in each Community of Inquiry session, artefacts and responses to Bridge Lesson activities, and children's written and drawn responses in each of their Empathy Journals across the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy. These data were examined and the dialogic exchanges analysed using immediate inductive analysis to explore emergent patterns and enact iterative

changes to the research design, and cycles of retrospective deductive analysis to uncover patterns and themes that could inform the theoretical and pedagogical aspects of this research.

Several key design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy were found to support children's empathic reasoning. These were: (1) the design of Bridge Lessons as a conceptual link between each Community of Inquiry session, (2) the use of experiential stimuli and hypothetical scenarios to elicit affective response, (3) the Empathy Journal as a vehicle for surfacing children's thinking, (4) teacher prompts and questions in the Community of Inquiry to support children's justificatory reasoning, and (5) the duration of Community of Inquiry sessions and the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy over time.

This research found that contrary to Hoffman's (2000) model, young children were able to empathise with others beyond their immediate social context as their empathic reasoning was fostered through their engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy. The children in this research were able to take the perspective of others, reason about their emotions, and demonstrate critical, creative and caring thinking in their empathic reasoning about the emotional concerns of others. Furthermore, the Empathic Pedagogy was shown to provide a safe space for children to recognise, understand and discuss emotions, children who may otherwise have no avenue for this kind of social emotional development. Key recommendations include that the Empathic Pedagogy be used in schools to support the development of young children's empathic reasoning in ways that can help build a community of critical and caring learners in schools and beyond.

Table of Contents

Abstract i

List of Figures x

List of Tables xii

Acknowledgements xiii

Declaration xv

Glossary xvi

1. INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Research Focus 2

1.3 Research Context 3

1.3.1 Educating for Empathic Reasoning 5

1.3.2 Community of Inquiry 7

1.3.3 Empathic Pedagogy 8

1.4 Research Problem 9

1.4.1 Educational Design Research 10

1.5 Research Aims and Purpose 11

1.6 Research Significance 11

1.7 Structure of the Thesis 12

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE 15

2.1 Introduction 15

2.2 Empathy as Perspectives of Self and Other 16

2.2.1 Moral Development and Empathic Concern 19

2.3 Empathy Development in Children 22

2.3.1 Affective and Cognitive Empathy 26

2.3.2 The Self and its Differentiation from Others 28

2.3.3 Neuroscience and Empathy 29

2.4 Defining Empathy 30

2.5 Educating for Empathy Development 31

2.6 Social Emotional Learning 35

2.7 Dialogic Encounters in the Classroom 41

2.8 Community of Inquiry 43

2.8.1 Origins of Community of Inquiry 47
2.8.2 The Community of Inquiry in the Classroom 48
2.8.3 A Wide-Sense View of Community of Inquiry 50
2.8.4 A Narrow-Sense View of the Community of Inquiry 52
2.8.5 Peer Social Interaction in Community of Inquiry 53
2.8.6 The Language of Reasoning in a Community of Inquiry 55
2.8.7 Experiential Stimuli to Encourage Dialogic Exchange 59
2.9 Engagement in a Community of Inquiry: Developing Critical, Creative and Caring Thinking 60
2.10 Engagement in a Community of Inquiry: Developing an Expanded Emotional Vocabulary 65
2.11 Engagement in a Community of Inquiry: Developing Empathy for Others 69
2.12 Chapter Summary 71

3. METHODOLOGY 73
3.1 Introduction 73
3.2 Research Orientation 73
3.2.1 Social Constructivist Paradigm 73
3.2.2 Qualitative Research Approach 74
3.3 Theoretical Considerations 76
3.4 Research Methodology 78
3.4.1 Educational Design Research 79
3.4.2 Key Elements of Educational Design Research 82
3.4.2.1 Real Life Research Settings 82
3.4.2.2 Acceptance of Multiple Dependant Variables 83
3.4.2.3 Characterising the Research Context 83
3.4.2.4 Iterative Cycles of Evaluation and Design 84
3.4.2.5 Complex Interactions between Participants and the Researcher 84
3.4.2.6 Applicability to Diverse Educational Settings 85
3.4.2.7 Role of Participants 85
3.5 Research Methods 86
3.5.1 Recruitment of Participants 86
3.5.1.1 Selection of School Site 86
3.5.1.2 Teacher Participant 87

3.5.1.3 Child Participants 88
3.5.1.4 Mother and Baby Participants 89
3.5.2 Research Procedures 92
3.5.2.1 Phase One: Research Context and Conditions 94
3.5.2.2 Phase Two: The Empathic Pedagogy 95
3.5.3 Data Collection 106
3.5.3.1 Data Sources 106
3.6 Data Analysis 109
3.6.1 Implications for Data Analysis when using Educational Design Research Methodology 110
3.6.2 Immediate and Retrospective Data Analysis 110
3.6.3 Thematic Analysis of Inquiry Lessons 111
3.6.4 First Cycle of Data Coding 113
3.6.4.1 Questions Major Sub-Categories 115
3.6.4.2 Statements Sub-Categories 116
3.6.5 Second Cycle of Data Coding 117
3.6.5.1 Levels of Justificatory Reasoning 118
3.6.6 Analysis of Coded Data 119
3.6.6.1 Empathic Reasoning Matrix 120
3.6.7 Managing the Data 123
3.6.8 Validity, Generalisation and Trustworthiness 123
3.7 Ethical Considerations 125
3.7.1 Role of the Researcher 125
3.7.2 Ethics Approval 126
3.7.3 Informed Consent 127
3.7.3.1 Child Assent 127
3.7.3.2 Parent Consent 128
3.7.3.3 Mother and Baby Consent 128
3.7.3.4 Teacher Consent 129
3.7.4 Anonymity and Confidentiality 129
3.8 Chapter Summary 130

4. EMPATHIC PEDAGOGY IMPLEMENTATION 132
4.1 Introduction 132

4.2 Empathic Pedagogy Structure and Sequence 132
4.3 Welcome Visit 135
4.3.1 Welcome Visit 1 135
4.3.2 Welcome Visit 2 137
4.4 Bridge Lesson 1: Welcome Visit - Talking without Words 141
4.5 Community of Inquiry 1: Talking without Words 143
4.5.1 Stimulus Lesson 1 143
4.5.2 Inquiry Lesson 1 144
4.6 Bridge Lesson 2: Talking without Words – Faces and Feelings 146
4.7 Community of Inquiry 2: Faces and Feelings 148
4.7.1 Stimulus Lesson 2 148
4.7.2 Inquiry Lesson 2 149
4.8 Bridge Lesson 3: Faces and Feelings – Mismatched Messages 152
4.9 Community of Inquiry 3: Mismatched Messages 156
4.9.1 Stimulus Lesson 3 156
4.9.2 Inquiry Lesson 3 157
4.10 Bridge Lesson 4: Mismatched Messages – Emotions and Empathy 160
4.11 Community of Inquiry 4: Emotions and Empathy 163
4.11.1 Stimulus Lesson 4 163
4.11.2 Inquiry Lesson 4 165
4.12 Bridge Lesson 5: Emotions and Empathy – Mothers and Others 167
4.13 Community of Inquiry 5: Mothers and Others 171
4.13.1 Stimulus Lesson 5 171
4.13.2 Inquiry Lesson 5 171
4.14 Bridge Lesson 6: Mothers and Others – Making Connections 173
4.15 Community of Inquiry 6: Making Connections 175
4.15.1 Stimulus Lesson 6 175
4.15.2 Inquiry Lesson 6 176
4.16 Chapter Summary 178

5. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS: PERSPECTIVE TAKING IN THE EMPATHIC PEDAGOGY 179
5.1 Introduction 179
5.1.1 Overall Finding of Perspective Taking in the Empathic Pedagogy 181
5.2 Impact of the Research Design on Perspective Taking 181

5.2.1 Design of the Bridge Lesson Activities 182
5.2.2 Changes to Inquiry Lesson Discussion Plans 185
5.3 Levels of Justificatory Reasoning about Perspective Taking 190
5.4 Focus of Children's Perspective Taking 194
5.4.1 Perspective Taking Regarding the Baby 195
5.4.2 Perspective Taking Regarding the Self 202
5.4.3 Perspective Taking Regarding Others 208
5.5 Chapter Summary 216

6. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS: REASONING ABOUT EMOTION IN THE EMPATHIC PEDAGOGY 217
6.1 Introduction 217
6.1.1 Overall Finding of Reasoning about Emotion in the Empathic Pedagogy 218
6.2 Impact of the Research Design on Reasoning about Emotion 218
6.2.1 Design of the Bridge Lesson Activities 219
6.2.2 Changes to Teacher Prompts 222
6.3 Levels of Justificatory Reasoning about Emotions 224
6.4 Focus of Reasoning about Emotion 230
6.4.1 Reasoning about the Emotions of the Baby 230
6.4.2 Reasoning about the Emotions of the Self 241
6.4.3 Reasoning about the Emotions of Others 247
6.5 Chapter Summary 252

7. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS: EMPATHIC REASONING IN THE EMPATHIC PEDAGOGY 254
7.1 Introduction 254
7.1.1 Empathic Reasoning in the Empathic Pedagogy 255
7.2 Impact of the Research Design on Empathic Reasoning 256
7.3 Levels of Justificatory Reasoning about Empathy 259
7.4 Focus of Empathic Reasoning 265
7.4.1 Empathic Reasoning Regarding the Baby 265
7.4.2 Empathic Reasoning Regarding the Self 266
7.4.3 Empathic Reasoning Regarding Others 267
7.5 Chapter Summary 273

8. DISCUSSION 274
8.1 Introduction 274
8.2 Positioning the Research Findings in Relation to the Literature 274
8.3 The Empathic Pedagogy 276
8.3.1 Experiential Stimuli in the Empathic Pedagogy 277
8.3.2 Community of Inquiry in the Empathic Pedagogy 278
8.4 Design Characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy 279
8.4.1 Bridge Lessons 280
8.4.2 Stimuli Designed to Elicit Affective Response 285
8.4.2.1 Mother and Baby Experiential Stimulus 285
8.4.2.2 Use of Hypothetical Scenarios as Additional Stimuli 288
8.4.2.3 The Role of Experiential Stimuli and Hypothetical Scenarios in the Empathic Pedagogy 289
8.4.3 Empathy Journal 292
8.4.4 Teacher Prompts and Questions 297
8.4.5 Impact of Time 302
8.4.5.1 Length of Inquiry Lessons 302
8.4.5.2 Progression of the Empathic Pedagogy 304
8.5 Empathic Reasoning 308
8.5.1 Relationship between Perspective Taking of Others, Reasoning about Emotion and Empathic Reasoning 308
8.5.2 Quality of Children's Dialogue: Levels of Justificatory Reasoning 312
8.5.3 Focus of Children's Dialogue: Baby, Self and Other 313
8.5.3.1 Dialogue about the Baby 313
8.5.3.2 Dialogue about the Self 315
8.5.3.3 Dialogue about Others 318
8.6 Chapter Summary 320

9. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH 324

References 329
Appendix B: Teacher Consent Form 368
Appendix C: Child Information Brochure 370
Appendix D: Parent/Caregiver Information Letter 372

Appendix E: Parent/Caregiver & Child Consent Form 376
Appendix F: Parent/Caregiver Consent Form 378
Appendix G: Mother & Baby Recruitment Flier 380
Appendix H: Developmental Criteria for Baby 381
Appendix I: Mother & Baby Information Letter 382
Appendix J: Mother & Baby Consent Form 386
Appendix K: Coding Manuals for Data Analysis 388
Appendix L: Empathy Journal Prompts 393
Appendix M: Welcome Visit 394
Appendix N: Welcome Visit 2 395
Appendix O: Community of Inquiry Session 1: Talking without Words 396
Appendix P: Community of Inquiry Session 2: Faces and Feelings 397
Appendix Q: Community of Inquiry Session 3: Mismatched Messages 398
Appendix R: Community of Inquiry Session 4: Emotions and Empathy 399
Appendix S: Community of Inquiry Session 5: Mothers and Others 400
Appendix T: Community of Inquiry Session 6: Making Connections 401
Appendix U: Bridge Lesson 1 (Welcome 2 – Talking without Words) 402
Appendix V: Bridge Lesson 2 (Talking without Words – Faces and Feelings) 403
Appendix W: Bridge Lesson 3 (Faces and Feelings – Mismatched Messages) 404
Appendix X: Bridge Lesson 4 (Mismatched Messages – Emotions and Empathy) 405
Appendix Y: Bridge Lesson 5 (Emotions and Empathy – Mothers and Others) 406
Appendix Z: Bridge Lesson 6 (Mother and Others – Making Connections) 408

List of Figures

Figure 1. Children closely observing mother and baby in a Stimulus Lesson. 98
Figure 2. Length of time for Inquiry Lessons..... 100
Figure 3. Timeline of research design implementation, data collection and data analysis. 106
Figure 4. Overview of processes for thematic data analysis of Inquiry Lesson data. 112
Figure 5. Initial data coding of dialogue from Inquiry Lessons into categories. 113
Figure 6. First cycle data coding of questions into major sub-categories. 115
Figure 7. First cycle data coding of reasoning into minor sub-categories. 117
Figure 8. Second cycle data coding of statements into levels of justificatory reasoning. 119
Figure 9. Second cycle data coding of minor sub-categories using empathic reasoning matrix. 120
Figure 10. Empathic reasoning matrix..... 121
Figure 11. Detail of coded and quantified data plotted onto a cell of the empathic reasoning matrix. 122
Figure 12. Complete sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions and Bridge Lessons. 133
Figure 13. Examples of children's expectations of the baby. 136
Figure 14. Children's predictions about the feelings of the mother, baby and class..... 137
Figure 15. Children observing the baby on the circle mat. 138
Figure 16. Children's thoughts about the feelings of the baby, mother and class. 139
Figure 17. Examples of children's drawings of the baby after welcome visit 2. 140
Figure 18. Children's perceptions of the baby's perspective during welcome visit 2..... 142
Figure 19. Examples of Face It expression cards. 146
Figure 20. Example of Empathy Journal entry for 'faces and feelings' task..... 147
Figure 21. Teacher's categorisation of emotions as inward, outward, and both for 'emotional charades' activity..... 153
Figure 22. Children playing emotional charades 154
Figure 23. Example of Empathy Journal response to Bridge Lesson 3: emotional charades. 155
Figure 24. Example of child's thoughts on cardboard square..... 158
Figure 25. Feeling/emotion quadrant..... 160
Figure 26. Class categorisation of emotion cards using feeling/emotion quadrant. 161
Figure 27. Example of Empathy Journal entry reflection about the baby's feelings. 162
Figure 28. Children's placement of hypothetical scenarios on the empathy continuum in Bridge Lesson 5..... 168
Figure 29. Example of Empathy Journal entry for 'empathy line' task. 169
Figure 30. Example of Empathy Journal entry for 'good things/bad things' task. 174
Figure 31. Data sources for perspective taking across the lesson sequence 180
Figure 32. Flint's Empathy Journal entry for faces and feelings activity with original Face It™ drawing shown on the left. 183
Figure 33. Comparison between Overall Dialogic Offerings, Overall Statements, and Justificatory Statements coded as Perspective Taking 192
Figure 34. Justificatory reasoning levels of children's perspective taking across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence. 193
Figure 35. Justificatory levels of children's perspective taking regarding others across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence. 194

Figure 36. Andrea's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby drawing on her own understanding of emotions. 197
Figure 37. Buddy's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby. 198
Figure 38. Rick's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby. .. 199
Figure 39. Lori's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby. ... 200
Figure 40. Fergus's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby. 201
Figure 41. Isaac's Empathy Journal entry reflection for faces and feelings activity showing perspective taking of the self. 205
Figure 42. Kylie's Empathy Journal entry for changes reflection. 206
Figure 43. Buddy's Empathy Journal entry for changes reflection. 207
Figure 44. Focus of children's perspective taking across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence. 208
Figure 45. Tony's Empathy Journal entry about perspective taking of others. 213
Figure 46. Wayne's Empathy Journal entry about perspective taking of others. 214
Figure 47. Data sources for reasoning about emotion across the lesson sequence 218
Figure 48. Example of individual empathy line activity in Empathy Journal. 220
Figure 49. Carl's Empathy Journal entry showing 'feeling happy when a friend gets something they want' as the most empathic act on his empathy line. 221
Figure 50. Comparison between Overall Dialogic Offerings, Overall Statements, and Justificatory Statements coded as Reasoning about Emotion 226
Figure 51. Justificatory levels of reasoning about emotion across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence. 227
Figure 52. Justificatory levels of reasoning about emotion across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence: children aged 6.5-7.5. 228
Figure 53. Justificatory levels of reasoning about emotion across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence: children aged 7.5-8.5. 229
Figure 54. Focus of children's reasoning about emotion across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence. 236
Figure 55. Shane's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing reasoning about the emotions of the baby. 237
Figure 56. Andrea's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing reasoning about the emotions of the baby. 239
Figure 57. Lori's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing reasoning about the emotions of the baby. 240
Figure 58. Terry's Empathy Journal entry showing reasoning about the emotions of the self.. 245
Figure 59. Tyler's Empathy Journal entry showing reasoning about the emotions of the self and the baby 246
Figure 60. Venn diagram representing empathic reasoning and its component parts 254
Figure 61. Data sources for empathic reasoning across the lesson sequence 255
Figure 62. Duration of Inquiry Lessons and number of justificatory statements given across Inquiry Lesson sequence. 259
Figure 63. Comparison between Overall Dialogic Offerings, Overall Statements, and Justificatory Statements coded as Empathic Reasoning 262

Figure 64. Justificatory levels of empathic reasoning across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.....263
Figure 65. Justificatory levels of empathic reasoning regarding others across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence. 264
Figure 66. Focus of children's empathic reasoning across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.....265
Figure 67. Fergus's Empathy Journal entry for the emotional charades activity showing empathic reasoning about others.....268
Figure 68. Terry's Empathy Journal entry for the emotional charades activity showing empathic reasoning regarding others. 269

List of Tables

Table 1.....89
Table 2.....93
Table 3.....96
Table 4.....99
Table 5.....103
Table 6.....107
Table 7.....180
Table 8.....191
Table 9.....225
Table 10 257
Table 11 260

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Declaration

This thesis presents work carried out by myself and does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any materials previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; and all substantive contributions by others to the work presented, including jointly authored publications, are clearly acknowledged.

Martyn Mills-Bayne

10 April 2017

Glossary

The following key terms used throughout the thesis are defined below.

1. *Child*, *children*, and *young children* refer to children in the period of early childhood from birth to eight years of age (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2016).
2. *Junior primary classrooms and junior primary school* refer to the earliest year levels of formal schooling in Australia for children at five to eight years of age. This excludes other early years settings such as kindergartens and preschools.
3. *Reasoning* describes the cognitive processes by which children explain and justify their ideas and statements during dialogic interactions with peers and educators (Fisher, 2013).
4. *Perspective taking* is the affective processes involved in imagining what another person might be feeling or thinking based on the lived experiences of the self (Selman, 1980; Sigelman, Rider, & De George-Walker, 2013).
5. *Empathic reasoning* describes the process whereby children take the perspective of others, and reason about emotions using dialogue.
6. *Community of inquiry* is the pedagogical practice whereby children engage in dialogic inquiry relating to philosophical or ethical questions drawn from a range of stimulus materials (Lipman, Sharp, & Oscanyan, 1980).
7. *Empathic pedagogy* describes a teaching method that involves the use of emotive and experiential stimuli within a community of inquiry to stimulate dialogic inquiry into the emotional states of the self and others, and foster children's empathic reasoning (Schertz, 2006).

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces and identifies the research topic and positions it within the context of the current focus on supporting young children's social emotional development. Fostering empathic concern is seen as an important social issue in society, and schools are key sites for young children's social emotional learning (Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2012). The importance of children's understanding of their own, and others' emotional states, and the role these understandings play in children's social interactions is therefore critical. This research integrated experiential stimuli and dialogue about social emotional dilemmas within a Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach (Lipman et al., 1980), and these elements are presented as instrumental in the development of the *Empathic Pedagogy* (Schertz, 2006) employed in this research. Educational Design Research (EDR) (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012; McKenney & Reeves, 2012; McKenney & Reeves, 2014) is presented as an appropriate methodological approach for exploring young children's empathic reasoning within the context of junior primary classroom. The research problem, aims and significance of the research to young children's empathic reasoning are described; finally, a descriptive overview of each chapter in this thesis is presented.

1.2 Research Focus

This research developed an Empathic Pedagogy and implemented it in a primary school classroom of children aged six to eight years of age. A central assumption of this research is that empathic concern for others is a desirable feature of all modern societies and communities. Supporting young children to develop their empathic reasoning to better respond to social emotional dilemmas involving others underpinned the development of the Empathic Pedagogy implemented in this research. The effectiveness of the Empathic Pedagogy in fostering young children's empathic reasoning was explored.

This research built on the work of several researchers (Daniel, Auriac, Garnier, Quesnel, & Schleifer, 2006; Daniel, Pettier, & Auriac-Slusarczyk, 2011; Gimenez-Dasi, Quintanilla, & Daniel, 2013) who found that fostering young children's empathy is possible within the early years and junior primary classroom context with children aged up to eight years of age. Further, in defining empathy, the research examined the cognitive and affective elements most commonly researched. In developing the Empathic Pedagogy the research viewed these two elements as connected yet inseparable parts of empathic concern for others. This theoretical duality is mirrored in the pedagogical approach used in the research. The elements of reasoning and perspective taking were viewed respectively as the cognitive and affective elements of empathy in pedagogical practice. These were therefore brought together within the Community of Inquiry to create the Empathic Pedagogy.

The research employed Educational Design Research (EDR) methodology (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012; McKenney & Reeves, 2012; McKenney & Reeves, 2014) as an effective means of exploring young children's reasoning and perspective taking when

engaged with the Empathic Pedagogy in a junior primary classroom. In keeping with the EDR focus on developing knowledge of theory and practice, the characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy that surfaced children's reasoning and perspective taking were also explored.

1.3 Research Context

The profile of empathy has risen in the last decade. Educationally, to say that a method or program can help children develop more empathy implies that somehow there are many who lack the capacity to truly care for others. This deficit view is not one taken up by this research, as the focus of the pedagogical design of the Empathic Pedagogy is one of increasing opportunities to further develop empathic reasoning for others. This view also implies that empathy is worth cultivating and an important element for a healthy, caring and socially functional society. The social importance of empathy and its connection to educating children to becoming confident, caring and creative individuals are articulated in the Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2008), which underpinned the development of both the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for children from birth to five (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009) and the Australian Curriculum (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2014) for primary and secondary school aged children.

The commitment to educating for empathy through Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in schools is apparent in early years and primary school curriculum documents in a number of explicitly stated and implied forms. In the EYLF, empathy is recognised as a critical component of children's growing identity. Outcome 1.4 of this curriculum

document is specifically focused on children learning "to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect" (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009, p. 24). The EYLF Educator's guide reinforces this with empathy highlighted as being at the heart of pedagogical practices that value the cultural and social contexts of children and their families (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010). Additionally, the Australian Curriculum details the dispositions and skills needed for fostering empathy, particularly in the General Capabilities of Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding, and Intercultural Understanding (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2014). Furthermore, and in light of the argument presented above that an empathic pedagogy should support both affective and cognitive elements, the Australian Curriculum also describes the need for thinking and learning skills in the Critical and Creative Thinking and Ethical Understanding General Capabilities (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2013). In promoting the skills of ethical reasoning, the Australian Curriculum draws heavily on the work of Lipman and his concepts of philosophy in the classroom and the Community of Inquiry approach, as evidenced through its reference to educational researchers Burgh, Field and Freakley (2006), and Lipman, Sharp and Oscanyan (1980).

From a curriculum perspective, it is clear that SEL programs designed to help young children to develop empathy are an educational imperative. This thesis, however, highlights that affect alone is not sufficient for children to develop the capacity to respond empathically to others. Critical thinking and reasoning engage the cognitive aspect of empathy that is necessary for children's social and emotional learning. This research used Community of Inquiry pedagogy to bring both the affective and cognitive

elements of empathy together that enabled young children to discuss and inquire about their social emotional concerns and experiences.

This research was motivated by my experiences as an educator working with young children who often had difficulty in effectively expressing their emotions and taking the perspective of others when dealing with social dilemmas that occurred in the classroom and beyond. Children come from diverse social, familial and cultural contexts, and as an educator, I saw that pedagogy was needed to enable educators to recognise the sometimes limited understanding children have of each other's social emotional perspectives, and to foster their learning to reason and respond to the concerns of others. My teaching experience also showed me that young children were willing and able to engage in reasoned dialogue, and I used Community of Inquiry effectively to provide a rich dialogic environment for learning in my classrooms. I felt the need to explore meaningful ways that I could support young children to develop their empathic reasoning. As such, the central focus of this research was to investigate the ways that young children's empathic reasoning could be fostered in the classroom using experiential stimuli within the Community of Inquiry approach to build an Empathic Pedagogy; one that would foster both the affective and cognitive elements of empathy, by focussing on perspective taking and reasoning within an intersubjective space where children could feel safe to discuss emotional concerns.

1.3.1 Educating for Empathic Reasoning

Empathic reasoning should be part of children's educational experience at school. Young children are continually engaging in complex social emotional interactions with their peers, adults and others in their communities and society, seeking out social emotional connections with others where possible (Hrdy, 2009).

Coupled with this desire for social relationship with others, young children are developing a growing awareness of their own emotions, developing strategies and techniques for regulating their emotional states, as well as recognising the implications of their social responses for ongoing relationships with others. Research has found that parents and families are primary influencers of children's developing empathic concern for others (Bowes, Grace, & Hayes, 2012; Bowes & Warburton, 2012; Schaffer, 1996). Parents and families can model and demonstrate appropriate responses and behaviours to those in distress (Kristjansson, 2004; Olejnik, 1980). Schools also have an important role to play in supporting young children's SEL. The research presented in this thesis recognises that much of children's social interactions, and therefore their social emotional development occurs with peers in the school and classroom context, highlighting the importance and influence of peer interactions in children's lived experiences.

Empathy has traditionally been described as comprising two critical elements; affect and cognition, and many researchers have focussed on exploring these two components separately to better understand how empathy manifests itself in real life human interactions (Decety & Jackson, 2004; Decety & Batson, 2009; Decety & Michalska, 2012; Strayer, 1987). Recent research however has shown that it is more meaningful to view affect and cognition as intertwined and interrelated in their development (Coplan, 2011; Coplan & Goldie, 2011). Accordingly, the research in this thesis took an interrelated view of empathy and explored empathic concern as an integrated, affective and cognitive process, with both elements required to provide a comprehensive and holistic picture of young children's empathic reasoning.

1.3.2 Community of Inquiry

The pedagogical approach viewed as most appropriate for supporting young children's empathic reasoning is the *Community of Inquiry*. Research has demonstrated that Community of Inquiry when used in primary schools can improve children's literacy, numeracy and social skills over a sustained period of time (Topping & Trickey, 2007a; Trickey & Topping, 2006; Trickey & Topping, 2007). Research on Community of Inquiry has also found that it supports children to develop their critical, creative and caring thinking skills and ethical and philosophical reasoning (Davey Chesters, 2012; Fisher, 2013). This research used Community of Inquiry to support children to engage in dialogue about emotions, and explore experiential stimuli such as the interactions between a mother and her baby and hypothetical social dilemmas. These elements (facilitated dialogue in the Community of Inquiry and experiential stimulus) formed the Empathic Pedagogy developed for this research intended to support children's emotional expression, understanding of the perspectives of the self and others, and reasoning about emotions in order to foster empathic reasoning.

The Community of Inquiry is a vehicle for children's expression of views and ideas because it provides social learning conditions where children can engage collaboratively and intersubjectively with peers, with structure and focus; enabling each child to develop *autonomous morality* (Hoffman, 2000; Piaget, 1932). Developing autonomous morality supports children to reason about diverse social and moral dilemmas through dialogic interaction with others. Furthermore, in a Community of Inquiry the teacher provides structure and focused guidance as a facilitator of the dialogic process rather than an authority figure whose power influences children's responses (Fisher, 2013). These components when brought together provide spaces for

children to develop autonomy and agency in their dialogic exchanges about social dilemmas. This in turn raises children's awareness of their own emotional states, and fosters empathic reasoning about the emotional states of others.

1.3.3 Empathic Pedagogy

An Empathic Pedagogy combines an educational focus on promoting empathic concern for others through experiential engagement with others within the dialogic space provided by the Community of Inquiry. From an educational perspective children need a safe space for engaging with emotions and the challenges of social moral dilemmas that they face in their lives. The research presented in this thesis builds on Schertz's notion that inquiry-based pedagogical approaches such as the Community of Inquiry support dialogic interactions that support children's critical, creative and caring thinking about the emotional states of others, leading to the creation of an Empathic Pedagogy (Schertz, 2006).

The research in this thesis therefore hypothesised that an Empathic Pedagogy would be created employing a Community of Inquiry approach, an experiential stimulus of a mother and her baby, and the dialogic interactions and communication between children about the various emotional states under inquiry. When supported by additional materials and experiences over time a rich context is possible that can foster children's empathic reasoning about others. For these reasons, research is needed to inform the characteristics and implementation of an Empathic Pedagogy that fosters both the affective and cognitive elements of children's empathic reasoning.

1.4 Research Problem

Children live in a complex and dynamic world where they confront the challenges of navigating their way through a plethora of social and moral concerns throughout their day. Families are the primary settings for children to learn about managing their emotions, and how to respond to the emotional states of others with empathy and genuine concern (Bowes & Warburton, 2012; Bowes et al., 2012). Schools, however, also have an important role in supporting children's developing SEL beyond the home. Furthermore, teachers play a vital role in creating safe and supportive classroom environments that provide children with opportunities to explore emotions and foster empathic concern for others.

There are many ways that schools can foster children's empathic concern, however, what is necessary for children's lifelong learning is the provision of pedagogical approaches that enable children to develop an understanding of their own emotions, the impact these emotions may have on peers, an appreciation of the perspectives of others, and the ability to reason about the emotions of others. Dialogic pedagogies such as the Community of Inquiry can provide children with school-based opportunities to develop their empathic reasoning. Additionally, engaging with an Empathic Pedagogy that involves the use of experiential stimuli within a Community of Inquiry can foster children's empathic reasoning in ways that are more effective than imposing values and behaviour through didactic teaching and the inherent and coercive power wielded by teachers over students (Lovat, 2009).

The literature (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987; Hinnant & O'Brien, 2007; Johansson, 2008; Strayer, 1987) highlights the challenges in defining the notion of empathy, in terms of the affective and cognitive aspects inherent in the development and expression

of empathic concern for others. Furthermore, there is a view presented in the research literature that young children under the age of twelve are not able to demonstrate empathy consistently, or in the complex forms in which adults may be able (Hoffman, 1982; Hoffman, 2000; Snow, 2000). In the last decade however, researchers are discovering that the ability to understand the social minds of others and to make inferences about others' emotional states develops in infancy and into early childhood (Gopnik & Seiver, 2009; Meltzoff & Gopnik, 2013). Research is needed to explore young children's empathic concern for others in real life contexts to better understand the intricacies of young children's empathic responses. Much research on empathy has traditionally taken place in de-contextualised laboratory settings with methods that are not practical in other situations (Blair, 2005; Cozolino, 2006). To better understand the approaches that schools and teachers could take to support young children's SEL and empathic reasoning, researchers need to find ways to investigate the ways children engage with social moral concerns in actual classroom settings.

1.4.1 Educational Design Research

EDR methodology (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012; McKenney, Nieveen, & van den Akker, 2006; McKenney & Reeves, 2014) provides researchers with a way of implementing and researching pedagogical interventions. This methodological approach was born out of the engineering and scientific fields of research where the iterative testing of a product or intervention was needed to determine the efficacy of the design in real life contexts, and adapt its design characteristics based on observation and feedback (A. Collins, Joseph, & Bielaczyc, 2004; Reimann, 2011; Sloane, 2006). Not surprisingly, many educational researchers have embraced this methodology as a way to explore and examine the design characteristics of new pedagogical interventions and

artefacts in the dynamic, real life setting of the classroom (Alghamdi & Li, 2013; McKenney & Reeves, 2012).

1.5 Research Aims and Purpose

The purpose of this research was to explore the design characteristics of an Empathic Pedagogy that could foster young children's reasoning about the emotions of others and their capacity for perspective taking of others; that is, their empathic reasoning. The aim of this research was to investigate the ways in which children's empathic reasoning might be fostered through a series of Community of Inquiry sessions that involved experiential stimuli within an Empathic Pedagogy.

The research questions were:

1. What are the design characteristics of an Empathic Pedagogy that foster young children's capacity for empathic reasoning?

2. In what ways does an Empathic Pedagogy that includes Community of Inquiry and uses experiential stimuli support the development of young children's empathic reasoning?

1.6 Research Significance

This research makes an important contribution to research into young children's empathic reasoning about the emotion concerns of others in real life classrooms. The significance of this research is in the exploration and design of an Empathic Pedagogy as a pedagogical vehicle for young children's dialogic inquiry into their own emotions, and the perceived emotional states of others. Having an approach such as the Empathic Pedagogy will enable educators to better support children's developing perspective

taking, reasoning skills, and consequently foster young children's empathic reasoning about social and moral dilemmas in their lives. Current curriculum documents for Australian early childhood (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009) and primary school settings (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2014) describe the need for children to develop empathy for others, and to engage in SEL that can support children to become critical, creative and caring thinkers in their worlds. Hoffman highlights the importance of empathy and its role in children's lives and our wider society: "Empathy is the spark of human concern for others, the glue that makes social life possible" (Hoffman, 2000, p. 7).

This research provides evidence for the value of the Empathic Pedagogy in fostering young children's empathic reasoning, and presents key design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy that support young children's perspective taking, reasoning about emotions, and empathic reasoning within guided inquiry about the social and moral dilemmas children experience in schools, communities and society. This research adds to understanding of the elements that foster children's empathic reasoning when engaged in ethical and philosophical inquiry within the Community of Inquiry. This research also provides an understanding of the ways that the Empathic Pedagogy fosters young children's empathic reasoning.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis comprises nine chapters. Chapter One introduces the research topic, the context of the research, the aims and significance of the research, and the questions that drove the research.

Chapter Two sets out the argument for the need to support young children's developing empathic reasoning by reviewing the literature concerned with the affective and cognitive elements of empathy development, and its importance in children's social emotional and moral development. Traditional inductive processes for educating children in issues of morality and empathic concern are questioned, and the need for incorporating a philosophical approach to moral education is argued as necessary for children's movement towards becoming mature empathisers. SEL programs that help to foster empathy are reviewed, and an argument is made for the Community of Inquiry to be used in real life classrooms as a vehicle to focus children's thinking and discussion on the emotional states of others within an Empathic Pedagogy.

Chapter Three establishes the rationale for the methodological approach chosen for this research. EDR is presented as the methodology employed to best interrogate the research questions. The school selection and recruitment processes for the mother and baby are described in detail. Ethical considerations are presented, and the process for gaining informed consent from participants is described, including the decision to value each child as an active participant in the research by creating a two-step consent process where child participants were required to give assent, as well as have parent/care giver consent. The phases of this research are outlined, and a detailed description of the lessons that formed the research methods are given ahead of the specific description of the lesson implementation process described in Chapter Four. Data sources and the process of data analysis are explained including discussion of the implications for analysis when using EDR methodologies.

Chapter Four details the research methods employed in the research. An overview of the lesson format, and the sequence of lessons introduced in the classroom

are described. Each lesson implemented during the research is described using photographic evidence, examples of activities, and samples of student work to provide a rich description of each lesson and how the sequence developed iteratively throughout the research. In addition to the repeated cycle of Stimulus, Inquiry and Bridge Lessons, the initial Welcome Visit Lessons that were designed to introduce the mother and baby to the class are described.

The findings of data analysis are presented in three chapters. Chapter Five presents findings for children's *perspective taking* in the Empathic Pedagogy, Chapter Six presents findings for children's *reasoning about emotions* in the Empathic Pedagogy, and Chapter Seven presents findings for children's *empathic reasoning* in the Empathic Pedagogy. Iterative changes to the implemented design are discussed, where these changes were relevant to the refining of lessons designed to support children's empathic reasoning in the Empathic Pedagogy. Findings are presented that demonstrate the levels of children's justificatory reasoning in dialogic exchanges, showing that they are capable of empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy.

Chapter Eight presents discussion of the findings relevant to children's perspective taking, reasoning about emotion, and empathic reasoning, and the implications that follow for the use of the Empathic Pedagogy as a tool for fostering empathic reasoning in young children.

Chapter Nine concludes the thesis with a summary of the research as it relates to each of the research questions. Implications are presented for theory and pedagogical practice in supporting children's empathic reasoning through the use of the Empathic Pedagogy, as well as suggestions for future research in this area.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

In this review of the literature, in order to provide an operational definition for this research I explore the concept of empathy, the complexities of defining it and its development in humans. I argue for the importance of fostering the development of young children's empathy and examine the way that young children have been positioned in research literature on empathy development. Next, forms of intervention and education that foster empathy development in young children are reviewed to support an argument that schools can build on traditional inductive strategies, specifically pedagogies that combine both affective and cognitive dimensions of learning. Affective pedagogies include those that provide young children with opportunities to take the perspective of others, and begin to reason about the emotions of others. Cognitive pedagogies engage children in dialogic interactions about their emotions and the emotional states of others. I argue as a result that in combination, these pedagogies foster children's empathic reasoning. Furthermore, I argue that specifically the Community of Inquiry plays a pivotal role in fostering young children's empathy in school settings. The amalgamation of these ideas can be described as an Empathic Pedagogy and as such builds on the work of Schertz (2006). I argue that Empathic Pedagogy can provide opportunities for young children to develop their emotional vocabulary, take the perspective of others, reason about emotions, and ultimately foster children's empathic reasoning for others.

2.2 Empathy as Perspectives of Self and Other

At the heart of the problem of defining empathy lies an argument about the very nature of the self. An ontological view of the self considers each person as being connected parts of a greater whole where there is no separation between self and other (Schertz, 2007a). This is in contrast to a view of the self as separate from others and a contained entity (Schopenhauer, 1995). From this perspective, empathetic or empathic emotions are only possible because each person (and by extension, each person's emotions) is a part of a greater ontological whole where the self is connected to the other in an affective and intersubjective field of social relatedness (Merleau-Ponty, 1964; Schertz, 2007a; Stern, 1985). This ontological perspective positions emotional states as being like a web or intersubjective field that connects individuals to each other despite their physical separateness (Molnar-Szakacs, 2011; Schertz, 2007a; 2007b). For the purposes of this research, the word *empathic* will be used consistently to refer to responses triggered by concern for others.

The notion that individuals are part of a greater whole of emotionally connected beings may have some credence when we consider the pre-empathic states that can be observed in infants and toddlers, and the way that young children eagerly seek out social emotional connections with others (Hrdy, 2009). These early empathic arousal modes include motor mimicry, direct association of visual and audible cues such as infant's reactive crying in response to others' cries, and other involuntary empathic responses such as social referencing; where a child's emotional response is referenced by the caregiver's reaction to the same stimuli (Hoffman, 2000; R. Thompson, 1987). Furthermore, Hoffman found that reactive newborn crying and egocentric empathic distress also involve involuntary and vicarious empathic reactions to the emotional

states of others. Hoffman refers to this phenomenon as *emotional contagion*, and he found that this occurs in infants prior to the development of *self-other* distinction. This research demonstrates that there is some validity to the argument that there is no self-other divide in relation to infants.

Conversely, there is support for an ontological view of people as separate. Snow (2000) for example, argues that an ontological separation between individual people exists and that there is no "empathic field" (Schertz, 2006, p. 13) that allows individuals to experience the emotional states of others. Snow's view is that people are separate from each other and that their emotions are discreet and not shared through any metaphysical means. Snow and others propose that insight into the emotions of others can be gained through processes such as motor mimicry, social referencing (Hoffman, 2000; Snow, 2000), or through neural mechanisms in the brain such as mirror neurons, which are specialised brain cells in primates that elicit the same feeling as those being observed (Iacoboni, 2009). These processes are seen to be responsible for an individual's empathic insight into the experiences of others, so that the emotional states of others are felt 'as if' by the self (L. Carr, Iacoboni, Dubeau, Mazzlotta, & Lenzi, 2003; Cozolino, 2006; Gallese, Keysers, & Rizzolatti, 2004).

Although these are two different perspectives of the self-other divide this does not indicate that these ideas are incompatible. One the one hand, there is the ontological view that there is no divide between self and other, and that we are all part of a greater whole of emotionally connected beings set forward by authors such as Schertz (2007b). This view implies that our empathic response to others is a wholly affective process. On the other hand, the work of Hoffman (2000) and others (Cozolino, 2006; Iacoboni, 2009; Snow, 2000) has shown that these early affective processes and neural processes occur

in infants prior to recognition of the self as separate from others, and are built upon by more complex cognitive processes as children's social emotional and cognitive development increases (Nagel, 2012; Schaffer, 1996).

This connection between affective and cognitive processes that develop over time highlights that empathy cannot be considered as one or the other, but involves the complex interplay between both aspects. This is illustrated for example by children's involuntary affective responses. These responses are mediated through early developmental processes such as emotional contagion and neural processing, and are critical for responses to others that show empathic concern. Importantly, these *affective* processes work in tandem with deliberate *cognitive* processes such as perspective taking and reasoning that allow individuals to understand and respond to the emotional states of others in prosocial ways (Carlo, 2006; Christ, Carlo, & Stoltenberg, 2016; Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006). This view of the integrated nature of affective and cognitive processing is in line with Coplan's (2011) definition of empathy as "a process through which an observer simulates another's situated psychological states, while maintaining clear self-other differentiation" (Coplan, 2011, p. 58).

Coplan's definition enables the complex interplay between cognitive and affective elements to be both visible and valued. Although this definition seemingly narrows how empathy is conceptualised, it provides for a view that empathic concern for others involves a combination of involuntary affective responses and deliberate cognitive processes. In order to research empathy within the complex context of classrooms this definition provides ways of researching empathy that allows for the two parts of the whole to be studied separately and then brought together.

2.2.1 Moral Development and Empathic Concern

An important element in human moral development is empathic concern for others. Empathic concern is a form of prosocial moral behaviour where individuals distinguish between self and other, and fulfil a moral obligation to help others beyond concern for the self and often at the emotional expense of the self (Hoffman, 2000). These two areas; moral development and empathy are intimately connected. The emphasis on empathic concern as part of moral development reviewed in this section justifies the pedagogical perspectives taken in this research, described later in Section 2.4.

The nature of self and other is an existential dilemma found within all individuals as a philosophical conflict between egoism and social obligations (Hoffman, 1982). The dilemma of the nature of moral development and empathic concern for others has been addressed by both religious and philosophical theorists, and two are particularly relevant. The first is the *doctrine of original sin*, with its roots strongly embedded in religious ideologies, and described by many early philosophers and clerics, and echoed in early Freudian and social learning theories (Hoffman, 2000), and the second the *doctrine of innate purity* which Rousseau argued describes how children are born 'good' and are corrupted by societal influences in their environment. These views are considered as diametrically opposed to one another (Hoffman, 2000). While both views are raised because each highlights the differing perspectives on children's moral and empathy development found in literature, the doctrine of innate purity in particular provides some justifications for the pedagogical perspective taken in this research.

The doctrine of innate purity asserts that children are innately good but are susceptible to corruption from societal influences which are counterproductive to their

moral development. This view is visible in Piaget's theory of moral development which proposed that children's relationships with familiar and influential adults generate a respect for adults based on enforced rules and authority that interferes with moral development (Hoffman, 2000; Piaget, 1932). Piaget's concern was that the imposition of parental power and rules would not allow children to experience and engage with diverse human perspectives. Such experiences he argued were necessary for the development of a rich internalised sense of morality for solving social dilemmas. He suggested that the danger of this power imbalance could be circumvented by allowing children to interact with their intellectual and socially equal peers. The power balance characterised by these relationships and ensuing interactions encourage perspective taking and enables children to develop autonomous morality concurrently with maturation in their cognitive abilities (Hoffman, 2000; Piaget, 1932). This view of the child as a valued and autonomous participant in their own moral development delineates social learning conditions with minimal adult guidance deemed necessary for children to develop empathic concern that can lead to moral action.

Although both views of moral development have evidence to support their claims, it is widely accepted that a complex blend of both explanations contributes to development (Hrdy, 2009; Schaffer, 1996; Selman, 1980). Findings from monozygotic and dizygotic twin studies (Zahn-Waxler, Robinson, & Emde, 1992) and research on familial contexts (Zahn-Waxler, Kochanska, Krupnik, & McKnew, 1990) provide support for this complex blend, where the development of empathy and elements of young children's empathic concern for others was found to have been influenced by a combination of genetic and environmental influences.

Children's moral development is then positioned as something that is able to be influenced by the environment, and therefore, the actions that adults take in that environment become important. The foundational elements of an inquiry-based pedagogy for teaching young children, such as the *Philosophy for Children* (P4C) approach to education (Lipman et al., 1980; Lipman, 2003) take this perspective on the fostering of moral development. P4C is one of a number of pedagogical approaches for supporting moral development that employ inquiry-based pedagogy using dialogic methods, such as discussion and questioning about philosophical, moral and ethical dilemmas. Dialogue-driven teaching methods such as those in P4C , aim to encourage children to engage with each other in a Community of Inquiry facilitated by the educator. In a Community of Inquiry, the educator acts as a mentor and facilitator for the discussion, rather than an authority figure who controls the focus and direction of learning.

Within a Community of Inquiry, children participate as active agents whose words, ideas, and reasons are valued and whose competency as learners is acknowledged (Csak, 2002; Dockett, Einarsdottir, & Perry, 2011; P. Harris & Manatakis, 2013; Woodrow & Press, 2007). Research has established that inquiry-based pedagogies are an effective strategy for stimulating moral development in young children, particularly in contexts that involve real-life moral dilemmas, and allow all participants to contribute to the discussion (DeHaan, Hanford, Kinlaw, Philler, & Snarey, 1997; Fisher, 2013; A. Higgins, 1980). The Community of Inquiry provides the necessary social learning conditions for children to engage in dialogic exchanges with intellectual and socially equal peers about real-life social dilemmas that encourage children to discuss their empathic concern for others. As such, it has an important role to play in

determining how educators can foster young children's moral development, one element of which is empathy development.

2.3 Empathy Development in Children

Theories of empathy development in children, like all child development theories, are products of particular times and places, so it is necessary to view any such theories as being conceptualised and constructed within a particular cultural, social and temporal context (Rogoff, 2003). The danger of assuming that dominant westernised theories of child development hold true for all children is that they do not necessarily take into account the diversity in young children's cultural contexts. This is particularly true for cognitive-developmental theories of moral development such as those proposed by Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1958) because there are differences in the social conventions and accepted ethical practices across cultures (Nucci & Turiel, 2009; Turiel, 2002; Wainryb, 2006).

The most widely accepted and well-founded theory on the development of empathy in childhood is Hoffman's theory of moral development (Cooper, 2010; Johansson, 2008). This theory is a synthesis of the empirical findings of a range of other researchers including Kohlberg (1958), Piaget (1932), as well as British philosophers Hume (1957) and Smith (1965). Hoffman amalgamated these findings into a complete and systematic theory of moral development across the lifespan (Kristjansson, 2004). In his theory, Hoffman highlighted the role of empathic affect in moral development, but also stressed the important role of cognition in this development (Hoffman, 2000). Hoffman's theory specifically highlights the role of empathic concern as necessary for

moral action, and acknowledges the complex and intertwined roles of affect and cognition in children's empathy development. The important contribution that Hoffman's theory has made to the understanding of children's moral development is in the recognition of the parts (affect and cognition) that are necessary for the empathic whole. This in turn raises critical questions about how affect and cognition relate to the conditions for moral development within the real-life setting of a junior primary classroom, and whether environmental conditions can be designed pedagogically to bring about perspective-taking (as the affective dimension), and reasoning about emotions (as the cognitive dimension).

Hoffman's (1990; 2000; 2007) work emphasised that a child's age is one of the necessary conditions for the development of empathy. He hypothesised five sequential stages in the development of what he termed *empathic distress*; Global Empathic Distress (or reactive newborn crying), Egocentric Empathic Distress, Quasi-Egocentric Empathic Distress, Veridical Empathy for Another's Distress, and Empathy for Another's Experience beyond the Immediate Situation (Hoffman, 2000; 2007). Hoffman (2000) organised these five developmental stages of empathic distress into four levels of empathy that develop throughout childhood. The four levels proposed by Hoffman are Global Empathy, Attention to Others' Feelings, Prosocial Actions, and Empathy for Another's Life Condition (1987). Hoffman (1990) suggested a developmental sequence in that these four levels of empathy develop through childhood and into adolescence and beyond, but that they are not mutually exclusive. The notion of a sequence is also supported by DeWaal (2008), who likened this connected sequence of empathy development to a *Russian doll* model whereby each level is built upon and contained within the next level.

In examining this sequence of development, Hoffman's view on children's age and the development of empathy becomes clear. In their first year, infants often demonstrate empathic distress through reactive crying in response to others. This empathic response occurs because infants are yet to differentiate between self and other, and will react to the distress of others as if they are experiencing distress themselves. Hoffman referred to this stage as Global Empathy (Hoffman, 2000) or *emotion contagion* (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993), and is visible when infants attend to the emotions of others and respond automatically through imitation and synchronised affective expressions (Decety & Jackson, 2004). This is supported by Rieffe, Ketelaar and Wiefferink (2010) who found that when infants display these automatic responses that they do not differentiate between self and other. There are several behaviours that characterise this earliest stage of empathy development including reactive crying, motor mimicry, affective synchrony and social referencing. The first two of these pre-empathic modes (reactive crying and motor mimicry) are considered to be mostly automatic reactions to social emotional stimuli, and as such are precursors to what Snow (2000) coined as *true empathy*. True empathy involves more complex cognitive processes such as affective synchrony and social referencing that extend the automatic responses of global empathy.

True empathy (Snow, 2000) continues to develop as children move into their second year, where a growing awareness of the separation between the observed emotional states of others and their own feelings becomes more apparent. This is the stage of Attention to Others' Feelings (Hoffman, 2000), or *egocentric empathy*. Children begin to actively respond to the empathic distress of those around them, but tend to act in egocentric ways by responding in a manner that they themselves would find

comforting (R. Thompson, 1987). In their third year according to Hoffman's theory (2000; 1987), children start to understand that the feelings of others can be different from their own, and that individuals' need for comfort may also differ. This growing awareness of the inner emotional states of others develops in tandem with a deeper understanding that their physical self exists beyond their own subjective internal sense of their body, and that others may view children differently to the way they *see* themselves (Hoffman, 2007; Schaffer, 1996).

This is the level of development described by Hoffman as Empathy for Another's Feelings, which is typified by children displaying *veridical empathy* in response to the empathic distress of others (Hoffman, 2000). Veridical empathy is a key stage in children's empathy development, because this stage has all the elements of mature empathy compared to previous modes of empathic arousal which are transient and do not appear in subsequent stages of children's response to empathic distress. Hoffman (2000) suggested that children's empathy development stays at this this level until late childhood or early adolescence.

According to Hoffman, it is only in late childhood (beyond 12 years of age) that children are able to better understand that other people's emotional states may be influenced by their life situation and context as well as their immediate situation (Hoffman, 2000). At this level of Empathy for Another's Life Condition, children are also increasingly able to empathise with groups of people, and take the perspective of those who are unfamiliar by imagining themselves experiencing the feelings of the other (Hoffman, 2000; Lennon & Eisenberg, 1987). While Hoffman hypothesised that children are not able to empathise with unfamiliar others beyond their immediate social context, his work and the work of others who have built on his work (Batson et al., 1997;

Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990; Eisenberg, Smith, & Spinrad, 2011; Gallese et al., 2004) was based in clinical research settings. This raises the question as to whether children less than 12 years of age could demonstrate true empathy if given opportunities for dialogic exchanges within the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach. Research is needed to investigate whether young children are able to demonstrate Empathy for Another's Life Condition and empathic concern for the distress of others when engaged in dialogic exchanges within a Community of Inquiry, and to move beyond the level of veridical empathy described in Hoffman's theory of moral development.

2.3.1 Affective and Cognitive Empathy

There is continuing debate about whether the construct of empathy is affective or cognitive in nature (Strayer, 1987), or a complex mix of both (Hinnant & O'Brien, 2007; Hoffman, 2000). Affective empathy involves both the recognition of emotional cues in others and an empathic response involving feelings identical to those being observed. In this way, empathy is described as involving "feeling what another person is feeling" (Hunter, 2004 p. 5). Hunter (2004) suggested that the affective empathy construct is the most appropriate component of empathy to measure with young children. This is due, in part, to the limited cognitive and verbal abilities of young children, and thus the difficulty of collecting data relevant to the cognitive empathy construct. Furthermore, affective empathy can be triggered by many preverbal processes such as motor mimicry or emotional contagion (Vaish & Warneken, 2012), and requires only low level cognitive processes (Decety & Michalska, 2012; Hoffman, 2000), making this construct most relevant to the occurrence of young children's involuntary empathic responses.

Cognitive empathy however, is most often associated with the notion of taking the perspective of another through the perceived or imagined view of their emotional states (Hodges, 2005; Hoffman, 2000). Linked to this cognitive form of empathy is the development of a theory of mind, which is the understanding that the thoughts of another may differ from one's own (Hodges & Myers, 2007). Reik (1948) defined the empathic process from a psychoanalytical clinician's viewpoint, describing this process as having an affective component. In describing the final phase of his model, however, Reik highlighted the cognitive process of the individual's detachment from a merged state whereby the empathiser gains a greater understanding of the other's emotional state. This detachment of the merged self allows the individual to reflect on their understanding of the other, as well as their separateness from them (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987). The process of detachment proposed in Reik's model is a highly cognitive one, whereby the empathiser voluntarily acts to neutralise the automatic processes of affective empathy and purposefully applies higher order cognitive modes.

Empathy according to Reik's model of cognitive perspective involves understanding the emotional states of others. This understanding is often described as perspective taking whereby an observer uses cognitive processes to imagine what a person in empathic distress may be feeling (Eisenberg et al., 2006; Hanson & Mullis, 1985; Hodges, 2005; K. L. Thompson & Gullone, 2003). Gibbs (2014) stated that cognition can "complicate the relationship between empathy and prosocial behaviour" (p. 85), because causal attributes may lead to an individual engaging in contradictory social behaviour such as blaming the victim rather than producing empathic concern for others. In this way, the development of cognitive processes alone such as perspective

taking regarding others, does not necessarily lead to empathy for someone in distress, or result in prosocial behaviour.

Although this literature adds to our understanding of the role of both affect and cognition in empathy and specifically perspective taking, the research has not necessarily considered the role that the increasing awareness of differences between self and other plays in a holistic notion of children's empathy development.

2.3.2 The Self and its Differentiation from Others

The work of Selman (1980) gives the most widely accepted and detailed account of how the development of the self and its differentiation from others progresses through childhood. Selman proposed that the increasing awareness of the differences between the self and others allows children to be able to take the perspective of others (Selman, 1980). In infancy, children do not easily distinguish between their own self and others, and according to Selman's stages of self-other understanding, do not move beyond an egocentric view of the world until around six years of age (Schaffer, 1996). As children move beyond this self-focused relationship with the world around them and the people in it they begin to understand that others can have different perspectives from their own. This move towards being better able to take the perspective of others is an important development in the ability to empathise with others and understand their feelings.

Furthermore, according to Selman (1980), children from around eight years start to develop social perspective-taking skills, or the ability to reflect on the emotional states of others (Berk, 2013; Sigelman et al., 2013), but until they reach the third stage of self-other understanding at about 12 years old, are not able to simultaneously consider the perspectives of others and themselves (Selman, 1980). Selman's point

raises serious concerns about whether educators should encourage children in primary schools to empathise with their peers, as this model seems to indicate they would be unable to take the perspective of others by reflecting on their own experiences (Selman, 1980). Yet, many parents and educators experience young children's empathic concern regarding others, indicating anecdotally that the development of this capacity is possible earlier than Selman suggested. For this reason, research is needed to investigate whether young children are able to take the perspective of others, and whether educational environments can be designed to explicitly foster this differentiation of self which is necessary for perspective taking.

2.3.3 Neuroscience and Empathy

Neuroscience is shedding light on children's development of their understanding of self and others. Currently there is research on the processes that occur within the human brain when emotional states of others are experienced by the self. Researchers are beginning to locate parts of the human brain that activate when trying to understand the feelings of others (Iacoboni et al., 2005; Molnar-Szakacs, 2011; Shamay-Tsoory, 2010). The neural activity involved in empathising with the emotions of others has been found to mirror the neural activity that occurs when those emotions are actually felt (L. Carr et al., 2003; Decety & Jackson, 2004; Decety, 2011; Shamay-Tsoory, 2010). Much of this research is carried out in clinical or laboratory settings with the use of functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) that creates a map of the neural activity occurring within the brain. This imaging is often carried out when subjects are observing the facial expressions and imitating the emotions of others, or experiencing emotional responses to stimuli (L. Carr et al., 2003). While many researchers refer to empathy as a single function, research by neuroscientists shows how there are distinct

divisions in the neurocognitive systems responsible for particular forms of empathy. Blair (2005) noted divisions in neural systems responsible for three empathic functions: cognitive empathy, motor empathy and emotional empathy. Although these represent distinct areas of empathic functioning within the brain with partially separate systems, there is also clear overlap in neural systems used by all three (Blair, 2005).

Research into mirror neurons and the neural systems that support emotional contagion and affective understanding of the emotions of others supports the hypothesis that the observation of others in distress can trigger the same neural mechanisms responsible for the first-hand emotional experience (Hrdy, 2009; Meltzoff, 2002; Shamay-Tsoory, 2010; Thioux, Gazzola, & Keysers, 2008). Many researchers and authors believe, however, that mirror neurons play a pivotal role in empathy; others contend that the mirror neuron system primarily supports motor mimicry (Thioux et al., 2008). This research highlights the role of experiential stimuli and further reinforces the view that empathy is a holistic phenomenon.

2.4 Defining Empathy

Neuroscience is helping to build a complex picture of the way that empathy is experienced and expressed neurologically by children (Olsson & Ochsner, 2007). The review of literature in relation to the philosophical and developmental aspects of empathy provides the basis for an operational definition of empathy for this research. The challenges in defining empathy and the key arguments in characterising this concept have been explored. Defining empathy has long been a challenge for theorists, researchers and practitioners (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987; Hinnant & O'Brien, 2007; Johansson, 2008; Strayer, 1987). There are ongoing arguments about how this complex

and elusive concept should be defined, arguments that continue to foreshadow any exploration of empathy, its development across the human lifespan, and whether it can be learned or taught.

When researching empathy, an operational definition is needed, one that acknowledges the complex blend of cognitive and affective elements involved in emotional responses (Preston & DeWaal, 2002), as well as the intersubjective nature of the self-other divide (Snow, 2000). Coplan's definition does this work. Coplan (2011) argues that empathy should be specifically defined as 'a process through which an observer simulates another's situated psychological states, while maintaining clear self-other differentiation' (Coplan, 2011, p. 58). This definition presents a primarily cognitive focus for empathy, but one which does not discount the involuntary affective processes that can blur our perception of emotional stimuli from others.

2.5 Educating for Empathy Development

Researching whether young children's empathy can be developed in school-based settings requires methods other than clinical and laboratory trials. The messy variables found in the real life setting of a classroom provide a challenge for researching empathy development and its expression in children. Primary school classrooms are busy and dynamic environments where social and emotional interactions are occurring within and beyond the planned curricular experiences, activities and routines of the classroom. Children are interacting in complex social and emotional ways in the transitions between lessons, during recess and lunch breaks, and before they even step into the classroom. Therefore finding a way to pedagogically explore children's thoughts and feelings about empathy and their reasoning about social dilemmas which requires

them to think beyond their own self and take the perspective of others was foundational to this research.

Educating for empathy development through induction is often part of the moral socialisation of very young children by their parents and caregivers. Induction occurs when parents demonstrate the perspective of the person in distress and describe or model appropriate behaviours and responses to teach the child how to behave towards and empathise with others (Kristjansson, 2004; Olejnik, 1980). In this way young children learn that some social transgressions may cause emotional distress to others, and are socialised through parental induction, and moral internalisation to respond to social and emotional cues in socially appropriate ways (Blair, 1995; Hoffman, 1977; Hoffman, 2000; K. L. Thompson & Gullone, 2003).

The theory of moral development and empathic concern proposed by Hoffman (1977; 2000) supports an inductive approach to educating for empathy. Moral induction in education involves adults providing children with reasons and explanations for behaviour changes, or an appeal to social conventions already learned by the child (Eisenberg, 1992; Hoffman, 1977; Maccoby, 1992; Olejnik, 1980; Rottschaefer, 1999; Rottschaefer, 2009). It was Hoffman's conviction that through the process of induction young children are able to apply their reasoning to matters involving empathic concern (Hoffman, 2000). The notion that adults should teach empathy through induction alone has been challenged by Kristjansson (2004) who suggested that elements of moral development and empathic concern need to be informed by a philosophical view, to "add to both the theoretical strength and educational power of Hoffman's theory" (Kristjansson, 2004, p. 293). Underlining this call for the application of philosophically grounded learning to complement moral

induction is the suggestion that the use of induction alone may lead to *passive empathy* (Kristjansson, 2004), where no action is taken to help victims despite clear feelings of empathy for their situation.

If inquiry-based pedagogy holds the capacity to foster young children's empathy development, then the philosophical grounding of empathy development can be accommodated through the Community of Inquiry. Hoffman, however also raises a critical component in empathy development in considering the role of reasoning in the process. This implies that children's empathy can be developed through significant adult induction, but also proposes that induction alone is not enough to foster empathic concern for others. He argued that further pedagogical rigour is needed to support the process of moral induction, rigour that should include reasoning which Community of Inquiry can also support. Parents can provide an initial framework from which children begin to develop their own moral development and empathic concern for others. It is through the development of strong attachment relations between parents and children (Hrdy, 2009; Selman, 1980; Shaffer, 2005), as well as exploring ideas with other caring role models such as educators and peers, however, that children begin to develop their own sense of empathic concern for others (Hymel, Schonert-Reichl, & Miller, 2006; K. L. Thompson & Gullone, 2003). This model of attachment and the giving of reasons for caring mirrors an affective and cognitive approach to moral development. The challenge is in developing a model that similarly combines affective and cognitive dimensions for educational settings which curriculum now mandates.

The role of educators in supporting young children's empathy development is strongly highlighted in key curriculum documents that inform the pedagogical practices of teachers in early years and primary school settings. The Melbourne Declaration on

the Educational Goals for Young Australians (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2008), as well as the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009) and the Australian Curriculum (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2014) all articulate a commitment to educating for empathy through Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in schools and preschool settings in a number of explicitly stated and implied forms. In the EYLF, empathy is recognised as a critical component of children's growing identity. Outcome 1.4 of this curriculum document is specifically focused on children learning "to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect" (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009, p. 24). The Australian Curriculum used across Australian primary schools, details the dispositions and skills needed for fostering empathy, particularly in the General Capabilities of Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding, and Intercultural Understanding (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2014). There are therefore compelling current policy and curriculum imperatives for developing empathic pedagogies.

The review of literature supports the view that engagement in dialogic interactions with caring adults and peers provides children with opportunities to take the perspective of others, and to engage with the emotional states of others, and should therefore foster empathic reasoning. Dialogic opportunities in a safe and supportive space should enable children to actively develop their sense of moral and empathic concern for others, and to deepen their reasoning about the emotions of others. Furthermore, a philosophical view of moral development that moves beyond parental induction of empathic concern is needed. A school-based *Empathic Pedagogy*; a

pedagogy that aims to foster children's empathic reasoning, should cater for and explicitly promote learning opportunities for children in philosophically and theoretically grounded pedagogies (Kristjansson, 2004; Verducci, 1999).

Pedagogies that aim to develop children's empathic concern should provide opportunities for perspective taking, self-reflection, and provide access to dialogic exchange with others that is rich in emotional content (Kristjansson, 2000; Verducci, 1999). In support of this argument, Schertz (2006) claimed that an inquiry-based approach that engages a Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool can provide children with philosophically grounded learning about emotions through interaction with peers and with guidance from educators who are cognisant of their inherent power in the classroom setting. Additionally, Schertz (2006) argued that Community of Inquiry has the capacity to foster empathy development and promote children's movement towards Hoffman's (2000) concept of the mature empathizer. Based on Schertz's argument, pedagogical approaches that aim to engage children less than 12 years of age in dialogic exchanges about emotional stimuli within a Community of Inquiry should foster empathic concern at higher stages than Hoffman's theory would suggest. It can therefore be argued that a pedagogical approach that connects affect and cognition within a Community of Inquiry should act as a powerful pedagogical tool for fostering empathic reasoning in the early years of school.

2.6 Social Emotional Learning

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in educational settings engage programs that aim to develop children's emotion recognition and management, establishment and maintenance of positive relationships, and empathic concern for others (Australian

Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2012). SEL has been linked to positive outcomes for children in the areas of prosocial behaviour, reduction in aggressive behaviours, effective management of emotions, academic achievement, and the feeling and expression of empathic concern for others (Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2012; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011; Durlak & Weissberg, 2010; Elias, 2006). Engaging young children in SEL programs has been found to be highly beneficial for those children who may live in social and familial contexts where there is little support for their healthy social emotional development. Research has suggested that providing children with SEL programs can have positive outcomes for young children, particularly those if interventions are carried out in the early years of schooling (Coie & Dodge, 1998; Durlak et al., 2011; Whitted, 2011).

In Australia, primary schools use a range of SEL programs to support children's social emotional development and foster the disposition to care and empathise with others (Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2012). Two such programs found to be beneficial are *Bounce Back* and *Second Step.* Bounce Back uses theoretical principles of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and focusses on children's positive thinking, and the development of emotional literacy (Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014). The second program, *Second Step* is described as a 'universal protection program' (Maxwell & DesRoches, 2010). This description highlights the breadth of program aims that include teaching children awareness of the behaviours and attitudes that contribute to violence in society, and the promotion of social

emotional skills required to maintain positive relationships, including emotional management, social problem solving and empathy development (Hart et al., 2009; Izard et al., 2001). SEL programs such as these focus on explicit and often didactic teaching of skills and dispositions that children needs to develop to engage in effective social interactions with peers and others in the classroom and beyond. Other SEL programs use children's literature, videos, puppets and classroom activities to support the social emotional development of young children (eg. BGreat4kids; Friendly Kids, Friendly Classrooms; The PATHS Curriculum) (Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014), but do not necessarily involve direct human or peer interaction. Although these pedagogical approaches have produced positive outcomes for children, researchers have found that exposure to human, experiential social interaction and the emotions of others is necessary for the neural functioning related to the development of empathic concern (Gallese et al., 2004; Iacoboni et al., 2005; Pfeifer, Iacoboni, Mazziotta, & Dapretto, 2008; Rizzolatti, 2008). If the development of empathic concern is to be the goal for SEL programs, there is research evidence that such programs should provide children with opportunities to experience relationships between people so that verbal and non-verbal social and emotional cues can be observed.

Close observation of social interaction supports children to develop effective social strategies with peers because they learn to both recognise the emotional states and more readily take the perspective of others (Hubbard & Coie, 1994). This is important information when connected to our understanding of the Community of Inquiry. Community of Inquiry is a pedagogical approach that provides opportunities for children to engage with the emotional states of others. Importantly, there is a valid argument for a Community of Inquiry stimulus so that dialogue becomes experiential in

nature in order to provide authentic human engagement that may foster empathic concern for others. In children's daily classroom interactions there are many opportunities to observe social emotional exchanges with their peers. Effective SEL programs such as Bounce Back and Second Step mentioned above, use peers as a catalyst for fostering social emotional competencies such as empathic concern (Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2012), however these are didactic in nature. There are however, limited SEL programs that allow children opportunities to observe and reason about the emotional states of others in an experiential manner. The *Roots of Empathy* program (Gordon, 2009) is one such program that intentionally uses a mother and baby as experiential stimuli in order to develop empathic concern.

The Roots of Empathy program was created by Canadian researcher, Mary Gordon, and aims to develop children's ability to recognise, understand and empathise with the emotional states of others (Gordon, 2009). The program was born out of a need to address the poor academic outcomes of inner-city children in Toronto which Gordon saw as being the result of negative patterns of parenting. Children's academic outcomes are positively supported when their social emotional learning is fostered (Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000; Osterman, 2000; Schaffer, 1996). The Roots of Empathy program has been shown to provide opportunities for this learning to occur (Action for Children, 2013; Schonert-Reichl & Scott, 2009). Research has found that the Roots of Empathy program is highly effective in developing emotional literacy and empathic concern in primary school aged children in Canada and beyond (Action for Children, 2013; Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Cain & Carnellor, 2008; Schonert-Reichl & Scott, 2009).

The Roots of Empathy program uses a specialised curriculum for children from Kindergarten (age 4) through to middle school (age 13), and is separated into four age ranges (Gordon, 2009). These age ranges are; Kindergarten (age 4 to 5), Grades 1 to 3 (age 6 to 8), Grades 4 to 6 (age 9 to 11), and Grades 7 to 8 (age 12 to 13). The defining feature of the Roots of Empathy program is the involvement of an infant and parent(s) from the local community as the experiential stimuli. The parent and infant visit the classroom once a month over the school year accompanied by a certified Roots of Empathy instructor (Gordon, 2009). The instructor also works with the classroom teacher and students in the week prior to the parent-infant visit. Children are explicitly taught to observe the infant's development, recognize important developmental milestones, and to interact appropriately with the parent and infant. In the week following the visit the instructor works with the class to reinforce the learning that occurred during visits and to deliver a specialised curriculum suitable for each age range (Gordon, 2009).

A critical component of the Roots of Empathy program is the focus on student problem solving that is woven throughout the entire program (Cain & Carnellor, 2008; Schonert-Reichl & Scott, 2009). In lessons that support the parent-infant visit the children are guided by the instructor to observe, question and think about the reasons for the infant's behaviour (Gordon, 2009). The experiential nature of the learning allows students to access social emotional experiences of others and to begin to develop emotional literacy. Children's emotional literacy is observed through their involvement in problem solving and describing the emotions, feelings and motives of the pre-verbal infant. The program has been found to have a dramatic effect in raising social-emotional awareness and increasing empathy, while also reducing the levels of bullying and

aggression among school children (Cain & Carnellor, 2008). It has also been found to improve learning and prosocial behaviour beyond the scope of the program own aims for empathy development (Action for Children, 2013). The effect of this is that the breadth of results the program has achieved has led to the program being termed a *disruptive innovation* (Christensen, Horn, & Johnson, 2008). Gordon and Letchford (2009) have themselves described how radical interventions such as the Roots of Empathy program can provide unexpected benefits when compared to the incremental and sustained practices that are commonly accepted and used in schools. These new and innovative techniques move beyond standard practices to cater for the needs of future users in often unplanned or unexpected ways (Christensen et al., 2008). There is support therefore for including experiential stimuli as a pattern of regular parent-infant visits, supported by lessons that guide children to explore problem-solving and description of emotions as core components of a pedagogy that aims to foster empathic concern and reasoning.

In comparison to other SEL programs, the Roots of Empathy program is unique in its use of a parent and infant, and the positive benefits to children, educators, parents and the community have been found to be richer than many current SEL programs provide. In this regard, the commitment to such a unique program could be seen as a considerable leap of faith on the part of policy and curriculum advisors and administrators because of the very thing that makes it unique: the dynamic and unpredictable nature of the parent-baby experiential stimuli. The broad and far reaching benefits to children, teachers, families, schools, communities and society arguably outweigh the challenges of employing such a disruptive innovation. The employment of unique SEL programs supports the intention of this current research in

exploring how existing SEL practices can be disrupted or enhanced with the use of human experiential stimuli such as the Roots of Empathy program provides.

2.7 Dialogic Encounters in the Classroom

Dialogic encounters with others in the classroom have benefits for children's learning and cognitive development that are far reaching (Barrow, 2010; Littleton & Mercer, 2010). Engaging in reciprocal and *equitable dialogue* with peers and educators is a powerful way for children to construct knowledge and gain insight into their own and others' ways of thinking. The nature of equitable dialogue is captured in by Freire (1970) who stated, "[f]ounding itself on love, humility, and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence" (p. 72). Equitable dialogue with others involves more than just language and cognitive processes; the social and interpersonal nature of talk requires emotional relations with peers and with the process of dialogic encounter itself (Lefstein, 2010; Mercer, Wegerif, & Dawes, 1999). Furthermore, Fielding (2001) found that engagement in reciprocal dialogic encounter within an inclusive educational community provides opportunities for student voice to be valued and centrally located in educational discourse and requires well developed language and reasoning capacities.

Studies have shown that language development can be a strong predictor of children's ability to regulate emotions (Cole, Armstrong, & Pemberton, 2010; Fine, Izard, & Trentacosta, 2006). A language-rich home environment where caring adults explain and discuss feelings and emotional responses has been found to support children to develop understanding of their own and others' emotional states, and enhance their ability to take the perspective of others (Cole et al., 2010; Cutting & Dunn,

1999; Slade & Ruffman, 2005). If this is true of home environments, then classrooms where emotions are openly explained and discussed between educators and children should also enhance children's ability to better understand and articulate their own emotional states as well as their ability take the perspective of others in social situations where emotion plays a part (Gimenez-Dasi et al., 2013).

Making connections between children's lived experiences within the classroom environment and their social worlds beyond the classroom in their homes, communities, and broader society enables children to engage in critical thinking and meaningful dialogue about their lives. Furthermore, insight into children's lifeworlds in the community beyond the classroom can help educators' understanding of the children in their care (Scholl, Nichols, & Burgh, 2015). This connected view of children's social worlds is supported by Freire (1970) who stated that:

> …true dialogue cannot exist unless the dialoguers engage in critical thinking – thinking which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and the people and admits of no dichotomy between them – thinking which perceives reality as process, as transformation, rather than as a static entity – thinking which does not separate itself from action, but constantly immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved. (p. 73)

Friere's perspective is that meaningful dialogue and critical thinking can and should bridge the perceived gap between children's social emotional experiences in the classroom and their social lives outside of their educational experiences. Exploring the use of dialogic encounter within the classroom is a way to engage children in meaningful and reciprocal engagement with social emotional concerns that occur in children's lives within and beyond the classroom context. Such a pedagogical approach

to dialogue and critical thinking should foster empathic concern for others. Community of Inquiry is well placed to bring together the human experiential stimuli, dialogue and critical thinking about emotions of self and other in order to foster empathic reasoning and concern.

2.8 The Community of Inquiry

The Community of Inquiry is a pedagogical approach for exploring ethical and philosophical concerns with children through guided dialogue in a shared inquiry (Fisher, 2013; Lipman, 2003). The term *enquiry* is often used interchangeably in the literature and educational communities with the term *inquiry*, particularly in the United Kingdom. This thesis uses Community of *Inquiry* to describe this approach. The use of the Community of Inquiry in schools first appeared in the Philosophy for Children approach devised by Matthew Lipman (Lipman & Sharp, 1978), and was strongly influenced by the work of Pierce, Dewey and Vygotsky. The Community of Inquiry also has parallels with Habermas' (1973) Communicative Action Theory, which was founded on the processes of intersubjectivity and perspective taking. Habermas' theory highlighted the role of the group in engaging dialogic processes to reach a shared understanding of the focus subject/question through a mutual exploration that incorporates and takes into account each participant's unique and varied views and opinions (Habermas, 1973; Lipman, 2003).

Community of Inquiry explicitly aims for children to share in inquiring about a stimulus idea(s) and to move towards a deeper understanding of the truth of the idea(s) being explored. Community of Inquiry acts as a forum and testing ground for ideas where young children can put forward their claims about the ideas being explored. In

this forum these claims can be justified, contested, contrasted and shaped through dialogic exchange by all participants to guide the shared inquiry. As such it is an ideal pedagogical approach for young children to explore their own thinking and to develop sound reasoning with others (Fisher, 2013; McGuinness, 2005; Millett & Tapper, 2012; Schleifer, Daniel, Peyronnet, & Lecomte, 2003; Wegerif, 2007).

Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool requires the teacher to act as a facilitator and use questions and prompts to guide children's responses and require children to provide justifications for their claims, and to seek justification for the claims of their peers (Fisher, 2013; Lipman, 2003). The teacher's role changes as children develop increased autonomy and come to understand and care about the processes and goals of the Community of Inquiry (Davey, 2004). As children take more responsibility for the process of inquiry and justifying their claims, the teacher's facilitation shifts from more explicit skill building of processes and practice towards a lighter touch in guiding and supporting children's ideas (Fisher, 2013; Gillies, 2016; Teo, 2013). This shift can be a challenge for young children new to egalitarian and democratic education approaches because they are likely to initially be deferential towards the teacher when sharing their thoughts and ideas. Thus, the facilitation role of the teacher is a challenge in developing effective Community of Inquiry processes (Gillies, 2016; Lushyn & Kennedy, 2003). Ideally, the teacher performs the dual role of facilitator and equal and active contributor to the discussion, who is able to respond to the dynamic nature of children's exploratory talk (Barrow, 2015). As Davey (2004) states, "[i]t would be detrimental to inquiry if the teacher were seen as an expert or imparter of knowledge, as he or she is responsible for the form of discussion and not the content" (p. 27). The teacher thus becomes a reflexive practitioner who responds in ways that support critical and ethical dialogue

(Barrow, 2015). As a pedagogical tool, the aims and processes within a Community of Inquiry need to be mindful of Kohlberg's theory of moral development (Kohlberg & Kramer, 1969). Kohlberg's moral stage theory maintains that young children at around five years of age act out of concern for punishment and the deferral to authority (Kohlberg & Kramer, 1969). This requires teachers facilitating Community of Inquiry to be mindful of the inherent nature of the power differential between educator and child.

The inherent power differential between teacher and child may impact on children's responses during a Community of Inquiry that involves the teacher as part of the group due to an overriding obedience to the perceived authority of the adult present. This concern, highlighted by Kohlberg's theory is supported by Daniel and Delsol (2004) who found that children will initially direct their opinions toward the teacher, and that the teacher's requests for clarification can disqualify some children's thinking and limit their subsequent involvement in discussion. It is vital for the teacher using Community of Inquiry to make clear to young children in the foundational lessons that it is a process that allows for all ideas to be put forward regardless of their alignment with the teacher's own thoughts. This can be a challenge for young children, and can impact their responses and justifications as the socio-moral values and views of the teacher are often imitated and reflected in classroom discussion that involves the teacher's own views (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Maslovaty, 2000; Strike, 1996; Tirri, 1999). To be effective in deepening children's understanding, the educator's strategies must steer children away from either repeating the socio-moral views of the teacher, or being unwilling to state their own ideas and justify their reasoning where these are opposed to the teacher's views. An effective Community of Inquiry therefore requires an educator who is experienced in the processes and implementation needed to draw out

and establish the democratic processes it aims to develop and to reduce the existing power differential between adult and child.

A crucial outcome of dialogic pedagogies such as Community of Inquiry is the development of the language of reasoning. Community of Inquiry processes require children to expand their vocabulary of words and phrases in order to better justify their own thinking, and develop the tools necessary to critically analyse the thoughts and ideas of others (Lipman, 2003). It is the amalgamation of this language of reasoning with an emotional vocabulary that should be at the heart of an empathic pedagogy. Combining increased depth of reasoning with a wider lexicon supports children to apply their reasoning about social and emotional dilemmas in their lived experiences more effectively, therefore developing their emotional literacy. Children's use of emotional literacy should be visible when children draw from their lexicon of words when describing emotions while engaging in dialogic encounters with peers within a Community of Inquiry.

Community of Inquiry brings together a number of important philosophical, theoretical and pedagogical elements. Community of Inquiry combines and integrates three elements: the use of a philosophically or ethical challenging topic; the pedagogical structures that establish an environment that can take into account important theoretical perspectives about children's learning; and the processes of collaborative and focused reasoning that can therefore be enacted in this environment. These three elements can be conceptualised as the substantive, academic, and procedural aspects of philosophy with young children (Cam et al., 2007). The purposeful combination of challenging experiential stimuli that are a catalyst for dialogue about the emotions of self and others should then foster empathic concern for and reasoning about the

emotions of others within a classroom context. The potential for Community of Inquiry to be the principle pedagogical vehicle for an Empathic Pedagogy is underpinned by the depth and strength of its theoretical foundation.

2.8.1 Origins of Community of Inquiry

The origins of Community of Inquiry are associated with the work of theorists such as Pierce and Dewey (Lipman, 2003). Pierce argued that the Community of Inquiry was a necessary method for progressing scientific thinking (Pierce, 1878). Dewey's thinking in this regard was centred on the need to explore lived situations and problematise the ideas and narratives associated with these to trigger the inquiry process (Dewey, 1916; Kennedy, 2012). The introduction of the Community of Inquiry into school settings also developed with the influence of socio-cultural theories such as those of Vygotsky (1978). Everyday discussion with students within dialogic pedagogies are inherently socio-cultural in nature and as such involve Vygotskian notions about the use of language as a tool for social expression and transmission of ideas, and the internalisation of cognitive processes through social interactions (Duchesne, McMaugh, Bochner, & Krause, 2013). Theorists such as Rogoff (1990) have built on Vygotsky's ideas about the role of adults and peers for increasing social emotional development through dialogic exchange and guided participation (Duchesne et al., 2013; Rogoff, 1993; Rogoff, 2003). In line with these theories about the importance of language, social interactions, and guided learning in social and cognitive development, Community of Inquiry uses language to guide dialogic encounters with others, and as such is a principle tool for developing understanding of others and for constructing knowledge about the world (Littleton & Mercer, 2010). The socio-cultural roots of Community of

Inquiry will be further discussed in Section 2.8.5. The specific structure and use of Community of Inquiry is reviewed in the following sections.

2.8.2 The Community of Inquiry in the Classroom

In the late 1960s the Philosophy for Children (P4C) movement, under the direction of Mathew Lipman (Lipman et al., 1980) introduced the use of Community of Inquiry into elementary classrooms in the United States (Lipman et al., 1980; Lipman, 2003). The conceptual and procedural application of Community of Inquiry as the principle pedagogical tool in the P4C approach to education was formalised and successfully adapted to the classroom context over time. In Australia, P4C has been adopted in schools but these tend not to use the IAPC materials. Very few high schools and fewer primary schools use the P4C IAPC materials and methods despite positive findings from studies carried out in schools (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008; Millett & Kay, 2001).

Anecdotally, Australian schools' use of P4C is generally because of individual teachers who are either trained in its delivery, or are philosophically aligned to this way of teaching, have support from school leaders, and have opportunities for ongoing P4C training (Millett & Tapper, 2012). All too often schools stop using P4C when the committed teacher moves on, or when other specific curriculum areas are prioritised at a national, state or school level. Similarly, the implementation and continued pedagogical use of Community of Inquiry in schools often relies on an enthusiastic and informed educator who values this approach to dialogic learning, and a sympathetic and supportive school leadership team. As with P4C, the organised and continued use of the Community of Inquiry has been sporadic across Australia, with primary schools using the approach more often than secondary schools (Knight & Collins, 2005), exacerbated

by differences between the two contexts such as the integration of learning areas in primary schools.

Despite a limited uptake, some Australian schools have and are working with P4C and Community of Inquiry to great effect. Perhaps the most successful school site to continue to use philosophical inquiry as a core part of their curriculum is Buranda State School in Queensland (Hinton, 2003; Hinton, 2012). At Buranda State School, all children engage in philosophical inquiry as part of the regular curriculum through Community of Inquiry. Since implementation of this approach in 1996, student academic results have consistently been above the state average on state literacy and numeracy tests (Hinton, 2012). But more than this academic success, children who engaged in philosophical inquiry at Buranda State School were found to develop skills that helped them to reason about social emotional dilemmas inside and outside the classroom. Teachers at Buranda reported that they saw improvements in children's social skills, an ability to respectfully negotiate social disagreements, and a general sense of wellbeing across the school (Hinton, 2012).

There is a key difference between the implementation and use P4C and the use of Community of Inquiry in schools. The former uses Community of Inquiry as the principle pedagogical tool; however, in doing so it often relies on a set of texts and strict adherence to discussion guides and activities. Community of Inquiry, however, has an inherent flexibility which is independent of the P4C approach to education and is a standalone pedagogical tool able to be used in contexts other than P4C. Although understanding of Community of Inquiry have been honed within through the practice and research associated with P4C, it can be applied using various stimuli in the absence of prescribed texts and associated discussion plans written and published as part of

P4C. This flexibility gives Community of Inquiry a distinct advantage for educators who wish to encourage philosophical inquiry, dialogue and reasoning away from the suggested P4C texts and materials. The focus on philosophical inquiry, dialogue and reasoning afforded by Community of Inquiry fosters improvements in children's critical, creative and caring thinking (Hinton, 2003; Hinton, 2012).

Misunderstandings about the challenges of implementing Community of Inquiry in classrooms has led to Community of Inquiry being described in two very different, but related ways; in a *wide*- and a *narrow-sense* view (Sprod, 2001). In the following section these two views on Community of Inquiry will be described and operationalised for the purposes of this research.

2.8.3 A Wide-Sense View of Community of Inquiry

A wide-sense view of Community of Inquiry describes classrooms and settings as *becoming* a space where inquiry is valued (Sprod, 2001). Becoming a Community of Inquiry in this sense is about children as a community developing dispositions towards democratic notions of education, valuing philosophical and ethical thought, and engaging with the processes of dialogue and questioning which are encouraged and practiced (Lipman, 2003; Splitter, 2006). In this sense, Community of Inquiry represents the dispositions and intentions of the classroom and all of its members. Learning is shared and common understandings are attempted through open engagement with challenging questions and ideas that arise through the daily learning experiences that occur within the classroom, the community and society. When the classroom acts as a Community of Inquiry in the wide-sense, children are encouraged to question the world around them and their experiences within it (Sprod, 2001).

Children who are part of a social context that functions as a Community of Inquiry not only reflect in critical ways on their learning in the classroom, but also begin to gain a sense of their interconnectedness to others and of the contextual influences that are part of their social worlds (Nucci, 2009). Through this growing critical awareness of their world children are better able to reflect on the contextual influences in their classroom, community and broader society, and perhaps more importantly, are better able to influence those elements reciprocally (Bowes et al., 2012). A wide-sense view of Community of Inquiry positions the classroom and school community as interconnected in children's lives and is a view that should be encouraged. Sprod (2001) has termed this particular function of Community of Inquiry a wide-sense view and further clarified this by attributing the name *community of critical learners* to a Community of Inquiry that functions in this way and achieves these aims.

Community of critical learners will be used in this research to describe Community of Inquiry functioning in the wide-sense view. Developing a community of critical learners within a classroom and school context is about building a set of critical dispositions towards the world and creating a culture within these contexts where differing viewpoints are valued and open for discussion among its members. Through this process the classroom becomes a safe space for ideas to be presented and examined by all members of the community (Davey Chesters, 2012; Davey, 2004). Furthermore, as the community of critical learners develops, children are better able to engage in dialogue and directed inquiry around social and moral issues that arise in the dynamic context of the school (Sprod, 2001). Research on young children's empathic reasoning should aim to build on the potential safe space created by a community of critical learners developed in the classroom. The development of a community of critical

learners in the wide-sense view is however dependent on the development of a Community of Inquiry in the narrow-sense. The narrow-sense view, now described has a pedagogical focus that is a necessary core of a community of critical learners produced therein.

2.8.4 A Narrow-Sense View of the Community of Inquiry

A narrow-sense view of Community of Inquiry focusses on the pedagogical process of developing dispositions and intentions necessary for establishing a community of critical learners (Sprod, 2001). These processes are principally about the pedagogies that enable students to engage in dialogic inquiry about an ethical or philosophical issue through the use of relevant stimuli (Fisher, 2013). As Fisher stated; "A community of enquiry seeks to create the optimal conditions for group discussion" (p. 59). These optimal conditions require the creation of a meaningful and intersubjective community space where children can safely interact with each other's ideas (Davey Chesters, 2012; Davey, 2004). Furthermore, there is an insistence on children using justificatory reasoning to support their claims (Fisher, 2013; Hagaman, 1990; Laverty & Gregory, 2007), a respect for the process of guided inquiry (Davey, 2004), and consideration for the views and opinions of all members of the community (Lipman et al., 1980).

The learning and dispositional outcomes of the narrow-sense view of Community of Inquiry build essential skills that are reflected in the general capabilities of critical and creative thinking, and ethical understanding set out in the Australian Curriculum (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2013). These general capabilities highlight the need for students to develop learning dispositions that encourage the increased use of reasoning and discussion skills, collaborative inquiry

and justification of ethical positions that take the positions of others into account (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2013). Research is needed to investigate whether Community of Inquiry in the narrow-sense view can foster the development of young children's skills and learning dispositions in the areas of critical and creative thinking, and ethical understanding and whether this can occur within an Empathic Pedagogy designed to foster empathic reasoning.

Research that explores the role of Community of Inquiry in developing empathic reasoning would need to begin with a narrow-sense view rather than focussing on the wide-sense view that leads to the broader development of a community of critical learners in the classroom and beyond. A narrow-sense view should consider pedagogically what processes Community of Inquiry would need, such as; how inquiry lessons would work to bring about empathic reasoning through dialogic exchange. Research on young children's empathic reasoning needs to focus on the pedagogical processes and dialogic encounters within a Community of Inquiry. A focus on the narrow-sense view would therefore allow educators and researchers to refine the characteristics of pedagogies designed to best support children to take the perspectives of their peers, and to foster empathic reasoning within a Community of Inquiry.

2.8.5 Peer Social Interaction in Community of Inquiry

The strong socio-cultural roots of Community of Inquiry are visible in the social interaction with peers through dialogic exchange. Socio-cultural human development theory views learning as a range of cultural processes that occur through the social interactions and relationships that children engage with within their particular cultural and societal contexts (Rogoff, 2003; Turiel, 2002; Vygotsky, 1962). Vygotsky contributed heavily to the development and understanding of the role of socio-cultural

contexts in learning and theorised that language plays a crucial role in the construction of knowledge. In this way, children's development across cognitive, social and emotional domains can be seen as a dialogic process that occurs through the sharing of meaning and experiences between members of communities, as well as within the individual and children's world beyond the classroom (Littleton & Mercer, 2010; Scholl et al., 2015).

Community of Inquiry creates a *dialogic space* that encourages the development of *intersubjectivity* and collaboration between members of the community of critical learners operating within it (Littleton & Mercer, 2010). Intersubjectivity can be defined as the intimate communication and concurrent development of shared meaning occurring between two or more individuals in relation to a specific task or problem (Rogoff, 1990; Trevarthen, 2012). Furthermore, as the foundations for children's lifelong social emotional development and competence are linked to their early childhood experiences (Nagel, 2012; Schaffer, 1996), it is particularly important that children are given regular opportunities for intersubjective cognitive and social emotional engagement with adults and peers in supportive environments (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2004; 2011). Opportunities characterised by intersubjectivity enable children to engage in social learning processes with others, further developing their social understanding of the world around them (Crick & Dodge, 1994).

Community of Inquiry creates an *intersubjective space* where the thoughts and ideas of children are connected and built upon by the community of critical learners (Mohr-Lone, 2000; Schertz, 2006) through collaborative dialogue which is employed to negotiate meaning and achieve a shared understanding of the social or ethical problem,

or philosophical idea being discussed (de Souza, 2005; del Collado, 2012; Littleton & Mercer, 2010). Children's capacity to create intersubjectivity, or develop shared thinking (Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff & Toma, 1997), is built upon as the community of critical learners develop the skills of listening, turn-taking, and the increasing ability to accept, imagine, understand and genuinely value the different perspectives of a range of other people over time (Lipman, 2003; Mohr-Lone, 2000). While the importance of both dialogic and intersubjective space is recognised, research that has investigated the function and characteristics of these spaces within Community of Inquiry with children under eight years of age is limited (Daniel & Delsol, 2004; Daniel, 2005; Daniel et al., 2006).

2.8.6 The Language of Reasoning in a Community of Inquiry

Children are encouraged to use the language of reasoning in a Community of Inquiry to explain and justify their thoughts and ideas, to support their thinking and clarify their viewpoints for themselves and for others. In early childhood children can be guided to be able to use language that supports sound reasoning and the clarification of ideas (Daniel & Delsol, 2004; Lipman et al., 1980; Nucci, 2009). There are some foundational aspects of reasoning essential for building a successful Community of Inquiry, foundations which also support the development of higher order thinking skills, often the hallmark of various taxonomies of thinking skills (Hedayati & Ghaedi, 2009). These foundational skills or dispositions are the ability to listen to others, the confidence to talk to others, and the offering of reasons for statements of opinion (Littleton & Mercer, 2010). In addition to these three foundational skills necessary for effective reasoning, Community of Inquiry processes through teacher guidance teach children to agree or disagree with someone else's opinion or ideas, encourage children

to provide reasons for their viewpoints, and to understand that any disagreement is related to the idea itself, not the individual offering it (Fisher, 2013). This is a skill that needs to be modelled and practiced because young children are primarily self-focused beings who more often than not are 'fused' with their thoughts (Nucci, 2009; Schaffer, 1996). Young children can take personal offense to others disagreeing with their personal opinion, perceiving these disagreements as personal attacks (Schaffer, 1996).

Children's growing awareness and ability to accept other views and adjust thinking based on the collaborative input of the members of the community is critical to children's cognitive flexibility; one of three core executive functions. Executive functions are the top-down mental processes humans use to remember multiple instructions, focus and ignore distractions, hold ideas in their mind, and assess information from a variety of sources (Brocki & Bohlin, 2004; Diamond, 2012; Nagel, 2012; Zhou, Chen, & Main, 2012), essential skills for mental and physical health and successful social and cognitive development (Diamond, 2012; Eisenberg et al., 2011; Semrud-Clikeman, 2007). The National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2011) describes the three most commonly highlighted skills or components of executive function as working memory, inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility. Building of these skills and dispositions encourages the development of internalised self-correction techniques that develop and build on children's metacognitive thinking and executive function skills (Laverty & Gregory, 2007). Executive functions are crucial for children's development of cognition and social skills (Nagel, 2012), providing opportunities for children to employ their working memory, inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility within a Community of Inquiry can aid children's cognitive and social development (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2011).

Genuine dialogue within a Community of Inquiry requires that the children involved share a common understanding of the functional terms being used and the concepts that they represent. The requirement to consistently use clear and logical language raises problems when using Community of Inquiry with young children. Functional terms used in a Community of Inquiry such as "I agree" or "I disagree" become common language that is used to build useful and genuine dialogue. Nelson (1949) argued that one of the benefits of philosophical dialogue is that it readily conveys concepts through language. Through this clarity of functional words children are better able to draw reason from intuition through the accurate and consistent use of comprehensible language (Fisher, 2013). Young children's use of functional language to justify their claims about the emotional experiences of the self and others within a Community of Inquiry needs research to better understand its role in the development of empathic reasoning.

Young children's expressive language can be insufficiently developed to convey some of the challenging and abstract concepts they experience, such as emotions and feelings. Emotions themselves may also adversely impact on the way that young children are able to convey their thinking. Emotion, however, can also positively influence children's ability to think critically about issues, as it is understood that emotions can support as much as impair rational thought (Elder, 1996; Newton, 2014). Research that provides children with the opportunity to explore, describe and discuss their own feelings and emotional responses through collaborative dialogue within a Community of Inquiry can build understanding of the role of language in young children's empathic reasoning.

Perhaps the most crucial outcome for young children engaged in dialogic pedagogies such as Community of Inquiry is the development of justificatory language that enables children to convey their ideas and critically analyse the thoughts and ideas of others (Lipman, 2003). In the early years of school, children can be encouraged to offer reasons for their ideas. Offering reasoning is facilitated with the use of simple prompts within a Community of Inquiry such as the teacher asking for reasons (e.g. "can you give us a 'because' for that idea?"). As young children continue to engage in dialogue in an established Community of Inquiry, they use the language of reasoning more regularly and consistently, and demand this type of language from other members within the community of critical learners (Lipman et al., 1980; Lipman, 2003). In this way, Community of Inquiry differs from inductive approaches to moral development where the adult provides the reasoning for children to emulate (Nucci & Turiel, 2009; Nucci, 2009).

Young children's justificatory reasoning is under-researched. Kuhn and Udell (2003) explored the reasoning skills that children and adolescents displayed during dialogic exchanges, and examined aspects of justificatory reasoning in terms of the number of reasons offered, as well as the quality of argument produced during dialogues (C. Collins, 2004; Kuhn & Udell, 2003), a finding also supported by Collins (2004). Kuhn and Udell's research focused on the reasoning of adolescents; however, similar analysis of young children's justificatory reasoning could highlight the language of reasoning employed by younger children. Research on this aspect could be achieved by building on the research of Kuhn and Udell, and Collins by exploring young children's justificatory reasoning and through analysis of the number of reasons provided by

children, as well as the quality of the argument being put forward in their dialogic exchanges.

2.8.7 Experiential Stimuli to Encourage Dialogic Exchange

Stimuli used within Community of Inquiry to engage children and initiate discussion about ethical or philosophical concepts can include texts, stories, picture books, artwork, music, and/or video (Cam et al., 2007; Fisher, 2013). The P4C program has traditionally drawn on the text-focused stories written by Lipman (1976; 1978; 1980a; 1980b; 1981; 1986; 1988) as the stimulus for discussion. Research has found that young children are able to express their reasoning about the emotions displayed by characters in stories (Daniel, 2005; Daniel et al., 2006; Schleifer et al., 2003). Further research has found however, that when engaging children in discussion about feelings and the perception of the emotional states of others, the more experiential the stimulus the better children are able to take the perspective of the other involved (Murris, 2009). Reading about, or even seeing a drawing about a fictional character's emotions and possible empathic distress can engage children in meaningful discussion about emotions and can foster children's reasoning about the emotions of imaginary others (Murris, 2009). Drawings and fictional stories, however, are not as rich and meaningful as engaging with people's personal narratives and related emotional states in real life (Sorin, 2004; Spiteri, 2010).

Experiential stimuli is one of the key elements in the success of the Roots of Empathy program; children's relationship and investment in the infant provides them with a richer emotional stimulus to connect with. Striano (2011) stated that caring thinking involves "an openness to the experiential and interpersonal dimension with responsibility and sense of judgement for the people and objects with which one comes

in contact" (p 99). Interpersonal contact with a real life human stimulus such as a mother and baby provides the opportunity for children to engage their caring thinking to reason about the emotional states of others within a Community of Inquiry. Research that purposefully uses human stimuli in the form of a parent and infant to provide rich experiential stimuli could explore children's dialogic exchanges relevant to the emotional states of others within a Community of Inquiry.

2.9 Engagement in a Community of Inquiry: Developing Critical, Creative and Caring Thinking

Caring about what is being inquired into is at the heart of genuine inquiry. Lipman (2003) argued that engagement in a Community of Inquiry supported children's development of three ways of thinking: critical, creative and caring. He argued that these three ways are developed through continued engagement with genuine inquiry that is focused on moving dialogue towards a sense of truth about a philosophical or ethical question. Of these three ways of thinking, critical and creative thinking are most often the focus of research about the benefits of the Community of Inquiry with caring thinking the least researched.

The Clackmannanshire Philosophy with Children Initiative (Trickey & Topping, 2007) used a thinking skills program adapted from the P4C program (Lipman et al., 1980). This initiative was carried out in a number of primary schools across Scotland over a four year period, and achieved significant results in improving children's critical thinking skills (Law, 2007; Trickey, 2007). The program predominantly used books as stimulus material to engage children in collaborative philosophical dialogue within a Community of Inquiry. Research results showed that children's justifications to support

their ideas increased two-fold across the initiative (Topping & Trickey, 2007a). These increases in critical thinking were found to sustain over a two year period after the initiative finished (Trickey, 2007). The benefits, however, extended beyond critical thinking to involve caring thinking and the social emotional development of children (Trickey & Topping, 2006).

In 2004, Trickey and Topping carried out a meta-analysis of ten studies that used controlled experiment designs to investigate the P4C program in schools. All of these studies described positive outcomes in critical thinking skills, with a consistent positive effect across a wide range of measures (Trickey & Topping, 2004). This research was replicated in 2010-2011 in the US with similar increases in cognitive abilities reported for seventh and eighth graders engaged in collaborative inquiry (Fair et al., 2015). Fair et al. found that collaborative philosophical dialogue within a Community of Inquiry had a meaningful impact on children's critical thinking over 24 weeks of regular lessons; a much shorter period of time than reported by Topping and Trickey (2007a; 2007b). In another meta-analysis of 18 studies that used Community of Inquiry within the P4C program, Garcia-Moriyon, Robello and Colom (2005) found that students' reasoning skills were greatly improved with an increase of "roughly seven IQ points" (Millett & Tapper, 2012, p. 9). Evidence from studies within Australia also supports the benefits of using Community of Inquiry in classrooms (Millett, 2006). This evidence has largely come from studies that highlighted the use of Community of Inquiry for teaching values (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008; Millett & Kay, 2001; Russell, 2002). These studies demonstrated positive effects in the areas of active listening, student engagement, and increasing care and respect in children's peer interactions (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008).

There are many programs and approaches that focus on the development of children's critical and creative thinking skills (Garcia-Moriyon et al., 2005; Gardner, 1998; S. Higgins, Hall, Baumfield, & Moseley, 2005; McGuinness, 2005; Trickey & Topping, 2004). Lipman, however, was adamant that the P4C program should be focused on creating dispositions for thinking and not become a skills program with little connection to society and life beyond the classroom (Burgh, 2003). Bailin and Siegel (2003) supported this position, describing the essential characteristics of the critical thinker as one who has "the ability to reason well and the disposition to do so" (p. 182).

For Lipman, critical thinking in a Community of Inquiry occurs when children start to examine their own arguments as well as the arguments of others as they are offered in the dialogic exchange of ideas (Lipman, 2003). As such, critical thinking is a reflective and self-oriented process focused on uncovering and refining the child's own justifications as much as it is about examining the thoughts of others or refining the inquiry itself. Lipman (2003) identified three characteristics of critical thinking: reliance on reasons, self-correction, and sensitivity to context. It is this third characteristic that provides a strong connection between critical and caring thinking. By examining the similarities and differences in the contextual nature of their own feelings, and the perceived emotional states of other members of the Community of Inquiry, children are able to use these differences as part of the reasoning process to provide more critical and caring justifications for their claims (Fisherman, 2010).

Creative thinking is described as a habit of intelligent thinking that allows children to use dialogue to generate ideas, develop hypotheses, apply imagination to their problem solving endeavours and build on the ideas of others (Fisher, 2013). When considering the thoughts, ideas and feelings of others within a Community of Inquiry

children demonstrate caring thinking when considering the viewpoints of others and building on their ideas in creative ways. As Fisher (2013) stated, "[i]f dialogue is to assist in the expression of ideas, it needs to be governed by relationships of 'reasonableness' and by care for the rights of others" (p. 43). In this way, dialogic forms of creative thinking as Lipman (2004) imagined them, clearly need to be connected to what others are thinking and feeling within a Community of Inquiry to make use of all members of the community of critical learners as imaginative, creative and appreciative caring thinkers, and build on all children's ideas to further the inquiry process.

Lipman characterised caring thinking as children's genuine concern for the dialogic processes and outcomes of Community of Inquiry itself (Lipman, 2003; Sharp, 2004). This view is supported by Davey (2004) who argued that caring thinking is primarily concerned with children's engagement as active thinkers who value the Community of Inquiry process. In this way, caring thinking can be seen as a pedagogical form of caring where the community of critical learners take ownership over the Community of Inquiry and demonstrate responsibility and concern for the processes and outcomes that are part of their learning (Barrow, 2010; Davey, 2004; Noddings, 1984; Sharp, 2004). Beyond this pedagogical focus on procedures and processes, or perhaps embedded within it, is the notion that caring thinking involves not only an investment in the process, but also care for the other children and adults who make up the community of critical learners. As Sharp (2004) argued, caring thinking is the beginning point for thinking in the other two realms of critical and creative thinking because "…without it ethical thinking and valuation of all kinds would be impossible" (p. 12).

Lipman (2003) referred to caring thinking as being as valid a form of reasoning as critical and creative thinking, and described caring thinking as involving active, affective and empathic thinking (Phillips, 2011). It is the dynamic interpersonal relationships between individuals within a Community of Inquiry (Striano, 2011) that makes it successful in promoting a genuine concern for the thinking that occurs within a community of critical learners. Research that aims to foster children's caring thinking through engagement with experiential stimuli would enable a focus on how children think and reason about the emotional states of self and others, and what empathic concerns they may hold for others. Caring as an affective component is often viewed as being in opposition to the more logical and analytical forms of thinking promoted within the inquiry process. Lipman (2003) himself muddied the waters of this debate when he stated that caring thinking was as necessary for higher order thinking as critical and creative thinking because, "emotion *is* the choice, it *is* the decision, it *is* the judgement. And it is this kind of thinking that we may well call caring thinking when it has to do with matters of importance" (p. 271). Many have taken this quote as indicating that Lipman was proposing the idea that emotions are as valid a form of judgement as other more logical forms of reasoning. This is not the case however. Lipman (2003) was pointing out that while we should not let our emotions be the main guide to other reasoning, we should be cognisant of them as they strongly influence our reasoning and attention. This influence occurs in two ways: first, if we did not care about the truth that we are searching for through the process of inquiry then we would not be motivated to find the most relevant understanding. Second, as genuine inquiry most often involves an ethical element from where we are drawing on our values, there must be some care for the people involved as well as the possible outcomes of the inquiry itself.

Davey (2004) drew on the work of Noddings (1984) to explore the notion that the community of critical learners that is fostered through Community of Inquiry develops an *environment of trust* where children's different beliefs, values, and views are accepted. This acceptance of the thoughts of other members of the community of critical learners is particularly important when it comes to children's expression of their feelings. When children express their emotions with their peers it can be a vulnerable moment, especially when discussing emotional states that are seen as negative, such as anger, sadness, despair or frustration, or when openly exploring social and emotional challenges that arise between classmates. Fisher (2013) describes Community of Inquiry as involving an environment that cultivates children's respect for others, honesty, acceptance of different perspectives, and social reasoning skills and dispositions. When a community of critical learners is given opportunities to develop and apply these cultivated skills to discuss social and emotional dilemmas that occur within the classroom and beyond, then children are encouraged to make reasoned moral judgements about their own emotions and the perceived emotional states of others. Whether children are motivated to care about others is worth researching.

2.10 Engagement in a Community of Inquiry: Developing an Expanded Emotional Vocabulary

Engagement in a Community of Inquiry supports children's development of an expanded emotional vocabulary that can be applied to dialogic exchanges that demonstrate their justificatory reasoning. The Community of Inquiry processes create a dialogic space where children can develop justificatory language and sound reasoning skills (Fisher, 2013; Millett & Tapper, 2012). When the stimulus in a Community of Inquiry is focused on emotions, and the inquiry aims to deepen children's

understanding of the feelings and thoughts of others, this can also foster the development of emotional reasoning (Daniel & Delsol, 2004; LaFortune & Robertson, 2006; Schleifer et al., 2003). Harris (2000) explained that unlike any other animal, humans have the unique capacity to express their emotions with words. Being able to put emotions into words allows people to share and explain their own emotional states and helps to regulate emotional experience with others (Decety & Batson, 2009; Matthews, 2006; Sorin, 2004). In this way, discussion about their own feelings and the shared experiences of the emotional states of others helps children develop empathic concern for others.

When children build a vocabulary of descriptive feeling words, they are able to apply their growing lexicon to their dialogic exchanges about the feelings of others as well as their own internal emotional states. This increase in emotional vocabulary provides children with the dialogic tools to verbalise their emotions and develop a deeper understanding of the emotional states of others (Lipman, 2003; Schaffer, 1996). Developing an emotional vocabulary is about more than increasing the number of words related to emotions that children can use in their verbal and written exchanges. Lipman (2003) explains that to educate children about emotions within a Community of Inquiry, a rich vocabulary about emotions and their value is needed which develops their emotional literacy.

Being an emotionally literate individual means that not only does one have a rich lexicon of emotions and language to describe those emotions at your disposal, but also an understanding of what these emotions are likely to indicate, and how they may relate to possible behaviour of the self and others. When children describe their emotions and the emotional states of others in relation to real or hypothetical social and moral

transgressions they are developing their empathic concern for others (Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger, Gasser & Malti, 2010). Research is needed to explore the ways in which children show empathic concern for others when engaging in dialogic encounter with peers within a Community of Inquiry. Community of Inquiry processes would need to be designed in a way that encouraged reasoning about children's own emotional states as well as the perceived emotional states of others. In this way, the characteristics of Community of Inquiry that enabled children to build an expanded emotional vocabulary and develop more complex justificatory reasoning about their empathic concern for others could be explored.

A Community of Inquiry fosters children's emotional vocabulary in two ways. First, because Community of Inquiry is primarily a dialogic space where talking is encouraged and celebrated, it requires participants to engage with the inquiry stimulus as well as the questions and ideas that are being discussed. When the inquiry stimulus for Community of Inquiry is experiential in nature, and inquiry questions are about emotions, then the discussion is focused on the emotional states of others. Under these conditions the dialogue exchange will require children to use their emotional vocabulary (Lipman, 2003), therefore, a genuine inquiry question can be posed that asks 'What are emotions?'. In response, the dialogue of the participants should draw from their vocabulary of words related to emotions. In this way, a wide range of individual ideas about feelings can be introduced into the intersubjective space of the Community of Inquiry, creating a bigger pool of emotional vocabulary and ideas than those possessed by any individual participant.

Second, the intersubjective space created by a Community of Inquiry requires children to carefully attend to the emotional responses of other participants as well as

their own emotional states. A child who does not attend to and respond to the emotional states of others becomes isolated, not influenced by their peers, or connected to the Community of Inquiry. Unless these children develop an emotional vocabulary that connects them to their peers, they will find it difficult to connect their thoughts to the other members of the community of critical learners and the process of inquiry (Daniel, 2005). Research is needed that is purposefully carried out in a classroom where Community of Inquiry is established so that children would be able to attend to the child speaking at any given time in the inquiry process.

Community of Inquiry fosters children's emotional vocabulary by providing the dialogic and intersubjective space where individual feelings and emotions can be observed and shared (Arnold, 2005). Community of Inquiry aims to provide a safe dialogic space (Davey Chesters, 2012; Davey, 2004) where children can test out their understanding of emotions, and question the ideas of others to connect to the emotional states of others and themselves (Daniel et al., 2006; Schleifer et al., 2003). Furthermore, a Community of Inquiry provides an intersubjective space where children closely observe each other, learn to take the perspective of others and try to understand how the emotional states of others can affect, and in turn, be affected by them. This safe space of intersubjective engagement with others can help support what Arnold (2005) described as *empathic intelligence*, but which this research describes as empathic reasoning.

2.11 Engagement in a Community of Inquiry: Developing Empathy for Others

Community of Inquiry has the ability pedagogically to bring together a complex set of dialogic and intersubjective characteristics. These are necessary pedagogical characteristics for the development of empathy as they create conditions for engaging in dialogic encounters with others regardless of the focus of inquiry. Gardner (1998) argued that it is often presumed that development of empathy for others will be an indirect result of engaging children in philosophical discussion through a Community of Inquiry. Gardner goes on to state however, that the direct result of inquiry based dialogue within a Community of Inquiry is understanding or deep insight into the truth of the claims being investigated (Gardner, 1998). This research aimed to show that when the focus of the inquiry within the Community of Inquiry is on understanding the emotional states of others, this approach can result in deep insight into the truth of claims being made about concern for others. This not only fosters an affective sense of empathy, but also helps children to develop a greater understanding of the often subjective nature of emotions and the perspective of others.

To follow, in a Community of Inquiry where children are engaging in genuine dialogue about the nature of emotions and the perspective of others within a community of critical learners, the truth of the claims being investigated could be centred on understanding the subjective emotional experience of others. In this way empathic reasoning can be fostered through children's dialogic engagement with collaborative inquiry about the emotional states of others. Furthermore, the structures and processes inherent in a Community of Inquiry, and careful facilitation from the teacher can provide the safe dialogic space for children to reason about the emotions of

others as well as the opportunities for children to take the perspective of others (Kovalainen & Kumpulainen, 2007; Matthews, 2006). The combination of these two elements can foster children's empathic reasoning within a Community of Inquiry and as an empathic community of critical learners in the classroom and beyond.

Empathy involves a complex interplay between affective and cognitive processes (Hinnant & O'Brien, 2007; Hoffman, 2000). Similarly, when Community of Inquiry uses an experiential stimulus to lead an inquiry about empathic concern for others, this pedagogical approach also involves affective and cognitive processes of caring, perspective taking and justificatory reasoning (Fisher, 2013; Fisherman, 2010; Lipman et al., 1980; Mohr-Lone, 2000; Sharp, 2004). In this way, the pedagogical approach in this research strongly mirrors the concept under inquiry, giving the resulting empathic pedagogy a clear synergy between its process and content (Schertz, 2006).

This review of literature supports the exploration of the use of experiential stimuli in the form of a mother and baby as a focal point for dialogue about emotions within a Community of Inquiry. Children's ability to discuss their own emotions as well as the perceived emotional states of others is possible in conditions where children are encouraged to develop their existing emotional vocabularies and opportunities for meaningful dialogic interaction with their peers within a Community of Inquiry are created. The creation of a safe space facilitated by a teacher can be expected to enable children to offer their thoughts and support their positions using increasingly complex justificatory reasoning. The intersubjective space afforded by Community of Inquiry can also be expected to create opportunities for children to take the perspective of others as well as reflect on the subjectivities of their own perspective when discussing emotions. This research therefore focuses on young children's caring thinking, using an

experiential stimulus (to stimulate affective responses) within Community of Inquiry (to support cognitive engagement) that form an Empathic Pedagogy designed to foster young children's empathic reasoning.

2.12 Chapter Summary

This review of literature described the theoretical foundations that underpinned my research. An argument was made throughout this chapter that an Empathic Pedagogy that combines Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach with an experiential human stimulus can foster young children's empathic concern for others. Coplan's (2011) definition of empathy was offered to describe the importance of defining empathy in terms of its affective and cognitive components when considering young children's empathy development in educational contexts.

I reviewed the literature regarding the development of empathy in young children, drawing on key theorists such as Hoffman (2000) to describe the affective and cognitive aspects of empathy and how a view that combines these two aspects is the most relevant way to discuss empathy development in young children. The nature of the self/other divide that humans experience as they develop cognitively and socially was discussed, with links made between Schertz's (2006) notion of an 'empathic field', where self and other are ontologically connected, and the involuntary affective responses seen in early modes of empathy development (Hatfield et al., 1993; Hoffman, 2000). Furthermore, I described how neuroscientific research can help educators and researchers to better understand some of the neural processes that take place when people observe and display emotions, and show empathic concern for others.

I highlighted how the addition of philosophically grounded learning and the provision of increased opportunities for empathic and dialogic engagement in the classroom environment can support children's moral development and their empathic concern for others. The literature concerning the use of SEL programs in schools was broadly discussed, and the Roots of Empathy program was suggested as a program that could provide experiential encounters with a mother and baby for children to observe and discuss the emotional states of others.

The role of language development and opportunities for dialogic exchange in the classroom was considered. I argued that the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach provides children with a safe environment to discuss their own emotions, as well as the perceived emotions of others, and build their own emotional vocabulary. Furthermore, the review argued that the Community of Inquiry provided opportunities for children to take the perspective of others, reason about the emotions of others, and potentially develop their empathic reasoning.

I propose that the experiential process central to SEL programs such as Roots of Empathy, can provide a rich experiential stimulus for dialogue about the emotional states of others within a Community of Inquiry. I argue that the amalgamation of these ideas can be described as an Empathic Pedagogy; which can provide young children with opportunities to develop their emotional vocabulary, take the perspective of others, reason about emotions, and ultimately foster children's empathic reasoning for others.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology and methods. First, I describe how children's engagement with the world is best viewed using a social constructivist paradigm and explored using qualitative research approaches. Second, I detail EDR methodology, describe its key elements, and provide a justification for its appropriateness to the aims of this research. Third, I explain the research methods, and detail the child and adult participant recruitment procedures and the two phases of data collection and data analysis. Finally, I present evidence for the generalisability and trustworthiness of this research, and detail the ethical considerations that were taken.

3.2 Research Orientation

Children's engagement with the world is inherently situated in their socially constructed experiences with those around them and the context in which they exist. This view assumes a social constructivist paradigm whereby individuals create their social worlds, and in turn are shaped by the interactions from the world around them (Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). As this research is concerned with the socially constructed experiences of children in their engagement with others within an empathic pedagogy, a social constructivist paradigm has been taken.

3.2.1 Social Constructivist Paradigm

A social constructivist paradigm is often associated with an interpretivist worldview (Creswell, 2009; Mertens, 2010). The core assumption of an interpretivist worldview is that realities are socially constructed necessitating a focus on the

understanding of the experiences of individuals (Hesse-Biber, 2010; Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Interpretivism is founded on the concept of hermeneutics, which posits that knowledge is continually developed and reinterpreted within pre-existing social contexts, so that all meaning; including research findings, is fundamentally interpretive in nature (Clegg & Slife, 2009). Social constructivism is grounded in the work of Vygotsky, who theorised that young children's mature cognitive development develops within social contexts, development that is driven by interactions with peers and more capable others (Vygotsky, 1962). Social constructivism differs from the interpretivist worldview in its emphasis on language and social interaction as mediators of meaning (Crotty, 1998).

This research used Empathic Pedagogy that activates social, dialogical and intersubjective interactions between children. A social constructivist perspective was an appropriate paradigm for this research as it enabled interpretation of children's interactions as they engaged in dialogic interaction within the Empathic Pedagogy. In educational research there are often overlaps between differing perspectives and paradigms (Huberman & Middlebrooks, 2000), and these multiple views of learning can be used in conjunction with each other to add to the richness of the data. As this research was focussed on uncovering the uniquely individual thoughts and reasoning of the children involved in the Empathic Pedagogy, the use of a social constructivist paradigm was an appropriate choice.

3.2.2 Qualitative Research Approach

When a social constructivist paradigm is adopted, a qualitative research approach is employed by researchers, as this aligns with an aim to understand the lived realities and actions and interactions of the participants which are complex and involve

an inherent 'messiness' (Rossman & Rallis, 2012) that can be difficult to capture (Creswell, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). Carrying out naturalistic and collaborative research with young children in the rich and dynamic classroom context presents the researcher with these social complexities (Dockett et al., 2011; Kennedy, 1997). This research took place in a socially complex junior primary classroom, and a qualitative research approach was an appropriate choice for this context.

Taking these social and contextual complexities into account, a qualitative research approach supported capturing and interpreting observation and measurement of the expected/inherent richness of the relationships and interactions between the child participants (Stake, 2003). The dialogic interactions between children in the Empathic Pedagogy used in this research was the primary source of data, and a qualitative research approach captured essential data that was analysed for the presence of empathic reasoning, and supported analysis of rich dialogic data using a range of data analysis methods.

The research used a mother and baby as a human stimulus to investigate young children's empathic reasoning. Accordingly, it was essential that the research approach be exploratory in nature to take account of expected and unforeseen effects (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Gorard, Roberts, & Taylor, 2004). The social constructivist perspective views knowledge as being socially constructed, with a focus on identifying, documenting and interpreting phenomena being researched in natural settings, in relation to the meaning people attach to them (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), and enabled an exploratory approach to the socially constructed and contextual nature of children's interactions to be captured.

Two questions underpinned this research:

1. What are the design characteristics of an Empathic Pedagogy that foster young children's capacity for empathic reasoning?

2. In what ways does an Empathic Pedagogy that includes Community of Inquiry and uses experiential stimuli support the development of young children's empathic reasoning?

Accordingly, this research was situated within an appropriate and complementary research paradigm. Research that views knowledge as being socially constructed should employ a social constructivist paradigm and qualitative research approaches to enable researchers to best analyse the complex and contextual human interactions being observed (Creswell, 2013; Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Stake, 2003). As a consequence, qualitative data collection methods were needed to capture the dynamic and complex construct of empathy, which is difficult to observe and measure (Dadds et al., 2008), and qualitative analysis of the data to expose patterns and trends in the dialogic exchanges.

3.3 Theoretical Considerations

This research explored and investigated existing theoretical constructs and pedagogical approaches. An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical approach (Cam et al., 2007; Fisher, 2013; Lipman, 2003), Hoffman's (2000) theory of moral and empathy development, and young children's autonomous and participatory contribution to their own social emotional learning (P. Harris & Manatakis, 2013; Woodrow & Press, 2007), required consideration of the theoretical foundations of

dialogue, reasoning and intersubjectivity that are intrinsic to these three elements of the research.

Community of Inquiry provided a methodological platform for developing both a theoretical and a pedagogical understanding of the dialogic nature of young children's empathic reasoning. The dialogue and resultant learning that occurred in the Empathic Pedagogy using Community of Inquiry was socially constructed and framed within a dynamic and collaborative community of critical learners (Fisher, 2013; Lipman, 2003; Sprod, 2001) where children developed their own thoughts and ideas based on their individual and personal experiences and contexts. At the same time, children's engagement within the empathic pedagogy encouraged understanding within an intersubjective space where shared understandings are socially constructed (Davey Chesters, 2012; Mohr-Lone, 2000; Schertz, 2006).

Empathy development and its expression are challenging to observe and recognise in complex and dynamic real life settings such as a primary school classroom. As a result of this, research focussed on capturing children's empathic concern for others in its dialogic form needed to employ a research orientation and methodological approach that could create opportunities for data that would surface empathy development and expression in practice. Employing multiple paradigms that take into account both individual and social constructions of knowledge (Creswell, 2009; Creswell, 2011; Mertens, 2010) produced a rich description of children's empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy. The use of multiple inquiry paradigms has been described as "…a reciprocal, mutually respectful, dialogic relationship between philosophical frameworks and methodological decisions in most warranted" (Greene & Caracelli, 1997, p. 15). The use of multiple research perspectives can therefore

contribute to new insights and new understandings (Greene & Caracelli, 1997; Hartas, 2010). While a social constructivist paradigm is considered part of an interpretivist worldview, there are elements of interpretivism which present differing views on the construction of knowledge (Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). The adoption of a social constructivist paradigm within a broad interpretivist worldview however, supported relevant interpretation of learning across the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions within the Empathic Pedagogy, adding to the trustworthiness of the findings (Hartas, 2010).

3.4 Research Methodology

The first research question driving the research was concerned with the effective design characteristics of a specifically engineered intervention entitled *Empathic Pedagogy*, within a complex social setting: a junior primary classroom. The specific methodological approach to be employed therefore needed to be flexible to allow for changes to the research design in response to the dynamic research context in which it was situated.

There are a number of qualitative research methodologies that have been used to investigate children's empathic concern for others (Dadds et al., 2008; Miller & Eisenberg, 1988) including interviews, questionnaires, and case studies. There have been a number of studies on empathy that have used tools such as Bryant's (1982) *Index of Empathy for Children and Adolescents* or the *Griffith Empathy Measure* (Dadds et al., 2008). Research using interviews or self-report questionnaires such as these showed good reliability and validity across age and gender (Bryant, 1982). Substantial problems exist however, with self-report questionnaires when used with young children due to

the cognitive and verbal demands required to report internal states such as empathic response (Dadds et al., 2008; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987). Case studies can also provide researchers with an in-depth understanding of specific phenomena in one setting or context using methods including observation and interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Stake, 2003). Case studies are generally used to provide findings that can benefit practitioners, however, they do not allow for the linking and refinement of theoretical and pedagogical elements that were the focus of this research.

These qualitative research methods were considered for their applicability for investigating the extent to which the Empathic Pedagogy could foster children's empathic reasoning. This research however, required a methodology that could best capture children's empathic responses within the dialogic space created by the Empathic Pedagogy, as well as surfacing the pedagogical and theoretical elements of children's empathic reasoning in practice. Furthermore, the research aimed to understand the fluid and dynamic dialogic exchanges that occurred within the Empathic Pedagogy intervention; and hence, surfacing these exchanges required a methodological approach that was also able to take complex and varied data into account in a way that reflected the messy nature of these interactions as they evolved within the Empathic Pedagogy. To this end, I chose EDR as an appropriate methodological approach that was characterised by flexibility and able to address the research questions. In the next section I draw upon key literature to make the case for using EDR.

3.4.1 Educational Design Research

Educational Design Research (EDR) is a specific form of research design that is typified by the implementation and iterative development of an engineered artefact or

intervention to seek solutions and further understanding of practical and complex educational problems that can inform the work of others. (Cobb, Confrey, diSessa, Lehrer & Schauble, 2003; Kelly, 2004; McKenney & Reeves, 2012; Plomp & Nieveen, 2007). McKenney and Reeves (2014) argued that building on existing Design-Based Research in the form of EDR would be an effective methodological approach to investigate problems and generate usable knowledge in classrooms where messy variables often limit other forms of research. With the dual aims of expanding theoretical knowledge and developing pedagogic practice to address identified problems in real life settings, EDR has the potential to "impact learning and teaching in naturalistic settings" (Barab & Squire, 2004, p. 2).

An aim of this research was to assess the ways in which a Community of Inquiry that used a human experiential stimulus could foster young children's capacities for empathic reasoning. These elements (Community of Inquiry and a human experiential stimulus) formed an Empathic Pedagogy intervention in a junior primary classroom. EDR methodology provides several benefits for the design and assessment of an intervention such as this (Barab & Squire, 2004; Cobb et al., 2003; Design-Based Research Collective, 2003). The Empathic Pedagogy developed for this research was an intervention employed in collaboration with the teacher participant and relied on the re-engineering and refining of practical and theoretical elements using iterative cycles of design development across its implementation (McKenney & Reeves, 2012; Reimann, 2011).

Both the researcher and collaborating teacher played a central role in the research process, and shaped, and were shaped by the emerging processes of inquiry and analysis (Rossman & Rallis, 2012) adopted for this research. The constructivist

feature of qualitative research was compatible with the methodological choice of EDR, which enabled the design of the intervention to evolve and be adjusted based on researcher and teacher observations as to the effectiveness of the Empathic Pedagogy in practice. Collaboration with the classroom teacher in the engineering of the Empathic Pedagogy intervention is a characteristic of EDR methodology (Barab & Squire, 2004; Design-Based Research Collective, 2003; Gorard & Taylor, 2004). The use of EDR methodology enabled refinement of elements of the intervention, including stimulus material; the inquiry process; the supporting activities; and the way that learning is observed and recorded to be iteratively analysed and refined across design cycles that were connected to relevant theoretical frameworks and actual classroom practice. This is a key strength of using EDR methodology. The ability to re-engineer the intervention design (Barab & Squire, 2004; Ben-Zvi Assaraf & Orion, 2009; Design-Based Research Collective, 2003) enabled ongoing adaptions to be made to the Empathic Pedagogy with minimal impact on the practical implementation of the intervention, however, with maximum impact on the specific aims of the research. Re-engineering the intervention involved drawing on children's insights into what was meaningful about their experience surfaced by the intervention.

Multimodal data gathering methods such as written and drawn observations recorded in an *Empathy Journal* supported the ongoing refinement of the intervention and multi-informant assessment was conducted that included ongoing feedback from the classroom teacher, detailed recording of dialogue from Inquiry Lessons, and researcher observations. Employing multiple data sources allowed for more accurate understanding of the complex constructs of empathy (Dadds et al., 2008) and the nature

of dialogic exchanges involving empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy, and this flexibility was supported by the characteristics of EDR.

3.4.2 Key Elements of Educational Design Research

There are seven key elements of EDR that characterise the differences between this research methodology and the more traditional psychological research methods frequently used in educational settings (A. Collins, 1999; A. Collins et al., 2004). These elements are: the acceptance of real life research settings, an acceptance of multiple dependant variables, a focus on characterising the research context, progressive refinement through iterative cycles of evaluation and design, complex interactions between participants and researchers, applicability to diverse educational settings, and the role that participants play in the research process.

3.4.2.1 Real Life Research Settings

This research was conducted in a real-life classroom context. EDR does not attempt to eliminate so called *contaminating effects* found in real-life settings in the way that psychological experimentation in laboratory settings aims to (Cobb et al., 2003; A. Collins et al., 2004). Instead, EDR accepts the messy nature of real life settings with no attempt to control the many variables impacting on the function of the setting (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Primary school classrooms are busy and dynamic environments that involve complex rituals and rich social interactions between the teacher and students. This acceptance of the messy nature of research in classroom settings is a key strength of EDR because any findings will reflect the real life conditions to be experienced in any future implementation of the intervention or artefact being designed, and are explicit in the generalisability of the research (Plomp & Nieveen, 2007). This strength also presents one of the challenges of carrying out EDR in educational settings, as the

researcher must detail the distinctive context and situated environment for the design's usefulness to others to be evaluated. EDR however, recognises that each educational situation presents a unique context and requires a unique design approach (Cobb et al., 2003; Sloane, 2006).

3.4.2.2 Acceptance of Multiple Dependant Variables

This research investigated the concept of empathy using dialogue in order to ascertain whether young children's empathic reasoning increased. This deliberate giving up of control of many of the variables at play in the research context (Dede, 2005) aimed to increase the ecological validity of the research, but comes at the risk of reducing the theoretical impact through a reduction in the methodological rigor of the design (Kelly, 2004; McKenney & Reeves, 2012). By not controlling the many variables found in a junior primary classroom, this research honours this complex and dynamic context and allows for varied interpretation of the practical and theoretical components being researched.

3.4.2.3 Characterising the Research Context

EDR explicitly characterises the research context in which the design is being implemented rather than focussing on identifying a number of dependant variables and holding these constant (Barab & Squire, 2004; A. Collins et al., 2004). The detailed description of the research methods that EDR requires enables the researcher to maintain a broad focus on many possible variables that are present, and identify relevant design characteristics as they emerge. In this research, this broad focus allowed expected and unforeseen variables that were relevant to children's empathic reasoning to be identified, and inform ongoing iterations of the design itself. This in turn

enabled theory building to occur in conjunction with usable pedagogical knowledge and understanding.

3.4.2.4 Iterative Cycles of Evaluation and Design

The process of progressive refinement (A. Collins et al., 2004) used in EDR enables interventions to be tested and refined through a series of iterative cycles of evaluation and design. This progressive refinement enabled the intervention design in this research to be constantly revised (Reimann, 2011). This characteristic was a key factor in choosing EDR as the Empathic Pedagogy needed to be responsive to the dynamic conditions of the classroom research setting, and the iterative flexibility mirrored the processes within a Community of Inquiry which was a central design element of the Empathic Pedagogy intervention. Community of Inquiry by its very nature involves a cyclical refinement of ideas and claims that lead towards a more reasoned and enhanced understanding of the focus question being investigated (Fisher, 2013).

3.4.2.5 Complex Interactions between Participants and the Researcher

The complex nature of the research classroom environment is where the sharing of ideas was reflected in participant and research interactions (Barab & Squire, 2004). In this research, the teacher participant and researcher interactions were critical to the concurrent, iterative data analysis needed to respond to children's engagement and maintain focus on the research aims. This research was primarily concerned with the dialogic exchanges between the children involved, however the interactions between child participants, classroom teacher, researcher, mother, and baby informed ongoing iterations of the research design.

3.4.2.6 Applicability to Diverse Educational Settings

EDR aims to evaluate the contextual aspects of research settings while arguing for a design's applicability to other diverse settings. Examining a wide range of observable impacts of a specific design builds a profile of the contextual aspects that characterise the design in practice (A. Collins et al., 2004). EDR does not therefore seek to test a hypothesis, but is concerned with identifying and describing "the complexity, fragility, messiness, and eventual solidity of the design and doing so in a way that will be valuable to others" (Barab & Squire, 2004, p. 4). The goals of design experiments are therefore paradoxical in that the research must embrace the contextual influences of the unique classroom, school, and community setting in which the research is carried out, yet must work to gain design knowledge that is valuable to a wide range of similar contexts. This research aimed to build on existing understanding of young children's empathic concern for others, as well as develop usable pedagogical knowledge about the characteristics of an empathic pedagogy that could foster young children's empathic reasoning.

3.4.2.7 Role of Participants

The wide range of experience and expertise from participant perspectives can be applied to the ongoing design refinement of interventions (Barab & Squire, 2004; A. Collins et al., 2004). This research used the experiences and observations of the researcher and teacher participant to recognise the pedagogical and theoretical elements of the design that worked to elicit dialogic exchanges between children that involved reasoning about emotions and encouraged perspective taking of others. The honouring of children's voice was a key principle of this research, and EDR supported this principle by positioning the child participants as valuable contributors to the research.

3.5 Research Methods

3.5.1 Recruitment of Participants

A number of school sites and classrooms were purposefully considered for recruitment of participants for this research. Purposeful selection of the research site and participants using predetermined criteria relevant to the research questions ensured that data generated was specific to the aims of the research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013; Patton, 2002). The following sections detail this recruitment process.

3.5.1.1 Selection of School Site

The school site and classroom to be researched needed to be working with Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical practice so that children had a strong foundation in the procedure and engagement of Community of Inquiry in the regular classroom experience. Familiarity with the concepts and procedures of Community of Inquiry was necessary for implementing Empathic Pedagogy, as an existing community of critical learners (Littleton & Mercer, 2010; Sprod, 2001). The strategic and practical selection of the school, classroom and participants using predetermined selection criteria relevant to the specific aims of this research and was a requisite condition for the in-depth qualitative analysis necessary for evaluating children's empathic reasoning (Patton, 2002).

Several potential school sites in the Adelaide metropolitan area were identified through the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) website (Government of South Australia, 2015). A detailed examination of the school context statements of all government primary schools in the five metropolitan regions of Adelaide identified where a school described using the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach in their context statement. A follow up phone call to the principal

or school administrator was made to establish whether this approach was currently being employed. When a school confirmed the use of Community of Inquiry in their pedagogical practice, an inquiry was made by email to ascertain if the school would be willing to be involved in the research. Two sites were found to be using the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach across their school. One school expressed a strong desire to be involved in the research and a face to face meeting was arranged with the principal and the school's Community of Inquiry Coordinator to further discuss the research.

The recruited school was a government primary school situated in the Adelaide hills region. At the time of the research, the school had approximately 200 children enrolled from Reception to year 7. The school had an Index of Educational Disadvantage (IED) rating of Category 7 which indicates those schools that are the least disadvantaged communities on the IED; a socio-economic index based on Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data (Department of Education and Child Development, 2012). The school community consisted of mainly English speaking families, with 29% of enrolled children having one or more parents born overseas. Many children in the school (over 60%) came from outside of the local area (Department of Education and Child Development, 2016).

3.5.1.2 Teacher Participant

Recruitment of the teacher participant occurred after I met with her and the school principal. In this meeting the teacher expressed interest in participating in the research. The teacher was permanently employed, with two decades of experience working in early childhood education and junior primary school environments. At the time of this research she was working in a Year 2/3 classroom as well as being the

Community of Inquiry Coordinator. In this role she implemented weekly philosophical inquiry lessons using Community of Inquiry across all classes in the school from Reception to Year 7. Community of Inquiry was a part of her regular classroom teaching practice and used to engage students in genuine inquiry about philosophical and ethical elements across all curriculum areas. This commitment and experience in the implementation of the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach made this teacher an ideal participant for the purposes of this research.

3.5.1.3 Child Participants

Child participants in this research were the 21 children from the teacher's Year 2/3 class at the same government primary school in the Adelaide Hills region (**see Table 1**). The school employed vertical grouping of students, and the children in this research ranged from six years and six months to eight years and six months old, an age range conducive to their ability to benefit from early positive social emotional interventions (Coie & Dodge, 1998; Whitted, 2011). The mean age of the child participants was seven years and six months of age. Pseudonyms were used to refer to child participants, as well as in all documentation related to the research (**see Table 1**).

Table 1

Pseudonym, Age, and Sex of Child Participants

Child (Pseudonym)	Age at 1 July 2012 Years : months	Sex
	6 : 6 – 7 : 6	
Carl	7 : 5	M
Flint	7 : 2	M
Henry	6 : 6	M
Harry	6 : 9	M
Jim	6 : 9	M
Kylie	7 : 1	F
Shane	7 : 5	M
Terry	6 : 11	M
Tyler	7 : 5	M
	7 : 6 – 8 : 6	
Andrea	7 : 10	F
Bruce	8 : 2	M
Buddy	8 : 1	M
Fergus	7 : 10	M
Fraser	7 : 8	M
Isaac	7 : 7	M
Kevin	7 : 11	M
Logan	7 : 11	M
Lori	8 : 2	F
Rick	7 : 8	M
Tony	8 : 4	M
Wayne	8 : 5	M

3.5.1.4 Mother and Baby Participants

I recruited a mother and baby from the local community to be the human experiential stimuli in the empathic pedagogy. The mother, a teacher herself, was visiting the recruited school when I presented my research proposal to teachers at a staff meeting. I initially planned for the mother and baby to be recruited from the immediate school community to open the possibility of strengthening the relationships between all participants. A recruitment poster (**see Appendix A**) was displayed around the school and distributed to families through the school newsletter. Several mothers with babies offered to be involved in the research; however, the age of these babies was not within the criteria of the research design (**see section 3.5.1.4.1-3**). The anonymity

of the mother and baby, and teacher participants were also maintained through the use of pseudonyms. The mother is referred to as *Sarah*, the baby is referred to as *Baby Adam*, and the teacher is referred to as *Teacher*.

I met with the mother and baby to discuss the requirements for participation in the research and to answer any questions about her role and what was required of her baby. During this meeting I carefully observed the interactions between the mother and her baby to get a sense of the baby's general temperament and to ascertain whether the baby appeared to have a secure attachment with his mother. Using my experience as an educator I made an informed decision that the baby met my criteria. The three criteria of *age*, *temperament* and *attachment* used for selection of the baby participant are now described.

3.5.1.4.1 Age

The age criteria for the baby participant was based on a range of developmental milestones that I wanted to either avoid or capture within the timeframe of the research (**see Appendix H**). The most important developmental milestone that I wanted to avoid was the development of *stranger anxiety*, which typically occurs in the second half of infants' first year (Berk, 2013; Nagel, 2012). It was also important that the baby had limited verbal communication to highlight the non-verbal communication that occurs between mother and baby before language is more fully developed.

3.5.1.4.2 Temperament

The temperament of the baby participant was a prime consideration as this had the potential to significantly impact on his interactions with the child participants. Temperament plays an important role in how a baby responds to emotional events and novel stimuli in their immediate surroundings (Nagel, 2012). The temperament of a

baby can have a direct influence on how others respond to her/him, which in turn may influence the baby's future interactions in an ongoing bi-directional pattern of social responses (Berk, 2013; Schaffer, 1996).

My observation of the baby, and conversation with the mother about daily life, routines and the baby's response to situations, demonstrated to me that the baby appeared to have the needed 'easy' temperament (Schaffer, 1996). Infants who demonstrate an easy temperament tend to show positive approach responses when experiencing novel stimuli (Schaffer, 1996), and generally display positive interactions towards strangers and new experiences (Schaffer, 1996; Thomas & Chess, 1977). During my meeting with the mother and baby, the mother moved away from the table leaving the baby and me alone. During this time I engaged the baby in a finger play and some directed talk, to which the baby responded well. He appeared content and at ease with the interactions. This exchange indicated to me that the baby was likely to have an easy temperament

3.5.1.4.3 Attachment

A baby who demonstrates a secure attachment with her/his mother was a desirable attribute. The Empathic Pedagogy intervention required the mother and baby to interact with an (initially) unfamiliar group of children and adults in regular Stimulus Lessons. Securely attached babies display behaviour such as seeking proximity to their mother, being upset when their mother is out of sight, and calming upon her return (Schaffer, 1996). During our meeting I observed the baby seeking the mother when she moved away, and displaying excitement on her return, indicating that the baby appeared to be securely attached.

I was also looking for instances of infant-directed speech from the mother. Infant-directed speech is a simplified form of speech that adults often sub-consciously use when interacting with babies (Nagel, 2012). This socially interactive speech is altered by the adult so as to be more understandable to the baby, enriching cognitive, social and emotional development in the infant. Importantly for this research, the use of infant-directed speech by the mother is also a significant factor in developing strong infant-mother attachment (Bjorklund, 2012). Therefore, instances of infant-directed speech would be another good indicator of secure attachment. I observed several exchanges where the mother used infant-directed speech to soothe and entertain the baby, showing further evidence of secure attachment.

3.5.2 Research Procedures

In this section, I describe the procedures implemented in this research. This comprised two separate, but critically interconnected phases of *observation* and *intervention implementation*. These are referred to as Phase One and Phase Two (**see Table 2**). As the Empathic Pedagogy intervention implemented in Phase Two was central to the research, the three design components, or lesson types that comprise the structure of the Empathic Pedagogy are discussed in detail. These lesson types were named *Stimulus*, *Inquiry* and *Bridge Lessons*.

Table 2

Overview of Phases of Research Procedure

Research Phase	Research Process	Research Purpose
Phase One (Context & Conditions)	*Data Preparation*	
	Observation of Classroom	Observing interactions and behaviours indicating dialogic and empathic practice
	Observation of Teacher	Observing pedagogical practice generally and use of Community of Inquiry
	Development of Empathic Pedagogy design	Aligning intervention with existing teacher pedagogy to engineer empathic pedagogy that provides opportunities for children to express and develop empathic reasoning
	Embedding into Classroom	Researcher building relationship with teacher and children to be accepted and therefore unobtrusive during Phase Two
Phase Two (Empathic Pedagogy)	*Design Implementation & Data Capture*	
	Welcome Visit	Introducing the mother and baby to the classroom and beginning to build relationships between children, teacher, researcher, mother and baby.
Three Design Components	Stimulus Lessons	Providing mother and baby time to describe their relationship and their communication with specific focus on the Big Question being asked in following Inquiry Lesson. Allowing children to ask questions about the ways the mother and baby communicate emotions.
	Inquiry Lessons	Engaging children in Community of Inquiry to discuss and deepen understanding of the Big Idea being explored and the Big Question being asked.
	Bridge Lessons	Summarising previous Inquiry Lesson and priming for following Stimulus Lesson. Connecting ideas between each Community of Inquiry to maintain children's focus on the inquiry across Phase Two.

3.5.2.1 Phase One: Research Context and Conditions

Phase One of the research involved the researcher developing a working familiarity with the classroom context and the pedagogical practice of the teacher, particularly her use of Community of Inquiry pedagogy. This familiarity informed the intervention design; established a working relationship with the school and the classroom teacher, and built rapport with the children in the classroom. Over the course of one school term through regular visits to the school and engagement with the daily classroom routines as researcher, I embedded myself within the classroom, becoming an accessible adult to the children in the classroom, and an observer of the teacher's existing Community of Inquiry pedagogical practices.

I drew on research that investigated both dialogic pedagogies and empathic concern for others (Cam et al., 2007; Daniel, 2005; DeHaan et al., 1997; Fisher, 2013; Littleton & Mercer, 2010; Mercer et al., 1999; Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Schleifer et al., 2003) to provide a lens for observing children's engagement within the existing Community of Inquiry processes, as well as their interactions with peers in the general classroom context.

To develop knowledge of Community of Inquiry approach in practice in the classroom, several Community of Inquiry sessions were observed and recorded using audio/visual equipment. These observations informed the construction and implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy intervention. Discussion with the teacher about the process and practice of implementing and facilitating a Community of Inquiry allowed the Empathic Pedagogy intervention to be refined to best fit the pedagogical practice of the teacher, maintain children's familiarity with the form of dialogic inquiry used in the classroom, and integrate this with knowledge gained from the review of

literature on the development of empathy, dialogue and Community of Inquiry pedagogical practice.

3.5.2.2 Phase Two: The Empathic Pedagogy

In Phase Two, I designed and implemented an Empathic Pedagogy. This intervention aimed to facilitate children's engagement in dialogic encounters with their peers about the emotional states of others in a safe, intersubjective space. The design of the Empathic Pedagogy was built on evaluations of literature and practice, and highlighted key requirements: engagement with experiential stimuli, peer dialogue within a Community of Inquiry, children's facilitation in critical, creative and caring thinking that expands children's emotional vocabulary and encourages perspective taking. The Empathic Pedagogy was designed to foster young children's empathic concern for others. To this end, a series of six connected *Community of Inquiry* sessions, referred to as Community of Inquiry sessions that involved engagement with an experiential human stimulus, were developed.

Each Community of Inquiry session comprised a Stimulus Lesson coupled with an Inquiry Lesson. These Lessons were designed with consistent core elements (**see Table 3**) that could be used flexibly throughout the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions. These were followed by a Bridge Lesson before the sequence was repeated. In the Stimulus Lessons the mother and baby visited the classroom and shared their experiences. During Stimulus Lessons, children observed the interactions between the mother and baby, and between the baby and themselves and engaged in discussion with the mother about changes in the baby's development and the communication of emotions that had occurred between visits. Each Inquiry Lesson involved a Community of Inquiry where children engaged in discussion about their understanding of the

emotions of the baby, themselves, and others. These Inquiry Lessons were designed around Big Ideas and Big Questions that guided children's inquiry. Bridge Lessons were designed to maintain children's connection to the mother and baby, as well as maintain the thread of their ideas about the emotional states of others. These Bridge Lessons involved a range of activities that supported children's thinking about the Big Ideas and Big Questions being discussed in each Community of Inquiry session.

Table 3

Summary of Consistent Core Elements of Community of Inquiry Sessions

Community of Inquiry Sessions	
Stimulus Lesson sequence	**Inquiry Lesson sequence**
Key Ideas summarised	Formation of Community of Inquiry circle
Mother and Baby Summary Talk	Allocation of wishing stones
Observation of Baby	Description of Big Idea
Questions for Mother	Make connections with Big Idea and
Discussion about Baby's development	Stimulus Lesson
and communication	Pose Big Question
	Community of Inquiry
	Use discussion plan prompts
	Opportunity for final round
	Summary of main points discussed

3.5.2.2.1 Stimulus Lessons

As described in Chapter Two, Community of Inquiry requires a stimulus to provide the focal point for inquiry (Fisher, 2013; Lipman et al., 1980; Lipman, 2003). In this research, the stimulus for the Community of Inquiry was the experiential observation of the relationship between the mother and baby participants, the dialogue between the child participants and the mother as she described her experiences of caring for her baby, and the ongoing relationship developed between the child participants and the mother and baby. The six Stimulus Lessons therefore played a pivotal role in the Community of Inquiry sessions and the overall Empathic Pedagogy.

The mother and baby visited the classroom for a Stimulus Lesson every two weeks. At that visit the mother described any changes in the mother-baby interactions, and explained how she and the baby communicated their feelings to each other verbally and non-verbally. The mother described any key events or experiences that had highlighted the social emotional development of the baby and their developing relationship. Prior to each Stimulus Lesson I emailed the mother to inform her of the 'Big Idea' and 'Big Question' that was the focus of the corresponding Community of Inquiry session. This supported the mother to align her contribution to each Stimulus Lesson with the dynamic and ongoing process of inquiry within each Community of Inquiry session across the Empathic Pedagogy implementation.

The length of each Stimulus Lesson was on average 30 minutes and was carried out in the morning session after recess. For each lesson the children sat in a large circle around a floor mat that was only used for visits by the mother and baby, so that this would act as a signal for the children to focus their attention and thinking on the mother and baby.

At the commencement of each Stimulus Lesson the key ideas that had been raised in the previous Community of Inquiry or the intervening Bridge Lesson were described and summarised. Following the mother's summary, the children were encouraged to ask the mother any questions about what had been said, or about the baby's development and communication. Children could also ask any questions that related to the discussion in the preceding Inquiry Lesson, or the Big Ideas and Big Question in the upcoming Community of Inquiry session. The children were reminded to watch the baby closely and observe verbal and non-verbal communication between the baby and his mother (**see Figure 1**).



Figure 1. Children closely observing mother and baby in a Stimulus Lesson.

3.5.2.2.2 Inquiry Lessons

The Inquiry Lessons were informed by six key social emotional themes drawn from the Roots of Empathy program: *neuroscience, temperament, attachment, emotional literacy, authentic communication*, and *social inclusion* (Gordon, 2009). These six themes were grouped under three broad aspects of empathic response; cognition, affect, and action. These three aspects guided the design of the intervention by framing each Community of Inquiry around concepts drawn from the six key themes, forming a conceptual framework. This conceptual framework informed the design of each Inquiry Lesson (**see Table 4**) so that the empathic focus across the lesson sequence moved from the baby's emotions, to awareness of the children's own internal emotional states, towards a focus on the perceived emotional states of others. Each Community of Inquiry had a title; a *Big Idea* that described the broad focus for each session and was aimed at

provoking curiosity in children, and a *Big Question* that was the focal point of the dialogue within the Inquiry Lessons.

Table 4

Sequence, Theme and Focus of Inquiry Lessons

Week	Lesson & Big Idea	Big Question	Thematic Aspect	Empathic Focus
Term 3, Week 4	COI 1: Talking without Words	Do we 'talk' to each other without using words?	Cognition	Baby
Term 3, Week 6	COI 2: Faces and Feelings	How do we 'read' other people's faces?		
Term 3, Week 8	COI 3: Mismatched Messages	How can we be sure that we read people's emotions correctly?	Affect	Self
Term 4, Week 4	COI 4: Emotions and Empathy	Can you know what someone else is feeling if you haven't had those feelings yourself?		
Term 4, Week 6	COI 5: Mothers and Others	Why do we respond differently to different people at different times?	Action	Others
Term 4, Week 8	COI 6: Making Connections	Should we/can we try to be more empathic?		

The Inquiry Lessons incorporated a Big Question that was determined by the teacher and researcher, based on the stimulus material being presented, and adapted in response to children's discussion in preceding Stimulus Lessons. As described in Chapter Two, this design characteristic focussed on a key theme drawn from the stimulus material and on the most salient question within this frame of reference.

The key benefit of employing this characteristic was that the teacher has greater control over the primary focus and direction of the inquiry process. I chose to maintain

this format for the Inquiry Lessons because in this way I could control the focus of each 'Big Idea' and specify each 'Big Question' to better engineer the sequence of Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons throughout the research.

The Inquiry Lessons were implemented every two weeks directly after the Stimulus Lesson when the mother and baby visited the classroom. Each Inquiry Lesson was planned for approximately 40 minutes to maximise opportunities for rich discussion. Not all of the Inquiry Lessons went for this length of time (**see Figure 2**), as there were unexpected interruptions such as school assemblies (for example *Community of Inquiry 4: Empathy and Emotions*). The average length of each Inquiry Lesson was just over 35 minutes.

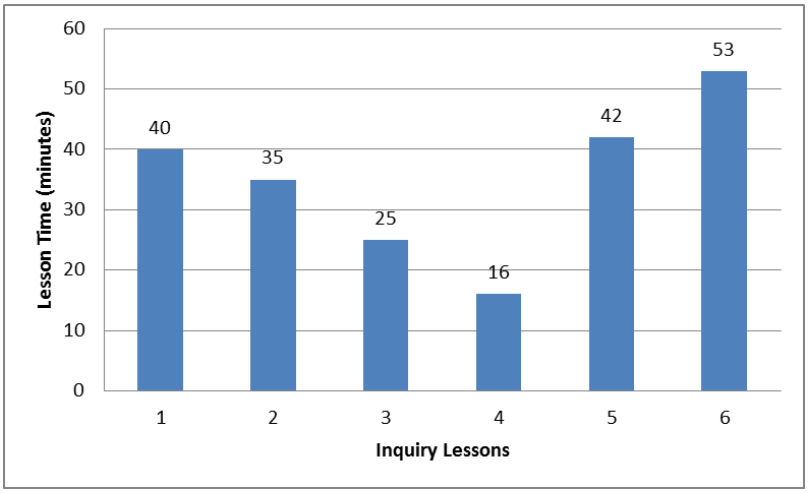


Figure 2. Length of time for Inquiry Lessons.

In Phase One, the teacher and I discussed the best time for the Community of Inquiry sessions to be implemented during the school day. The total anticipated time for Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons to be completed was approximately one hour. Given the age range of the children in the classroom and the cognitive load (Sweller, Ayres, & Kalyuga, 2011) that the younger children would face in attending to complex tasks over

this period of time (Vakil, Blachstein, Sheinman, & Greenstein, 2009) the Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons were separated and the Stimulus Lesson was scheduled shortly after recess, so the children had a five to ten minute relaxation break before starting the Inquiry Lesson.

For each Inquiry Lesson the children were each given between three and five *wishing stones*. These wishing stones were part of the teacher's existing Community of Inquiry pedagogy, and as such were used in the Empathic Pedagogy. The stones were used by the children to indicate to the group that they had an idea that they wanted to add to the dialogue. The number of wishing stones allocated to each child was based on factors such as time available for the Inquiry Lesson, the number of children present during each lesson, and a pedagogical decision to use the stones to stimulate greater depth from each dialogic exchange offered by children. Accordingly, the stones were set out in a line in front of each child and a stone was moved forward to indicate that they wanted to add their thoughts to the dialogue. Children could retract their offered stone if their thoughts were voiced by another child, if they changed their mind about their thought, or if their thinking had been addressed in some way. A *speaking ball* was used to indicate the child who was offering their thoughts, and was rolled to a child who indicated they had thoughts to offer with their wishing stone indication.

To start the inquiry process the teacher would describe the Big Idea, make any possible connections with the Stimulus Lesson, ask the class the Big Question, and allow a short amount of thinking time. Then the speaking ball was gently rolled to a child who had indicated with a wishing stone that they wished to offer their thoughts to start the dialogue. When each child had added their thoughts or responded to another child's ideas the ball would be rolled gently to another child whose name was called.

A range of possible questions was given to the teacher in the form of a discussion plan to guide the discussion, connect thinking to the preceding Stimulus Lesson, or draw further ideas from the children. The teacher also used a range of procedural prompts such as asking children to give reasons or examples to support their statements, asking children to clarify or re-phrase their ideas, and asking children to add or build on their ideas. These prompts helped to guide children's thinking, to elicit more depth from children's initial responses, and to encourage children to justify their statements with support (Cam et al., 2007).

Towards the end of the Inquiry Lesson there was a *final round* where every child in the circle was given the opportunity to add to the dialogue. This final exchange could be a comment that they had not already shared, a response to an idea raised in the Community of Inquiry, a summary of their thinking, or a question that they still had regarding the Big Idea or Big Question. Children could choose to pass if they did not want to contribute or were not ready to do so. At the end of the final round the teacher thanked the children for their contributions, summarised the main points raised during the Inquiry Lesson, and highlighted any questions that remained unanswered or ambiguous. Children were then allowed to get their lunch and eat before going outside for their lunch break.

3.5.2.2.3 Bridge Lessons

Prior to each Community of Inquiry session, a Bridge Lesson was implemented to support children to maintain their connection to the mother and baby, and to link ideas between the focal point of each Community of Inquiry. These Bridge Lessons involved a range of activities designed to complement and connect ideas generated during Inquiry Lessons (**see Table 5**).

Table 5

Sequence and Activities for Bridge Lessons

Week	Lesson	Activities
Term 3, Week 3	Bridge 1	Being Adam: sounds like, looks like, feels like Empathy Journal
Term 3, Week 5	Bridge 2	'Face It' expression cards Name an emotion and describe a time you felt that way Empathy Journal
Term 3, Week 7	Bridge 3	Emotional Charades Mini COI: reading people's emotions Empathy Journal
Term 4, Week 3	Bridge 4	Feelings and Emotions Quadrant Empathy Journal
Term 4, Week 5	Bridge 5	Hypothetical scenarios Empathy Continuum Empathy Journal
Term 4, Week 7	Bridge 6	Defining empathy Good thing/Bad thing Empathy Journal

The design of the Empathic Pedagogy implementation needed to maximise the chance for observable increases in the baby's social emotional, cognitive and physical development to be apparent to support the children to observe and relate to the growth and behavioural changes of the baby. Therefore the time between each visit by the mother and baby needed to be longer than a week, so that the Empathic Pedagogy could span the necessary period of development (**see Appendix H**). To achieve this, Stimulus Lessons were conducted at two-weekly intervals, a time frame that allowed the baby's social emotional and communication development to be observed over a longer period, giving children greater opportunity to develop relationships with the mother and baby that could help stimulate empathic concern for the baby.

I was concerned however, that this gap of two weeks between Stimulus Lessons could result in a *disconnect* in the relationship being built between the children and the

baby, a possible reduction in any cumulative development in children's perspective taking of the baby, and a loss of the overall thread and flow of the Empathic Pedagogy. In response, Bridge Lessons were designed to provide a link between each series of Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons, and were implemented in the alternate weeks between Community of Inquiry sessions. Each Bridge Lesson incorporated unique activities designed to build on the learning and dialogue from the previous Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons, and primed children for the Community of Inquiry that would follow. Discussions were carried out in each Bridge Lesson that focussed on group reflection of the prior Community of Inquiry session and involved questions that connected to the Big Ideas and Big Questions for the impending Community of Inquiry session. These Bridge Lessons also provided further opportunities for children to write or draw in their Empathy Journal.

The Bridge Lessons were adjusted in response to the lived experiences of the child participants and their learning needs. Connecting the design and sequence of Bridge Lessons enabled a continued focus and opportunity for reflection on three key theoretical and pedagogical areas. First, the activities provided opportunities to learn about the expression and recognition of emotions in the baby, self, and others. Second, the activities built on the safe dialogic space already created in the classroom, and enabled open engagement with ideas about taking the perspective of others, and how children's emotions may be misread by others who do not share their internal perspective. Finally, each Bridge Lesson involved dialogue exchanges where children were required to provide justification for their thinking and to argue for the position they had taken in an activity, supporting the processes and skills developed in the Community of Inquiry.

The Bridge Lessons therefore explicitly provided the child participants with increased and ongoing connection to the ideas and experiences that developed in each Community of Inquiry session. This linking supported the notion that each Community of Inquiry session, and the ideas that are generated within them, are not isolated to a single lesson or context but can connect to many activities and experiences beyond the inquiry process itself. In this way a community of critical learners was being fostered that could bring a deeper understanding into each Community of Inquiry.

The Stimulus, Inquiry and Bridge Lesson designs were based on my observation of existing teaching practices in the classroom, and in response to ongoing observation in Phase One. I had observed the teacher participant using children's storybooks as stimulus material and facilitating discussion and inquiry with the class based on overarching themes or questions, and this basic structure informed the design of the Empathic Pedagogy intervention. I consequently collaborated with the teacher to ensure that the implementation of the lessons designed for the intervention reflected the existing Community of Inquiry pedagogical practices used in the classroom. In this way the Inquiry Lessons could maintain a familiarity for the child participants, and would not require any major change to the teacher's pedagogical approach.

During the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy in Phase Two, EDR enabled for iterative re-design to be carried out in response to the interests and learning of the participants, informed by observations of the practical and theoretical aspects of the design in practice (Design-Based Research Collective, 2003) made by both the researcher and teacher.

3.5.3 Data Collection

In this section, I describe the data collection procedures for this research. First I discuss the procedures for data collection. Second, I detail the various qualitative data sources, paying particular attention to the dialogue arising from the Inquiry Lessons. As the data analysis was both immediate and retrospective it was necessary to provide an overview of the implementation of the intervention, and the processes of data collection and data analysis (**see Figure 3**).

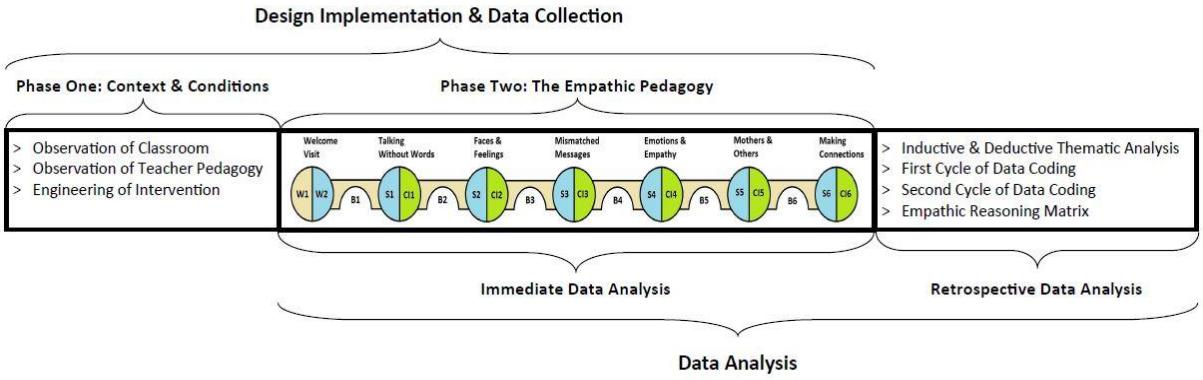


Figure 3. Timeline of research design implementation, data collection and data analysis.

3.5.3.1 Data Sources

In accordance with the purposes of EDR, data from multiple sources was collected documenting the children's empathic reasoning over the period of Empathic Pedagogy intervention implementation (**see Table 6**). Dialogue data from Stimulus, Inquiry and Bridge Lessons were captured using an audio/video digital device to record children's dialogue exchanges in each Lesson. Audio/video recording was employed to accurately record all dialogue and allow the researcher to support the teacher to facilitate each lesson while reducing the demand for the taking of field notes (Hammersley, 2010). The video camera was positioned on a tripod away from the main floor area where lessons took place, and a Bluetooth recording device linked to the

video camera was placed in the centre of the Community of Inquiry circle for Inquiry Lessons. In this way the recording methods caused minimal disruption to participants (Flewitt, 2006). Using the digital audio/video recordings, I accurately transcribed all dialogue within each Stimulus and Inquiry Lesson using word processing software. These transcribed data were then formatted and organised for coding and analysis. Data were collected throughout the research from the activities presented in the Bridge Lessons, and from the child participants' Empathy Journals.

Table 6

Summary of Data Collection Methods and Their Purpose

Data Collection Method	Purpose
Observation of classroom context and teacher pedagogy, and participation in classroom activity (*Phase One*)	Embed myself in the classroom to build familiarity and trust with children. Gain insight into teacher pedagogy to guide engineering of research design for Phase Two intervention.
Video and Audio recording of Stimulus, Inquiry and Bridge Lessons (*Phase Two*)	Record and gain insight into children's empathic reasoning in dialogic exchanges. Identify salient characteristics of the research design that impacted on its implementation and that could be modified to facilitate children's expression of empathic responses. Identify relevant theoretical and pedagogical aspects of the research design that may have an impact on children's engagement and learning during implementation.
Children's written and drawn products recorded in the Empathy Journal (*Phase Two*)	Gain insight into children's learning through their use of multimodal forms of expression. Document children's learning about their interactions with, and responses to the emotions of the baby, themselves and others.

3.4.3.1.1 Stimulus Lesson Dialogue

Stimulus Lessons were digitally recorded to accurately capture all dialogue within these lessons, particularly the mother's description of the communication

regarding emotions and empathy between herself and the baby. These recordings also allowed me to accurately capture questions raised by child participants. These questions were used to inform and refine discussion plans in subsequent Inquiry Lessons, and to add contextual elements to activities in following Bridge Lessons.

3.4.3.1.2 Inquiry Lesson Dialogue

The primary source of data used to address the research questions were the dialogic exchanges that were recorded during each of the six Inquiry Lessons. Digital recording enabled accurately capturing of all dialogue within each Inquiry Lesson and to allow identification of the participants who spoke when there was increased background noise, and when there were a number of speakers at one time.

3.4.3.1.3 Bridge Lessons

Bridge Lesson activities were recorded to accurately capture activities, as well as the artefacts produced during these activities. Dialogue from each Bridge Lesson was transcribed and formatted using word processing software. Each Bridge Lesson also included some written or illustrated work by child participants in their Empathy Journal.

3.4.3.1.4 Empathy Journal

Each child was provided with a high quality art book to be used throughout the research to record written and illustrated responses to a range of prompts. Entries in each child's Empathy Journal included observations from Stimulus Lessons, reflections on Inquiry Lessons, and individual tasks carried out during Bridge Lessons. I collected each child's Empathy Journal at the end of each cycle of Stimulus, Inquiry and Bridge Lessons and digitally scanned each page. I maintained a secure electronic archive of these digitally scanned Empathy Journal entries for each child throughout the research.

3.6 Data Analysis

As this research was framed around an interpretivist worldview where the experiences of individuals drives the interpretation of all meaning; including research findings (Clegg & Slife, 2009; Rossman & Rallis, 2012), and a social constructivist paradigm where the language and social interactions of individuals create meaning (Crotty, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2009), data analysis needed to best reflect these ontological and epistemological understandings. Qualitative data analysis was employed for this research as this approach has a focus on discovering and exploring evidence as it arises from the data being generated (Richards, 2010). I engaged immediate inductive data analysis to immerse myself in the data to explore emergent patterns (Johnson & Christensen, 2014), and retrospective deductive analysis to verify expected theoretical and pedagogical aspects of the data (Babbie, 2010; Bergman, 2008). The use of both inductive and deductive analysis of data helped to uncover patterns and themes that allowed for better exploration and explanation of the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

In this section, I explain the implications for data analysis when employing EDR, I describe the processes of data analysis that I employed to discover meaning and make sense of the data collected. I describe how data analysis occurred immediately and retrospectively, the ways in which data was coded and analysed, the analytical tools I employed to analyse data, the software I used to manage data, and how I interpreted the data.

3.6.1 Implications for Data Analysis when using Educational Design Research Methodology

In using EDR methodology the researcher must ensure that the procedures used in data analysis accurately support and represent the design process itself (Edelson, 2002; Kelly, 2004). Data analysis procedures need to truthfully reflect the data collection process to maintain a clear and logical link between the data, analysis, and the claims being made about the data (Cobb & Gravemeijer, 2008; Patton, 2002). The design of the Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons were engineered to create authentic engagement with a mother and baby followed by guided dialogic inquiry within a Community of Inquiry that focussed on the social and emotional elements of communication with others. The purpose of the Empathic Pedagogy intervention was to provide innovative educational conditions for observing practices that stimulated dialogue and fostered empathic reasoning.

3.6.2 Immediate and Retrospective Data Analysis

Immediate data analysis was carried out to support the progressive refinement of the designed Empathic Pedagogy intervention through iterative cycles of inductive analysis (A. Collins et al., 2004; Reimann, 2011), and retrospective data analysis was used to apply both inductive and deductive analysis of data following implementation of the intervention (Kelly, 2004).

I carried out immediate data analysis following each data collection period to direct the ongoing changes made to the Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons that formed the core of the research design. This immediate analysis was informed by the children's engagement and learning in each Community of Inquiry. By engaging in immediate data

analysis, I was able to collaborate with the teacher to refine and adapt pedagogical and theoretical elements of the research design in iterative cycles of design and analysis.

Immediate analysis of data was a necessary component of my research design. A key element of EDR methodology is the refining of pedagogical and theoretical elements throughout the design intervention (Kelly, 2004; McKenney & Reeves, 2012). I transcribed and analysed recorded data the day after each Inquiry Lesson to take ongoing contextual and participant change into account, and to enable timely adjustments to be made to the research design based on this immediate analysis.

Immediate analysis of data was carried out following implementation of each lesson in Phase Two to investigate whether empathic reasoning occurred by systematically examining the data collected throughout the research (Kelly, 2004). By working through the data in this way, I was able to examine whether the data addressed the research questions, and to discover any unanticipated pedagogical and theoretical understandings. The initial method used to examine the data collected was immediate thematic analysis, the details of which are presented in the next section.

3.6.3 Thematic Analysis of Inquiry Lessons

Engaging in immediate thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998) of the Inquiry Lesson data allowed me to identify key patterns and themes that emerged during Phase Two of research design implementation. At the same time as identifying thematic elements, a deductive lens was applied to analyse data because the research questions were based on theoretical frameworks (Babbie, 2010; Patton, 2002). Thematic analysis of data meant that I was able to identify categories and sub-categories within the dialogue from each Inquiry Lesson prior to more detailed retrospective data analysis in the second cycle of data analysis (**see Figure 4**). These categories were then analysed using a

coding manual I created and employed to uncover emergent patterns and themes (**see Appendix K**). The following sections detail the two cycles of data analysis that I employed to examine the data from children's dialogic exchanges within each Inquiry Lesson.

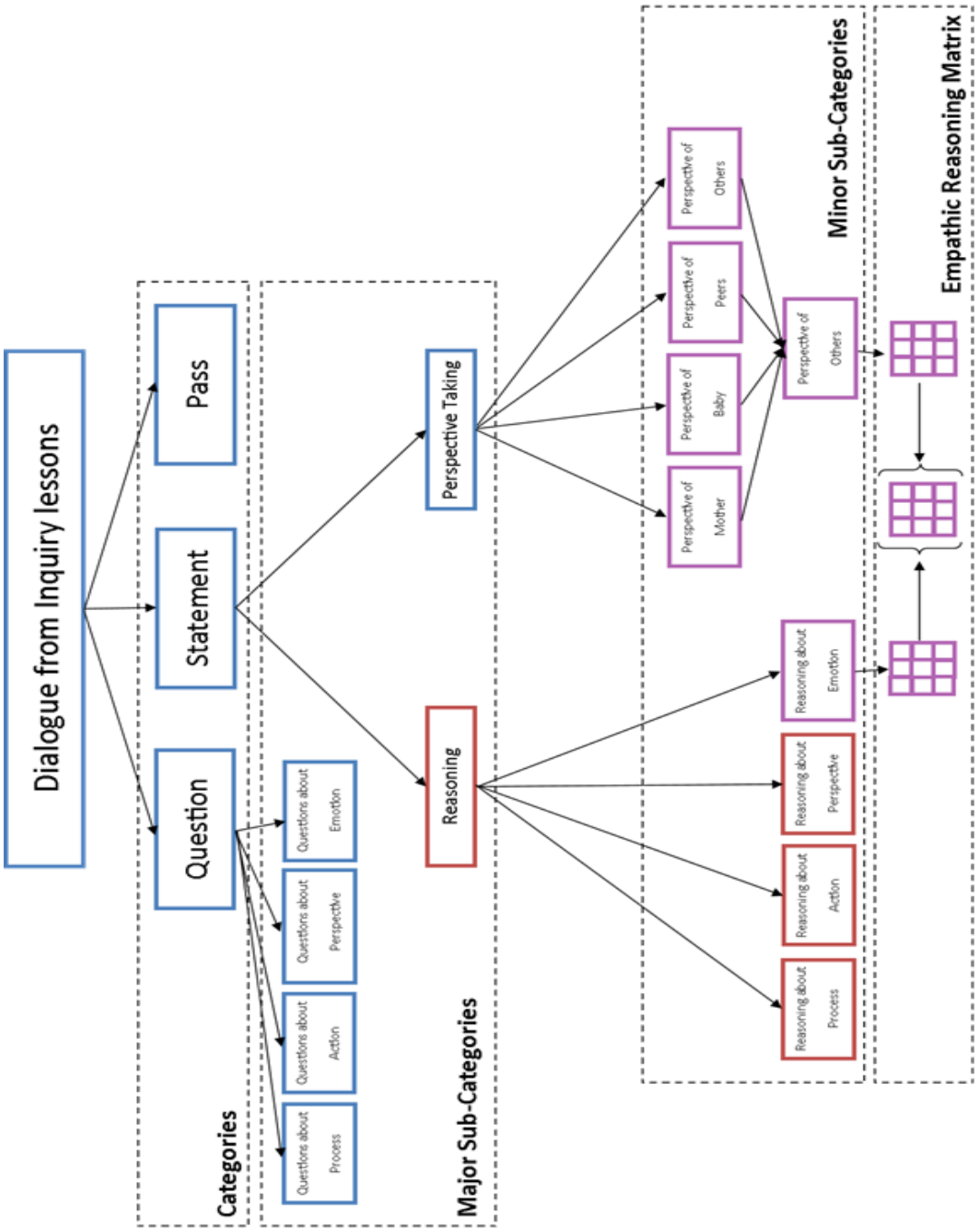


Figure 4. Overview of processes for thematic data analysis of Inquiry Lesson data.

3.6.4 First Cycle of Data Coding

In the first cycle of data coding, based on my understanding of the literature about dialogue within a Community of Inquiry, I identified three categories that were present in children's dialogic exchanges during Inquiry Lessons. These categories were designated as Questions, Passes and Statements. For each figure shown depicting the thematic data analysis (**see Figures 5-7**), a shaded box highlights the level of data analysis that is the focus of discussion for those sections. Figure 5 below presents a flowchart which shows the initial coding of dialogue into the three categories of Question, Statement and Pass in the first cycle of the data coding process.

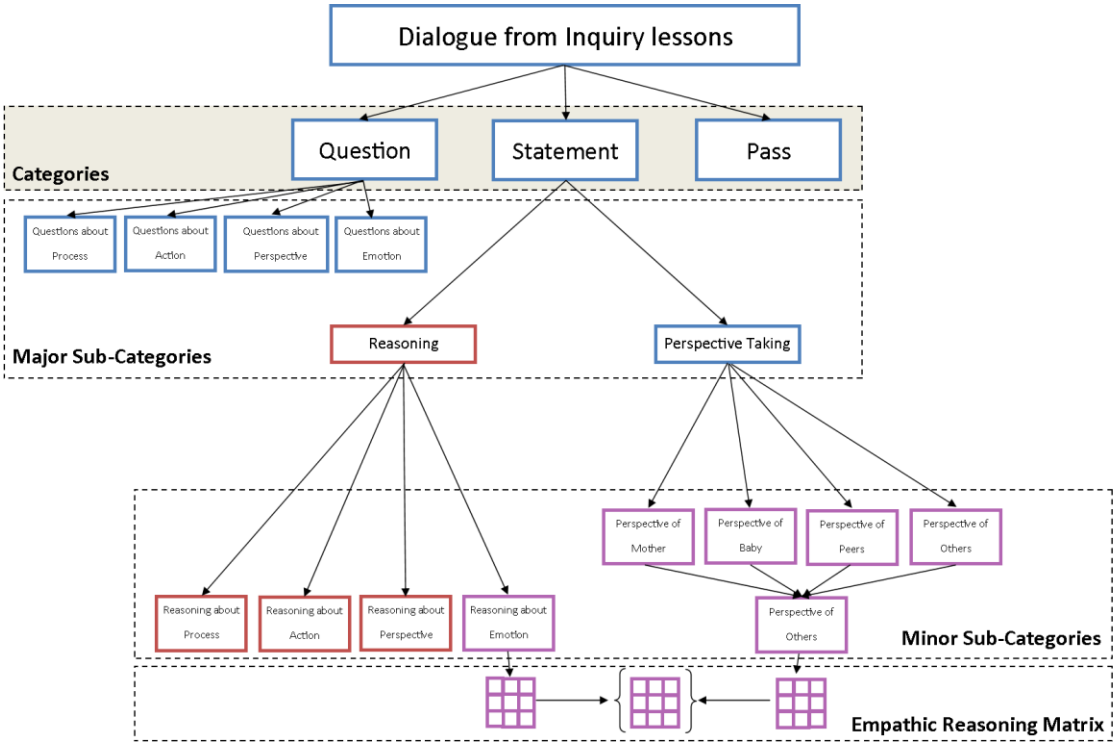


Figure 5. Initial data coding of dialogue from Inquiry Lessons into categories.

As data were collected, I grouped children's dialogic exchanges into these three initial categories. It was important to carry out this initial descriptive coding of the data

to identify dialogic exchanges within the Inquiry Lessons that highlighted children's empathic reasoning and to inform further analysis of relevant data. This initial descriptive coding of data also allowed me to organise data from Inquiry Lessons into more manageable structures for the second cycle of retrospective data analysis which are discussed in Section 3.6.5.

Dialogic exchanges that were coded as Pass did not contain data that would answer or further inform the research questions; therefore the research design was pedagogically altered to limit the number of Passes produced by child participants within the Inquiry Lessons. Further analysis of the Question and Statement categories was carried out both deductively, based on my understanding of the literature and the theoretical elements underpinning the research design and inquiry processes, and inductively as data were collated and emergent themes were identified. As a consequence, the category of Question was analysed and coded into more focused major sub-categories (**see Figure 6**). These major sub-categories reflected many of the key foci suggested by the theoretical framework, such as posing questions about the dialogic process, actions, perspective, and posing questions about emotions. In the following section, the Question major sub-categories of Questions about *process, action, perspective* and *emotion* will be described with reference to the coding manual (**see Appendix K**) developed to organise the data.

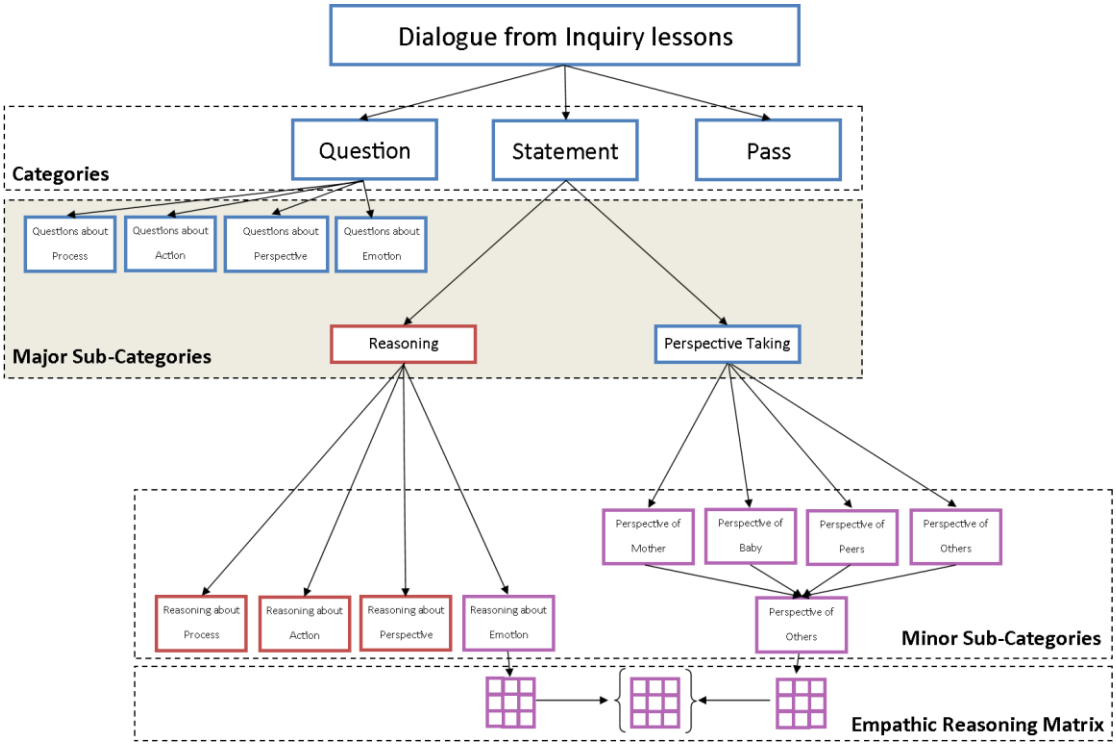


Figure 6. First cycle data coding of questions into major sub-categories.

3.6.4.1 Questions Major Sub-Categories

Data collected and organised under the various Question major sub-categories were analysed immediately following data collection. This analysis allowed for engineering of the research design through the refinement of discussion plans for each Inquiry Lesson. In this way the child participants' interests were honoured and their interest in the inquiry process was nurtured throughout Phase Two of design implementation (**see section 3.5.2.2**). A coding manual was used to organise dialogue into the Question major sub-categories (**see Appendix K, Section 1**).

Data collected under the category of Statement were analysed and coded into the two major sub-categories of *Reasoning* and *Perspective Taking* (**see Figure 6**). I categorised the dialogic exchanges coded as Statement into Reasoning and Perspective Taking based on my understanding of the literature about the nature of empathy and

the cognitive and affective elements that comprise dialogic exchanges that typify empathic reasoning.

3.6.4.2 Statements Sub-Categories

Data collected and organised under the Statement major sub-categories of Reasoning and Perspective Taking were similarly analysed immediately following each data collection period. I examined child participant statements using a chronological timeline of the dialogic exchanges within each Inquiry Lesson, as well as organising data from individual children's statements to examine each participant's dialogic exchanges. The dialogic exchanges coded and organised under these two major sub-categories of Reasoning and Perspective Taking were then further analysed and organised into more focused minor sub-categories. These minor sub-categories reflected many of the key foci suggested by the theoretical framework and my understanding of the literature.

2.8.4.2.1 Reasoning Minor Sub-Categories

The dialogic exchanges coded as Reasoning were organised under the minor sub-categories of reasoning *about process, about actions, about perspective*, and reasoning *about emotions* (**see Figure 7**). The coding manual was used to organise dialogue into the Reasoning sub-categories (**see Appendix K, Section 2**).

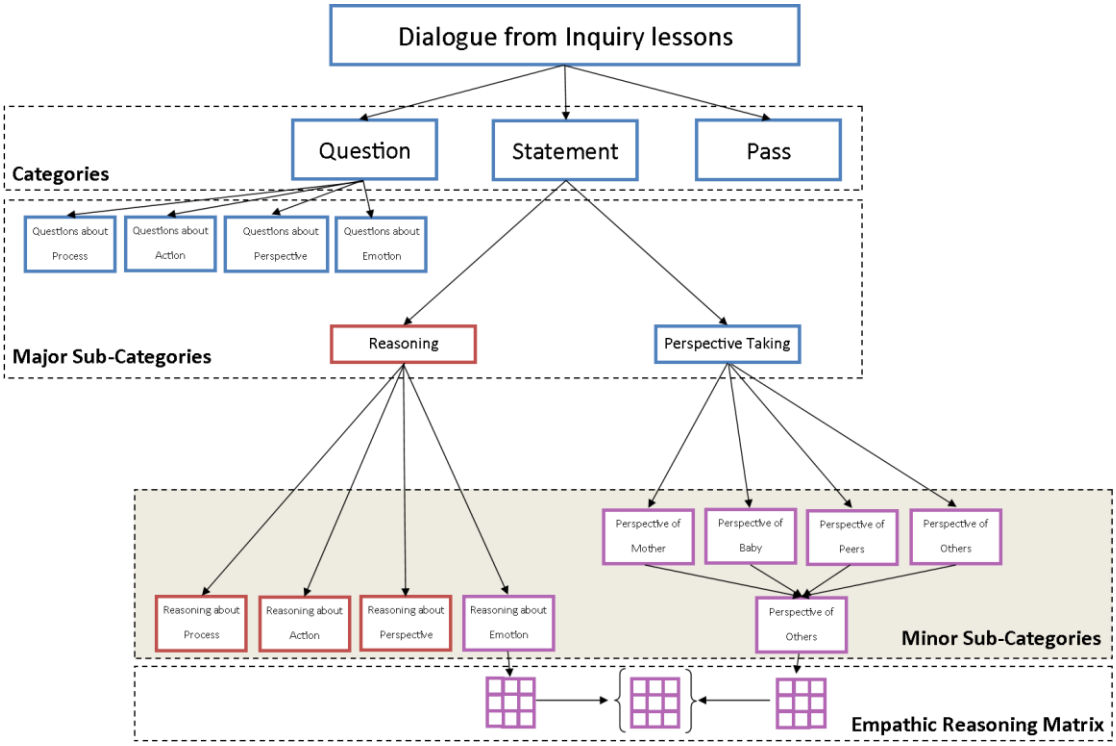


Figure 7. First cycle data coding of reasoning into minor sub-categories.

2.8.4.2.2 Perspective Taking Minor Sub-Categories

The dialogic exchanges coded as Perspective Taking were organised under the minor sub-categories of perspective taking *of the mother*, *of the baby*, *of the peers* within the classroom and the 'community of critical learners', and perspective taking *of others* (**see Figure 7**). The coding manual was used to organise dialogue into the Perspective Taking minor sub-categories (**see Appendix K, Section 3**).

3.6.5 Second Cycle of Data Coding

The First cycle coded data thematically into categories, and major and minor sub-categories. In the second cycle further coding of the data coded as Statement was carried out to analyse the reasoning that children displayed in their dialogic exchanges during Inquiry Lessons (**see section 3.6.5.1**) I used this second cycle of coding to sort data according to Levels of Justificatory Reasoning. In this way, my analysis moved from

the inductive approach applied during simultaneous data collection through to a more deductive approach during coding and analysis of sub-themes and into this second cycle of data coding (Babbie, 2010). For each figure shown depicting the reasoning data analysis (**see Figures 8-9**), a shaded box highlights the level of data analysis that is the focus of discussion for those sections.

3.6.5.1 Levels of Justificatory Reasoning

As was discussed in Chapter Two, the dialogic exchanges that show reasoning within a Community of Inquiry should develop in quality over time (Fisher, 2013). I analysed all coded statements and coded these into three Levels of Justificatory Reasoning; (1) *no justification*, (2) *some justification* and (3) *strong justification* (**see Figure 8**). In this way, data were analysed according to the quality of the justificatory reasoning being used by child participants when offering these statements (Felton & Kuhn, 2001; Kuhn & Udell, 2003). The coding manual was used to organise Statement data into Levels of Justificatory Reasoning (**see Appendix K, Section 4**).

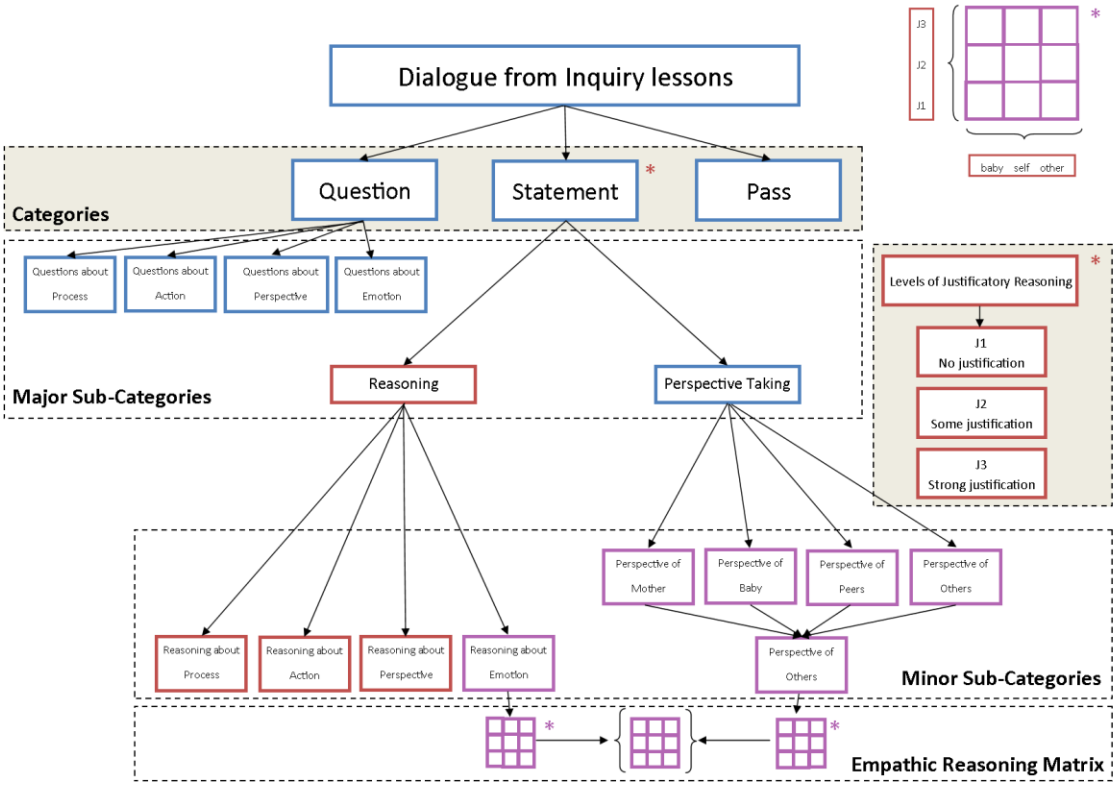


Figure 8. Second cycle data coding of statements into levels of justificatory reasoning.

3.6.6 Analysis of Coded Data

In order to analyse the coded data and identify patterns in children's dialogue, I quantified the data and used spreadsheets to map these out. My hypothesis was that child participants would increasingly demonstrate dialogic exchanges that showed empathic reasoning, so I created an analytical tool that would best capture this increase. An increase in empathic reasoning would be typified by two factors. There would be an increase in dialogic exchanges that highlighted the perspective taking of others, and an increase in the ability to reason about emotions. I therefore chose to further analyse the data for the two sub-categories of *reasoning about emotion* and *perspective of others*. During this process of analysis however, I realised that each of the four minor sub-categories for perspective taking were relevant to children's perspective taking of others as each minor sub-category represented 'others'. I re-defined the minor sub-

categories of perspective taking to incorporate all coded data under *perspective of others* (**see Figure 8**). I quantified the coded data from these two minor sub-categories of reasoning about emotion and perspective taking of others and designed a matrix to collate these data for further pattern analysis (**see Figure 9**).

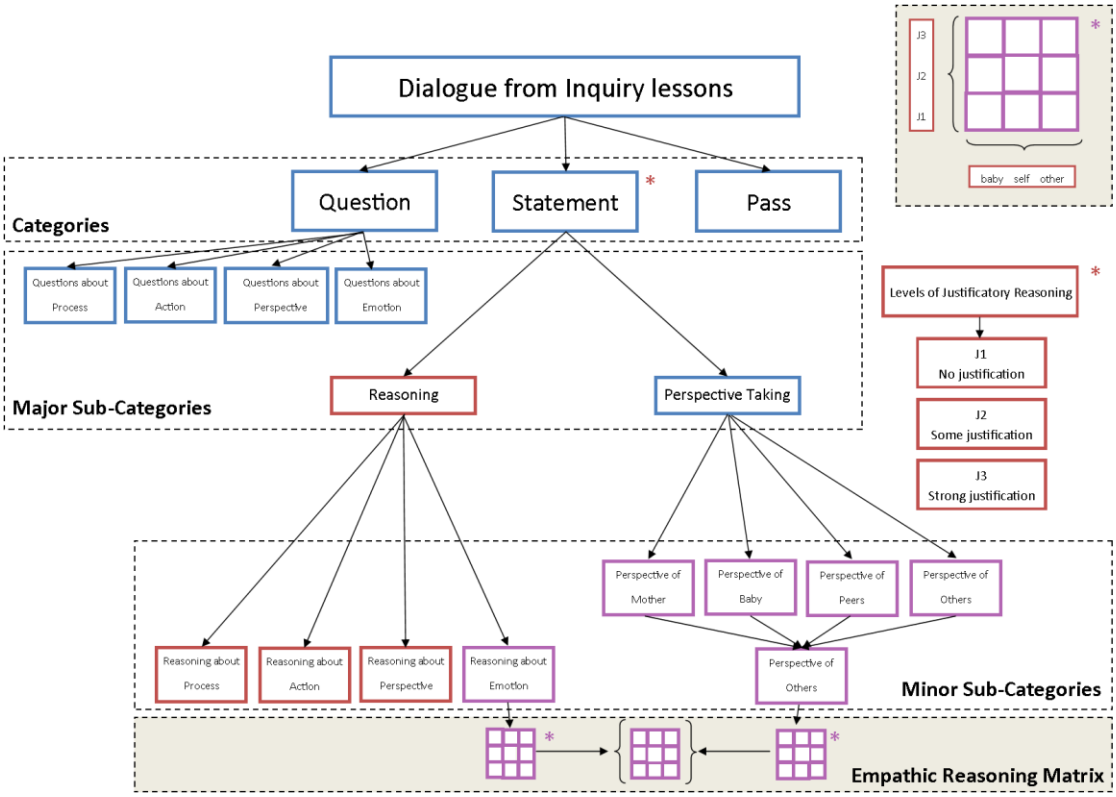


Figure 9. Second cycle data coding of minor sub-categories using empathic reasoning matrix.

3.6.6.1 Empathic Reasoning Matrix

The *Empathic Reasoning Matrix* was designed for this research to plot instances of dialogic exchange within a Carroll Chart that utilised a 3x3 grid (**see Figure 10**). This data analysis tool was developed to better organise, identify patterns, and analyse the coded content of the dialogic exchanges across the Inquiry Lesson sequence (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011).

A Carroll Chart in its very simplest form is a matrix or grid designed to categorise attributes that either fit or do not fit with a particular criteria, and plot these in a clear and obvious manner. I chose to employ a matrix display as it presented the most relevant and clear method to analyse patterns within the key affective and cognitive elements of the data (Bazeley, 2010; Bergman, 2008). These data were the sub-categories of reasoning about emotion, and perspective taking of others. I also analysed data that were coded as both reasoning about emotion and perspective taking of others which would best typify empathic reasoning. Descriptive coding of data that is mapped using matrices is essential for identifying and assessing participant change over long periods of time (Saldana, 2009). By using these matrices I was able to highlight the relationship between the affective and cognitive elements of children's dialogue that typified empathic reasoning.

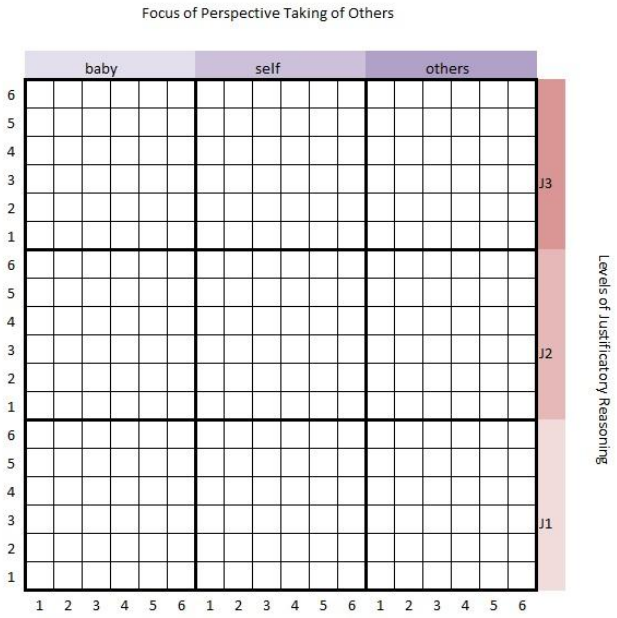


Figure 10. Empathic reasoning matrix.

Figure 11 shows the detail of the Empathic Reasoning Matrix, which is described more fully in this section. The vertical axis of the Empathic Reasoning Matrix incorporated the cognitive elements of justificatory reasoning, with a gradient from justificatory level one to justificatory level three in ascending order. Affective elements were represented along the horizontal axis by showing the focus of affective perspective taking that was designed across the lesson sequence. This was comprised of a gradient from focus on the baby; focus on the self, and up to a focus on others. In this way, I was able to plot coded and quantified data onto these matrices to more clearly analyse how children's dialogic exchanges evolved across the Inquiry Lesson sequence (**see Figure 11**). Using the Empathic Reasoning Matrix, the number of children's dialogic exchanges were plotted across the lesson sequence and categorised according to both the level of justificatory reasoning levels and the affective focus of the perspective taking of the data.

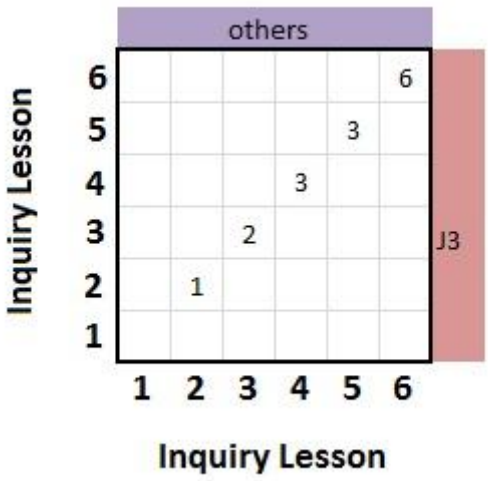


Figure 11. Detail of coded and quantified data plotted onto a cell of the empathic reasoning matrix.

3.6.7 Managing the Data

I managed the large amounts of data generated using a range of tools. The auditory components of video recordings were transcribed and recorded into word processed documents, then organised into table format. The tabled data were then imported into NVivo11 software to collate and categorise all data during the first and second cycle of data coding.

Following initial thematic analysis and the generation of categories, major sub-categories and minor sub-categories, data were quantified, re-coded and transferred into Microsoft Excel 2010 spread sheets. Using the Empathic Reasoning Matrix, I organised and categorised data within a number of these matrices and applied a wide range of visual mapping and charting functions to draw further meaning from the data.

3.6.8 Validity, Generalisation and Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, issues of validity in terms of generalisation and trustworthiness can be a challenge. Some of the methods traditionally employed in quantitative research to maintain these qualities tend to reduce the inherent complexity found in social processes that are researched in real-life contexts using qualitative data collection, and defy traditional ideas about triangulation or even crystallisation of data (Barbour, 2001; Bergman, 2008; Crabtree & Miller, 1999; Malterud, 2001; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2009).

Employing EDR methodology also presents some unique issues for the generalisability of research processes and findings. One of the key principles guiding EDR is the characterisation of findings derived from real life contexts. I aimed to describe and embrace the unique and complex contextual influences of the research setting while refining the design itself through refinement and *evolutionary planning*

(McKenney et al., 2006). Characterising the data in this way enabled the design to be valid and reliable in diverse settings (Barab & Squire, 2004). Although the research design was refined in response to the unique context of the classroom being researched; the theoretical and pedagogical principles that were being described and analysed were transferable and informative for a range of other educational contexts (McKenney & Reeves, 2012).

The use of EDR provided a mechanism for validating the data analysis and findings in this research. I engaged in cycles of design refinement throughout Phase One. These cycles involved designing Community of Inquiry sessions, observing the teacher employing her own lessons, and adjusting elements of the design to refine the Stimulus and Inquiry Lesson formats.

My persistent observation of the classroom context, the pedagogical approaches employed by the teacher and my knowledge of extant literature informed ongoing refinement of the research design (Kennedy-Clark, 2013). These factors allowed me to develop a more informed understanding of the contextual and pedagogical impacts on the research design prior to Empathic Pedagogy implementation in Phase Two. Progression and refinement of the intervention prior to implementation helped build validity and trustworthiness into the findings as well as the design of the Empathic Pedagogy itself.

The use of video recording to capture audio data during each Community of Inquiry session ensured that data collection was accurate. I had informal meetings of approximately 15 minutes with the teacher after each lesson to verify and review elements of the data as they were collected and analysed. These meetings allowed for continued reflection on the pedagogical and theoretical aspects of the Empathic

Pedagogy design and collaborative discussion about changes to the delivery of Community of Inquiry sessions.

By engaging collaboratively with the teacher to refine the design of Stimulus, Inquiry and Bridge Lessons, rigour was built into the Empathic Pedagogy design and the ongoing analysis of data by engaging a multidisciplinary perspective (Kennedy-Clark, 2013). I applied transparent processes of analysis throughout data collection and ensured trustworthiness of analysis through comprehensive and systematic documentation of the data analysis processes. I achieved this through detailed flowcharts that detailed the chronological and conceptual progress of data analysis (**see Figure 4**).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

In this section I identify the ethical considerations relevant to this research, including the role of the researcher, ethics approval processes, informed consent for participants, the honouring of children's voice through the requirement of child assent for participation in conjunction with the required parental consent, and the measures taken to ensure participant anonymity and confidentiality.

3.7.1 Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in an investigation is a particularly important consideration, especially when the research involves young children as participants. The power differential that exists between children and adults can be a barrier to any meaningful access to young children's experiences, particularly where the researcher is closely aligned with the educators (Harwood, 2010). Central to this issue then was the

need to find ways to manage the power relations between myself as an adult researcher and the child participants (Mason & Hood, 2011).

In conducting this research, I was aware of the challenge of trying to reduce inherent power differentials and working with (not on) the child participants (Conroy & Harcourt, 2011). I drew on my experience as a junior primary teacher to build meaningful rapport and trust with the children to reduce inherent power relations (Fontana & Frey, 1998; Graue & Walsh, 1998; Greig & Taylor, 1999; Mason & Hood, 2011). I began regular visits to the focus classroom in the two school terms prior to starting the data collection. This allowed me to develop reciprocal relationships with the children in the classroom that helped lessen some of the inherent power that comes with being an unknown adult entering the classroom, and to develop trust between myself and the children (Smith, 2011).

Purposeful building of reciprocal relationships helped me to build shared meaning with the children (Conroy & Harcourt, 2011; Rinaldi, 2006), to better understand these children's views of their world and how they interacted with each other, their classroom and the broader community (Dockett & Perry, 2005; Graue & Walsh, 1998; Greig & Taylor, 1999). Viewing children as active agents in making meaning in their worlds whose perspectives are critical to understanding their actions is a necessary feature of social constructivist and interpretivist approaches (M. Carr, 2000; Clark, 2007; MacNaughton, 2003).

3.7.2 Ethics Approval

Ethics approval for this research was sought and gained from the University of South Australia Human Research Ethics Committee, and the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD). Ethics approval from these organisations was

dependant on the fulfilment of my ethical responsibilities in regard to matters of informed consent, confidentiality and participant safety during the research. I also sought and gained approval to carry out my research from the school site.

3.7.3 Informed Consent

It is a responsibility of all researchers to comprehensively inform all participants of the nature of the research, and the possible consequences of participating in the research. Furthermore, informed consent should protect the identities and maintain the privacy of participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Of particular concern for this research was the method for gaining informed consent from the child participants.

3.7.3.1 Child Assent

I endeavoured to explain the research to the child participants using plain language, and provided each child with a Child Information Brochure (**see Appendix C**). The purpose of the brochure was to provide children and adults with a description of the research that incorporated text in plain language, pictures and semiotic devices which could be more accessible to children and their families than the formal Parent/Caregiver Information Letter (**see Appendix D**). The child participants were between six and a half and eight and a half years of age, so consent for participation from each child's legal guardian was mandatory. I took the view however, that children are active agents and participants in research carried out with them (Coady, 2001; Conroy & Harcourt, 2011). Therefore, I employed a two-tiered assent/consent process for child participant selection whereby I also sought and gained child assent to participate in this research (**see Appendix E**).

In applying social constructivist and interpretivist perspectives it was important to value children as active agents not only in the context of the research process, but

also in their decision to be involved in the research (Coady, 2001). Therefore, to be included in the research child participants needed to be given consent to participate by a parent/caregiver as well as indicating their own assent to participate. Child participants were reminded prior to the first Welcome Visit Lesson that they could withdraw their assent at any stage of the research with no repercussions.

3.7.3.2 Parent Consent

Consent from parent participants was sought for two purposes. The first form of consent was to allow their child to be involved in the research concurrent with their child's assent, and the second was to be participants in their own right. I prepared information and consent packages which were given to parents in the term before Phase One of the research was scheduled to commence. This package contained an information letter (**see Appendix D**) that detailed the research purpose, the participant expectations, the expected benefits and risks of participation, the ways in which confidentiality would be maintained, and my contact details. Parents/caregivers were provided with a consent form for their own participation (**see Appendix F**), and a consent form for their child's participation (**see Appendix E**). I ensured that the process complied with organisational criteria for involvement in human research.

3.7.3.3 Mother and Baby Consent

A prepared information letter was given to the mother participant, that explained the research purpose, the participant expectations, the expected benefits and risks of participation, the ways in which confidentiality would be achieved for the mother and her baby, and my contact details (**see Appendix I**). The mother participant was provided with a consent form which she signed to indicate that she understood the

nature of the research, the ethical guidelines, and the requirements of the mother and her baby (**see Appendix J**).

3.7.3.4 Teacher Consent

I provided the teacher participant with an information letter that outlined the aims of the research, the expected benefits and risks involved, the ways in which privacy and confidentiality would be achieved, and my contact details (**see Appendix A**). The teacher signed a consent form (**see Appendix B**) prior to Phase One of data collection to indicate that she understood and would comply with the ethical considerations of the research.

3.7.4 Anonymity and Confidentiality

In this section, I detail the measures taken to ensure participant anonymity and confidentiality for the specific context of this research and across all stages of the research process. As data collected for this research included video footage, particular measures to ensure anonymity of participants was required. Such data can be problematic, as 'raw' video recordings allow for recognition of children's faces, school uniforms and logos, and the classroom setting itself (Robson, 2011).

The consent forms for both parent/caregiver, and the mother detailed that access to video recording would be restricted to me and my supervisors to ensure accurate transcription of recorded dialogue. Permission was sought for images of children to be used in publications and teaching materials. Identifying school logos were digitally removed from all still footage and facial images blurred or covered where necessary.

When reporting on data from this research, anonymity and confidentiality of participants' identity was further ensured through the use of participant codes and pseudonyms. The key used for coding of participants' identity was kept separately from the data, and pseudonyms were selected to further protect the identity of participants. I maintained the use of these codes and pseudonyms throughout data collection, transcription and analysis, and in reports on research findings.

All data were stored on a password protected external hard drive and secured with all hard copy information in locked filing cabinets, in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council, & Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, 2007).

3.8 Chapter Summary

The aim of this research was to explore the ways in which the Empathic Pedagogy could foster children's empathy development when a mother and baby are used as an experiential stimulus for dialogue within a Community of Inquiry. To conduct this research, I employed a qualitative research approach that was informed by a social constructivist paradigm and an interpretivist worldview. I adopted EDR methodology (McKenney & Reeves, 2012; McKenney & Reeves, 2014) to allow for the design and implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy intervention in a junior primary classroom across two school terms. Importantly, EDR methodological enabled me to work collaboratively with the classroom teacher to design, implement and redesign the Empathic Pedagogy intervention through iterative cycles of design implementation, evaluation and alteration (McKenney & Reeves, 2012; Reimann, 2011).

I carried out Phase One over a full school term of ten weeks to build meaningful relationships with teacher and child participants, and to observe and analyse the existing Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach being employed by the teacher. In Phase Two of my research, I implemented the Empathic Pedagogy intervention that was central to the research, which consisted of Bridge Lessons, and the Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons that made up the six Community of Inquiry sessions.

I carried out immediate analysis during data collection which supported the EDR methodology employed, and applied retrospective thematic analysis of collated data to organise and draw meaning from the dialogic exchanges within each Inquiry Lesson. This data collection and analysis were carried out in such a way as to support the validity, trustworthiness and generalisability of the research processes employed.

My research took into account the various ethical considerations required when conducting research with young children in real life settings. In particular, informed consent from all participants, assent from child participants, as well as ensuring confidentiality and anonymity for participants were considered essential in the organisation of this research.

The following chapter presents a detailed description of the implementation of the complete Empathic Pedagogy which comprised Welcome Visits, Bridge Lessons and the Community of Inquiry sessions that consisted of Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons. These are reported in detail as a separate chapter to support the validity and trustworthiness of the research by accurately documenting the Empathic Pedagogy design implementation in accordance with EDR methodology (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012; McKenney & Reeves, 2012; McKenney & Reeves, 2014; Plomp & Nieveen, 2007).

4. Empathic Pedagogy Implementation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents expanded details of the component parts of the Empathic Pedagogy, which comprised the Welcome Visits, Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons, and Bridge Lessons outlined in Chapter Three (**see section 3.5.2.2**). First, I describe the content and format for each of the three Lesson types. Next, I detail the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions and supporting Bridge Lessons and their implementation over two school terms in Phase Two of data collection. Finally, I conclude with a description of each lesson in sequential order. The Welcome Visit, Stimulus, Inquiry and Bridge Lesson descriptions are presented in sequential order to show the scope of the complete Empathic Pedagogy implementation sequence, and linear description of the refinement of the research design during Phase Two and to highlight the progressive development of the Empathic Pedagogy intervention. This detailed documentation is a methodological requirement for the research trustworthiness and generalisability (Plomp & Nieveen, 2007).

4.2 Empathic Pedagogy Structure and Sequence

The structure of the Empathic Pedagogy in Phase Two was informed by theoretical and practical knowledge of Community of Inquiry as classroom pedagogy. As discussed in Chapter Two (**see section 2.8**), there are different ways that a Community of Inquiry can be implemented in the classroom (Cam et al., 2007; De Haan, MacColl, & McCutcheon, 2008; Fisher, 2013; Sprod, 2001). The discussion focus for each

Community of Inquiry was pre-determined. The broad themes and the inquiry questions for each Community of Inquiry were *fixed* rather than being chosen by the children. My knowledge and evaluation of the extant literature in developing the format for each Community of Inquiry session and component Lessons was further informed by considered observation and analysis of existing classroom practice, and discussion with the teacher participant about theoretical justification for practical aspects of the lesson implementation throughout Phase One. The six themes articulated in the Roots of Empathy program (Gordon, 2009) were used to inform and broadly frame the Inquiry Lessons; however, lesson content was flexibly adapted using the questions, ideas and insights that the children raised in response to each of the Bridge, Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons.

Figure 12 will be used throughout the remainder of the thesis to provide a visual guide to the relevant session or Lesson being referred to in a section, shown by a red boundary in the section title. Each of the activities, Community of Inquiry sessions and component Lessons are presented separately and sequentially.

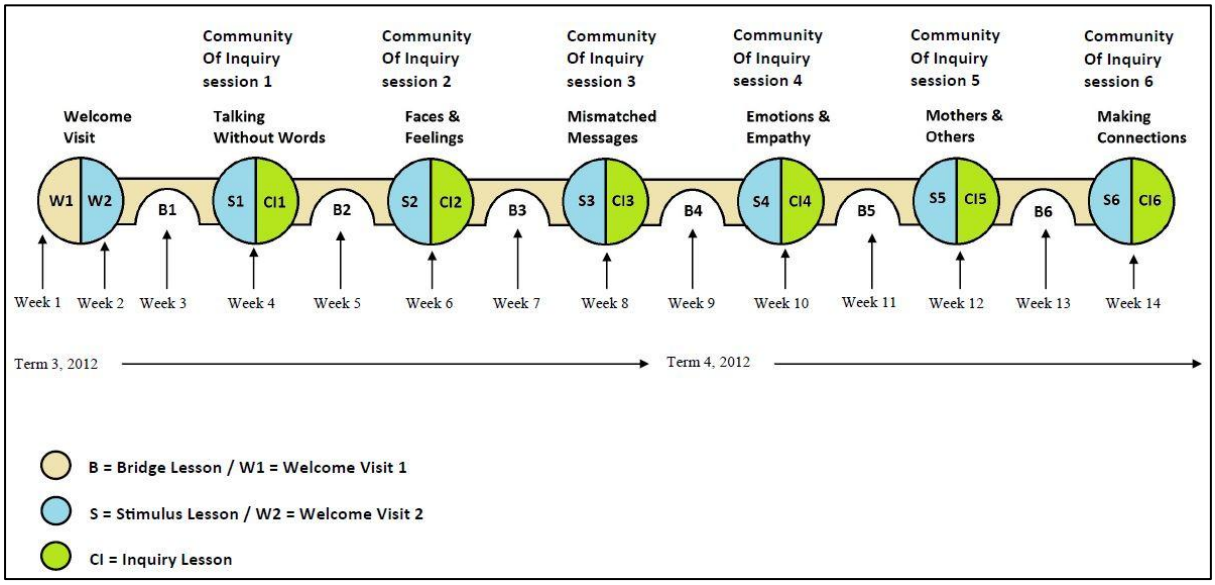
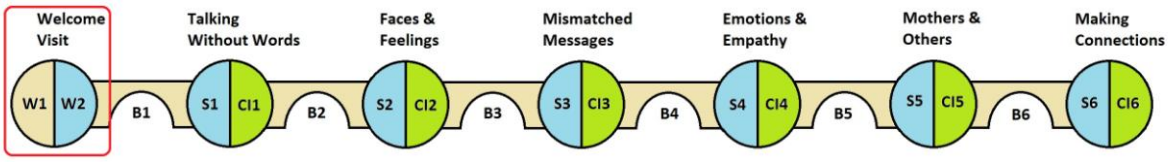


Figure 12. Complete sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions and Bridge Lessons.

The Community of Inquiry session sequence followed a regular pattern in which a Stimulus and Inquiry Lesson were implemented every two weeks. These fortnightly lessons were supported by Bridge Lessons in the alternate weeks, designed to maintain the link between each Community of Inquiry by summarising the preceding Inquiry Lesson and priming for the following Inquiry Lesson. At the commencement of Phase Two of the data collection two Welcome Visit Lessons were implemented to explain the procedures for the session sequence; particularly the Stimulus Lessons with the mother and baby. As the Empathic Pedagogy implementation progressed and evolved, I drew on contextually relevant material as complementary stimuli for each Community of Inquiry, and for activities and discussion in each Bridge Lesson that connected each Stimulus and Inquiry Lesson cycle. Furthermore, content and examples were tailored to respond to the specific social emotional issues or scenarios that were part of the lived experience of the children during the research process.



4.3 Welcome Visit

The two Welcome Visit Lessons were designed to focus children's thinking on the baby and his mother and to engage children's reasoning about the feelings of the baby, the mother, and themselves when meeting for the first time. The first Welcome Visit acted primarily as a procedural lesson to set out the expectations and guidelines that were important for the safety and well-being of all participants, particularly the baby. The activities were designed to engage children in hypothesising about both the physical and emotional aspects of others (**see Appendix M**). The second Welcome Visit was the first time that the children met and observed the baby and his mother. This visit was designed to familiarise all participants with the context and the ongoing procedure for each Stimulus Lesson. The activities were therefore designed to encourage children to observe and to reflect on their thinking about the baby's physical appearance, and the emotional states of the baby, his mother and themselves during this lesson.

4.3.1 Welcome Visit 1

Prior to the first visit by the mother and baby, the Teacher and I presented a lesson where we explained the procedure for *Welcome Visit 1* and introduced the children to the mother and baby (**see Appendix N**). We explained the necessary safety and procedural requirements for this and subsequent visits for Stimulus Lessons and asked the class to think about why it would be important to follow these expectations and requirements. These were focused on keeping a reasonable distance from the baby to avoid crowding him, keeping noise levels low to avoid startling the baby, and being

respectful of the mother and her expected protectiveness of the baby. We explained to the children that the baby they would meet in *Welcome Visit 2* was two months old. The children were asked to imagine what the baby would look like and to draw a picture of the baby in their Empathy Journal (**see Figure 13**). These drawings were then shared in a discussion circle on the floor, where children discussed the physical features and attributes that they thought the baby would have.



Figure 13. Examples of children's expectations of the baby.

We then asked the children to shift their thinking away from the physical features they thought the baby would have and to think about what emotions the baby, the mother, and the class might feel during the Welcome Visit, and to name these emotions. As the children called out the emotions the Teacher wrote the words onto cardboard strips which we called *emotion cards*. We then used chalk to draw a Venn diagram with three attributes, and labelled these as *baby*, *mother*, and *classroom*. Children were asked who they thought might experience each feeling on the first

classroom visit, and each feeling was placed in the Venn diagram. After all emotion cards had been placed, the class discussed any emotions cards they felt were not accurately placed. Agreement was sought with all children, resulting in the final arrangement (**see Figure 14**).

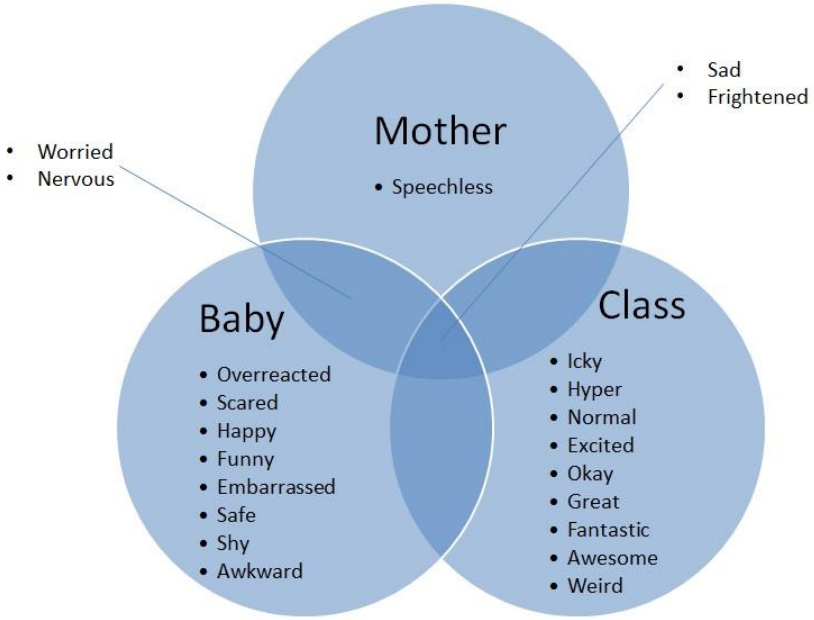


Figure 14. Children's predictions about the feelings of the mother, baby and class.

4.3.2 Welcome Visit 2

In *Welcome Visit 2*, the mother and baby visited the classroom for the first time. Prior to their arrival, children were reminded about the safety and procedural requirements for this lesson, and the preparation for the visit they did in Welcome Visit 1. Prior to the arrival of the mother and baby, children were asked to pose any questions they had about the mother and baby. Following their arrival, the children formed a circle and a large mat was placed in the middle of this circle for the baby to lie on (**see Figure 15**).



Figure 15. Children observing the baby on the circle mat.

The mother and baby were introduced to the class and the Teacher and I explained that the mother would describe what it is like for her to look after a baby, and how they communicated with each other and expressed their emotions. The mother discussed their daily routine; how the baby communicated his needs, how he reacted to a range of circumstances and environments, and explained that the baby had regular visits to her partner's Year 2 classroom where he interacted with many children. After this introduction and sharing of information, the children were asked to remember their thinking from yesterday, to take into account what the mother had just described, and to reflect on their own observation of the baby since his arrival today. Then children were allowed to pose any questions. As the mother answered, the teacher and I facilitated the flow and coherence of the questions being posed.

When there were no more questions from the children, we thanked the mother and baby for visiting and sharing aspects of their relationship with the class and the children said goodbye. The class were given a five minute break outside, and the floor

space was cleared in preparation for summarising the mother and baby's first visit and subsequent activities. After the break, the children sat in a circle and a Venn diagram was drawn on the floor with three attributes and labelled these as *baby*, *mother*, and *classroom*. The emotion cards were shown to the class again and the children were asked who they thought had experienced each emotion, and each emotion card was placed on the diagram. After all emotion cards had been placed class discussion was facilitated to discuss any emotion cards that children felt were not accurately placed. Agreement was sought amongst the children about the final arrangement of emotion cards represented in Figure 16.

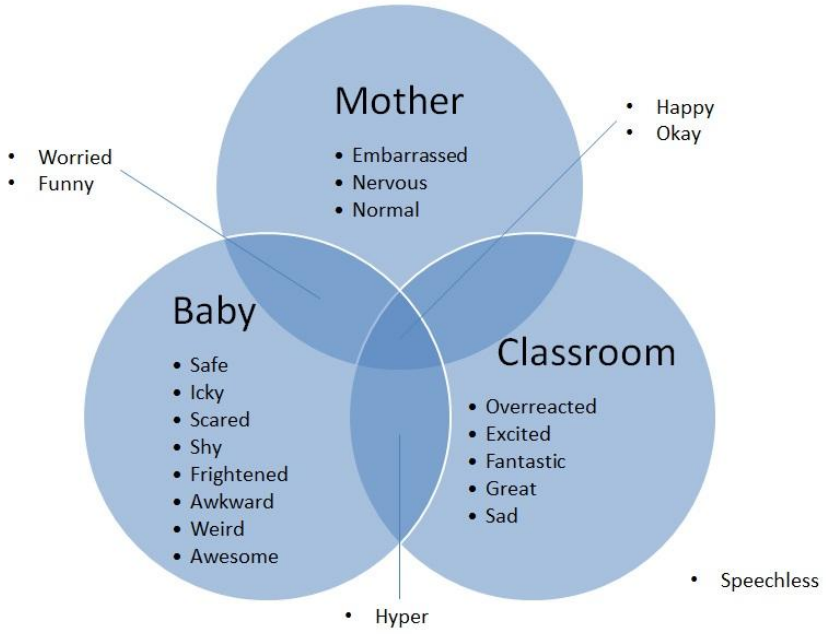


Figure 16. Children's thoughts about the feelings of the baby, mother and class.

Children were then asked to draw a picture of the baby in their Empathy Journal based on their observations (**see Figure 17**) which they then shared in a discussion circle on the floor. The children discussed the baby's physical features and attributes,

and any differences between this drawing and their earlier drawing completed in Welcome Visit 1 where they had imagined what the baby would look like.

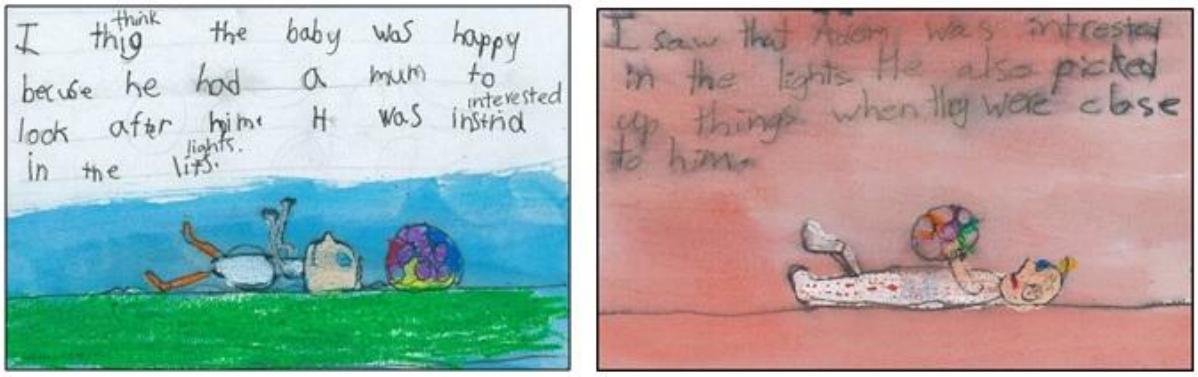
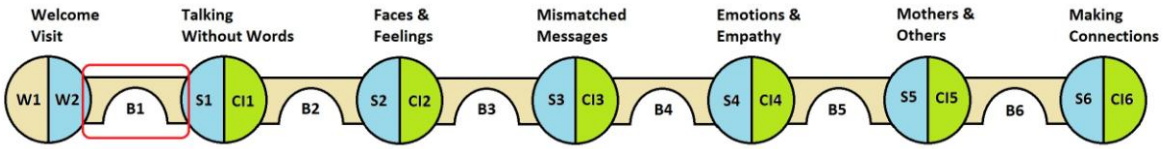


Figure 17. Examples of children's drawings of the baby after welcome visit 2.



4.4 Bridge Lesson 1: Welcome Visit - Talking without Words

Bridge Lesson 1 was implemented between the *Welcome Visit* and *Community of Inquiry 1: Talking without Words*. The Bridge Lesson activity was designed to focus children's perspective taking on the baby (**see Appendix U**). The children were asked to physically get into a position they had observed the baby to be in during *Welcome Visit 2* and to try to imagine what the experience was like from the baby's perspective. Children were asked to find some space on the floor of the classroom that was not encroaching on any other child's personal space. They were reminded that they did not need to make the noises or movements that the baby did. Children were asked to take the baby's perspective and to describe what they saw, felt, heard or smelled. The teacher and I recorded children's responses to this experience and plotted these on a Y-chart that was entitled 'Being the Baby'. The children's responses were recorded under the categories of 'sounds like', 'feels like', and 'looks like' (**see Figure 18**). Children were then asked to write a response to the prompt "When I met the baby I felt…" and "I think the baby was feeling… about being in the classroom".

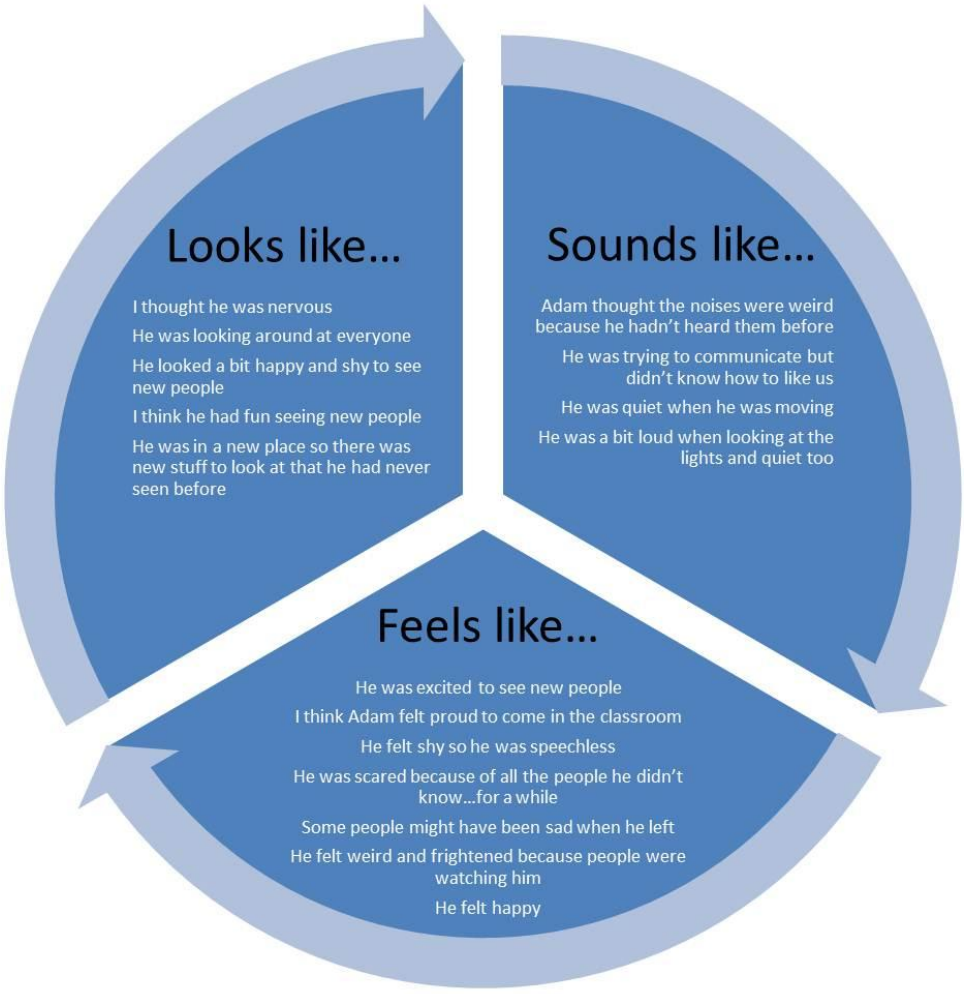
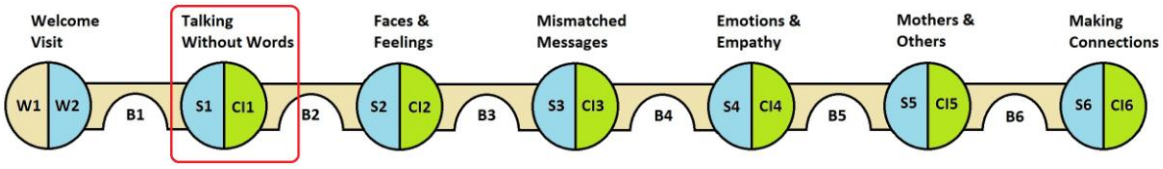


Figure 18. Children's perceptions of the baby's perspective during welcome visit 2.

Children then formed a discussion circle on the floor and were prompted to respond to a series of questions which were written on the whiteboard for reference.

- *Were you surprised by something the baby did?*
- *Were you surprised by something the baby didn't do?*
- *Did anyone expect the baby to talk?*
- *Could you tell what the baby was feeling? How could you tell?*
- *What do the mother and baby do to 'talk' to each other?*



4.5 Community of Inquiry 1: Talking without Words

The first Community of Inquiry session focussed on the 'Big Idea' of *Talking without Words.* The 'Big Question' that guided the Inquiry Lesson was *Can we talk to each other without using words?* (**see Appendix O**).

4.5.1 Stimulus Lesson 1

The Stimulus Lesson began with the class welcoming the mother and baby to the classroom. The mother positioned the baby in the middle of the mat and shared their experiences over the past fortnight. The main points raised by the mother were:

- *Every day he does something different, but sometimes they are only little things*
- *He has started squealing when he is hungry*
- *He likes standing and sitting up to watch what is going on around him*
- *He's starting to laugh a bit more*
- *He is watching when she leaves the rooms and watching to see her coming back*
- *He's starting to grab people's faces to sort of feel what's going on*
- *He's starting to talk more, not that she completely understands what he says*
- *If he is in a strange place he can be a bit uptight*

The children were invited to ask the mother questions. Questions posed by the children included:

- *Does he go to sleep longer than he used to?*
- *Is that his hungry voice?*
- *Is there anything you are worried about?*
- *When he started making the sounds how did you know what he was saying?*
- *What sign does he give you that he wants to play with toys?*
- *Does he sometimes mimic?*
- *Do you try to mimic him?*

4.5.2 Inquiry Lesson 1

Inquiry Lesson 1 involved 21 children and went for 40 minutes. This Inquiry Lesson began with a warm-up activity to encourage children to focus their attention on each other and observe non-verbal cues. The activity was called 'Stand-Up' and involved the children working together to move from a sitting to a standing position as a whole group, but with only one child at a time moving. The rules of the activity were that there could be no talking, or signalling to each other, and if more than one person stood up at the same time that the class would have to start again. In this way, children were looking at all members of the Community of Inquiry and focussing their attention on the unintentional non-verbal cues that their peers were displaying.

After this activity the teacher explained that the 'Big Idea' for this Community of Inquiry session was *Talking without Words*. The teacher then reminded children to think about anything the mother had said about this idea, anything they had observed during the Stimulus Lesson, or any experiences that they had that related to this idea. Five 'wishing stones' were given to each child and the class was given one minute of

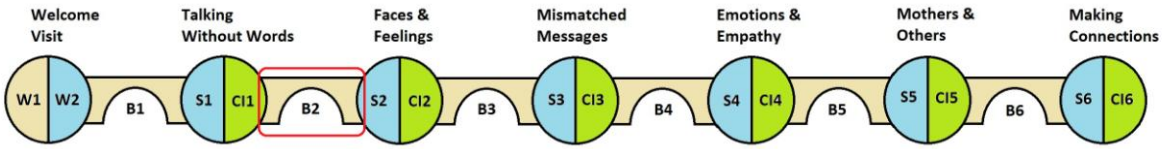
reflection time to think about their response to the 'Big Question': *Can we talk to each other without using words?*

Following one minute of silent reflection time, children were invited to put forward a 'wishing stone' if they had any thoughts or ideas that could add to the group's understanding of this 'Big Question'. Children took turns offering their thoughts, building on their peers' ideas, or disagreeing with the claims of others, and rolling the ball to another child who had put their 'wishing stone' forward. The teacher facilitated the dialogic process with prompting questions and requests for more information or justifications to support the children's statements.

The questions in the discussion plan for *Community of Inquiry 1: Talking without Words* were focussed on the preceding Stimulus Lesson and were designed to focus children's perspective and allow connections to the mother and baby. These discussion plan questions were:

- Does the baby think/feel?
- How does the baby communicate these thoughts and feelings?
- How does the mother know what the baby needs?

Towards the end of the inquiry the teacher called for a *final round*, where children offered their final thoughts around the 'Big Question': *Can we talk to each other without using words?* Children were allowed to pass if they did not have any thoughts or remaining questions to offer. The teacher then summarised the main points raised during this Community of Inquiry and asked the children to be observant about the way that people communicate with each other without words in their daily lives.



4.6 Bridge Lesson 2: Talking without Words – Faces and Feelings

Bridge Lesson 2 was implemented between *Community of Inquiry 1: Talking without Words* and *Community of Inquiry 2: Faces and Feelings*. The lesson activity was designed to encourage children to recognise and name emotions, and to reflect on a time in their own lives where they had experienced these emotions (**see Appendix V**).

A set of Face It™ expression cards was used for this activity, which are therapeutic resources designed to engage children in meaningful discussions about feelings, behaviours and social scenarios (Quirky Kid, 2009). The cards feature detailed black and white hand-drawn illustrations depicting a range of facial expressions (**see Figure 19**), but do not detail what emotion or feeling the facial expression is intended to demonstrate. This feature allows for open interpretation of the perceived emotional states by children.



Figure 19. Examples of Face It expression cards.

The class formed a circle on the floor and each card was showed to the class before placing each one in the centre of the circle with the illustration facing up. The Teacher explained that each child would choose one card and describe to the class what emotion they thought it illustrated. Children were then asked to draw the face in their Empathy Journal using pencils, name the emotion, and write about a time when they have felt the same way as the child illustrated on the card (**see Figure 20**).

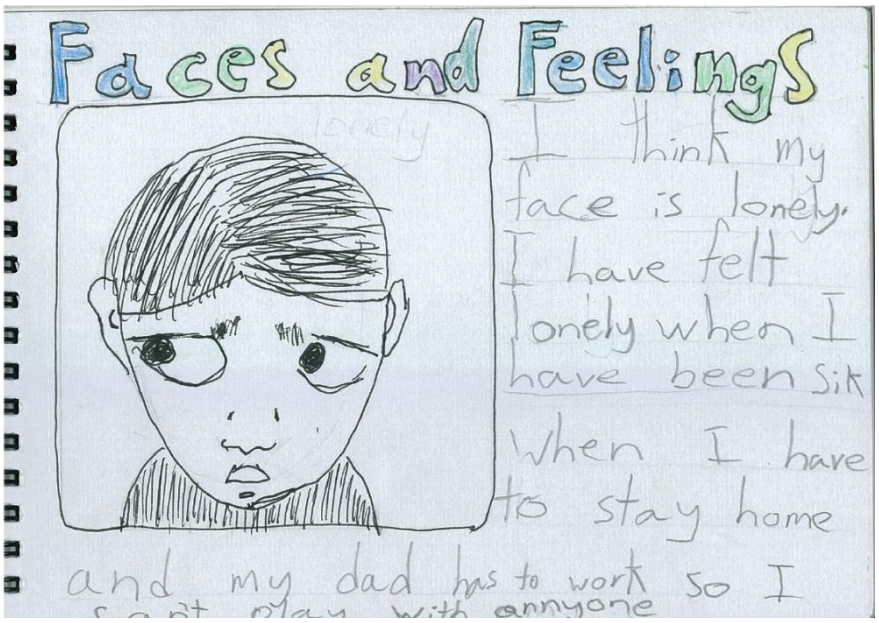
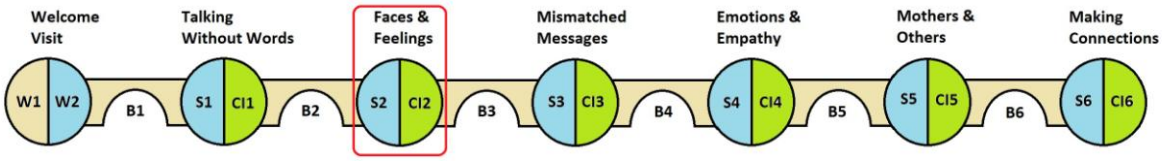


Figure 20. Example of Empathy Journal entry for 'faces and feelings' task.

At the end of the activity children were asked to form a circle on the floor and show their drawings, and were asked "would anyone like to share their written work with the class". Several children explained the emotion they had attributed to the illustration, and read their description of a time when they had felt that emotion.



4.7 Community of Inquiry 2: Faces and Feelings

The second Community of Inquiry session focussed on the 'Big Idea' of *Faces and Feelings.* The 'Big Question' that guided the Inquiry Lesson was *How do we read other people's feelings?* (**see Appendix P**).

4.7.1 Stimulus Lesson 2

This Stimulus Lesson began with a reminder to children to focus their attention and actively listen during the Stimulus Lesson and directing the children to do deep focus breathing. The Teacher explained that this deep breathing can help with thinking processes. Next children were prompted to reflect on the 'Big Question' for this Community of Inquiry session by asking the children to actively observe the baby's face and body movements to determine what feelings the baby could be communicating.

The class then welcomed the mother and baby to the classroom, and the mother placed the baby in the middle of the mat while she talked. The main points raised by the mother were:

- *He won't go to sleep unless I've got him, so that's a bit frustrating*
- *He makes it very clear now if he wants food*

- *He's still not rolling over, though he's quite happy to lie on his tummy for longer*
- *He's good at reaching for more toys and stuff that is around him*
- *He looks at me more often, so he looks to see where I am in the room*
- *He is looking for my reaction. So if I'm OK, then he's OK*
- *He is recognising people. So when he sees people that he's seen a few times he smiles a bit bigger than normal*
- *When he was scared I could feel his energy change. I always know when he feels really calm.*
- *He uses his body to tell me what he wants, not just his voice*

Some of the questions that children posed were:

- *What is he scared of?*
- *Does he still have his hungry scream?*
- *When was his first laugh?*
- *What does he do when he sees another baby?*

4.7.2 Inquiry Lesson 2

Inquiry Lesson 2 involved 18 children and went for 35 minutes. This Lesson began with the teacher describing a personal anecdote from her own life, and was used to stimulate discussion around the Big Question. The anecdote was shared to provide children with a real life example of the way our faces may not reflect our feelings accurately, and is recorded here verbatim:

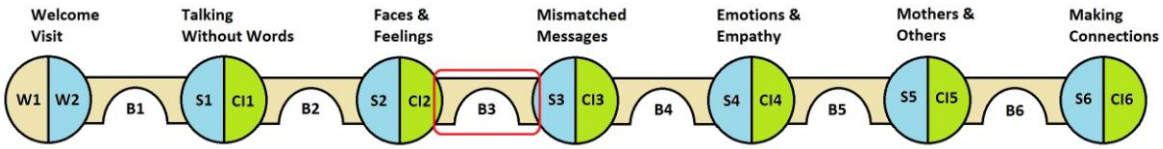
I'm going to give you a 2 minute story just to create this sense of people's faces can often be misread: Simon and I stopped to get a coffee the other day and this man came up to Simon and said "I've been wanting to talk to you for ages". He didn't know who he was, but this man had seen Simon lots, and he said, "I want to apologise to you for something". Simon said "what are you apologising to me for?". And this man explained and then they got into a conversation, his name was Doug, and he said to Simon "you often look unapproachable and you often look like you're intense and a little bit angry". So they both had this interesting conversation where they were both open for it, and Simon explained to him that often what he's feeling inside is not what he's looking like on the outside so that question for me is an interesting one. How do we read other people's feelings, and how do we get it right? How do we know if we've got it right? Do we misread people's faces?
(Teacher Participant)

Following this example of how our faces and feelings can be incongruent, children were given three wishing stones. Reducing the number of wishing stones was designed to draw more children into the dialogue, and to encourage those children who contribute the most to push for depth with their contributions (Cam et al., 2007). Children took turns offering their thoughts, building on their peers' ideas, or disagreeing with the claims of others, and rolling the ball to another child who had put their 'wishing stone' forward. The teacher facilitated the dialogic process by prompting with questions and requests for more information, asking for justifications to support the children's statements.

The questions in the discussion plan for *Community of Inquiry 2: Faces and Feelings* were focussed on the preceding Stimulus Lesson and were designed to focus children's thinking on the perspective of the mother and baby. These discussion plan questions were:

- If the mother and baby 'talk' without always using words, how do they communicate?
- What do their faces do?
- How does the baby share his thoughts and feelings?

Towards the end of the inquiry the teacher called for a final discussion round, where children offered their final thoughts around the 'Big Question': *How do we read other people's feelings?* The teacher explained that she would prefer children not to pass, and that children could pose a question they still had, or they could agree with someone's idea that reinforced their thinking, or they could disagree. The teacher then summarised the main points raised during this Community of Inquiry and posed a question for the class to think about during the week: *How can we be sure that what we are seeing is correct when it comes to feelings?*



4.8 Bridge Lesson 3: Faces and Feelings – Mismatched Messages

Bridge Lesson 3 was implemented between *Community of Inquiry 2: Faces and Feelings* and *Community of Inquiry 3: Mismatched Messages*. The lesson was designed to focus children's attention on the faces of others, to try to interpret what emotional states were being portrayed, and to understand how their own physical features change depending on their emotional state (**see Appendix W**).

The activity involved a game of *emotional charades* that was played in two ways. The first way was for a child to choose an emotion from the range of emotion cards created in Welcome Visit 1 (**see section 4.3.1**), to stand in front of the class and use their face and body language to display the chosen emotion. The teacher and I then chose children who raised their hand when they thought they knew the emotion, and this continued until a correct answer was given. The child who guessed correctly was then given the option of choosing another emotion card and having a turn at portraying an emotion. This version of emotional charades proved difficult for many of the children due to a limited lexicon of words to describe emotions. Several children repeated the guesses of others who were trying to read the player's face and body language. To help the children to better recognise the portrayed emotion, I provided a list of the possible emotions that the player could be portraying. The teacher wrote the emotions on the whiteboard and grouped these into her own perceived categories of inward and outward emotions, and emotions that could fit both categories (**see Figure 21**). This was an unplanned categorisation based on the teacher's own thoughts about how people feel and convey emotional states.



Figure 21. Teacher's categorisation of emotions as inward, outward, and both for 'emotional charades' activity

The second way the game of emotional charades was played was a reversal of this process. This version was played to shorten the length of time it took to play it and reduce restlessness, and increase the number of children playing, and therefore increase interest levels. Three headbands were created that had a sticky area at the front, and used the emotion cards created in Welcome Visit 1. Three children were chosen to stand at the front of the class while the teacher and I chose three random emotion cards and placed these on the front of each child's headband where they could not be seen by the child wearing it (**see Figure 22**).



Figure 22. Children playing emotional charades

The remaining children were asked to raise their hands if they thought they could portray the emotional state displayed on each player's headband using their face and body. The players then took turns selecting a child with their hand raised, watching their portrayal and guessing what emotion card they had on their headband. If the player guessed correctly then the child who portrayed the emotion was given the option of wearing the headband with another randomly selected emotion card. Following several games of emotional charades where each child had a turn, the children were given a five minute break followed by a shortened Community of Inquiry. The teacher facilitated the discussion in the inquiry, and started by posing the question 'How can we be sure that we read people's emotions correctly?'

After this Community of Inquiry, children were asked to think about the questions and ideas raised in the discussion and their experience of trying read other

people's emotions during the games of emotional charades. Next children were asked to write their responses in their Empathy Journal (**see Figure 23**).

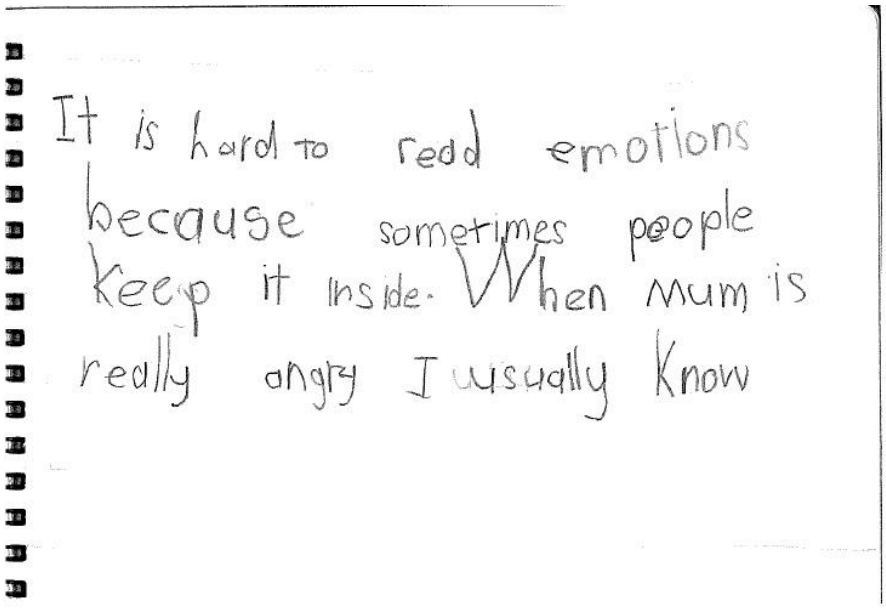
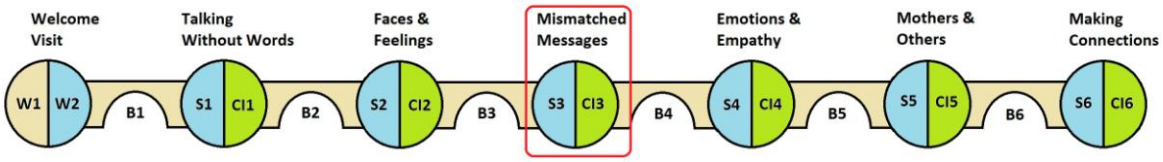


Figure 23. Example of Empathy Journal response to Bridge Lesson 3: emotional charades.



4.9 Community of Inquiry 3: Mismatched Messages

The third Community of Inquiry session focussed on the 'Big Idea' of *Mismatched Messages.* The 'Big Question' that guided the Inquiry Lesson was *How do we know if we are reading people's feelings correctly?* (**see Appendix Q**).

4.9.1 Stimulus Lesson 3

This Stimulus Lesson began with the class welcoming the mother and baby into the classroom, and the baby being placed on the mat within the circle of children. This lesson began with the children asking questions instead of the mother giving a summary of the last two weeks. Some of the main points raised by the mother were:

- *He is rolling over which means I have to prepare for him to be moving around*
- *There have been a few times when I think he's hungry but he's not really so I've misread what he is trying to tell me*
- *He likes watching people. He's watching for a longer time and can track things. That's a new thing*
- *I do lots of guessing. Lots and lots of guessing (to know what the baby is feeling)*
- *There are some noises he makes that definitely mean the same thing*

Children were then invited to ask questions. Children's questions posed to the mother included:

- *Can you always read what he is saying?*
- *Do you always read his feelings correctly?*
- *How do you know what he is feeling?*
- *When he makes those noises, how do you know what to try to find out what he wants?*
- *How do you know when he is happy?*
- *How do you know when he is hungry?*
- *How do you know when he is feeling tired?*
- *How do you know when he is in pain?*

4.9.2 Inquiry Lesson 3

This Inquiry Lesson involved 17 children and went for 25 minutes. The Lesson began with the teacher asking children to take five deep breaths before the inquiry commenced, which was a signal for the class that deep concentration and focus was needed. Children were asked to write any thoughts or 'wonderings' that they had on a cardboard square (**see Figure 24**). These cards were designed to act as prompts to which children could refer during the inquiry.

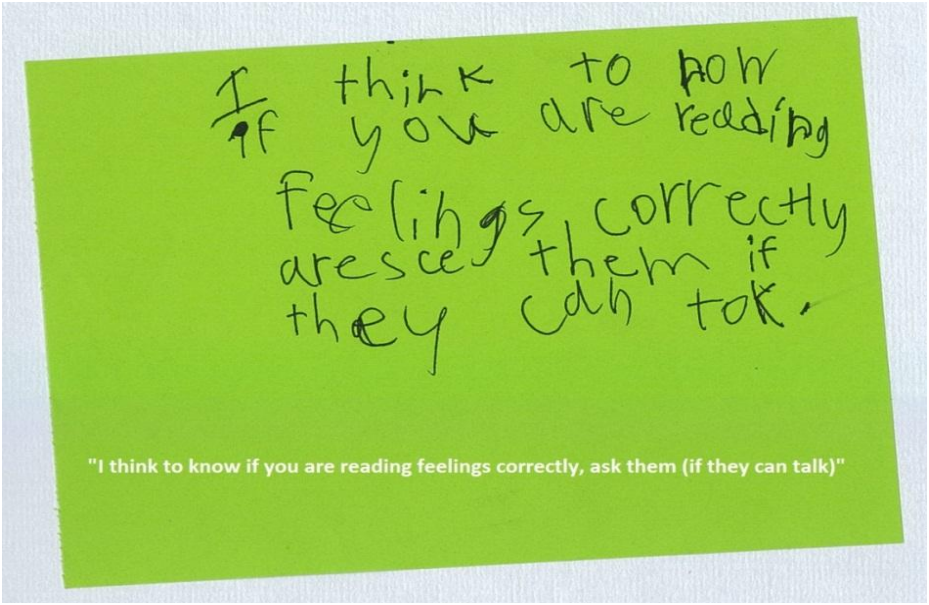


Figure 24. Example of child's thoughts on cardboard square.

Children were given three wishing stones due to time constraints resulting from a change in the school timetable, reducing available time to a maximum of 30 minutes.

The teacher explained that the 'Big Idea' for this Community of Inquiry was *Mismatched Messages*, and reminded the class about a statement that the mother had shared with the class in response to a question asked during the preceding Stimulus Lesson, recorded here verbatim:

Lori: *"do you always read Adam's feelings correctly?"*

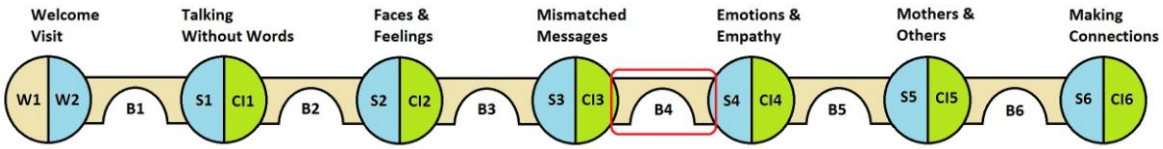
Sarah (mother): *"No. That was one of my comments for the week was that there have been quite a few times when he's grizzly, and I think he's hungry, but he's not really hungry and he's had a dirty nappy, so I've misread what he's trying to tell me"*

The teacher asked the 'Big Question': *How do we know if we are reading people's feelings correctly?* She then asked children to reflect on their own feelings, and whether it can be difficult to read their own feelings as well as the feelings of others. Children took turns using the wishing stone selection method to offer their thoughts, building on their peers' ideas, or disagreeing with the claims of others. The teacher facilitated the dialogic process by asking prompting questions and making requests for more information or justifications to support the children's statements.

The questions in the discussion plan for *Community of Inquiry 3: Mismatched Messages* were focussed on the preceding Stimulus Lesson and were designed to focus children's perspective on the mother and baby. These discussion plan questions were:

- How does the mother read the baby's feelings?
- How does the baby read his mother's feelings?
- How can you tell what you are feeling?
- How can you tell what other people are feeling? Can we ever be sure?

During this inquiry, the teacher asked children to turn to the person next to them and tell that person about a time when they had read someone else's feelings inaccurately, then listen to that person share their experience. I suggested this technique as a way to engage all children in dialogue with each other at times when discussion was waning or when time was limited. Due to the time restraints on this Inquiry Lesson there was no final round for children to offer their final thoughts, questions or ideas.



4.10 Bridge Lesson 4: Mismatched Messages – Emotions and Empathy

Bridge Lesson 4 was implemented between *Community of Inquiry 3: Mismatched Messages* and *Community of Inquiry 4: Emotions and Empathy*. The Lesson was designed in response to a question raised by a child during the shortened Community of Inquiry in the previous Bridge Lesson: 'Is there a difference between feelings and emotions?' (**see Appendix X**).

This activity used a quadrant organiser (Cam et al., 2007) to sort and categorise emotions (**see Figure 25**). The children were asked to form a circle and I used chalk to draw a vertical line intersected by a horizontal line in the middle of the circle. Labels were added to the end of each line, with 'feelings' and 'NOT feelings' at each end of the vertical line, and 'emotions' and 'NOT emotions at each end of the horizontal line.

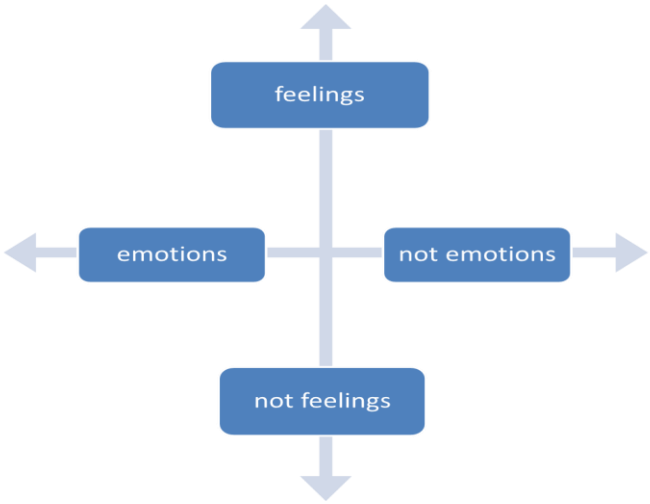


Figure 25. Feeling/emotion quadrant.

The Teacher explained that in the previous Bridge Lesson (Bridge Lesson 3) it seemed that there were questions about the difference between feelings and emotions, and whether they were two words that described the same thing. Several definitions of 'feelings' were then shared with the class:

- A feeling is the way you are; resulting from your emotions
- an opinion based more on emotion than reason
- something you say that is based more on the way you feel than the way you think
- when you are easily moved emotionally

The emotion cards created in Welcome Visit 1 were shown to the children again and discussion was conducted with the class to decide which quadrant each emotion best fitted in (**see Figure 26**). This meant that the named emotions were sorted into four categories: emotions/feelings, emotions/NOT feelings, feelings/NOT emotions, and NOT feelings/NOT emotions.

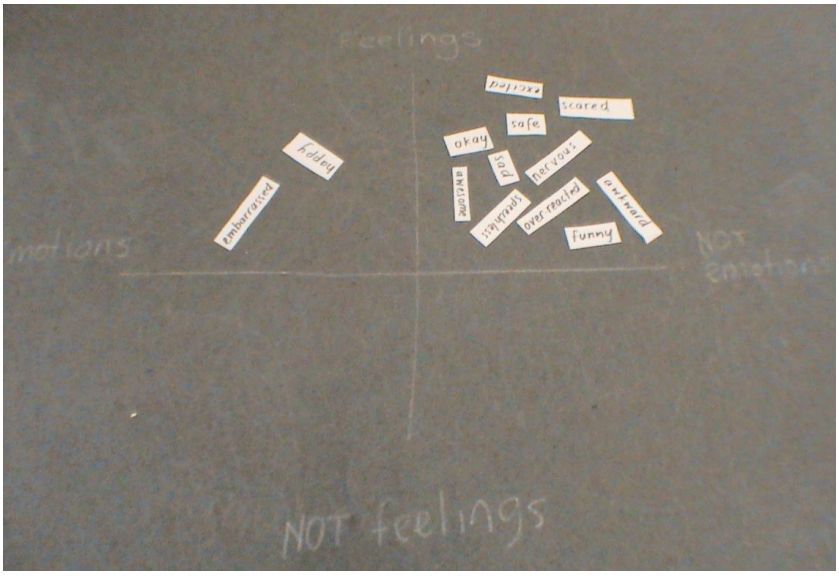


Figure 26. Class categorisation of emotion cards using feeling/emotion quadrant.

The teacher and I facilitated discussion about the position of each emotion card, and whether this helped clarify the children's perception of emotions considering the all emotion cards were categorised as feelings, and most were categorised as feelings/NOT emotions. Children were then asked to write a reflection on their learning about the baby's feelings (**see Figure 27**), drawing on the quadrant activity, the previous Inquiry Lesson, and the previous Stimulus Lesson when the mother and baby visited the classroom.

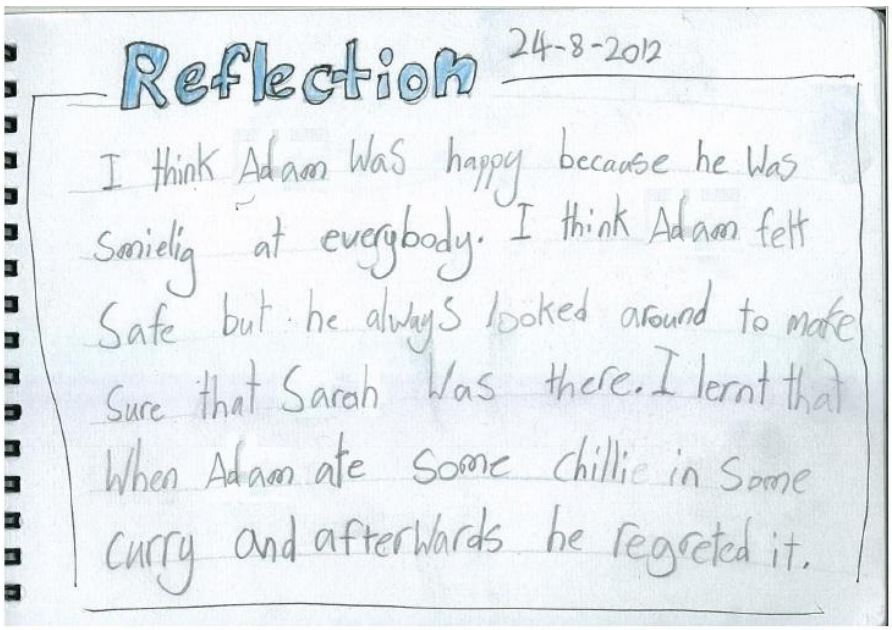
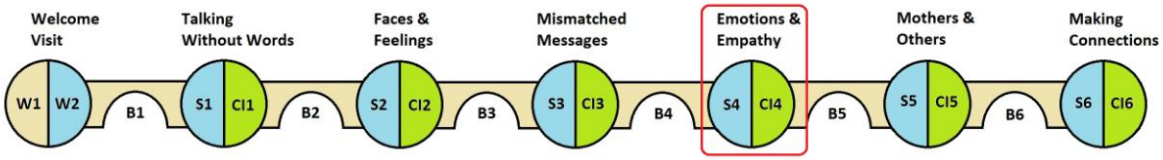


Figure 27. Example of Empathy Journal entry reflection about the baby's feelings.



4.11 Community of Inquiry 4: Emotions and Empathy

The fourth Community of Inquiry session focussed on the 'Big Idea' of *Emotions and Empathy.* The 'Big Question' that guided the Inquiry Lesson was *Can you know what someone else is feeling if you haven't had those feelings yourself?* (**see Appendix R**).

The cardboard squares for children to write their ideas and questions prior to the previous Inquiry Lesson (**see section 4.9.2**) were not used in this Inquiry Lesson in response to children's reliance on these tools in the previous Community of Inquiry session. Many children read their own questions, but did not add to the ideas of others as much as seen in previous Inquiry Lessons. The increased number of questions and isolated statements was seen as detrimental to the depth and rigour of the dialogic process. Therefore, the Teacher and I decided not to use this tool in future iterations of the Inquiry and Stimulus Lessons.

4.11.1 Stimulus Lesson 4

This Stimulus Lesson was interrupted for 30 minutes by a whole school event during the initial welcome to the mother and baby. Upon resumption, the teacher asked children to pose questions to the mother without any summary of the last fortnight. The main points raised by the mother were:

- *Now he lets me know with his body as well when he is hungry because he leans forward*
- *Now that he's getting bigger we are starting to see some other feelings come through. A little bit of frustration. He gets a bit angry when he doesn't get what he wants*
- *He sort of copies what we are doing, so when we smile he smiles. So that's how babies learn to smile. They watch what you are doing and I guess they sense if you are happy or feeling sad, because he changes*
- *When he's upset and crying and I've got no idea why, that makes me feel upset and anxious because I don't know what wrong. So I tend to copy what he's doing too I suppose*
- *I try really hard not to show or let on when I'm feeling anxious*
- *He doesn't talk with words we are using. He talks now, but he does it with sounds and with his body*

The children were invited to ask the mother questions. Some of the questions posed by the children included:

- *How do you get to know his hungry scream?*
- *Do you know if he has feelings?*
- *Has he ever had the same feeling as you?*
- *How close is he to talking?*

4.11.2 Inquiry Lesson 4

This Inquiry Lesson was implemented on a day where an overlooked whole school event occurred during the preceding Stimulus Lesson resulting in a reduction of the allocated time. The Inquiry Lesson involved 14 children and went for 16 minutes.

The teacher asked a child to hand out three wishing stones and asked the 'Big Question': *Can you know what someone else is feeling if you haven't had those feelings yourself?* Children were then asked to think about other people's feelings and their own experience. Children took turns offering their thoughts, building on their peers' ideas, or disagreeing with the claims of others, and rolling the ball to another child who had put their wishing stone forward. The teacher facilitated the dialogic process with prompting questions and requests for more information or justifications to support the children's statements.

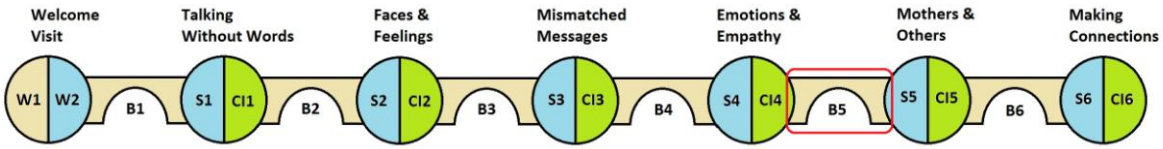
The discussion plan for *Community of Inquiry 4: Empathy and Emotions* provided three scenarios that were designed in response to the personal anecdote told by the teacher to stimulate discussion in the second Community of Inquiry session. These scenarios were designed to elicit children's justificatory reasoning following their response to the teacher's story. The aim of these designed hypothetical scenarios was to help children make connections between the ideas raised in the inquiry with social dilemmas that could occur in the school yard at recess or lunch to allow children to draw on their lived experience of similar social dilemmas. These scenarios were:

1. **Scenario A:** *you are sitting outside watching a group of your friends playing a game while you finish your recess. One of your friends doesn't like the way another friend is playing the game, yells at him/her and storms off.*

The other friend walks away with their head down and you see tears in their eyes. What emotions do you have? What do you do?

2. **Scenario B:** *same situation, but this time the person who walks away with their head down is from another class and you don't know them very well. Are your emotions the same? What do you do?*
3. **Scenario C:** *same situation, but this time you don't know any of the children.*

The scenarios were not used by the teacher in this Inquiry Lesson due to the time constraints, and they were carried over into the following discussion plan for *Community of Inquiry 5: Mothers and Others*. The teacher called for a final round and because of the limited time, she allowed children to pass if they had no final thoughts to offer. The teacher thanked those children who engaged in the inquiry and congratulated these children on their ability to refocus and employ their inhibitory control.



4.12 Bridge Lesson 5: Emotions and Empathy – Mothers and Others

Bridge Lesson 5 was implemented between *Community of Inquiry 4: Emotions and Empathy* and *Community of Inquiry 5: Mothers and Others*. The lesson was designed to develop children's growing understanding of their emotions and the social emotional experiences of others in hypothetical scenarios (**see Appendix Y**). The children were asked to evaluate a range of scenarios, discuss these in small groups, and then negotiate with peers to place each scenario on an *empathy continuum*.

This Bridge Lesson began with a revision of the previous Community of Inquiry session, highlighting the discussion about empathy, what it meant, and how this term was used. A definition for empathy was shared with the class: *"empathy is thinking and caring about other people's thoughts and feelings and then positively acting on it".* Then chalk was used to draw a horizontal line on the floor and I wrote 'more empathy' at one end, and 'less empathy' at the other end. The teacher and I explained that this was an empathy continuum that we would be trying to place each scenario on. Eight hypothetical scenarios were read to the class:

1. Feeling happy when a friend gets something you want

2. Feeling sad when a friend is sad
3. Smiling at someone you don't know
4. Playing with a new student
5. Being nice to someone who is mean
6. Helping a stranger who is sad
7. Helping a friend who is sad
8. Asking if a friend needs help

Children were put into groups of three and given one of the hypothetical scenarios to discuss. The groups were given five minutes to negotiate with each other about where they thought the scenario should be placed on the empathy continuum, and to be ready to justify their decision about that placement. After five minutes of group discussion and negotiation the class formed a circle around the empathy continuum and each group placed the scenario they had been given on the empathy continuum and justified their decision to the whole class (**see Figure 28**).

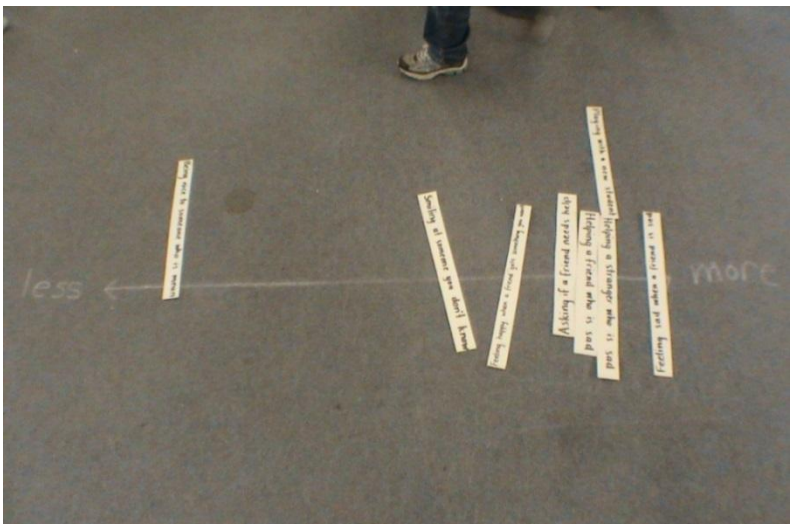


Figure 28. Children's placement of hypothetical scenarios on the empathy continuum in Bridge Lesson 5.

After all the scenarios had been placed children were given two minutes to talk to each other about where the scenarios had been placed and if they agreed or disagreed with each choice. A short discussion was had about any scenarios that children felt should be moved, and children were asked to justify their thoughts about this placement.

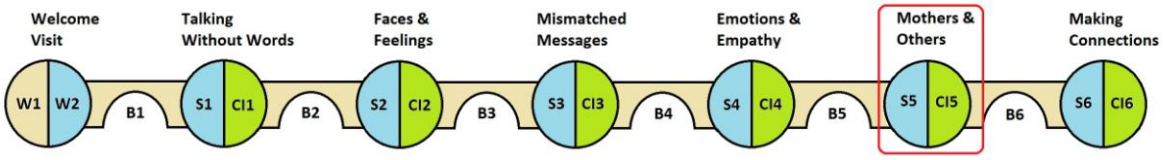
Each child was then given a sheet which had all eight scenarios, and asked to draw an empathy line in their Empathy Journal and to cut and paste all scenarios onto it where they thought they belonged. When children had finished this task they were asked to use a separate page in their Empathy Journal to illustrate and label the scenario that they thought displayed the most empathy (**see Figure 29**).



Figure 29. Example of Empathy Journal entry for 'empathy line' task.

At the end of the lesson children were asked to form a circle on the floor again and to show their empathy lines and drawings. Children were asked if they would like to share their justification for choosing the scenario they thought showed the most

empathy. Several children shared their drawing of the most empathic scenario and justified their thinking about this decision with the class.



4.13 Community of Inquiry 5: Mothers and Others

The fifth Community of Inquiry session focussed on the 'Big Idea' of *Mother and Others.* The 'Big Question' that guided the Inquiry Lesson was *Why do we respond differently to different people at different times?* (**see Appendix S**).

4.13.1 Stimulus Lesson 5

I was not present in the classroom for Stimulus Lesson 5. The mother and baby came to the school on an unscheduled day due to some confusion following an extended break over school holidays. The teacher facilitated this lesson and did not record the mother or children's dialogue.

4.13.2 Inquiry Lesson 5

This Inquiry Lesson involved 16 children and went for 42 minutes. The Lesson began with the teacher reading the first scenario that was not used in the inquiry for *Community of Inquiry 4: Emotions and Empathy*:

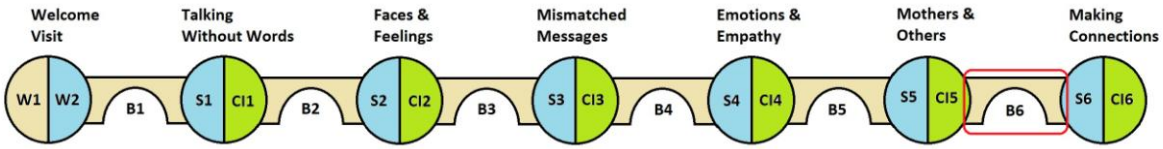
> **Scenario A:** *you are sitting outside watching a group of your friends playing a game while you finish your recess. One of your friends doesn't like the way another friend is playing the game, yells at them and storms off. The other friend walks away with their head down and you see tears in their eyes. What emotions do you have? What do you do?*

To help the children visualise this scenario during the Community of Inquiry a visual representation was drawn on the whiteboard. Five wishing stones were given to each child and the teacher started the inquiry by asking: *What emotions do you have?* and *What do you do in that situation?* Children took turns offering their thoughts, building on their peers' ideas, or disagreeing with the claims of others. The teacher facilitated the dialogic process with prompting questions and requests for more information, or justifications to support the children's statements.

As the inquiry progressed and the dialogue was building, the Teacher introduced the second scenario to further provoke children's thinking about empathic response to the social dilemmas of others.

> **Scenario B:** *same situation, but this time the person who walks away with their head down is from another class and you don't know them very well. Are your emotions the same? What do you do?*

After further dialogue the Teacher asked the 'Big Question': *Why do we respond differently to different people at different times?* This encouraged children to reflect on the differences between people's feelings and possible actions for each scenario. The Teacher recognised a sense of restlessness in the class and initiated a final round where children were invited to offer any final thoughts, ideas, changes to their thinking or questions. The Teacher allowed children to pass if they had no final thoughts to offer.



4.14 Bridge Lesson 6: Mothers and Others – Making Connections

Bridge Lesson 6 was implemented between Lesson 5: *Mothers and Others* and Lesson 6: *Making Connections*. The lesson involved an activity designed to allow children to explore empathy from a range of perspectives and to limit any bias towards a purely positive view of empathy (**see Appendix Z**). During previous Community of Inquiry sessions children had raised some negative effects of acting with empathy, so this lesson aimed to provide an opportunity to reflect on a holistic view of empathy.

The lesson began with a discussion about empathy and what the class understood about it. Children sat in a discussion circle and the teacher explained that this activity would be an exploration of what it means to have empathy and whether it is always useful. Children were asked to give an explanation of what empathy is. Several children offered explanations:

- It is caring for other people. Say if Fergus fell over or something or he was feeling lonely, I could come along and help him… that shows empathy if I want to be friends with him (Bruce)
- I think empathy is doing something kind for someone else and treating their feelings. So it's thinking what they might be feeling and trying to cheer them up (Flint)

- It's a bit like caring and helping people if they are sad or not feeling very well (Shane)

It was explained to the class that they would be working on a two-page entry in their Empathy Journals to brainstorm ideas about the positives and negatives of having empathy for others. On one page children were asked to write down their thoughts about why empathy could be a good thing, and on the facing page to write down their thoughts about why empathy could be a bad thing (**see Figure 30**).

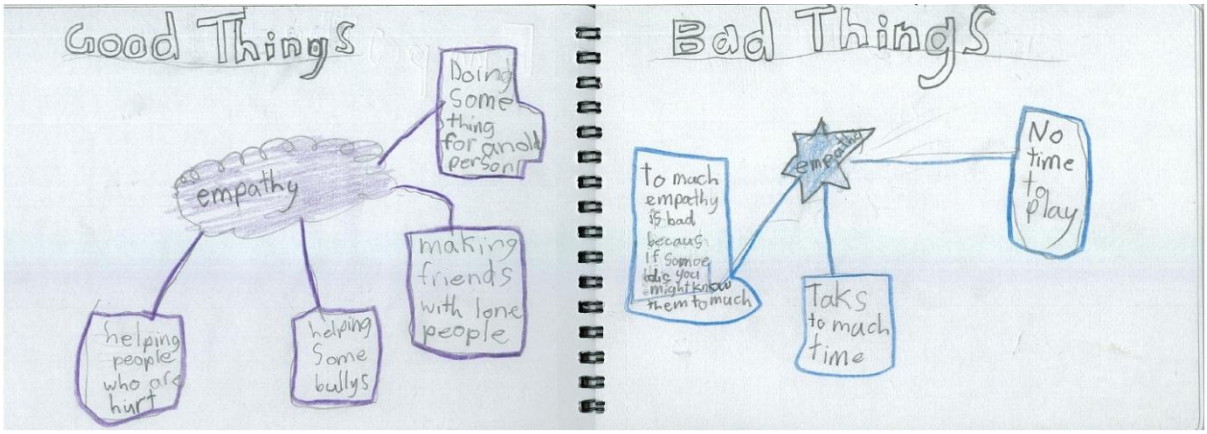
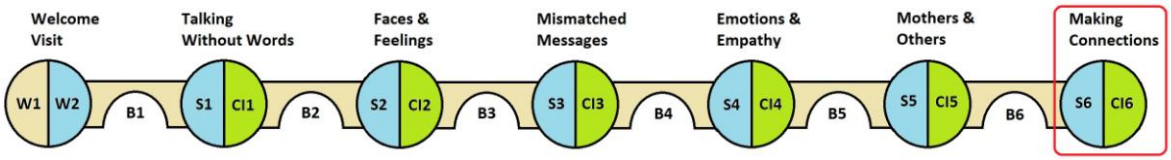


Figure 30. Example of Empathy Journal entry for 'good things/bad things' task.

After children had been given time to write down their ideas they were asked to form a circle on the floor and to share their thinking about the good things and bad things about empathy. Children were invited to share their thoughts with the class. Several children shared their Empathy Journal pages with the class and justified their thinking regarding the elements of empathy about which they had written.



4.15 Community of Inquiry 6: Making Connections

The sixth Community of Inquiry focussed on the 'Big Idea' of *Making Connections* and the 'Big Question' that guided the inquiry was *Should we/can we try to be more empathic?* (**see Appendix T**).

4.15.1 Stimulus Lesson 6

This Stimulus Lesson began with the children welcoming the mother and baby to the classroom, and the mother placing the baby on the mat. The mother explained the changes that had happened since their last visit including:

- At the moment it seems like he's doing something new every single day.
- He is waving and will say 'tata' sometimes.
- He can say 'hello'…like I know he's saying hello because he looks at you and moves his hand and he says something
- He's moving and pulls himself up on everything
- He loves kids, he loves people
- …and the world is all about him, like when babies don't know that they actually need to think about people

Children were invited to ask the mother questions. Some of the questions that children asked were:

- Do you know when he is angry?
- Is he still used to being with children?
- What is he saying he wants?

4.15.2 Inquiry Lesson 6

Inquiry Lesson 6 involved 19 children and went for 53 minutes. This Lesson started with the Teacher explaining that the 'Big Idea' for this Community of Inquiry was *Making Connections*, and explained that ideas from all Bridge, Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons could be drawn upon. The Teacher then asked the 'Big Question': *Should we try to be more empathic?* Five wishing stones were handed to each child and the Community of Inquiry began. The Teacher provoked children to think further about the baby and them by also asking the class:

- Is it your responsibility (to be more empathic)?
- Is it our responsibility?
- What have you learned about yourself?
- What have you learned from the baby?

Children took turns offering their thoughts, building on their peers' ideas, or disagreeing with the claims of others. The teacher facilitated the dialogic process with prompting questions and requests for more information or justifications to support the children's statements. The questions in the discussion plan for *Community of Inquiry 6: Making Connections* were designed to link ideas across the entire lesson sequence and to focus children's perspective on the baby, on themselves, and on others. These discussion plan questions were:

- What can help us develop empathy?
- Does talking about our feelings help?
- Does it help to think about how other people might feel?

- Do circumstances make a difference?
- What does empathy do for us?

Towards the end of the Community of Inquiry the Teacher called for a final round. Children offered their final thoughts around the 'Big Question': *Should we try to be more empathic?* The Teacher asked each child to comment about whether they learned anything about themselves by observing the baby. Children were not allowed to pass, and were asked to comment about their thinking in general if they could not comment on the 'Big Question'.

4.16 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I described in detail the Empathic Pedagogy intervention that was employed in this research. I added to the succinct description of the over-arching lesson format from the previous chapter, and outlined the chronological sequence that the lessons took throughout the research. Each Stimulus and Inquiry Lesson that comprised the six Community of Inquiry sessions was detailed, and the initial Welcoming Visits and intervening Bridge Lessons were described. This accurate and comprehensive documentation of the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy intervention supports the validity and trustworthiness of the research in accordance with Educational Design Research methodology (McKenney & Reeves, 2012; McKenney & Reeves, 2014; Plomp & Nieveen, 2007).

In the following three chapters I present findings from my research. The first data chapter will present findings for children's perspective taking in the Community of Inquiry, the second data chapter will present findings for children's reasoning about emotions, and the final data chapter will present findings for children's empathic reasoning. I present the findings in these three chapters using a mix of qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Qualitative data is presented in the form of quotes from children's dialogic exchanges within the Community of Inquiry sessions, as well as excerpts from children's Empathy Journals. Quantitative data is presented in the form of graphs depicting frequencies of dialogic exchanges within Inquiry Lessons. Pseudonyms are used throughout the following three data chapters to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the child participants (**see Table 1**), as well as the mother and baby participants.

5. Analysis and Findings: Perspective Taking in the Empathic Pedagogy

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis and findings regarding children's *perspective taking* regarding the baby, the self, and others across the Empathic Pedagogy. As described in Chapter Two, perspective taking is the cognitive aspect of empathy which involves an observer considering the world as experienced through the eyes of another (Hanson & Mullis, 1985; Hodges, 2005; K. L. Thompson & Gullone, 2003). The experiential stimulus of the baby also generated an affective response within the dialogic space of the Empathic Pedagogy which supported children's ability to take the perspective of others (Barrow, 2010). The Empathic Pedagogy was purposefully designed to move from a focus on the perspective of the baby: fostering an affective response to promote empathic concern for another human, to a focus on children's self-perspective: moving from concrete to more abstract forms of empathy, and towards perspective taking regarding others: understanding others' emotional states through an increasing understanding of the self.

I first present data analysis and findings in relation to design characteristics that impacted on children's perspective taking across the Empathic Pedagogy. Second, I present analysis and findings regarding the justifications that children used to support their thinking about the perspectives of the baby, self and others. Data presented throughout this chapter were drawn from a range of sources highlighted below (**see Figure 31**).

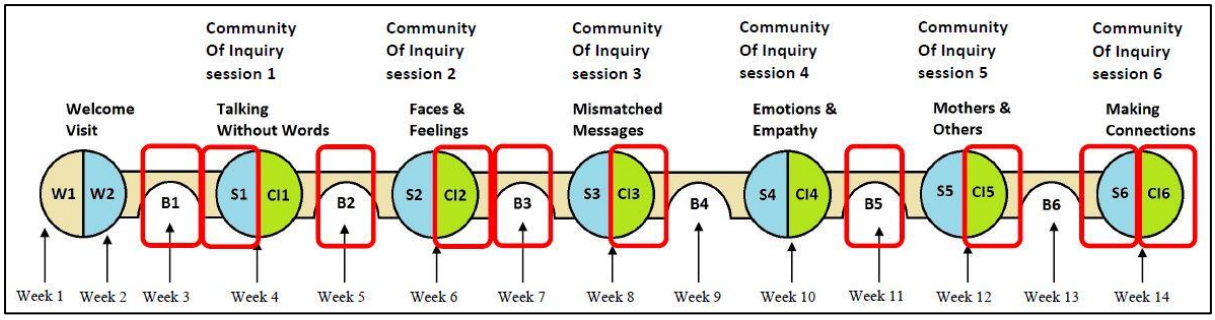


Figure 31. Data sources for perspective taking across the lesson sequence

Where exemplars are provided to support data analysis and findings, a code is used to indicate the name of the child, their age in years and months, and the lesson from which the data were drawn (**see Table 7**). For example, (**Fergus, 7:10, COI3**) indicates that the datum being described was collected in the third Community of Inquiry session from Fergus who was seven years and ten months old. Inquiry Lessons were coded as **COI** to highlight that these data was drawn from children's dialogic exchanges within each Community of Inquiry.

Table 7

Data Exemplar Coding

Lesson Type	Data Exemplar Code	Example
Community of Inquiry Session	COI	Fergus, 7:10, COI3
Stimulus Lesson	STM	Buddy, 8:1, STM1
Bridge Lesson	BRG	Carl, 7:5, BRG1
Welcome Visit	WEL	Shane, 7:5, WEL1

5.1.1 Overall Finding of Perspective Taking in the Empathic Pedagogy

Overall, analysis of data from dialogic exchanges revealed that engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy fostered children's capacity for perspective taking regarding the baby, themselves, and others. Data presented in the following sections demonstrates children's perspective taking regarding the baby, their own perspective, and perspective taking regarding others and that perspective taking can be fostered within the Empathic Pedagogy. Characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy that played a role in supporting children's perspective taking were the use of hypothetical scenarios in Bridge and Inquiry Lessons, the questions and prompts provided by flexible discussion plans in Inquiry Lessons, and the use of the Empathy Journal to record children's thoughts and experiences.

5.2 Impact of the Research Design on Perspective Taking

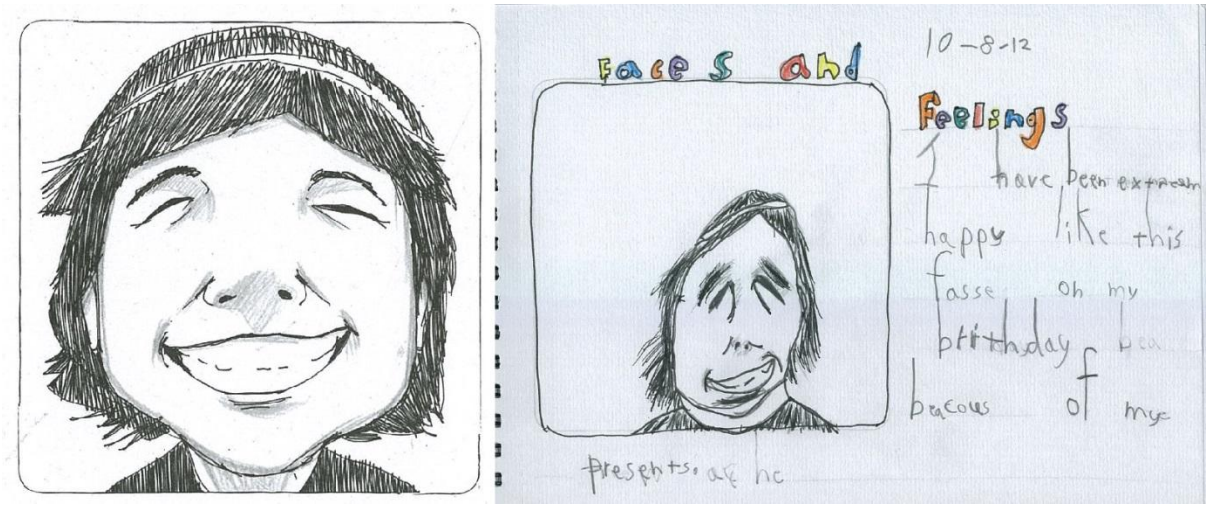
Following the principles of EDR (**see section 3.4.2.4**), the data analysis considered the impact of the research design on children's perspective taking. This analysis included consideration of changes made throughout the research process to encourage and strengthen children's capacity for perspective taking within the Empathic Pedagogy. Three design characteristics that impacted children's perspective taking were the Bridge Lesson activities; which provided additional opportunities for fostering children's perspective taking, Inquiry Lesson discussion plans; which allowed for adjustments to questions and teacher prompts that elicited children's perspective taking within the Community of Inquiry, and children's access to the Empathy Journal for recording their thoughts and feelings.

The following sections present findings on children's perspective taking and the relationship of these to the original design and changes to the research design.

5.2.1 Design of the Bridge Lesson Activities

The design of the Bridge lesson activities had a positive impact on children's perspective taking, as well as their overall engagement with the Community of Inquiry sessions that followed. As was described in Chapter Four, the Bridge Lessons were designed to help children keep hold of the thread of the Big Ideas being discussed in the Community of Inquiry sessions and to bridge the gap between each session.

An example of the critical role the Bridge Lessons played in fostering children's perspective taking is found in the second Bridge Lesson, which was designed to provide children with an opportunity to recognise and empathise with the perceived emotional state of a hypothetical other. The children were shown a range of Face It™ cards that depicted children expressing a range of emotions. Children were asked to choose one and name the feeling they thought was being expressed. (**see section 4.6 for full description**). While this activity did not ask children to specifically take the perspective of the illustrated child to respond to it, it required children to recognise the emotional state which in turn required perspective taking. Children were asked to use their Empathy Journal to describe a time in their lives when they had felt that emotion themselves. The children were able to express the same emotion in different ways than shown in the illustration. An example of an Empathy Journal entry is Flint's (**see Figure 32**). Flint's response is representative of common Journal responses.



(*I have been extremely happy like this face on my birthday because of my presents*) (**Flint, 7:2, BRG2**)

Figure 32. Flint's Empathy Journal entry for faces and feelings activity with original Face It™ drawing shown on the left.

This change to the design of the second Bridge Lesson provided data showing children's perspective taking that would not have been available otherwise. This was consistent across all children's Empathy Journal responses to this activity. For example:

I was annoyed when my sister was singing in the car and she wouldn't stop. I wouldn't want to feel annoyed all the time (**Andrea, 7:10, BRG2**)

I felt left out when Isaac was only playing with Chad (he always does it) (**Fergus, 7:10, BRG2**)

I've been naughty when I've been angry at my mum (**Logan, 7:11, BRG2**)

When I felt annoyed my face was like this. I did it when my brother blamed all of the bad things on me (**Fraser, 7:8, BRG2**)

These Empathy Journal responses show that children were able to connect their prior experiences to the facial expressions and to reflect on their own perspectives of the emotional states of these hypothetical others. By asking children to go beyond recognition of the emotional state depicted on the card and describe a time when they had felt the same emotional state in their own lives, the design of this Bridge Lesson provided opportunities for children to engage in perspective taking regarding the self.

The design of the fifth Bridge Lesson was changed to provide an opportunity for children to engage in both whole class and small group dialogue about a range of scenarios to prompt empathic responses. The More or Less Empathy activity (**see section 4.12 for full description**) was designed in response to changes to the previous Inquiry Lesson. The original discussion plan for this Inquiry Lesson focussed on a series of three hypothetical scenarios. Due to unforeseen circumstances and limited time for the Community of Inquiry these scenarios were not used, and changes were made to use the same scenarios in a different format. The children were asked to determine an empathy continuum and place scenario cards on a line on the classroom floor labelled from more empathy to less empathy.

This design change prompted children to use their perspective taking skills in two ways. First, the brief scenarios prompted children to take the perspective of the hypothetical other in each scenario, and to take the perspective of the self in imagining themselves acting in each scenario. Second, by working in small groups to negotiate the order of the scenarios, children needed to take the perspective of their peers, as they explained their ideas and negotiated with each other about where each scenario should be on the empathy continuum. In this way, the fifth Bridge Lesson activity primed children to take the perspective of others in preparation for the following Community of

Inquiry where the teacher presented the discussion plan scenarios that were not discussed in the previous Inquiry Lesson.

5.2.2 Changes to Inquiry Lesson Discussion Plans

Each Community of Inquiry session focussed on a specific Big Idea and a Big Question, a design structure that remained stable across the lesson sequence. All Community of Inquiry discussion plans were designed to support genuine inquiry about the Big Idea and Big Questions; however, the discussion plans were designed to being adjusted in response to the dynamic and ongoing dialogic exchanges that occurred in each Inquiry Lesson. The questions asked by the teacher were impacted by ongoing design changes and the use of hypothetical scenarios across Bridge and Inquiry Lessons. Findings in relation to both of these are presented next.

Minor adjustments were made to questions and prompts in discussion plans in response to the dynamic and changeable nature of the inquiry process in each Community of Inquiry session, the focus of children's learning and discussion during intervening Bridge Lessons, and discussions with the teacher after each lesson throughout the design implementation. The teacher and I considered that the initial prompts were not sufficiently clear to support children's ability to demonstrate perspective taking regarding others.

An example of changes made to teacher prompts was the increased use of questions to sustain dialogue such as "Who agrees/disagrees with (child)'s ideas here?" "Can you explain why you agree/disagree with (child)'s idea?". These changes to the discussion plans appear to support the need for a teacher to have a repertoire of questions and to understand the purpose in drawing out specific elements of

pedagogical practice necessary for fostering children's perspective taking and justificatory reasoning in their facilitation of a Community of Inquiry.

Another change designed to increase children's perspective taking regarding the emotional states of others was the introduction of hypothetical scenarios into discussion plans for the fifth Community of Inquiry. These scenarios were designed to provide examples of social dilemmas within the familiar context of the schoolyard that children might experience during recess or lunch and used some of the dilemmas taken from the empathy continuum in the fifth Bridge Lesson (**see section 4.12**). By providing three scenarios where the situation remained the same and the protagonists shifted from friends, to familiar peers, to strangers, the children engaged in perspective taking regarding others (**see section 4.13.2**). This research found that the children engaged in perspective taking regarding others and were able to dialogically build on peer thinking.

For example, in the fifth Community of Inquiry, Wayne showed that he was building on the thoughts of his peers to support his own thinking about the perspective of others. He used the stimulus of the hypothetical scenarios to connect his ideas to the suggestions of other children. '*I agree with Flint (I think we should just leave her alone, because I agree with Bruce that you shouldn't, but because they might also get angry with you), also with Tony (they might get angry at you and then they would stomp away and you might feel sad) because if you go up to a person who is sad they might get even more sad because it is easy to get your feelings hurt even more once they are hurt*' (**Wayne, 8:5, COI5**). This exemplar shows that Wayne was thinking about how he might feel in that situation and was applying his own experience of having hurt feelings stimulated by the hypothetical scenario.

Another example of the role of the hypothetical scenarios in prompting children's perspective taking came from Harry after the teacher asked these questions after describing the scenario; *'What emotions do you have and what do you do in that situation? What are you feeling and what would your actions be in that situation'* (**Teacher, COI5**). *'I think it nearly happened with me and India, Kylie, and Rebecca. Nearly every day we do it, we get frustrated with each other and we just argue too much'* (**Harry, 6:9, COI5**). '*So you're sharing that this situation happens to you so you can understand what's just happened in the scenario. The question is how do you feel and what are you going to do about it?* (**Teacher, COI5**). '*I think I'll maybe say to the person who is crying "it's alright you don't always have to cry all the time because it wasn't like you were playing how you don't play the game". I would probably feel normal but I would probably be really sad about the person who is crying'* (**Harry, 6:9, COI5**). This exemplar illustrated that Harry immediately began to engage in perspective taking regarding the self and others in the scenario by drawing on his own experience with social dilemmas between friends in the playground context and using this understanding in his thoughts about the children represented in the scenario. This also highlights the important role of the teacher and their understanding of the dialogic process, as additional prompts were used to elicit responses to the questions asked. This is an example of discussion plan questions and hypothetical scenarios working to elicit responses from children that showed perspective taking of self and others.

A further example is shown in this series of dialogic exchanges between the teacher and Fergus. *'A couple of days ago I was sitting on the step watching Isaac and Tyler and I think Isaac got angry at Tyler, or Tyler got angry at Isaac hitting the ball off him and Tyler ran away* (**Fergus, 7:10, COI5**). '*So how did you feel?*' (**Teacher, COI5**). '*A*

bit bad for Tyler' (**Fergus, 7:10, COI5**). *'Who ran away?'* (**Teacher, COI5**). '*Tyler*' (**Fergus, 7:10, COI5**). *'So you felt sorry for the person that wasn't the angry person?*' (**Teacher, COI5**). '*Tyler got angry because Isaac took the ball off him and he ran away crying and I got angry'* (**Fergus, 7:10, COI5**). This exemplar demonstrated that Fergus connected his own experience of challenging social situations with the scenarios being presented, indicating that children were able to connect their own experience of social dilemmas to the hypothetical scenarios, and reason about their empathic response to social emotional dilemmas. This is an important exchange to note because Fergus was a child who had trouble regulating his emotions at school, and did not often engage in dialogue during Community of Inquiry sessions. This series of dialogic exchanges between the teacher and Fergus focussed more on his own experience than the hypothetical scenario; however it also provided an opportunity for Fergus to engage in dialogue about his emotional states that he may not have otherwise had. Across the intervention Fergus offered 13 statements during all Community of Inquiry sessions. Of these 13 dialogic exchanges, nine were offered during the last two Inquiry Lessons. The addition of the hypothetical scenarios to the discussion plan for the fifth Community of Inquiry gave Fergus the opportunity to engage with the community of critical learners in ways he had not previously demonstrated. Furthermore, it provided Fergus with an opportunity to reflect on his own responses in past social dilemmas which may have helped to inform his emotional response in the future.

Changing the design elements to incorporate hypothetical scenarios into the Community of Inquiry discussion plans enabled some children to engage in perspective taking regarding the self and others through making connections to their own lived

experience. Additionally, it provided individual children with the opportunity to reflect on their own emotional states.

The following section presents data that showed an increase in the complexity of children's dialogic exchanges that demonstrated perspective taking, as measured by levels of justificatory reasoning across the sequence of lessons.

5.3 Levels of Justificatory Reasoning about Perspective Taking

This section presents analysis and findings of the justifications that children used to support their thinking about the *perspectives of the baby, self and others* in the Empathic Pedagogy. Children's dialogic exchanges were found to increase in complexity in their ability to take the perspective of the baby, self and others.

As described in Chapter Three (**see section 3.6**), children's dialogic offerings were first coded as statements and then further coded at three levels of justificatory reasoning:

1. Justificatory Reasoning Level One: isolated statements that had no support, or support that was not relevant to the claims being made.
2. Justificatory Reasoning Level Two: statements that offered some relevant evidence to support reasoning.
3. Justificatory Reasoning Level Three: statements that used relevant evidence to support reasoning about the claim being made often through the use of the word 'because'.

To illustrate some of the children's dialogic exchanges demonstrating perspective taking that typified each of the levels of justificatory reasoning, examples from each of the Community of Inquiry sessions are presented below (**see Table 8**).

Table 8

Examples of Children's Justificatory Reasoning Levels of Children's Perspective Taking across the Community of Inquiry Lesson Sequence

Lessons	Child	Dialogic Exchanges	Justificatory Reasoning Levels
Inquiry 1	Carl	When I was on my holiday, my cousins knew all about sign language and they were teaching me how to do it and some sign languages were kind of funny	1
Inquiry 2	Tyler	Well I think that sometimes when you have a face that looks happy, you can be angry or have different feelings	1
Inquiry 3	Isaac	I think that you need feelings because if you didn't have feelings you won't know what people are saying	2
Inquiry 4	Henry	I agree with Shane because you sort of can know if you haven't had the feeling that someone else is having because you can sort of read it	2
Inquiry 5	Andrea	I would feel sad for both of them because when they walk away the angry one might feel sad for the other one, because they might not know what it is they're saying; being angry	3
Inquiry 6	Flint	I think that if you want more friends you should be more empathetic because if you be more empathetic you'll get more friends because then people will start to like you because you care for them and so they'll want to be your friend and be with you more.	3

This selection of dialogic exchanges illustrates the increase in the complexity of children's justificatory reasoning for perspective taking across all three levels. It can be

seen that the dialogic exchanges demonstrating justificatory reasoning at level three contain strong support for the claim being made through the use of multiple forms of relevant evidence.

This research found that there was an overall increase in the number of justificatory statements coded as *perspective taking* across the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions (**see Figure 33**).

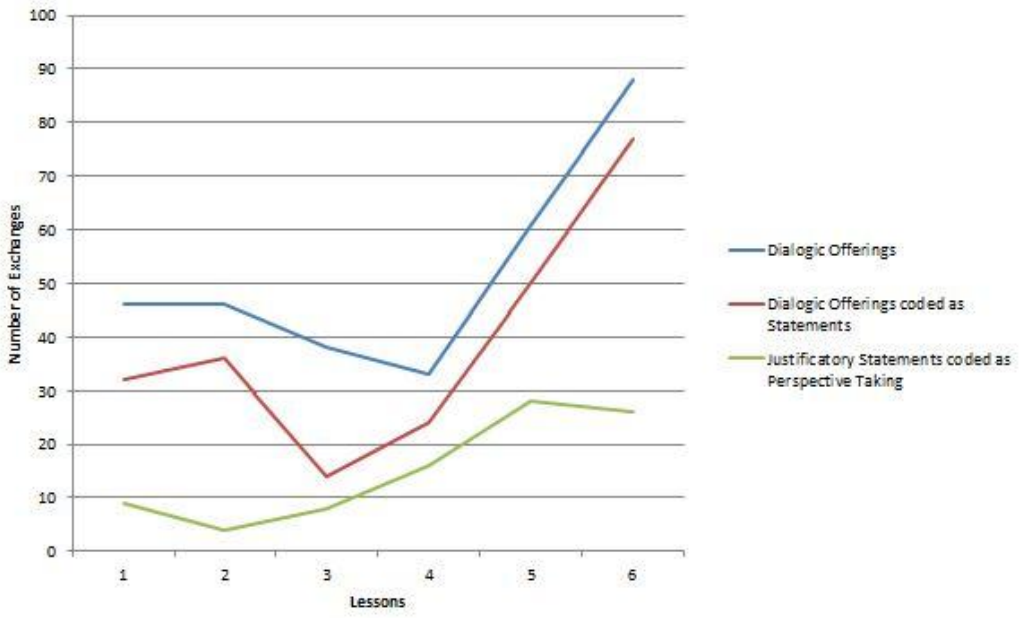


Figure 33. Comparison between Overall Dialogic Offerings, Overall Statements, and Justificatory Statements coded as Perspective Taking

When examining the dialogic offerings coded as perspective taking it was found that children's justificatory reasoning for perspective taking increased in all three justificatory reasoning levels over the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions (**see Figure 34**).

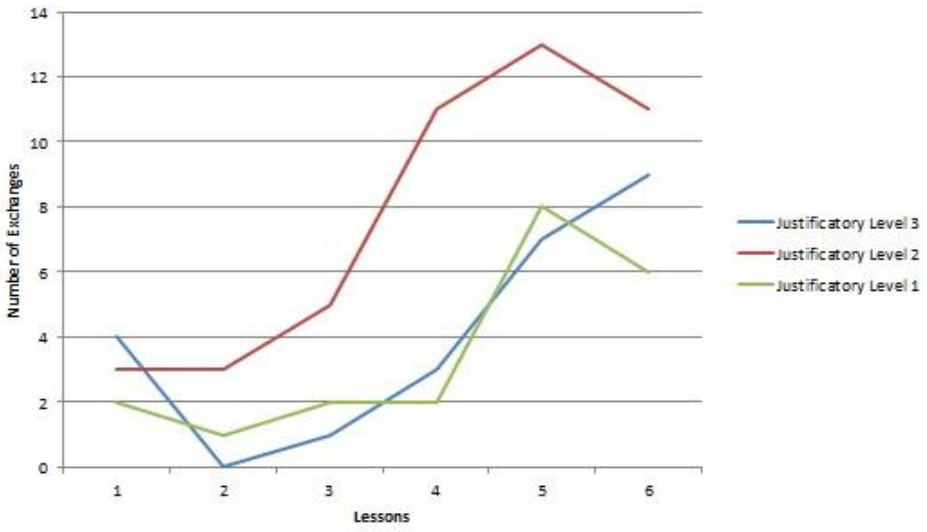


Figure 34. Justificatory reasoning levels of children's perspective taking across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.

Analysis showed a slight decrease in the number of dialogic exchanges at justificatory reasoning levels one and two in the final Community of Inquiry session and an increase in the number of dialogic exchanges at justificatory reasoning level three culminating in the final Community of Inquiry session. The predominant justificatory reasoning level for perspective taking regarding the baby, self and others was found to be justificatory reasoning level two.

When looking specifically at the dialogic exchanges that showed *perspective taking regarding others*, it can be seen that justificatory reasoning at level two was the most prevalent form of reasoning (**see Figure 35**). There was however, an increase in the number of dialogic exchanges that demonstrated justificatory reasoning at all levels, including dialogic exchanges at level three, the highest level of justificatory reasoning.

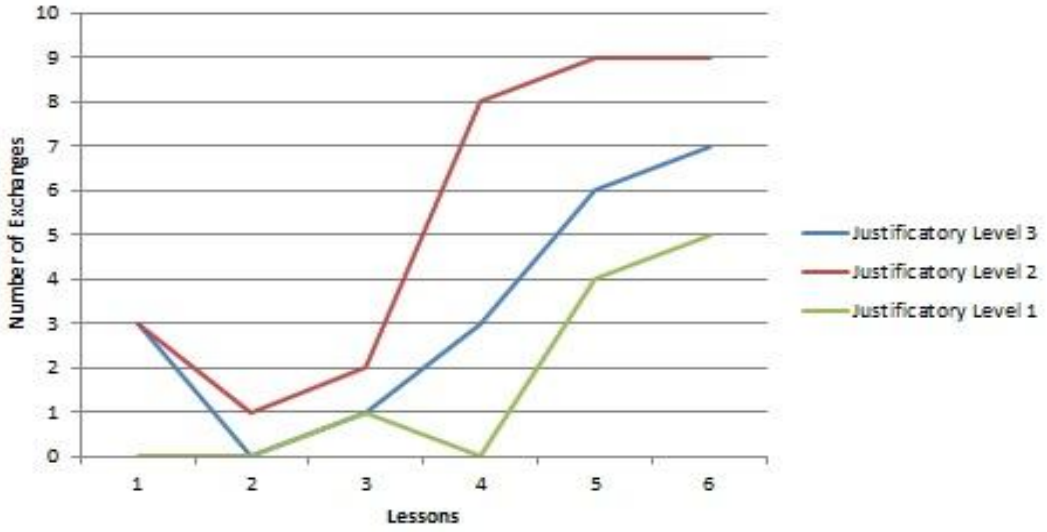


Figure 35. Justificatory levels of children's perspective taking regarding others across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.

Overall, this research found that the number of children's dialogic exchanges about perspective taking within the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions, increased in complexity, as measured by justificatory reasoning levels. This research further found that children's perspective taking, and the complexity of the justifications used to support their thinking about perspective taking, can be fostered over time using a Community of Inquiry approach.

5.4 Focus of Children's Perspective Taking

This research found that children have the capacity to increase their engagement in genuine dialogue about emotions, and are able to support their thinking with justifications about the perspectives of the baby, their own emotional states, and the perspectives of others. The research found that this capacity can be developed in the Empathic Pedagogy. Analysis and findings relating to each of the three focus areas for

perspective taking regarding the baby, the self, and others are presented below. The data is presented using the thematic elements and chronological order which highlights the linear characteristics of the research design that supported perspective taking.

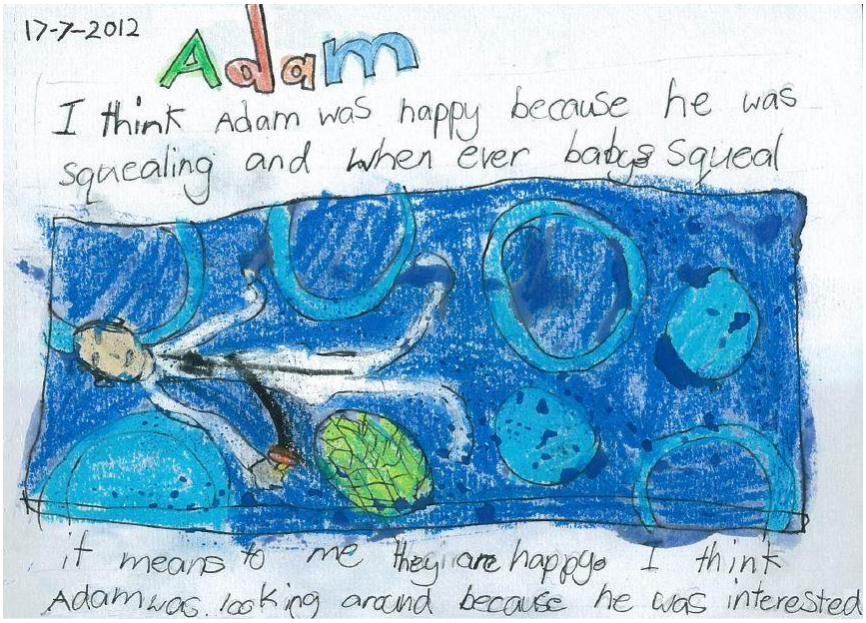
5.4.1 Perspective Taking Regarding the Baby

This research found that children were able to take the perspective of the baby. This was evident in children's dialogue within Community of Inquiry sessions, artefacts from lessons and Empathy Journal responses, and also across the Empathic Pedagogy implementation. The data analysis highlighted the multiple ways in which children's perspective taking regarding the baby were visible. Children were able to imagine what the baby was thinking and trying to communicate during their ongoing observations. Fergus offered a statement that indicated that he was thinking about the baby's perspective and how baby Adam may be feeling about being in the classroom. '*I think Adam is a feeling reader because when everyone was laughing, Adam was smiling and laughing'* (**Fergus, 7:10, COI3**). His conclusion was that the baby could read feelings, because baby Adam was able to observe those around him in the same way that the children were observing baby Adam and trying to read his emotional states. Fergus' statement indicated that he was able to respond to the baby's emotional state. In recognising baby Adam as a 'feeling reader', he was taking the perspective of the baby and imagining why baby Adam would be smiling and laughing with everyone else.

Children were found to have a broad range of understandings about the baby's emotional states when they were asked to physically take the baby's perspective. In the first Bridge Lesson, children were asked to physically position themselves like baby Adam and to imagine what he was seeing, hearing and feeling. The subsequent discussion revealed that children were able to consider a wide range of emotional states

and provide reasons to support their observations. For example: Carl was able to infer that baby Adam was enjoying himself because of new stimuli; *'I think Adam was having a good time because he had new things to see and had some old stuff that he could do things with'* (**Carl, 7:5, BRG1**), Flint and Rick both saw that baby Adam was frightened and experiencing stress because he was in unfamiliar surroundings; *'I think Adam was a bit scared because all the people he didn't know, for a little while'* (**Flint, 7:2, BRG1**); *'I think Adam felt a bit under pressure at the end when everyone was crowding him in and looking down at him'* (**Rick, 7:8, BRG1**). Bruce reasoned that baby Adam was communicating with others; *'I think when he was making those sounds he was trying to communicate but he just didn't know how to communicate like us'* (**Bruce, 8:2, BRG1**). These examples illustrated that children were able to take the perspective of the baby by reading baby Adam's emotional states and his ways of communicating.

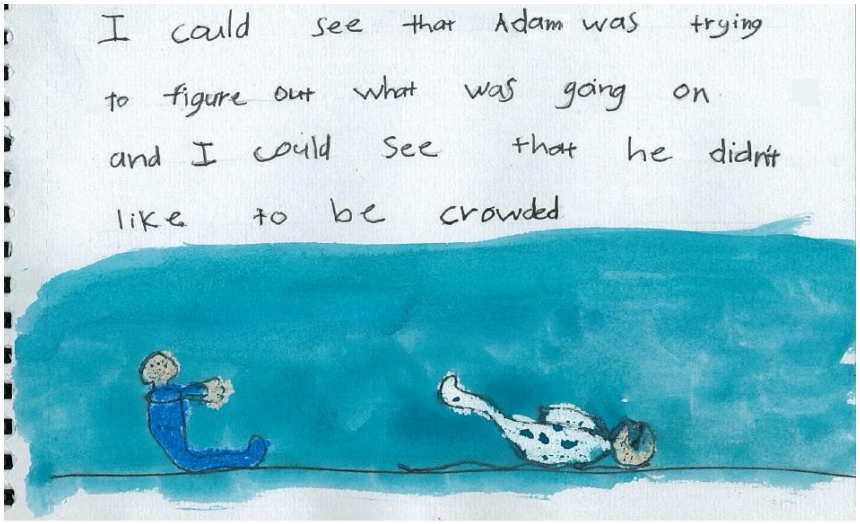
The findings demonstrate that children were able to verbalise their feelings and thoughts about how baby Adam might have felt in the classroom, and provide reasons to explain the ways that the baby might feel by drawing on observations of his past experience in the classroom, his mother's responses, and his own response to the children in the classroom. Furthermore, children drew on their own understanding of emotions to support their perspective taking regarding baby. For example, Andrea drew on her own understanding of the squealing noises she observed baby Adam making when she explained how she thought he was feeling during his first visit to the classroom (**see Figure 36**).



(*I think Adam was happy because he was squealing and whenever babies squeal it means to me they are happy. I think Adam was looking around because he was interested*) (**Andrea, 7:10, STM1**).

Figure 36. Andrea's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby drawing on her own understanding of emotions.

Children's written and drawn responses during planned activities and in their Empathy Journals provided further evidence of their ability to take the baby's perspective. For example, Buddy used his journal entry after the first Stimulus Lesson to highlight his concern for baby Adam's feelings as the children crowded around at the end of that lesson (**see Figure 37**).

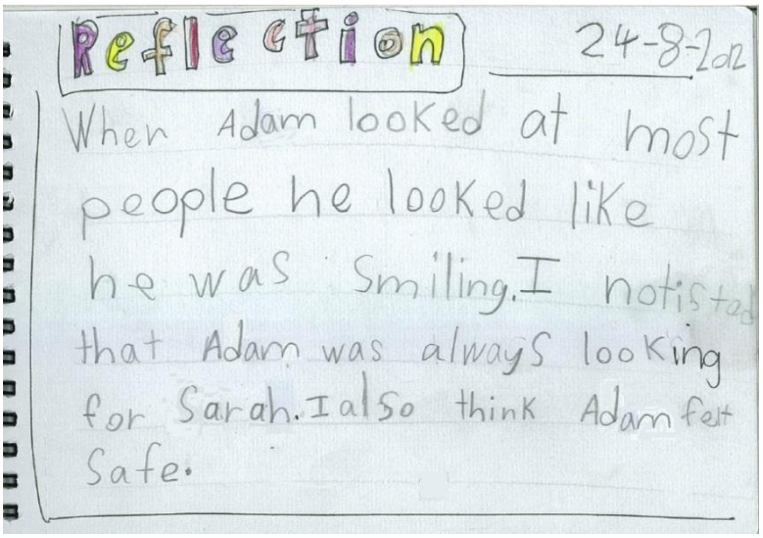


(*I could see that Adam was trying to figure out what was going on and I could see that he didn't like to be crowded*) (**Buddy, 8:1, STM1**).

Figure 37. Buddy's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby.

This exemplar demonstrated that Buddy was able to take the perspective of the baby by imagining what it must be like for baby Adam to have so many unfamiliar children crowding around him, and to interpret baby Adam's emotional states in coming to that conclusion. The fact that Buddy chose to write and illustrate this particular situation further supports that Buddy was able to demonstrate his understandings of the baby's perspective through a range of representations.

Another example is visible in Rick's Empathy Journal entry after the second Community of Inquiry Rick showed that he had observed baby Adam closely and made a connection between the baby's emotional states and his connection to the mother (Sarah), drawing his own conclusions about baby Adam's emotional states (**see Figure 38**).



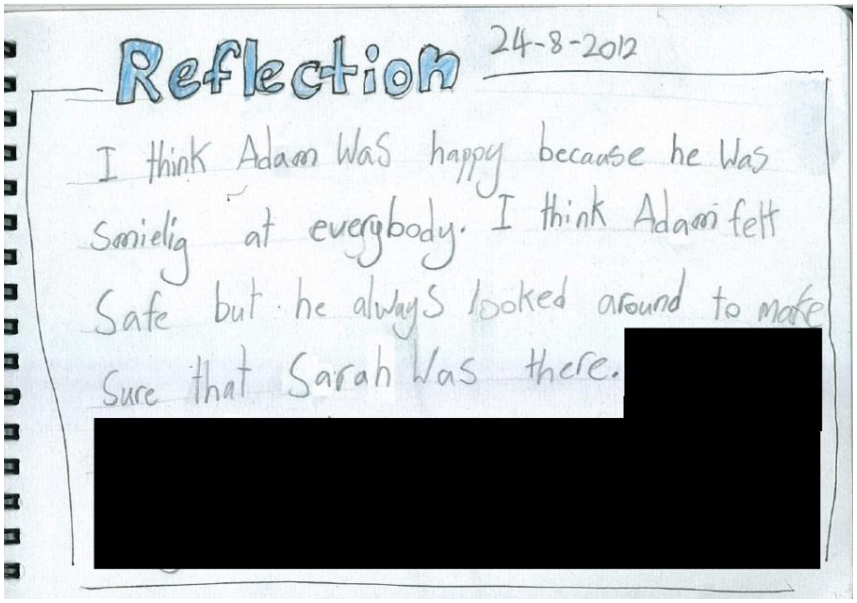
(*When Adam looked at most people he looked like he was smiling. I noticed that Adam was always looking for Sarah. I also think Adam felt safe*) (**Rick, 7:8, COI2**).

Figure 38. Rick's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby.

The reasoning that Rick employed here is complex. His journal entry describes how he observed the facial cues baby Adam exhibited, and applied his own thoughts about the relationship between the mother and baby, leading to his conclusion that baby Adam felt safe with his mother. The line of reasoning shown in this journal entry might be expressed in this way: *Baby Adam looks to his mother for reassurance → baby Adam is smiling a lot → therefore, baby Adam must feel safe.* This exemplar indicated that Rick used his observations of the baby and mother as well as drawing on his own understanding of the impact of close relationships on the baby's emotional state. This was then used to engage in perspective taking regarding the baby.

A further example of children using their observations of the baby and their understanding of emotional states to support their perspective taking regarding the

baby was found in Lori's journal entry in response to the same Community of Inquiry (**see Figure 39**).



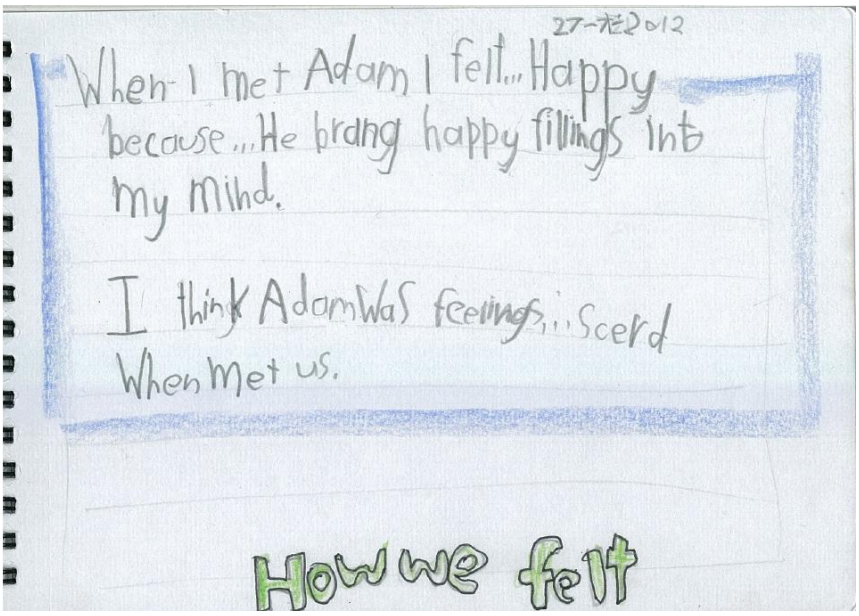
(*I think Adam was happy because he was smiling at everybody. I think Adam felt safe but he always looked around to make sure that Sarah was there.*) (**Lori, 8:2, COI2**).

Figure 39. Lori's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby.

Lori demonstrated that she was able to take the perspective of the baby as she described how he might be feeling. Lori used her observations of baby Adam's facial and body movement cues, and like Rick, she described how she thought that baby Adam's social cues indicated his secure attachment to his mother, therefore indicating to her that he felt safe and happy.

Following this Bridge Lesson activity of lying on the floor like baby Adam, children were asked to describe in their Empathy Journals how they felt after the first visit from Sarah and baby Adam. Children incorporated their thoughts about baby

Adam's feelings into their journal entries, which demonstrated their ability for perspective taking regarding the baby. This data exemplar from Fergus' Empathy Journal (**see Figure 40**) following the first Bridge Lesson indicated that he was engaging in perspective taking regarding the baby when describing his own feelings.



(*When I met Adam I felt happy because he brought happy feelings into my mind. I think Adam was feeling scared when he met us*) (**Fergus, 7:10, BRG1**).

Figure 40. Fergus's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing perspective taking of the baby.

Fergus showed that when asked to reflect on his feelings after meeting baby Adam, he could articulate his own feelings of happiness, but more importantly, he was able to reflect on baby Adam's emotional state which was in contrast to his own, and therefore differed from his own, a complex form of perspective taking. Fergus was able to take the perspective of the baby and hypothesise that baby Adam may be feeling scared when meeting the class for the first time despite having had some prior

experience in a classroom environment, and Fergus was able to connect his own feelings with the experience of observing and interacting with the mother and baby.

The analysis of data from children's written journal entries highlighted their awareness of not only their own emotional states, but also the impact that circumstances can have on others' emotional states, and that these can differ from their own. Overall, the findings suggest that children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding the baby by; observing the social cues that baby Adam was taking from his mother, drawing on observations of baby Adam's past experiences in the classroom, and using their own understanding of emotional states to imagine what baby Adam might be feeling or thinking.

The analysis of data in the following section shows that children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding the self to reflect on and express their feelings. Children demonstrated this within the planned Community of Inquiry sessions (**see Table 4**), and also in the planned experiences, activities (**see Table 5**), and in the opportunities that children had for recording their thoughts and reasoning.

5.4.2 Perspective Taking Regarding the Self

This research found that children were able to engage in and express verbally and as representations, perspective taking regarding the self to support their thinking about the emotional states of others, indicating that they were able to draw on their own experiences to better understand the emotional states of others. This was particularly evident in children's dialogue within the final two Community of Inquiry sessions, as well as in children's written and drawn responses in their Empathy Journals, and built across the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy, increasingly

from the second Community of Inquiry session as the focus moved from the baby to the self.

Children were able to imagine how they might feel and act in the hypothetical scenarios used as additional stimuli in Bridge and Inquiry Lessons. An example is found in the fifth Community of Inquiry session. Tony offered a statement that indicated that he was able to draw on an understanding of his own perspective to imagine how he might feel in the scenario and how those feelings would help him decide who he would help in that situation. *'Well if I saw someone getting angry at someone and they stomped off, I would feel sad for the person that's crying and help them'* (**Tony, 8:4, COI5**). This exemplar indicated that Tony was able to imagine not only how he might feel in the situation presented, but also how the feelings of the other children involved would impact on the action he would take. Shane offered a further example and imagined how others might feel. He said; *'If two of my friends were upset, and one was angry and one was sad; I'd probably feel sad as well'* (**Shane, 7:5, COI5**). Likewise, Harry used his own social experience to reflect on the hypothetical scenario when he stated; *'I think it nearly happened with me and India, Kylie, and Rebecca. Nearly every day we do it, we get frustrated with each other and we just argue too much'*. He later added; *'I would probably feel normal, but I would probably be really sad about the person who is crying'* (**Harry, 6:9, COI5**). These exemplars indicated that children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding the self to imagine how they would feel in another situation where the feelings of others could be considered and how they would empathise with these hypothetical others.

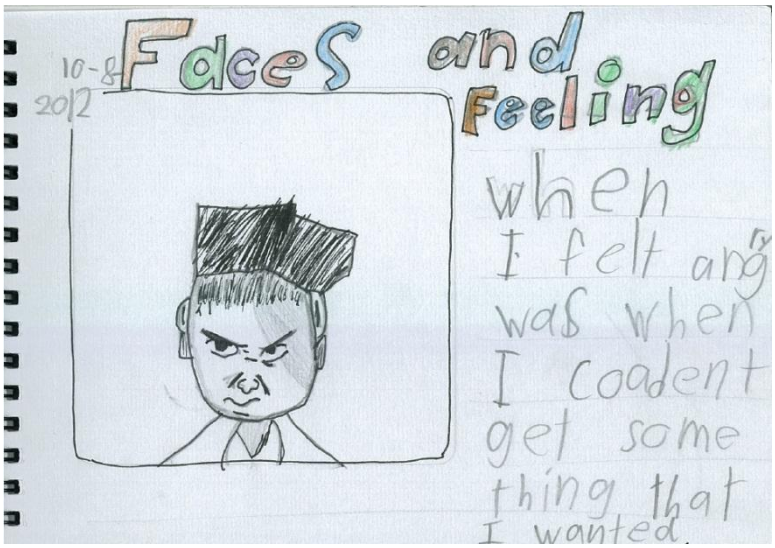
In contrast, there were some children who explained that they would not empathise with the children in the scenario. Wayne explained that he would not

intervene in any way as it was their issue to solve. *'I would think just to leave them to sort it out themselves because it's their problem, not mine'* (**Wayne, 8:5, COI5**). This exemplar indicated that Wayne was engaging in perspective taking regarding the self when considering how he might feel in response to the emotional states of others, but that he would not intervene. Other children also demonstrated perspective taking regarding the self to support their ability to take the perspective of others, in order to conclude that despite empathising with those in distress, no empathic concern should be offered. Fraser said *'If I was sitting there watching it, I would feel quite sorry for the person who walked off crying, but I wouldn't do anything'* (**Fraser, 7:8, COI5**), and Isaac suggested that he wouldn't help anyone in that situation *'because if you're helping somebody and the other person sees, they might even get angrier'* (**Isaac, 7:7, COI5**). As will be seen in the following section on perspective taking regarding others (**see section 5.4.3**), this reasoning that others should be left to solve their own social problems was common amongst these children.

The finding indicates that children were able to engage in perspective taking of the self to support their understanding of the emotional states of others, but their empathic response may or may not result in concrete action. Children were able to verbally express how their own feelings and past experiences could influence their feelings, thoughts and actions towards others.

Analysis of data provided further evidence for children's perspective taking of the self in their written and drawn responses in their Empathy Journals. The activity for Bridge Lesson 2 involved children naming an emotion depicted on a Face It™ card and describing a time when they had felt that emotion themselves (**see section 3.7**). This activity explicitly asked children to think about and articulate their own perspective and

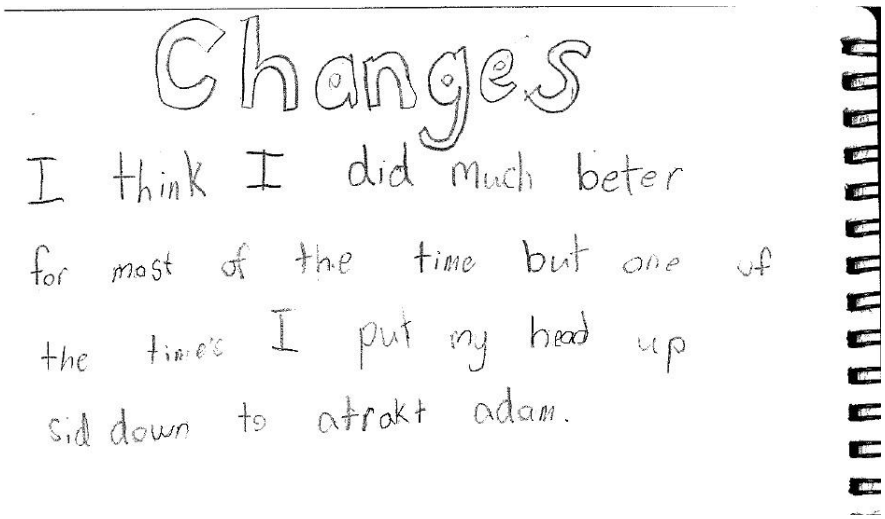
was designed to encourage children to begin to relate the observed and perceived emotional states of others to their own experiences. Isaac demonstrated that he was able to refer to his own perspective to describe a time when he felt angry in his own life (**see Figure 41**).



(*When I felt angry was when I couldn't get something that I wanted*) (**Isaac, 7:7, BRG2**)

Figure 41. Isaac's Empathy Journal entry reflection for faces and feelings activity showing perspective taking of the self.

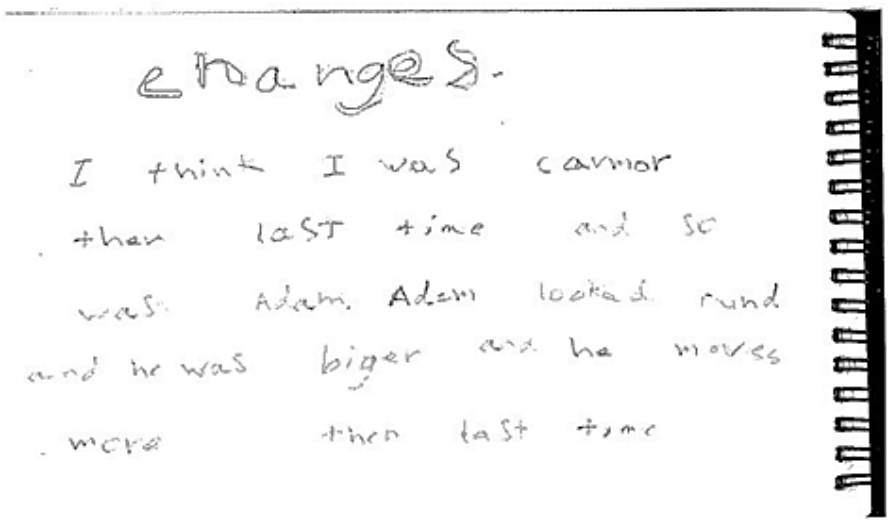
This exemplar demonstrated that Isaac was able to reflect on his own perspective to describe a time when he felt angry, and indicated that children were able to refer to their own emotional experiences to inform their thinking about their own feelings as well as the emotional states of others. Another example of children's perspective taking regarding the self was found following the final Community of Inquiry session; where children recorded any changes they had noticed in baby Adam or themselves over time. Kylie demonstrated perspective taking regarding the self when she reflected on her own behaviour after the final Community of Inquiry session (**see Figure 42**).



(*I think I did much better for most of the time but one of the times I put my head upside down to attract Adam*) (**Kylie, 7:1, STM6**)

Figure 42. Kylie's Empathy Journal entry for changes reflection.

Kylie showed an awareness of her own social emotional development across the Empathic Pedagogy, described a growing awareness of the need for personal inhibitory control, and explained how her actions could impact on the behaviour of others such as baby Adam. Buddy wrote in his Empathy Journal entry after the final Community of Inquiry (**see Figure 43**) and described how both he and baby Adam were calmer than the last time Adam visited the classroom.



(*I think I was calmer than last time, and so was Adam. Adam looked round and he was bigger, and he moves more than last time*) (**Buddy, 8:1, STM6)**

Figure 43. Buddy's Empathy Journal entry for changes reflection.

Buddy demonstrated that he was able to engage in perspective taking regarding the self and to draw on this understanding of his own emotional states when reflecting on baby Adam's development over time. In describing how both he and baby Adam were calmer, Buddy indicated that he engaged in perspective taking regarding the self to recognise, name and connect his own feelings with those of others.

The analysis of data from children's written Empathy Journal entries demonstrated that children were able to reflect on their own perspectives in relation to the emotional states of others. Some perspective taking regarding the self was visible in children's dialogic exchanges offered in Community of Inquiry sessions, but it was most evident from the written responses from their Empathy Journals that children were engaging in perspective taking regarding the self. In this way, the Empathy Journal was

a key design feature in making visible children's perspective taking regarding the self. Overall, the findings presented in this section indicated that children were able to use their own perspective to support their understanding of the emotional states of others and to inform their actions. The analysis of data in the following section shows that children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding others.

5.4.3 Perspective Taking Regarding Others

This research found that children engaged in perspective taking regarding others and were able to reflect on the emotional states of others in ways that took into account a range of perspectives. This was evident in children's dialogue across all Community of Inquiry sessions. Children also demonstrated the capacity for perspective taking regarding others in their written and drawn responses in their Empathy Journals following Bridge Lessons. Children's dialogic exchanges that demonstrated perspective taking regarding others were the most frequent form of perspective taking across the Empathic Pedagogy (**see Figure 44**).

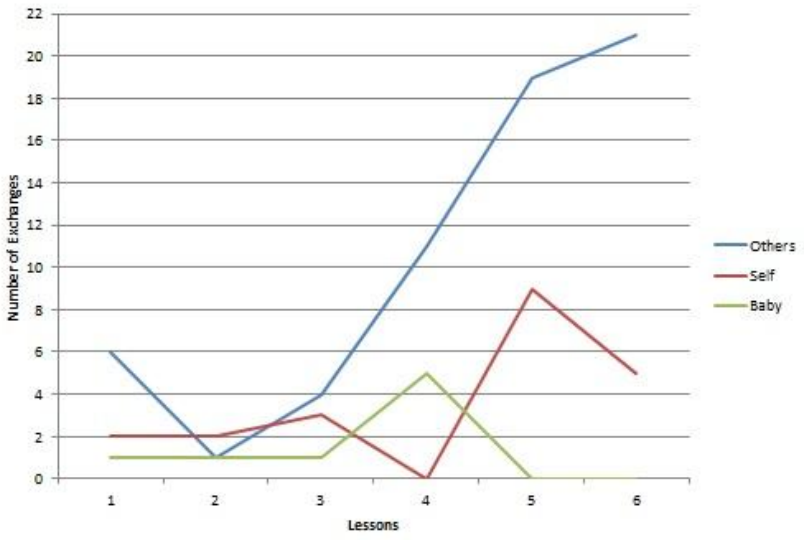


Figure 44. Focus of children's perspective taking across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.

Children were found to take the perspective of others and imagine what they were thinking and feeling by observing and reflecting on non-verbal cues such as tone and intonation of others' voices. Wayne offered a statement that indicated he was considering the perspective of others based on the sound of their voices. *'I think you can tell how people are feeling by their voice, because if they are feeling kind of angry they might be in a deep, more angry sounding voice, and when they're happy they're at their normal tone'* (**Wayne, 8:5, COI2**). His conclusion was that the emotional states of others could be better understood by listening to the tone and intonation and imagining the emotional state that was reflected in their voices. Wayne was able to distinguish between sound quality and draw inferences about emotional meaning from these differences.

In the fifth Community of Inquiry session (**see section 4.13.2**) the children were provided with a scenario involving a social dilemma concerning two friends; one who becomes angry and stomps off, and one who becomes sad and cries following a playground disagreement. Bruce asked a question that indicated he was engaging in perspective taking regarding others. *'Why do so many people care for the one who is crying when the one who is angry might feel sad inside because they don't get their way or something?'* (**Bruce, 8:2, COI5**). This example indicated that Bruce was not only imagining himself as an observer in the hypothetical scenario, but was also taking the perspective of others and reasoning about the emotional state of the angry child. This focus on the angry child in the scenario was also found in Harry's statement, that he would act to support the angry child '*because if you don't do anything about it the person might get angrier and angrier and angrier*' (**Harry, 6:9, COI5**). This example showed

that Harry was also taking the perspective of others and imagining how social support (or lack of it) could impact on the emotional state of the angry child.

Perspective taking regarding the emotional state of the angry child was in contrast to most children's viewpoints, which tended to focus on supporting the sad child in the scenario. Tony's statement illustrated this: '*Well if I saw someone getting angry at someone and stomped off I would feel sad for the person that's crying and help them'* (**Tony, 8:4, COI5**). This example demonstrated that Tony was able to engage in perspective taking regarding others, but that his concern would be for the child who was crying, as he would feel sad for them.

Fraser's statement in the same Community of Inquiry showed concern for the crying child: *'If I was sitting there watching it, I would feel quite sorry for the person who's walked off crying, but I wouldn't do anything'* (**Fraser, 7:8, COI5**). Fraser's empathic concern for the emotional states of others is visible; however he concluded that no social support was needed from him in that situation. Several children presented similar views about the need to leave others to solve their own social problems. Wayne suggested that if he was going to respond, it would be to tell both children to solve their own problem; '*Well if I did do anything I would just get them together and tell them to sort it out themselves'* (**Wayne, 8:5, COI5**), Kevin agreed with Wayne that social problems should be solved by those immediately involved; '*I agree with Wayne that you could just go up to them and tell them to sort it out themselves'* (**Kevin, 7:11, COI5**). These exemplars indicated that children were engaging in perspective taking regarding others to conclude that social dilemmas should be solved by those directly involved, with minimal support from observers or bystanders. In this way children's justification

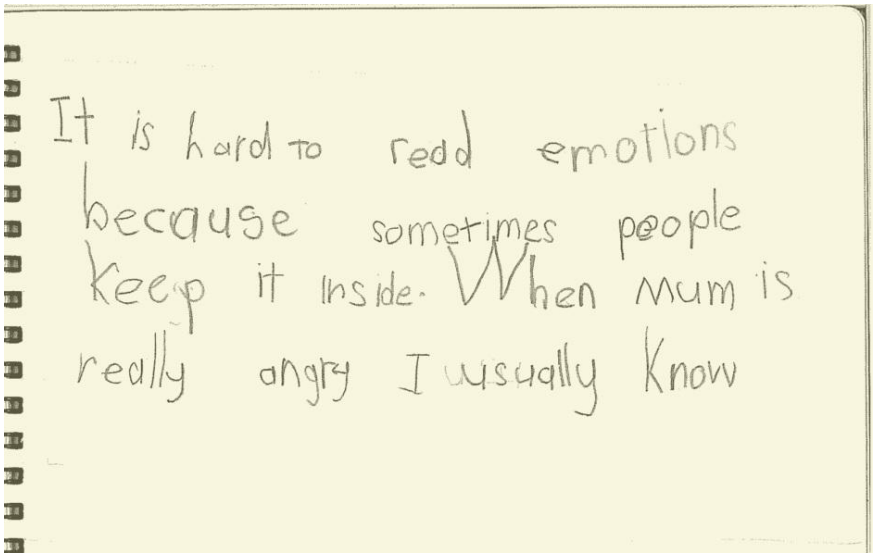
for empathic action (or inaction) appeared to be based on a matter of principle that others need to be allowed to solve their own problems.

In the sixth Community of Inquiry session Rick demonstrated that he was able to engage in perspective taking regarding others. Rick posed the question *'do you need to have empathy?'* (**Rick, 7:8, COI6**), and the teacher turned this question back to Rick get his response to this question by asking *'Do you need to Rick? What do you think?'* (**Teacher: COI6**). Rick showed that he recognised the reciprocal nature of having empathy and caring for others when he stated that *'We should. Because, if you don't have empathy, people may not care about you'* (**Rick, 7:8, COI6**). This example illustrated that children could reflect on how others may perceive a lack of concern for their emotional states, and were able to take the perspective of others and reflect on the implications of their social interactions 'for themselves'.

A further example of perspective taking regarding others while taking into account the possible implications for their social interactions came from Tyler in the same Community of Inquiry session. Tyler reasoned that too much empathy may negatively impact on friendships. *'Well I think if you already have enough empathy and you try to become more empathetic, you might be too empathetic so you might lose all of your friends because you might be worried about something when they don't need help so they might not like you'* (**Tyler, 7:5, COI6**). It can be seen here that Tyler had moved beyond the instrumental standpoint of the 'showing empathy equals gaining friends' conclusion that was suggested by many children. Tyler suggested that we have a limit to the amount of empathy we should show, and that if we try to be more empathic we may in fact alienate our friends.

This conclusion contrasts with that of children who believed that they should not act empathically to children in distress out of a principled position because it would limit those children's social problem solving. Some children concluded that empathy could lead to people taking advantage of any concern for their emotional distress. *'Well what if the person who you help is not all that nice and they just think 'well they just helped me so I don't have to do anything back' so they might not always make friends with you. Empathy didn't help me make friends'* (**Wayne, 8:5, COI6**). This exemplar demonstrated that while children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding others, their reasoning about the need for, or the response to empathic concern given to those others varied.

Data indicating children's perspective taking regarding others were also evident in their Empathy Journals. Tony stated how it can be difficult to read other people's emotions when they do not express them outwardly (**see Figure 45**). In this journal entry following the 'Emotional Charades' activity in the third Bridge Lesson, Tony also highlighted how the close relationship with a parent such as his mother helped him to gauge the emotions others were experiencing, particularly when it is a strong emotion such as anger.

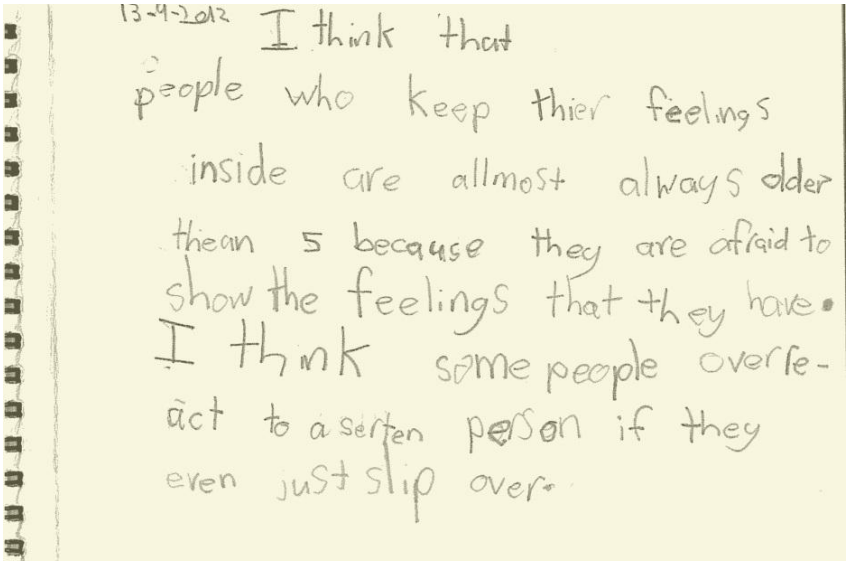


(*It is hard to read emotions because sometimes people keep it inside. When Mum is really angry I usually know*) (**Tony, 8:4, BRG3**)

Figure 45. Tony's Empathy Journal entry about perspective taking of others.

Tony was aware that perspective taking regarding others can be difficult when the emotional states of others are not outwardly displayed. He offered further support for this idea by suggesting that the emotional state of his mother was usually recognisable when she was angry, suggesting that it is easier to identify emotional states when the other person is known well.

Wayne's Empathy Journal entry in the same lesson suggests that young children (under the age of five) often do not keep their emotions inside, and that it is older children and adults who almost always keep their emotions inside because they are afraid to show them (**see Figure 46**).



(*I think that people who keep their feelings inside are almost always older than 5 because they are afraid to show feelings that they have. I think some people overreact to a certain person if they even just slip over*) (**Wayne, 8:5, BRG3**)

Figure 46. Wayne's Empathy Journal entry about perspective taking of others.

Wayne's journal entry demonstrated that despite having a sound understanding of the emotional states that others may be experiencing, and demonstrating the ability to engage in perspective taking regarding others throughout the research, he had little tolerance for those who displayed their emotional states beyond the age of five. This is in line with his previous assertion that people who are in emotional distress should be left to solve their own social and emotional issues or they will not develop their problem solving abilities and may continue to overreact to the emotional states of others (**see section 5.4.2**).

The analysis of data showed that children used social cues to support their perspective taking of others. These social cues included verbal and non-verbal cues such as tone and intonation. Children also engaged in perspective taking regarding others by

imagining themselves in hypothetical scenarios and considering if they would respond to the empathic distress of others, and how this response or inaction would impact on those others. The analysis of data supported a finding that children's capacity for perspective taking regarding others can be supported through the Community of Inquiry approach using hypothetical scenarios as stimuli for discussion about the emotional states of others.

Analysis of data presented in the previous sections showed that children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding the baby, perspective taking regarding the self, and perspective taking regarding others. Through their engagement with the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach, and their development as a community of critical learners within the classroom, children demonstrated an ability to use perspective taking regarding the baby, the self, and others to reason about the emotional states of others. These data were drawn from children's dialogic offerings within the Community of Inquiry sessions, as well as from children's written responses in their Empathy Journals.

The analysis of data demonstrated that children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding others by verbalising their thoughts and feelings about how others might feel in a range of social situations where the feelings of others could be considered. This analysis of data supported a finding that children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding others within a Community of Inquiry using observation of non-verbal cues such as tone and intonation, by imagining themselves in hypothetical scenarios where children express emotional distress, and by considering how social support and empathic response can impact on themselves and others.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reported the findings regarding perspective taking in the Community of Inquiry by presenting analysis of data from a range of sources to demonstrate children's perspective taking regarding the baby, the self, and others. These data sources included dialogue exchanges from Community of Inquiry sessions, entries from children's Empathy Journals, and artefacts from Bridge Lesson activities.

The data show an increase in the number of dialogic exchanges which demonstrated perspective taking regarding the baby, the self and others across the sequence of six Community of Inquiry sessions. Analysis of data for children's perspective taking indicated a finding that children's capacity for perspective taking regarding the baby, the self and others is fostered through dialogic exchange within a Community of Inquiry approach. This was particularly evident in the analysis of data for children's perspective taking regarding others which found that incorporating hypothetical scenarios as stimulus material within the Community of Inquiry supported children's capacity for perspective taking regarding others. Analysis of data for perspective taking found that the complexity of children's justificatory reasoning for perspective taking regarding others can be fostered using the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach. By analysing data in multiple ways I added rigour to the findings that showed an increasing capacity in children's ability to engage in perspective taking regarding others over the sequence of the Community of Inquiry sessions. In the following chapter, findings relating to children's reasoning about emotions within the Community of Inquiry are discussed.

6. Analysis and Findings: Reasoning about Emotion in the Empathic Pedagogy

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis and findings regarding children's *reasoning about emotion* within the Empathic Pedagogy, specifically children's reasoning about the emotions of the baby, self, and others. As described in Chapter Two, reasoning is a central element of children's learning and occurs in all contexts of children's lives including the classroom setting. Children's ability to reason well is one of the prime goals of education (Fisher, 2013; Law, 2007); with the Australian Curriculum identifying critical and creative thinking as one of its general capabilities for students to be successful learners (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2013; Jensen & Kennedy White, 2014).

I first present data analysis and findings in relation to design characteristics that impacted on children's reasoning about emotion across the Empathic Pedagogy. Second, I present analysis and findings regarding the justifications that children used to support their reasoning about emotions of the baby, self, and others. Data presented throughout this chapter was drawn from a range of sources highlighted below (**see Figure 47**). Data is identified in this chapter using the descriptive coding system used in Chapter Five (**see Table 7, section 5.1**).

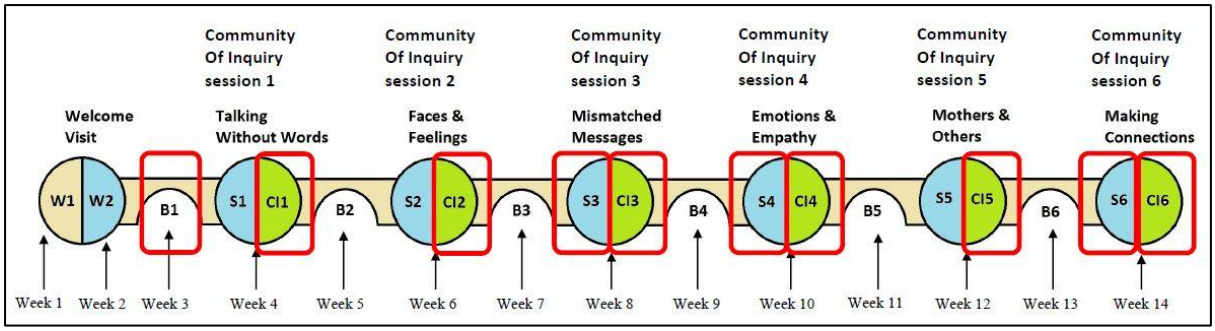


Figure 47. Data sources for reasoning about emotion across the lesson sequence

6.1.1 Overall Finding of Reasoning about Emotion in the Empathic Pedagogy

Overall, analysis of data supported a finding that engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy fostered children's capacity for reasoning about emotions of the baby, their own emotions, and the emotions of others.

6.2 Impact of the Research Design on Reasoning about Emotion

Following the principles of EDR (**see section 3.4.2**), the data analysis considered the impact of the research design on children's reasoning about emotion. This analysis included considering changes to lesson design made throughout the research process to encourage and strengthen children's reasoning about the emotions of the baby, the self, and others within the Community of Inquiry. The following sections present findings on children's reasoning about emotion and the relationship of these to the original design and changes made to the research design of Bridge Lesson activities and teacher prompts offered during Community of Inquiry sessions.

6.2.1 Design of the Bridge Lesson Activities

The design of Bridge Lesson activities had a positive impact on children's reasoning about emotion as well as their engagement with the Community of Inquiry sessions following the Bridge Lessons. An example of the role of the Bridge lessons in fostering children's reasoning about emotions is found in the fifth Bridge Lesson's *empathy line* activity (**see section 4.13**) where children developed their reasoning about emotions of others individually, and in small groups of three.

The 'empathy line' activity was adjusted to provide children with increased opportunity to discuss the emotions of others. This activity was originally planned as a whole class task where children would place scenarios on the empathy line and whole group discussion would take place. This activity still occurred at the beginning of the Bridge Lesson; however the lesson was redesigned to include small group work where all children would have increased opportunities to engage in reasoning about the emotions of others. The children were grouped to support children who tended not to offer their thoughts in the whole class discussions. For example, Bruce was grouped with Andrea and Lori; both of whom had been identified by the teacher in Phase One of the research as deep and critical thinkers yet were not contributing frequently in the Community of Inquiry sessions. Andrea and Lori had offered only six dialogic exchanges between them in the first four Community of Inquiry sessions, compared to Bruce who had offered 14 dialogic exchanges in those corresponding sessions. By re-designing this activity to include selective grouping, the discussion about the emotions of others in this Bridge Lesson provided opportunities for students to offer more dialogic exchanges and their reasoning about the emotions of others. The children's thinking about the

emotions of others was also recorded using an individualised Empathy Line in their Empathy Journal at the end of the lesson (**see Figure 48**).

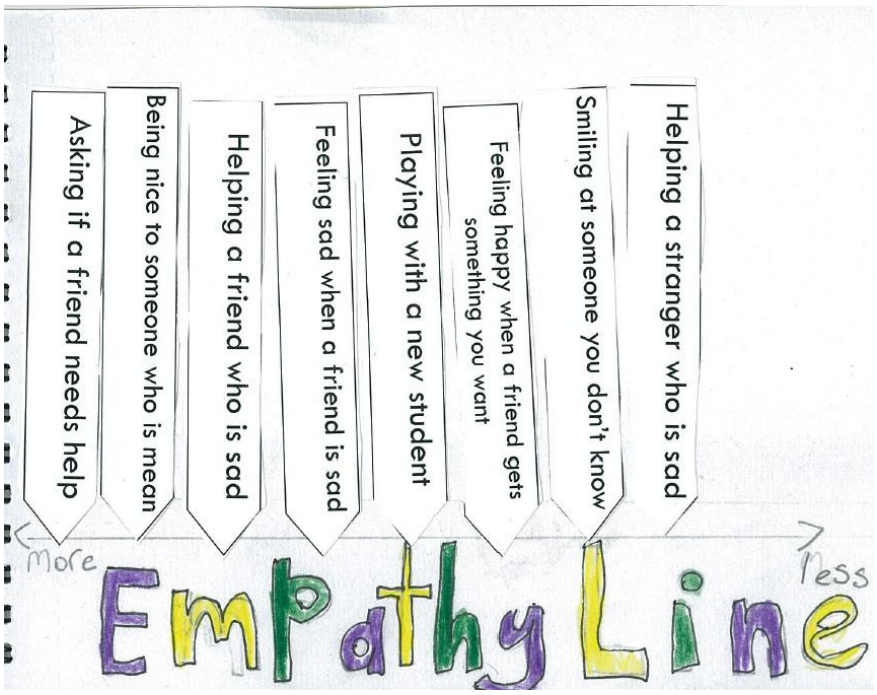


Figure 48. Example of individual empathy line activity in Empathy Journal.

The Empathy Journal entries provided data that would not have been available otherwise. The children's Journal illustrations provided insight into the actions they believed showed the most empathy (**see Figure 49**). The acts that children chose as the most empathic act included:

Feeling happy when a friend gets something you want (5 children)

Asking if a friend needs help (5 children)

Feeling sad when a friend is sad (3 children)

Playing with a new student (3 children)

Helping a stranger who is sad (2 children)

Being nice to someone who is mean (1 child)

Smiling at someone you don't know (1 child)

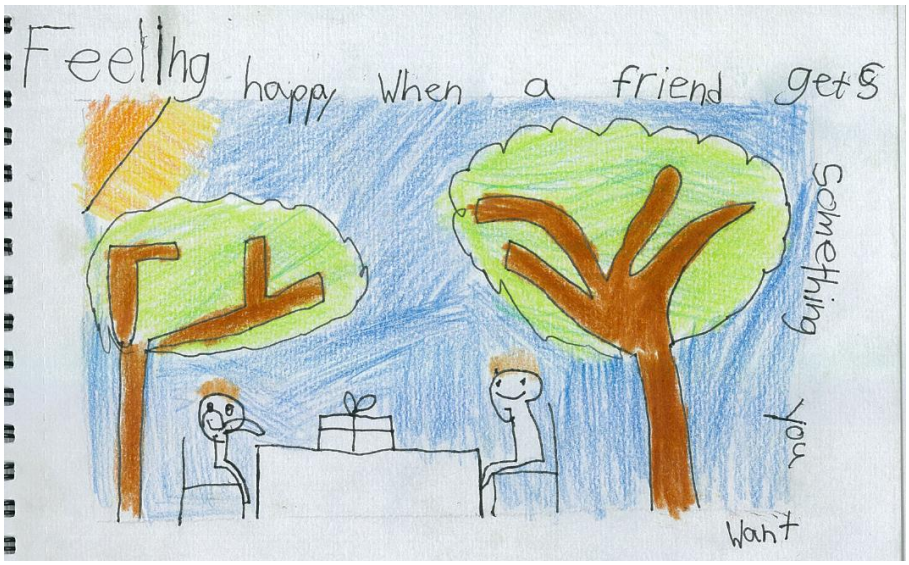


Figure 49. Carl's Empathy Journal entry showing 'feeling happy when a friend gets something they want' as the most empathic act on his empathy line.

Changing the design elements to include small group work provided children with increased opportunities to engage in reasoning about the emotions of others with their peers. This also enabled children who had not previously engaged in many dialogic exchanges within Community of Inquiry sessions to express their reasoning about the emotions of others in a smaller group, and individual setting that could inform their thinking for large group discussions in future Community of Inquiry sessions.

Furthermore, as was stated in Chapter Five (**see section 5.2.1**), the hypothetical scenarios used in the discussion plan for the fifth Community of Inquiry session drew on some of the dilemmas on the empathy continuum activity that children engaged with in the fifth Bridge Lesson. These cascading changes to the research design provided data

showing children's reasoning about emotion that might otherwise not have been seen. For example:

'If two of my friends were sad and one was angry and one was sad I'd probably feel sad as well' (**Shane, 7:5, COI5**) [Feeling sad when a friend is sad (**BRG5**)]

'The people you really care about would be the people you don't know, not your friends' (**Harry, 6:9, COI5**) [Helping a stranger who is sad (**BRG5**)]

Changes made to the research design of Bridge Lesson activities provided opportunities for children to engage with reasoning about emotion and contributed to understanding that could facilitate empathic response to familiar social dilemmas.

6.2.2 Changes to Teacher Prompts

Iterative changes were made to teacher prompts by asking children to justify their claims, and provide more explicit reasoning about emotions that may have underpinned their initial claim statements. As the Empathic Pedagogy progressed and the teacher and I debriefed after each Inquiry Lesson, it became clear that the teacher prompts for justification supported children to articulate or expand on their reasoning about emotions. This questioning was a part of the teacher's pedagogy beyond this research; however it was the overt recognition of these prompts, and the encouragement of their increased usage in the initial Inquiry Lessons, that allowed children's reasoning about emotions to be increasingly expressed. As described in Chapter Five, the need for a teacher to have a repertoire of questions and to understand the purpose in drawing out specific elements of pedagogical practice necessary for

fostering reasoning about emotion is an important factor in increased dialogic exchange within a Community of Inquiry.

Examples of the impact of the teacher's questions and prompts are found in the first Community of Inquiry that centred on how baby Adam was feeling after the recent Stimulus Lesson. The teacher prompted children to prepare to justify their claims at the beginning of this Inquiry Lesson by saying; *'Get yourself ready to truly think and question and put forward some of your wonderings or your experiences to justify your thinking to how do we read other people's feelings'* (**Teacher, COI1**). An example of children's responses is found in the following exchange. *'I disagree with Henry and India because I think he's happy and I also agree with India that he was kind of sleepy'* (**Shane, 7:5, COI1**)*.' I'm going to ask the question for those people who thought he was happy. Why did you think he was happy?'* (**Teacher, COI1**). *'I think he was happy because of the movement and the way he was looking'* (**Shane, 7:5, COI1**)*. ' I think I disagree with Henry because I think that he was very happy and excited to be in our classroom again and to be a bit curious, and I agree with Izzy that he might have been just a bit tired'* (**Rick, 7:8, COI1**)*. 'Wow, do you know what you've just described? You described curious, excited, and happy. So you saw all those things this morning?'* (**Teacher, COI1**). *'I think you can communicate with people by walking in different ways'* (**Fraser, 7:8, COI1**)*. 'Could you give us an example Fraser? Are you saying that you could have an angry walk?'* (**Teacher, COI1**).

In this example the teacher uses prompting questions to draw out children's justifications for their statements when she asks 'why did you think he was happy?' and 'Could you give us an example?'. These types of questions were increasingly used in subsequent Inquiry Lessons to elicit dialogic exchanges and extend children's reasoning

about emotion and then tapered off as children increasingly offered their justifications without prompting. This reduction in teacher prompts indicated that the overt focus on these questions in the first few Inquiry Lessons helped to both elicit children's reasoning about emotion, and create an expectation of reason giving, encouraging children to formulate and provide their own justificatory reasoning about emotions. In the context of the Community of Inquiry sessions' varying foci, the explicit focus on prompting children to provide justification for their reasoning about emotions was a key design characteristic of the Empathic Pedagogy.

The following section presents data that showed an increase in the complexity of children's dialogic exchanges that demonstrated reasoning about emotions, as measured by levels of justificatory reasoning across the sequence of lessons.

6.3 Levels of Justificatory Reasoning about Emotions

Children's dialogic exchanges that demonstrated reasoning about emotions became increasingly complex as the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy progressed. This increase in complexity was visible in analysis of the levels of children's justificatory reasoning.

To illustrate some of the individual children's dialogic exchanges that typified reasoning about emotion at each of the levels of justificatory reasoning, examples from each of the Community of Inquiry sessions are presented below (**see Table 9**).

Table 9

Data Exemplars Showing Justificatory Reasoning Levels of Children's Reasoning about Emotion across the Community of Inquiry Lesson Sequence

Lessons	Child	Dialogic Exchanges	Justificatory Reasoning Levels
Inquiry 1	Harry	I think Adam was excited to see us again because he knows all of us now	2
Inquiry 2	Tony	I think Adam was sad	1
Inquiry 3	Carl	Because Sarah knows when Adam is sometimes feeling about that and if he's hungry all the time, she finds out from Adam	2
Inquiry 4	Shane	I think you can kind of read their emotions if you haven't had it because the way that they look you might have had that one before so you know what it feels like, sometimes you haven't but you still might know what it feels like	3
Inquiry 5	Flint	I'm also going to add to my thinking, because if you're sad somebody might come and help you, then because if you're feeling kind of, not wanting that, you may get angry with them and you get angry and they get somebody and then it keeps on going to somebody else	3
Inquiry 6	Bruce	I disagree with Terry because you don't just have to be empathetic to them. They also have to decide if they like you or not. It's not just you. You can't just… Because I couldn't just decide that Wayne can be my friend, he has to make his mind up as well	3

This selection of dialogic exchanges illustrates the increase in the complexity of children's justificatory reasoning about emotion across the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions. The complexity of many of the dialogic exchanges offered

demonstrating the two higher levels of justificatory reasoning indicated that children were increasingly able to provide support for their statements, with strong justification evidence such as observations of baby Adam, anecdotes from their own experience of emotions and examples from other children's dialogic exchanges. This increasing complexity indicated that children were building on their dialogic skills to better articulate their own ideas, draw on their personal experiences in previous Inquiry, Bridge and Stimulus Lessons, and to use more inductive forms of justificatory reasoning as the Empathic Pedagogy progressed.

As detailed in Chapter Three and Chapter Five, statements were coded into levels of justificatory reasoning that categorised children's reasoning (**see sections 3.6 & 5.3 for detail**). In comparison with the increase in all dialogic offerings and statements, there was also an increase in the number of justificatory statements coded as reasoning about emotion (**see Figure 50)**.

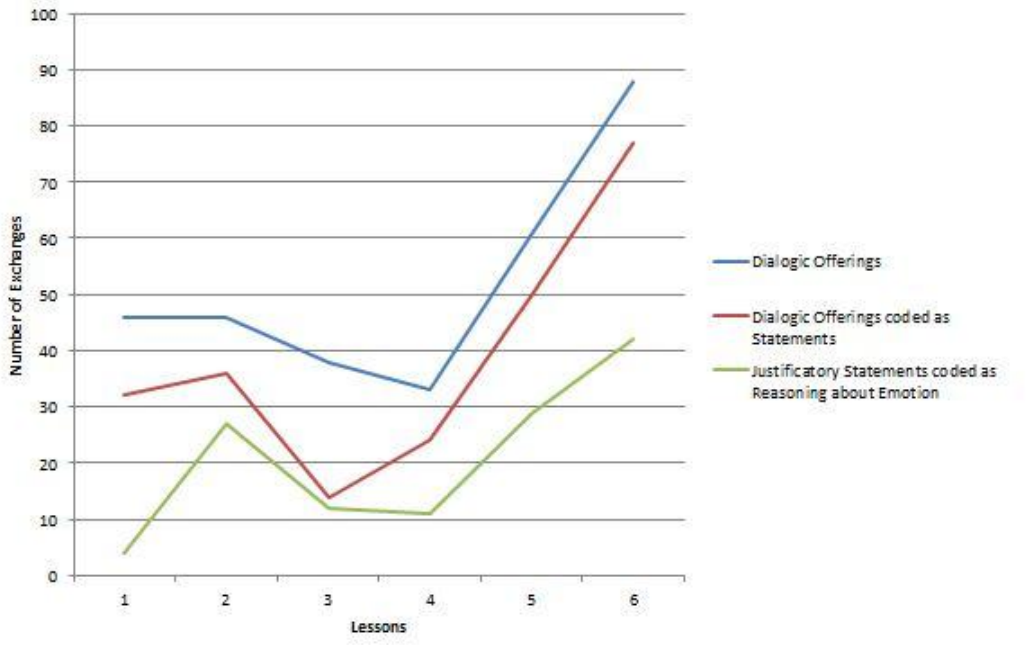


Figure 50. Comparison between Overall Dialogic Offerings, Overall Statements, and Justificatory Statements coded as Reasoning about Emotion

The research found that the number of dialogic exchanges at all three levels of justificatory reasoning about emotion increased, particularly reasoning at justificatory level two (**see Figure 51**). There was a decrease in the number of dialogic exchanges at justificatory level one in the final Community of Inquiry session. There was however, a gradual increase in the number of dialogic exchanges at the highest level of justificatory reasoning, level three, and a large increase in the number of dialogic exchanges that demonstrated children's reasoning at justificatory level two, which is reasoning that offers some relevant evidence to support reasoning (**see Figure 51**).

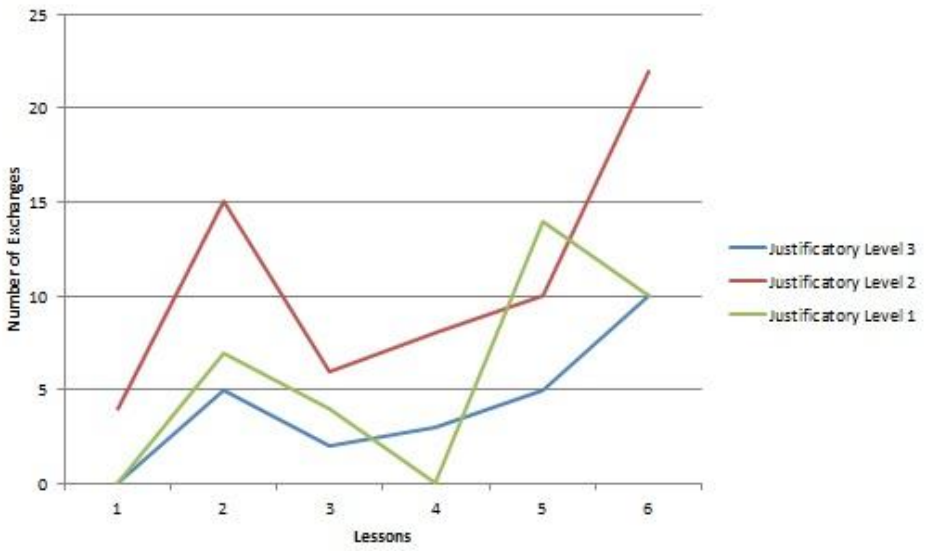


Figure 51. Justificatory levels of reasoning about emotion across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.

To better explore the impact of age on the levels of justificatory reasoning about emotions, the data were organised into two age ranges. These two age ranges allowed data to be examined for younger children (six and a half to seven and a half years of age)

and older children (seven and a half to eight and a half years of age). The increased number of dialogic exchanges offered by children in the final Community of Inquiry session was predominantly offered by children between six and a half and seven and a half years of age (**see Figure 52**).

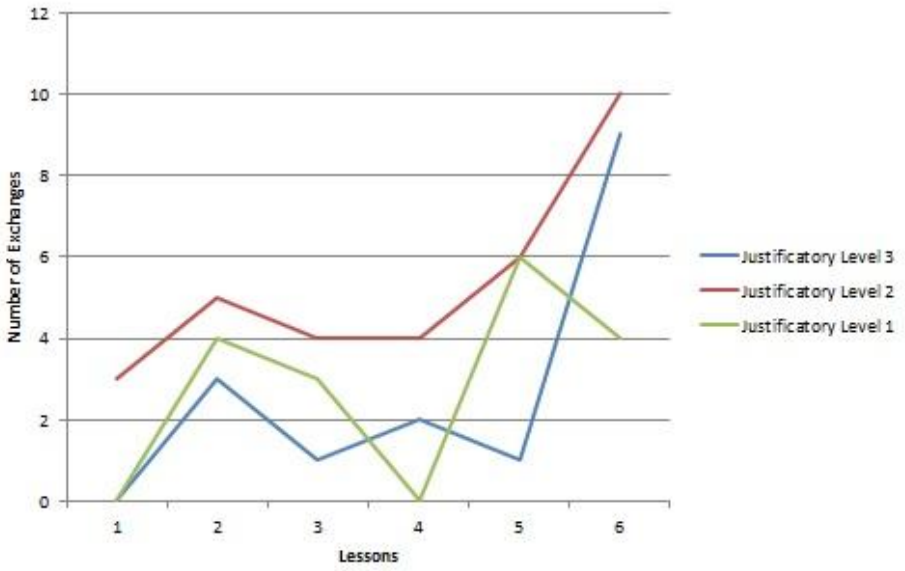


Figure 52. Justificatory levels of reasoning about emotion across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence: children aged 6.5-7.5.

The children in this age range demonstrated a significant increase in reasoning about emotions at justificatory levels two and three in the final Community of Inquiry session. This is in contrast to children between seven and a half and eight and a half years of age who showed increases only in the number of dialogic exchanges at justificatory level two in the corresponding session (**see Figure 53)**. This increase in younger children's justificatory reasoning at level three in the final Community of Inquiry may well be an indicator of the growing confidence of these children in their own abilities within the Empathic Pedagogy, and the developing community of critical

learners that was developed over time in this classroom. As the key difference between justificatory level two and three is the strength of the justifications given through the use of multiple *relevant* examples, the increase in justificatory reasoning at level three demonstrated that these children were drawing on more and more appropriate evidence to support their thinking as the Empathic Pedagogy progressed.

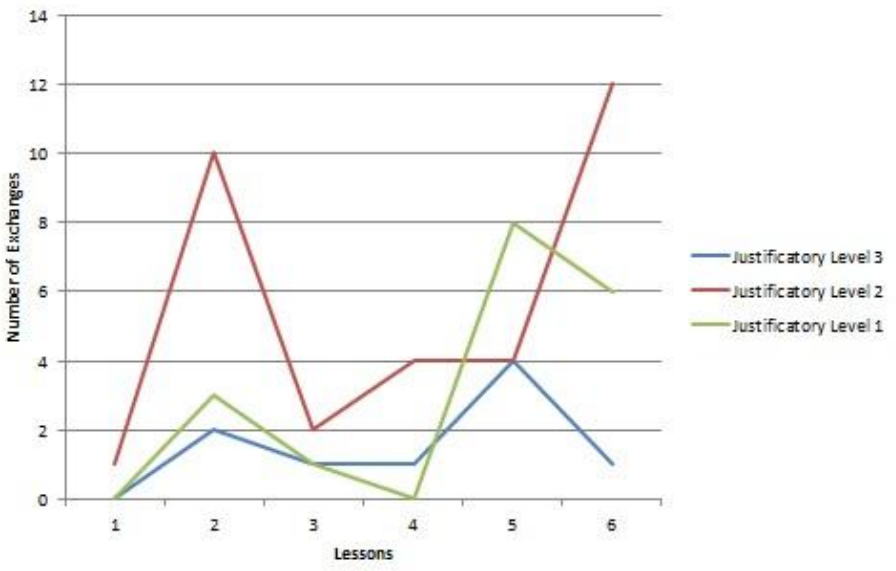


Figure 53. Justificatory levels of reasoning about emotion across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence: children aged 7.5-8.5.

Overall, this research found that the number of children's dialogic exchanges that demonstrated reasoning about emotion within the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions, increased in complexity, as measured by justificatory reasoning levels. This supported a finding that children's reasoning about emotion, and the complexity of the justifications children use to support their thoughts can be fostered over time using a Community of Inquiry approach.

6.4 Focus of Reasoning about Emotion

The research found that children's capacity to engage in genuine dialogue about emotions, and to reason about emotions using support and evidence drawn from an understanding of the emotional states of the baby, themselves and the emotions of others was fostered through engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy. Analysis and findings relating to the three focus areas for reasoning about emotion (baby, self, and other) are presented below. Coded data exemplars are provided to inform the reader (**see Table 7, section 5.1**). The data are presented using the thematic elements and chronological order, as the linear elements of the research design were found to support children's reasoning about emotion.

6.4.1 Reasoning about the Emotions of the Baby

This research found that children were able to reason about the emotions of the baby. This was evident in children's dialogic offerings within the Community of Inquiry sessions, artefacts from lessons and Empathy Journal entries, and also across the sequence of lessons. Children were able to provide justifications for their reasoning about the emotions of the baby by drawing on their observations of baby Adam, the social cues described by the mother to help her read the baby's emotions, as well as their understandings of baby Adam's emotional states based on his experiences and social contexts.

Children justified their reasoning about the emotions of the baby by suggesting that baby Adam was developing his relationship with the children across the lesson sequence. Harry offered a statement that indicated that he thought baby Adam's positive emotional state was influenced by his familiarity with the children from the previous Welcome Visit Lessons. *'I think Adam was excited to see us again because he*

knows all of us now' (**Harry, 6:9, COI1**). Harry's justification uses a chain of reasoning based on prior experiences: baby Adam knows the children because he has visited the classroom enough times to get to know children well; he would be excited to see people he knows well; therefore, baby Adam was excited because he knows the children well now. This exemplar demonstrated that Harry observed baby Adam closely during the initial Welcome Visits and first Stimulus Lesson. Harry drew on his understanding of the way developing relationships impact on emotional responses to help him reason about the emotions of the baby, and used this knowledge to draw inferences used to justify his thinking.

Reasoning about the positive emotions of the baby being brought about by prior experiences was further supported by Shane who stated that the number of baby Adam's visits to the classroom impacted on his emotional states. *'I think Adam felt happy because the first time he came he didn't know us, and it looked like he started to know us, and today he already knew us so he was happy'* (**Shane, 7:5, COI1**). This exemplar showed that like Harry, Shane had closely observed baby Adam during his initial Welcome Visits and concluded that he felt happy because of his familiarity with the children and their developing relationship. In this way, Shane was reasoning about the emotions of the baby based on his evidenced justification that over time, baby Adam would feel happier visiting the children in the classroom.

A further example of children's reasoning about the emotions justified by the evidence that baby Adam's familiarity with the children impacted on his emotional state was offered by Buddy who said: '*I think Adam was a little bit calmer than he was a couple of weeks ago because he sort of recognised us and wasn't moving around lots, and probably because he was a little bit older'* (**Buddy, 8:1, COI2**). This exemplar suggests

that Buddy thought that baby Adam was controlling his own internal emotional state more effectively over time because of his familiarity with the children in the classroom and his developing physical and social emotional control.

Children justified their reasoning about the emotions of the baby using their understanding of the social cues described by the mother to help her read baby Adam's emotional states and general needs. Children also used their own observations of baby Adam as evidence to support justifying their reasoning about the emotions of the baby. Henry suggested that the squealing noises that baby Adam was making indicated that he was feeling sad. '*I think Adam was feeling sad when he was squealing because it sounded like he was sad'* (**Henry, 6:6, COI2**). This exemplar demonstrated that Henry's observations and interpretations were used to justify his reasoning about baby Adam's emotional state. This justification was supported by Tony who said: '*I think Adam was sad…for the same reason'* (**Tony, 8:4, COI2**); and Harry, who added '*I agree with Tony and Henry that Adam was sad'* (**Harry, 6:9, COI2**), indicating that the evidence of the baby's emotional state was consistently read by the children.

Rick, however, offered a contrasting statement that indicated that he had also drawn on his observations of baby Adam to justify his reasoning about the emotions of the baby, but came to a different conclusion about the emotions that baby Adam was displaying. *'Well I think Adam was feeling happy because he was happy and excited because he was squealing a lot and sounded like he was excited'* (**Rick, 7:8, COI2**). In this exemplar Rick was using his observations to justify his reasoning about baby Adam's emotional state, but has read the social cues differently.

These dialogic offerings showed that children carefully observed baby Adam, and applied their reasoning in Community of Inquiry sessions to try to understand the emotional states that baby Adam displayed in the Stimulus Lessons.

It was found that children used questions and discussion with the mother during Stimulus Lessons to gain knowledge of social cues and their meaning that were then used when reasoning about the baby's emotions. Children asked the mother questions and learned that reading the social cues of baby Adam was a complex but important feature in understanding the emotions of the baby. A question example is Flint who asked after baby Adam squealed and looked towards the mother. He asked: '*Whenever he makes those noises, to find out what he wants how do you know what to try?*' (**Flint, 7:2, STM3**). This question prompted the mother to explain how she relies on baby Adam's sounds to reason about his emotions. '*Good question. OK there are some noises he makes that definitely mean the same thing. So when he does that "errh errh" sound I know that means 'I'm hungry'. When he starts to squeal a bit more I know he's starting to get tired.'* (**Sarah, STM3**). Terry reasoned about the emotions of the baby, and understood Sarah's explanation clearly, as he responded to baby Adam making the "errh errh" sound that she had described as meaning that he was hungry by stating '*He's hungry!*' (**Terry, 6:11, STM3**). These responses indicated that children were using the information given by the mother during Stimulus Lessons to support their reasoning about the emotions of the baby.

A further example of children applying their knowledge and understanding of social cues to justify their reasoning about the emotions of the baby was demonstrated by Carl, who stated; '*Because Sarah knows what Adam is sometimes feeling about that, and if he's hungry all the time, she finds out from Adam'* (**Carl, 7:5, COI3**). This exemplar

showed that Carl was drawing on information gained from the mother to justify his position when reasoning about the emotions of the baby. Rick posed a question that indicated that he was thinking about whether baby Adam also read social cues from the mother. '*I wonder if Adam can read Sarah's feelings*' (**Rick, 7:8, COI3**). This showed that children were thinking about the ways that reading social cues could be a mutual process that informs reasoning about the baby's emotions.

Another example of children reasoning about the emotions of the baby was seen in children's discussion about the copying, or mirroring of emotions that the mother and the baby engaged in. Buddy asked the mother a question that indicated he was thinking about whether the baby and mother had feelings in common. '*Has he ever had the same feeling as you?*' (**Buddy, 8:1, STM4**). The mother explained '*yeah, and I guess that might be how they learn their feelings too because they sort of copy what we're doing so like when we smile, he smiles. So that's how babies learn to smile is they watch what you are doing and I guess they sense if you're happy or feeling a bit sad or grumpy, because he changes.'* (**Sarah, STM4**). She then stated *'when he's upset and crying quite uncontrollably and I've got no idea why, that makes me feel sometimes upset, and sometimes really anxious because I don't know what's wrong so I tend to copy what he's doing too'* (**Sarah, STM4**). The teacher then asked the mother if she thought that baby Adam felt anxious because of her anxious feelings, to which she replied '*Yes. Which is why I try really, really hard not to show or let on when I'm feeling anxious'* (**Sarah, STM4**). This discussion provided children with an understanding of the way that mirroring emotions is reciprocal and provided children with further evidence to support their reasoning about the emotions of the baby.

Children were able to reflect on their understanding of the ways that the mother and baby communicated and responded to each other's emotional states to support their reasoning about the emotions of the baby. Buddy suggested that if baby Adam mirrored your emotions, then his emotional states could be controlled. *'You probably could almost control Adam's feelings if he can copy what your feelings are that you can control'* (**Buddy, 8:1, COI4**). Bruce disagreed with Buddy's idea, and stated that baby Adam would not copy all feelings. '*I disagree with Buddy that you can sort of control Adam's feelings by doing that feeling. It wouldn't always happen, because Sarah didn't say that he copies every feeling.* (**Bruce, 8:2, COI4**). This indicated that children were actively drawing on discussion from Stimulus Lessons where the mother discussed her own reasoning about hers and baby Adam's emotions. Children reasoned about the emotions of the baby using their understanding of baby Adam's past experiences to justify their thinking. Isaac demonstrated that he understood that baby Adam had previous experience visiting a classroom of young children with his mother; who was a teacher. *'Well I think Adam wasn't as scared when he came to this school because he used to go to a different school and he knew those people'* (**Isaac, 7:7, COI1**). This exemplar indicated that children were able to reflect on the impact of baby Adam's past experience of social contexts to inform their reasoning about the baby's emotions.

The analysis of data indicated that children were able to reason about the emotions of the baby by providing justification for their reasoning based on their observations of baby Adam, the social cues described by the mother to help her read the baby's emotions, as well as their understandings of baby Adam's emotional states based on his experiences, and social contexts. This analysis of data supported a finding that children reasoned about the emotions of the baby by drawing on evidence from

observations, dialogic interaction with the mother, and an understanding of the baby's experiences. In the second Community of Inquiry session the number of dialogic exchanges that demonstrated children's reasoning about the emotions of the baby was higher than any other focus of reasoning about emotion in any Community of Inquiry session (**see Figure 54**).

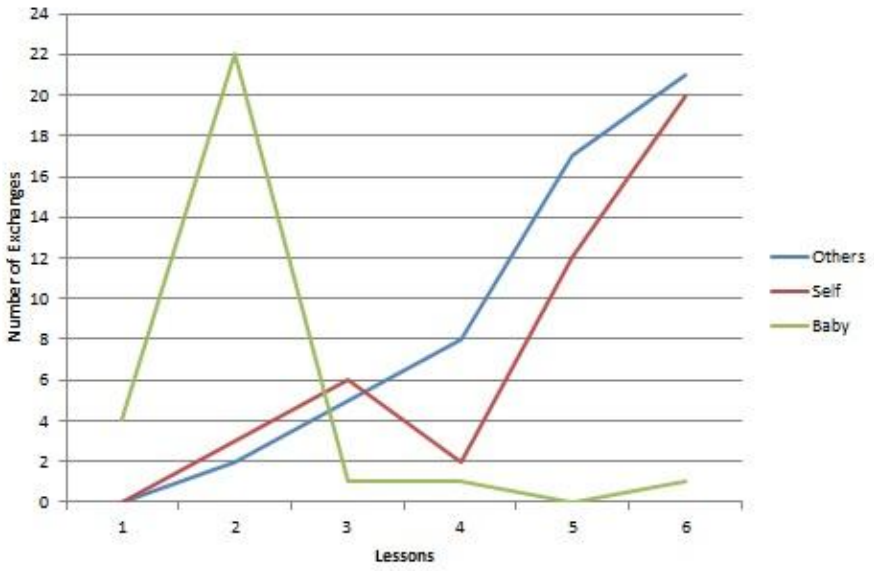
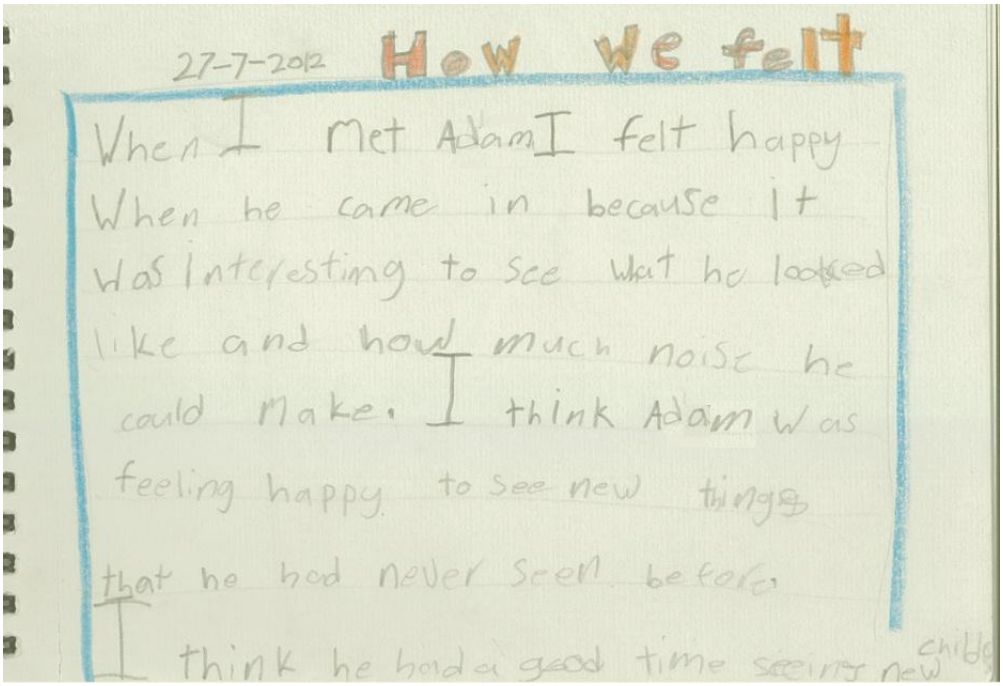


Figure 54. Focus of children's reasoning about emotion across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.

Children's increased focus on the emotions of the baby in the beginning of the Empathic Pedagogy could have resulted from the Big Idea and Big Question in the second Community of Inquiry sessions, which focused on the relationship and communication between the mother and the baby. The majority of dialogic exchanges where children engaged in reasoning about the emotions of the baby occurred in the first two Community of Inquiry sessions. Twenty six out of the overall twenty nine dialogic exchanges that showed reasoning about the emotions of the baby were offered in these two sessions. All four of the dialogic exchanges that indicated that children

were reasoning about emotion in the first Community of Inquiry session were focused on the emotions of the baby.

Data indicating children's reasoning about the emotions of the baby were also evident in their Empathy Journals. After the first Welcome Visit Lesson by Sarah and baby Adam, children were asked to reflect on their own feelings after meeting baby Adam for the first time by writing in their Empathy Journal. Shane reasoned about the emotions of the baby, and how baby Adam might have felt coming into a new environment with new people (**see Figure 55**).

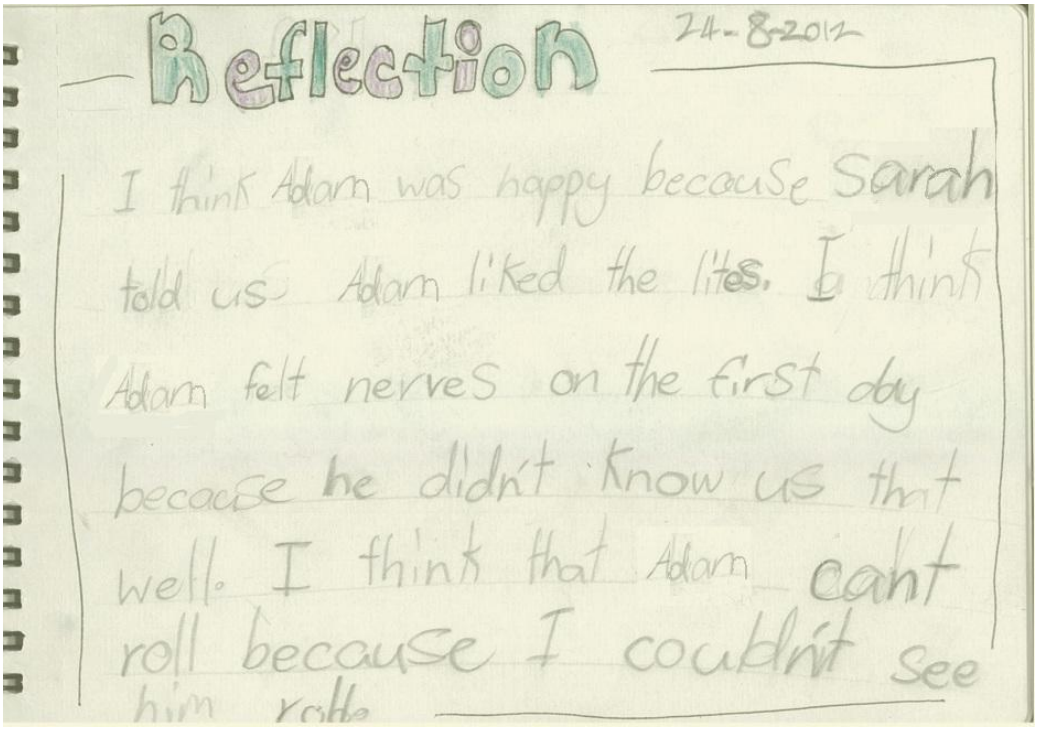


(*When I met Adam I felt happy when he came in because it was interesting to see what he looked like and how much noise he could make. I think Adam was feeling happy to see new things that he had never seen before. I think he had a good time seeing new children*) (**Shane, 7:5, BRG1**)

Figure 55. Shane's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing reasoning about the emotions of the baby.

This exemplar revealed Shane's reasoning about the emotions of the baby. He used the word 'new' in this journal entry to describe the things baby Adam had seen in the classroom as well as describing the children. This suggested that Shane was drawing on his understanding of baby Adam's previous experience of visiting a group of young children in another school.

Another example of children's reasoning about the emotions of the baby can be seen in Andrea's Empathy Journal reflection after the second Community of Inquiry (**see Figure 56**). Andrea drew on the mother's statement about baby Adam enjoying the lights in the classroom to support her reasoning about the emotions of the baby, and to justify her conclusion that baby Adam was feeling nervous as well as happy because he did not know the children well.



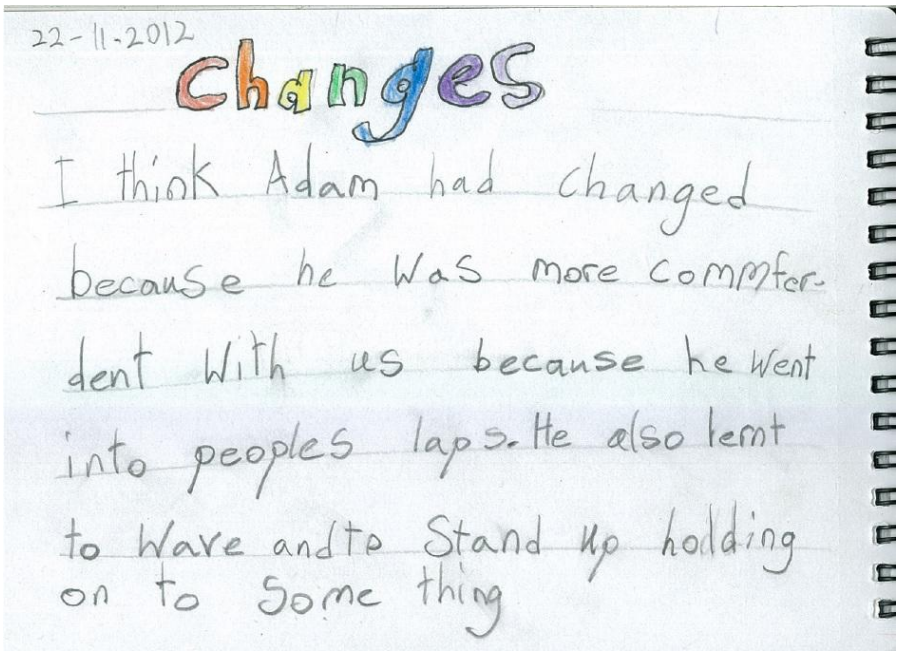
(*I think Adam was happy because Sarah told us Adam liked the lights. I think Adam felt nervous on the first day because he didn't know us that well. I think that Adam can't roll because I couldn't see him roll*) (**Andrea, 7:10, COI2**)

Figure 56. Andrea's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing reasoning about the emotions of the baby.

This exemplar demonstrated that Andrea understood that baby Adam could experience a range of emotional states, and that she was able to draw on a range of evidence to support her reasoning about the emotions of the baby.

After the final Stimulus Lesson where Sarah and baby Adam visited the classroom for the last time, children were asked to reflect on the changes they had observed in baby Adam since meeting him for the first time. Most of the data from this activity indicated that children focused on the physical changes that had occurred for baby Adam during the research. However, Lori's Empathy Journal entry (**see Figure 57**)

demonstrated that she was reasoning about the emotions of the baby by reflecting on the changes to baby Adam's social behaviour.



(*I think Adam had changed because he was more confident with us because he went into people's laps. He also learnt to wave and to stand up holding onto something*) (**Lori, 8:2, STM6**)

Figure 57. Lori's Empathy Journal entry reflection showing reasoning about the emotions of the baby.

This exemplar indicated that Lori had closely observed baby Adam and recognised that he had developed more confidence with the class, and that this social emotional development coupled with his growing motor development, meant that he could interact socially with the class physically by crawling into children's laps, waving and using children's help to stand up.

The analysis of data from children's written Empathy Journal entries found that children were drawing from a range of understandings and experiences to justify their

reasoning about the emotions of the baby. The children were able to reason about the emotions of the baby and provide justifications based on their observations of baby Adam, social cues described by the mother to help her read the baby's emotions, as well as their understandings of baby Adam's emotional states based on his experiences and social contexts.

6.4.2 Reasoning about the Emotions of the Self

This research found that children were able to reason about their own emotions to inform their thinking about social dilemmas relating to the baby, themselves and others. This was evident in children's dialogue within the Community of Inquiry sessions and written responses in their Empathy Journals. These data are now presented.

Children reasoned about their own emotions and explained that they would have the same emotional state as another child experiencing emotional distress due to a social dilemma. This reasoning about the emotions of the self was most evident when children discussed the sad child in the hypothetical social dilemma presented in the fifth Community of Inquiry session. Shane indicated that he would most likely mirror the sad child and would also feel sad. *'If two of my friends were upset, and one was angry and one was sad; I'd probably feel sad as well'* (**Shane, 7:5, COI5**). Tony described that he would also experience sadness if he witnessed a social dilemma where one child experienced emotional distress. *'Well if I saw someone getting angry at someone and stomped off I would feel sad for the person that's crying and help them'* (**Tony, 8:4, COI5**). Additionally, Harry indicated that he may have a conflicted emotional response to this scenario, but that would likely feel sad for the child who was crying as well. *'I would probably feel normal but I would probably be really sad about the person who is crying'* (**Harry, 6:9,**

COI5). These exemplars illustrated that children were able to reason about the emotions of the self, and that their empathic response would most likely mirror the child who was clearly experiencing sadness.

Children reasoned about their own emotions and were able to distinguish their own emotions from others. Isaac indicated that friendships may be gained by empathising with others. '*Because if you don't have empathy you won't get many friends, but if you have empathy you might get more friends'* (**Isaac, 7:7, COI6**). Fergus agreed with this statement and described how he had experienced contrasting emotional states to empathise with others in social situations. *'I agree because I kind of did get a lot of friends with empathy. I was kind of nice to them even if they were hurting and if they couldn't do something I'd try to help them'* (**Fergus, 7:10, COI6**). This exemplar showed that children were able to reason about the emotions of the self and to understand that their emotional states may be different from others when empathising with them.

Further examples of reasoning about the emotions of the self revealed that children were aware that their own emotional states may not always be accurate, and could be influenced by their own thoughts, Carl stated that *'When you have a feeling sometimes your feelings can be wrong and sometimes it can be right, like if you are thinking you're not sure about it'* (**Carl, 7:5, COI3**). This exemplar showed that Carl was able to reflect on how his thoughts may impact on his emotional states and create internal conflict that can impact his empathic response. Similarly, Flint explained that his emotional states may be impacted by someone offering care and support, and that consequently his thoughts about their empathic response may influence his emotional state. *'If you are sad somebody might come and help you, then because if you're feeling kind of… not wanting that; you may get angry with them, and you get angry and they get*

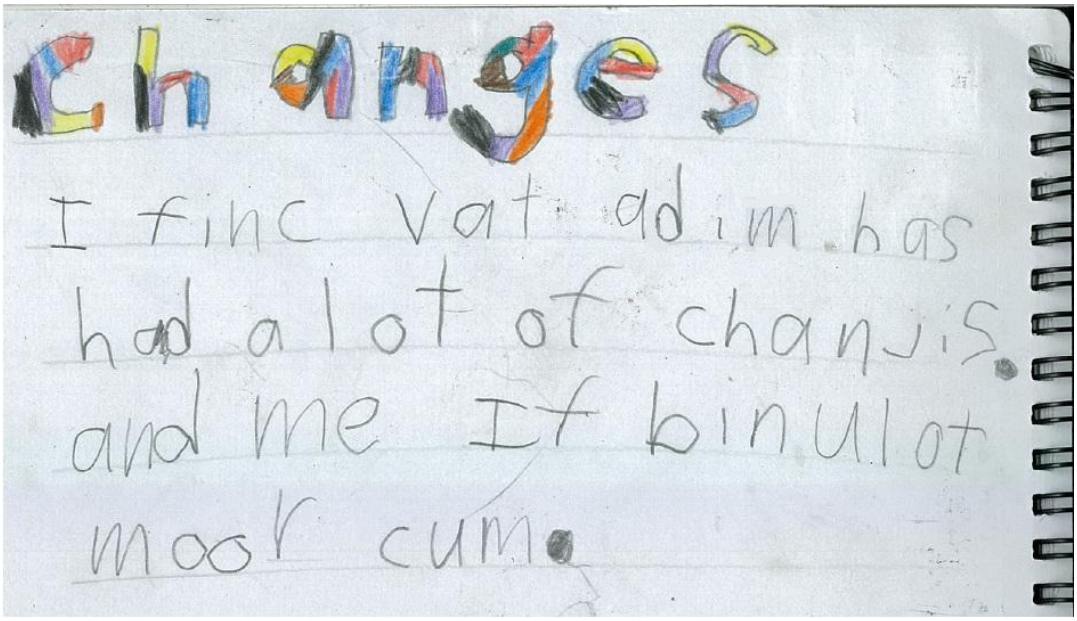
somebody and then it keeps on going to somebody else' (**Flint, 7:2, COI5**). These exemplars of children's reasoning about the emotions of the self support a finding that children were drawing on their own understandings of how feelings and thoughts can influence each other and impact their empathic response to others.

Children were able to reason about their own emotions by reflecting on the role of time in relationships. Flint reasoned that he had developed more empathy for baby Adam because of the development of their relationship over time; '*I think you have more empathy with Adam over time because you get to know him more, so you like to know him more because you be with him more, so you like him more, and you get more affection'* (**Flint, 7:2, COI6**). His line of reasoning here can be expressed in this way: *I got to know baby Adam more because I got spend time with him → I liked getting to know baby Adam more during this time → as I got to know baby Adam better, I liked him more & he gave me more affection → therefore, I now have more empathy for baby Adam.* In contrast, Bruce stated *'I disagree with Flint, because a bit like what the Teacher said; if you spend a long time with them it doesn't mean you get more empathy'* (**Bruce, 8:2, COI6**). Bruce's reasoning about the emotions of the self was justified further when he then stated: *'And I don't think Adam really made me more empathetic'* (**Bruce, 8:2, COI6**). Bruce's response may have been influenced by a statement made earlier by the teacher that her own empathy towards the baby may not have increased as a result of coming to know him over time. This suggests that the influence of teacher opinion could impact children's stated reasons. Further support for this is found in Shane's statement. Shane came to a comparable conclusion about the development of his empathy for the mother and baby, but then offered a further statement to clarify his thinking. *'I probably wouldn't have more empathy for Sarah and Adam; I probably have it for basically*

everyone' (**Shane, 7:5, COI6**), suggesting that when reasoning about his own emotions he felt that his empathy for baby Adam was no more or less than his empathy for any other person. It must be noted here that it is unclear whether Shane's thinking here is a sign of an unchanged perspective on his empathic concern for Sarah and Adam, or whether his engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy has led to the development of a more generalised perspective that deepened his empathy for all others.

The analysis of data indicated that children were able to reason about the emotions of the self to support their thinking and provide justifications about the social dilemmas faced by others. Children were able to reason about their own emotional states, and consider their development of empathy for the baby and others over time. Children were therefore able to reason about the emotions of the self by drawing on their response to hypothetical scenarios, their understanding that their own emotional responses may not be accurate indicators of the emotional states of others, and their understanding of empathy.

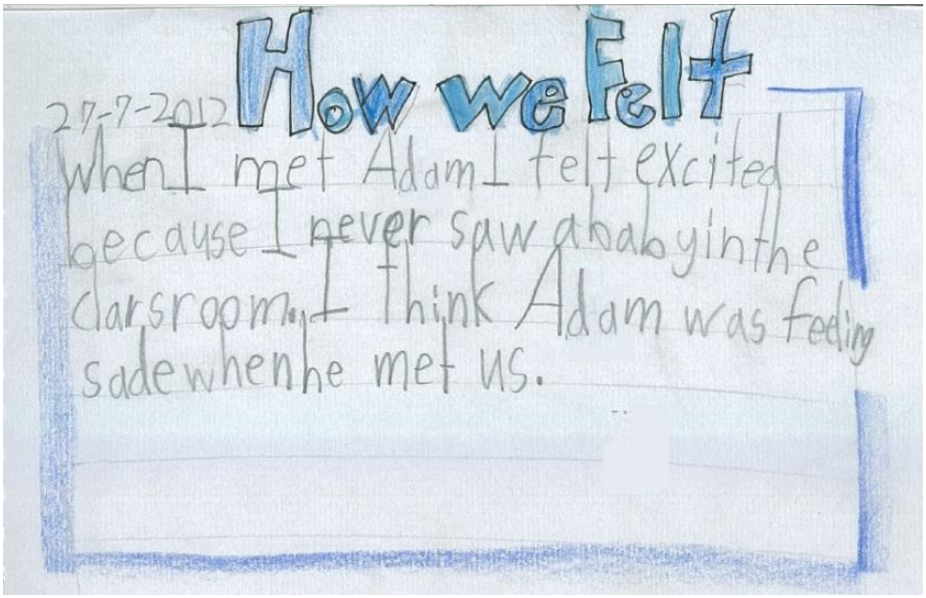
Data indicating children's reasoning about the emotions of the self were also seen in their written responses in their Empathy Journals. Children were able to reason about their own emotions by reflecting on their own and others emotions over time. Terry explained that he had seen many changes in baby Adam, and reasoned about his own emotional changes over time (**see Figure 58**).



(*I think that Adam has had a lot of changes. And me, I've been a lot more calm*) (**Terry, 6:11, STM6**)

Figure 58. Terry's Empathy Journal entry showing reasoning about the emotions of the self.

Terry was able to reason about the emotions of the self, and to reflect on his increased ability to regulate his own emotional states. Tyler's Empathy Journal response in the first Bridge Lesson (**see Figure 59**), reflected on baby Adam's visit to the classroom.



(*When I met Adam I felt excited because I never saw a baby in the classroom. I think Adam was feeling sad when he met us*) (**Tyler, 7:5, BRG1**)

Figure 59. Tyler's Empathy Journal entry showing reasoning about the emotions of the self and the baby

Tyler identified about his own emotions and justified why he felt that way, but was also able to identify how his own emotion may differ from someone else's.

The Empathy Journal entries support that finding that children were able to reason about their own emotions and reflect on their own social emotional development. Overall, children were found to be able to reason about the emotions of the self to support their discussions about social dilemmas, to inform their thinking about their relationships with the baby, the mother, and others, and to reflect on their own social emotional development over time.

6.4.3 Reasoning about the Emotions of Others

This research found that children engaged in reasoning about the emotions of others. This was evident in children's dialogue and their Empathy Journal responses. Children were able to reason about the emotions of others by drawing on a range of ideas and experiences regarding the emotional states of others. This was evident across the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions, and through the steady increase in the number of children's dialogic exchanges across the Empathic Pedagogy implementation (**see Figure 54, section 6.4.1**).

Children drew on the experiential stimuli of mother and baby and their developing knowledge of the baby's emotional states. By drawing on the mother and baby stimulus, children showed they understood that knowing another person increases the ability to make inferences about the emotions of the other. Children used their awareness that social cues, such as facial cues, to inform their analysis and understanding of the emotional states of others. Furthermore, children drew on their general knowledge about emotions and their implications for behaviour, as well as drawing on their understanding that their own actions and the actions of people in emotional distress could impact on their emotional states. Carl demonstrated his understanding that the relationship between Sarah and baby Adam would allow her to better understand his emotional state. *'When Adam was talking he was making weird noises that Sarah would've heard before, and now Sarah would know what that sound is'* (**Carl, 7:5, COI1**). This was supported by Rick who added: *'I agree with Carl because Sarah could've worked out that Adam was working out different cries for different things, and I think Sarah could have worked it out, so she knew what Adam was thinking about and wanted'* (**Rick, 7:8, COI1**). These examples illustrate that children were able to

reason about the emotions of others by drawing on their understanding of the mother and baby relationship. Henry offered a further example drawing on his understanding of the relationship between the mother and the baby to reason about the emotions of others. He said: *'when Adam squeals Sarah would have heard squealing lots, so she must know what it means'* (**Henry, 6:6, COI1**). Likewise, Isaac said; *'I think Sarah worked it out because they tried lots of things because Adam was squealing a lot until she gave him something to eat, so then he stopped squealing'* (**Isaac, 7:7, COI1**). Additionally, Carl continued to draw on his understanding of the relationship between the mother and baby to reason about the emotions of others when he said; *'Sarah knows what Adam is sometimes feeling about that, and if he's hungry all the time, she finds out from Adam'* (**Carl, 7:5, COI3**). These examples indicated that children were able to reason about the emotions of others by using the mother and baby stimulus to reflect on how relationships with others can support recognising emotional states.

Children were found to use observations of social cues such as people's facial expression, voice, and movements or positions of their features to support the recognition of emotional states and their reasoning about the emotions of others. Kevin reasoned: *'I think you could tell the person's feelings because of their face, and how they're moving their mouth and face'* (**Kevin, 7:11, COI2**). Kevin drew on his understanding of the importance of facial expressions for reasoning about the emotions of others. Carl supported Kevin's reasoning when he stated: *'I agree with Kevin, because when you are talking to someone you could tell if they are using their mouth and your eyebrows for something like you could be surprised or wasn't expecting what someone told you'* (**Carl, 7:5, COI2**). Shane offered a further example of reasoning about the emotions of others using evidence from facial expressions when he described how it is possible to read the

emotions of others when you have never experienced those emotions yourself. He said; *'I think you can kind of read their emotions if you haven't had it because the way that they look; you might have had that one before so you know what it feels like. Sometimes you haven't, but you still might know what it feels like'* (**Shane, 7:5, COI4**). Henry supported this idea when he added; *'I agree with Shane because you sort of can know if you haven't had the feeling that someone else is having because you can sort of read it'* (**Henry, 6:6, COI4**). These combined exemplars indicate that the children understood that the emotional states of others could be recognised using facial expressions, and that reading social cues in this way provides evidence that can be used to reason about the emotions of others.

Children reasoned about the emotions of others by reflecting on the lack of facial cues displayed by others, or on perceived mismatches between people's faces and their feelings. Wayne recognised that sometimes facial cues do not accurately reflect people's internal emotional states. He posed the question; *'How could you tell if someone is happy or angry if they're not actually putting on the expression that they are feeling, on their face?'* (**Wayne, 8:5, COI2**). Later, Wayne suggested an answer to his own question: *'I think you can tell how people are feeling by their voice, because if they are feeling kind of angry they might be in a deep, more angry sounding voice, and when they're happy they're at their normal tone'* (**Wayne, 8:5, COI2**), reasoning that sometimes facial expressions can be misleading, and a number of social cues such as tone of voice could provide evidence about the emotions of others.

Children reasoned about the emotions of others by drawing on their understandings of the emotional states themselves, particularly anger. In response to a stimulus scenario, Andrea said; *'I would feel sad for both of them because when they walk*

away the angry one might feel sad for the other one, because they might not know what they are saying being angry' (**Andrea, 7:10, COI5**). This exemplar showed that Andrea understood that sometimes when people get angry they say things that they might not mean and may feel sad about it afterwards. Bruce also reasoned that people may be experiencing other emotions that are overshadowed by anger, and suggested; *'The one who is angry might feel sad inside because they don't get their way or something'* (**Bruce, 8:2, COI5**). Bruce understood that a person's anger could be triggered by another internal emotional state. These examples indicated that children were able to draw on their understanding of emotional states to reason about the emotions of others.

Further evidence of the use of knowledge of emotional states in reasoning about the emotions of others can be found in Wayne's statement. He described how responding to the emotions of others in a social situation may trigger further emotional responses; *'If you go up to a person who is sad they might get even more sad because it is easy to get your feelings hurt even more once they are hurt'* (**Wayne, 8:5, COI5**). Wayne has used his understanding of how people in emotional distress can be susceptible to being upset further by any social intervention. Fraser added support for Wayne's suggestion: *'I agree with Wayne, because if you go up to them they'll be all fragile so they might get even more sad'* (**Fraser, 7:8, COI5**). This line of reasoning suggests that the children used their understanding that emotional states, intentions and actions can impact possible empathic response. Further support for this finding can be seen in Isaac's reasoning that being a bystander and helping others in a social dilemma may create further emotional distress for children involved in the dispute. He said; *'I wouldn't help anybody because if you're helping somebody and the other person sees they might even get more angrier'* (**Isaac, 7:7, COI5**). Isaac reasoned that the emotions of

others would impact his decision to support children experiencing emotional distress. Flint also articulated this line of reasoning when he stated; *'if you say "it's alright, you don't have to cry", they might think that actually is a bit mean and get all angry or upset with you as well and storm off from you'* (**Flint, 7:2, COI5**), concluding that in trying to help, that there may be further emotional distress caused. Wayne also drew on his understanding of the intentions of others to inform his reasoning about the emotions of others, and said: *'well what if the person who you help is not all that nice and they just think "well they just helped me so I don't have to do anything back" so they might not always make friends with you'* (**Wayne, 8:5, COI6**). Here Wayne reasoned about the emotions of others by drawing on his analysis of the possible intentions of people that he might help or empathise with in social situations. These exemplars indicated that children were able to reason about the emotions of others by drawing on their own understandings of their intent and actions.

Further evidence was provided following dialogue about the reciprocal nature of the empathy and how it impacts on the emotions of others. Henry demonstrated reasoning about the emotions of others when he stated; *'If you be nice to people you can make more friends by being empathetic, and if you be nice to them they'll like you more and they'll start being empathetic'* (**Henry, 6:6, COI6**). This suggests that reciprocity occurs when like emotions are offered and returned, an idea supported by Tony, who suggested; *'If you be nice and empathetic, people would more like you because if you be nice to the people they might be nice back to you, they would more like you because you are nice to them'* (**Tony, 8:4, COI6**). Flint also showed reasoning about the emotions of others and the impact of his own actions in developing empathy when he said; *'I think that if you want more friends you should be more empathetic because then people will*

start to like you because you care for them and so they'll want to be your friend and be with you more' (**Flint, 7:2, COI6**). These exemplars demonstrated that children were reasoning about the emotions of others by drawing on their own knowledge and understandings of how their own actions and intentions impact on the emotional states of others.

This research found that in reasoning about the emotions of others, children drew on their observations of the relationship between the mother and the baby, their awareness of the importance of social cues such as facial expression and vocalisation, as well as their understanding of specific emotional states. Furthermore, children drew on the understanding that their own actions and intentions, as well as those of others, could impact on the emotional states of others.

6.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reported the findings for children's reasoning about emotions in the Community of Inquiry by presenting analysis of data from a range of sources to demonstrate children's reasoning about the emotions of the baby, their own emotions, and the emotions of others. These data sources included dialogue exchanges from Community of Inquiry sessions, entries from children's Empathy Journals, and artefacts from Bridge Lesson activities.

The number of dialogic exchanges that demonstrated children's reasoning about the baby was highest in the first two Community of Inquiry sessions, but was reduced in the remaining sessions (**see Figure 54, section 6.4.1**). This reduction in the number of dialogic exchanges showing reasoning about the emotions of the baby was concurrent with an increase in children's reasoning about their own emotions as well as reasoning

about the emotions of others. Furthermore, the number of children's dialogic exchanges at the two highest levels of justificatory reasoning increased across the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions. This increase was found to be particularly true of children between six and a half and seven and a half years of age. Analysis of data for children's reasoning about the emotions of the baby, self and others indicated a finding that children's capacity for reasoning about emotions is fostered using the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach. Iterative changes to elements of the research design supported children's reasoning about the emotional states of others. Analysis of data for children's dialogic exchanges indicated a finding that the justifications children employed to support their reasoning about emotions increased in complexity over time using the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach. In the following chapter, findings relating to children's dialogic exchanges that demonstrated both reasoning about emotions and perspective taking of others within the Community of Inquiry are discussed. Dialogic exchanges that were coded for both of these minor sub-categories are described as empathic reasoning.

7. Analysis and Findings: Empathic Reasoning in the Empathic Pedagogy

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis and findings concerning children's *empathic reasoning* regarding the mother and baby, the self, and others when engaged in dialogic encounter with experiential stimuli within the Empathic Pedagogy. Empathic reasoning involves the ability to take the perspective of others, and reason about emotions using dialogue. In this way empathic reasoning is the dialogic expression of children's empathy for others (**see section 2.11**). A graphic representation of empathic reasoning and its component parts of perspective taking regarding others and reasoning about the emotions of others is presented here using a Venn diagram (**Figure 60**) for clarity.

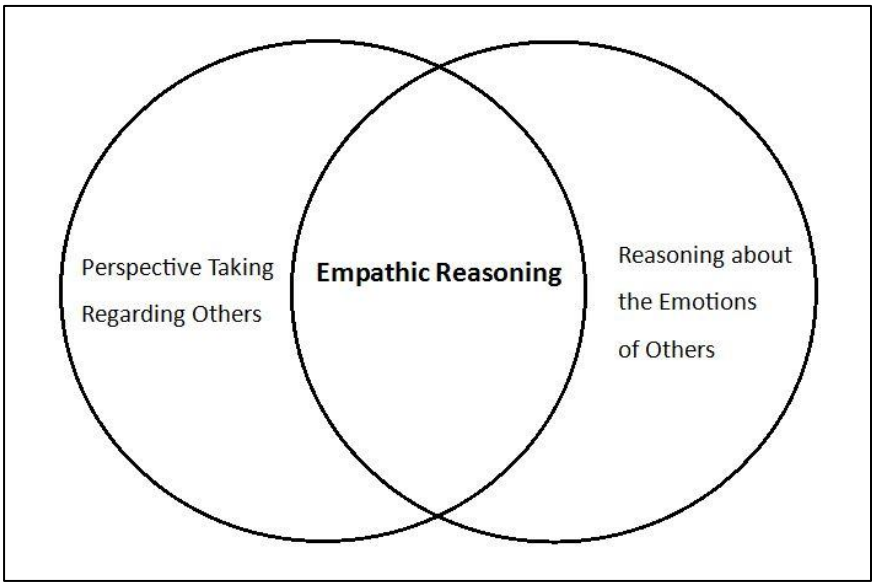


Figure 60. Venn diagram representing empathic reasoning and its component parts

I first present data analysis and findings in relation to design characteristics that elicited children's empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy. Second, I present analysis and findings regarding the justifications children employed to support their empathic reasoning. Data presented in this chapter was drawn from a range of sources highlighted below (**see Figure 61**).

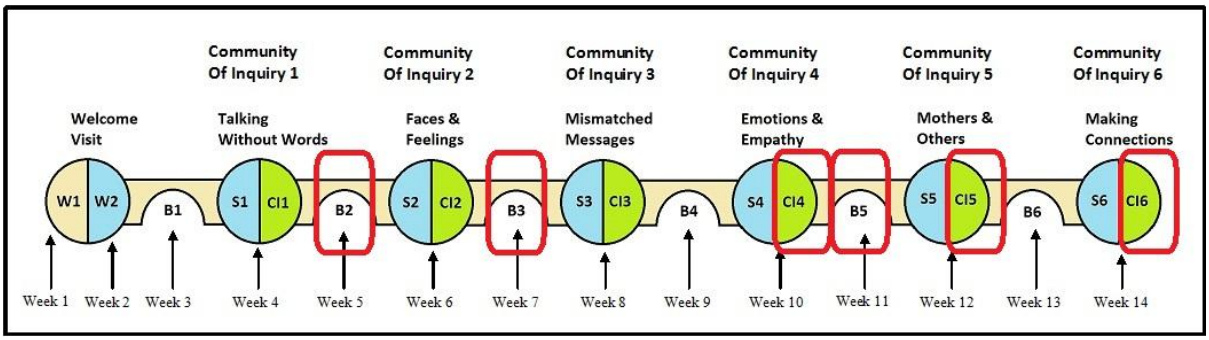


Figure 61. Data sources for empathic reasoning across the lesson sequence

Data is identified in this chapter using the same descriptive coding system used in the previous two findings chapters (**see Table 7, section 5.1**).

7.1.1 Empathic Reasoning in the Empathic Pedagogy

In the previous two chapters, I presented analysis of data and findings that showed how engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy fostered children's capacity for engaging in perspective taking regarding others and their capacity to reason about emotions; particularly the perceived emotions of others.

It was demonstrated that the Community of Inquiry provided a safe dialogic space where children could engage in meaningful dialogue that helped to elicit these cognitive and affective abilities. Overall, analysis of data from dialogic exchanges supported a finding that engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy fostered children's

capacity for empathic reasoning. Data presented in the following section demonstrates children's empathic reasoning regarding the self and others can be fostered within the Empathic Pedagogy.

7.2 Impact of the Research Design on Empathic Reasoning

Data analysis considered the impact of the original and evolving design of the Empathic Pedagogy on children's empathic reasoning. As empathic reasoning incorporates both perspective taking of others and reasoning about emotions, the iterative design changes were found to support children's empathic reasoning across the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy (**see section 5.2 & 6.2**).

Design alterations to the Empathic Pedagogy included changes to the activities in the second and fifth Bridge Lessons, discussion plans that the teacher used to guide each Community of Inquiry session, and prompts and questions used to encourage children to express and justify their thinking in Inquiry Lessons. Specific design changes made to Bridge Lessons such as the 'Faces and Feelings' and 'Empathy Line' activities supported building emotional vocabulary that children used increasingly in the Community of Inquiry sessions that followed.

The instances of children's emotional vocabulary use were reduced in the third and fourth Inquiry Lessons (**see Table 10**), which can be explained by these lessons being shorter in duration (**see Figure 62**), limiting opportunities for children's dialogue to progress and provided fewer opportunities for justificatory statements demonstrating empathic reasoning to be offered (**see Figure 62**).

Table 10

Data Exemplars Showing Instances of Emotional Vocabulary used to Support Children's Empathic Reasoning across the Community of Inquiry Lesson Sequence

Lessons	Instances of Emotional Vocabulary	Examples
Inquiry 1	5	*I think Adam **felt happy** because the first time he came he didn't know us, and it looked like he started to know us* (**Shane, 7:5, COI1**) *Well I think Adam **wasn't scared** when he came to this school because he used to go to a different school and he knew those people* (**Isaac, 7:7, COI1**)
Inquiry 2	20	*I disagree with Henry because I think that he was **very happy and excited** to be in our classroom again* (**Rick, 7:8, COI2**) *I don't think he was **actually sad** because I think he was **just happy*** (**Fraser, 7:8, COI2**)
Inquiry 3	8	*If you didn't have feelings that you might not have **an overreaction** to something that happened* (**Kevin, 7:11, COI3**) *I think Adam is **a feeling reader** because when everyone was laughing **Adam was smiling and laughing*** (**Fergus, 7:10, COI3**)
Inquiry 4	6	*I agree with Bruce that when Sarah is **anxious** then Adam is **anxious*** (**Harry, 6:9, COI4**) *I've never ever **felt anxious** because I don't know what that looks like* (**Henry, 6:6, COI4**)
Inquiry 5	47	*The one who **is angry** might **feel sad inside** because they don't get their way* (**Bruce, 8:2, COI5**) *I would **feel sad** for both of them because when they walk away **the angry one might feel sad for the other one*** (**Andrea, 7:10, COI5**)
Inquiry 6	42	*You might be **too empathetic** so you might lose all of your friends because you might be **worried about something** when they don't need help so they might not like you* (**Tyler, 7:5, COI6**) *If you **be nice** and **empathetic** like Flint, and people would more like you because if you **be nice** to the people, they might **be nice** back to you* (**Tony, 8:4, COI6**)

The use of hypothetical social dilemmas as additional stimuli within the fifth Community of Inquiry required children to focus their reasoning on the feelings and possible actions of others. There were several dialogic exchanges where children engaged in empathic reasoning. At the beginning of the Inquiry Lesson, Rick disagreed with Harry's initial suggestion that he would say "*it's alright you don't always have to cry all the time"* (**Harry, 6:9, COI5**) to the child in the hypothetical social dilemma. He stated: *'well I disagree with the bit that Harry said because when he said "it's alright, you don't have to cry", it would be a little bit mean because it's their emotions and not his, because he might not cry but they feel like they do'* (**Rick, 7:8, COI5**). Rick recognised that Harry applied his own perspective on the feelings of the upset child, rather than taking the perspective of the other by imagining how they might feel. These initial dialogic exchanges about the scenarios provided a clear foundation for the inquiry that followed, with many children demonstrating empathic reasoning when discussing whether they thought they should help the children involved, or leave them to solve the social dilemma themselves.

The duration of each Community of Inquiry session affected the number of dialogic exchanges children were able to offer, and subsequently on the opportunity to reflect on their own ideas and the ideas of others. While there were many constraining factors that impacted on the temporal aspect of the lesson design, it is important to note that a relationship was found between time and the number of justificatory statements offered by children (**see Figure 62)**.

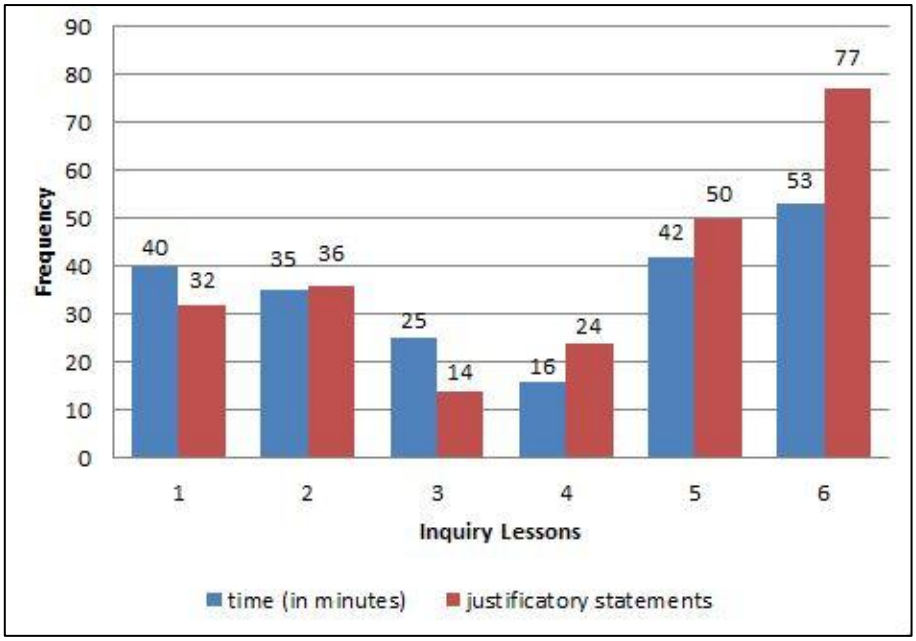


Figure 62. Duration of Inquiry Lessons and number of justificatory statements given across Inquiry Lesson sequence.

Changes to the Empathic Pedagogy design that were made to increase children's capacity for perspective taking regarding others and reasoning about emotion, both contributed to children's capacity for empathic reasoning. The following section presents data that showed an increase in the complexity of children's dialogic exchanges that demonstrated empathic reasoning, as measured by levels of justificatory reasoning across the sequence of lessons.

7.3 Levels of Justificatory Reasoning about Empathy

Children's dialogic exchanges that demonstrated empathic reasoning became increasingly complex as the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy progressed. This increase in complexity was visible in analysis of the levels of children's justificatory reasoning.

Data exemplars of each justificatory reasoning level are presented below (**see Table 11**) to illustrate children's empathic reasoning, as a capacity to reason empathically about the emotional states and motivations of others, which increased over time; a strong indicator of empathic responsiveness.

Table 11

Data Exemplars Showing Justificatory Levels of Children's Empathic Reasoning across the Community of Inquiry Lesson Sequence

Lessons	Child	Dialogic Exchanges	Justificatory Reasoning Levels
Inquiry 3	Jim	You can read bird's feelings when they fly off and they get scared.	1
Inquiry 4	Bruce	You said you can sort of control Adam's feelings by doing that feeling, but it wouldn't always happen.	2
Inquiry 4	Shane	I think you can kind of read their emotion if you haven't had it, because the way that they look you might have had that one before so you know what it feels like, sometimes you haven't but you still might know what it feels like.	3
Inquiry 5	Flint	I think we should just leave her alone, because I agree with Bruce that you shouldn't help, but because they might also get angry with you.	2
Inquiry 5	Rick	Well I disagree with the bit that Harry said because when he said "it's alright you don't have to cry", it would be a little bit mean because it's their emotions and not his, because he might not cry but they feel like they do.	3
Inquiry 6	Buddy	You could be empathetic to somebody and they might not actually be your friend still. They might not really care and want to be with that person so they just don't care even if you help them.	2

Inquiry 6	Tyler	Well I think if you already have enough empathy and you try to become more empathetic, you might be too empathetic so you might lose all of your friends because you might be worried about something when they don't need help so they might not like you.	3

These data exemplars illustrate the increasing complexity of children's justifications when engaging in empathic reasoning. Children supported their empathic reasoning with strong justifications; with most dialogic offerings demonstrating empathic reasoning coded at justificatory reasoning levels two and three (**see Figure 64**). As discussed in Chapter Six, this increase in children's justificatory reasoning at the two higher levels indicated that children were using a range of relevant evidence such as personal experiences or real life examples to support their thinking as the Empathic Pedagogy progressed.

As detailed in Chapter Three and Chapter Five, statements were coded into levels of justificatory reasoning that categorised children's reasoning within the Community of Inquiry in terms of its complexity (**see section 3.6 & 5.3 for detail**). In comparison with the increase in all dialogic offerings and justificatory statements, there was also a steady increase in the number of justificatory statements coded as empathic reasoning (**see Figure 63**).

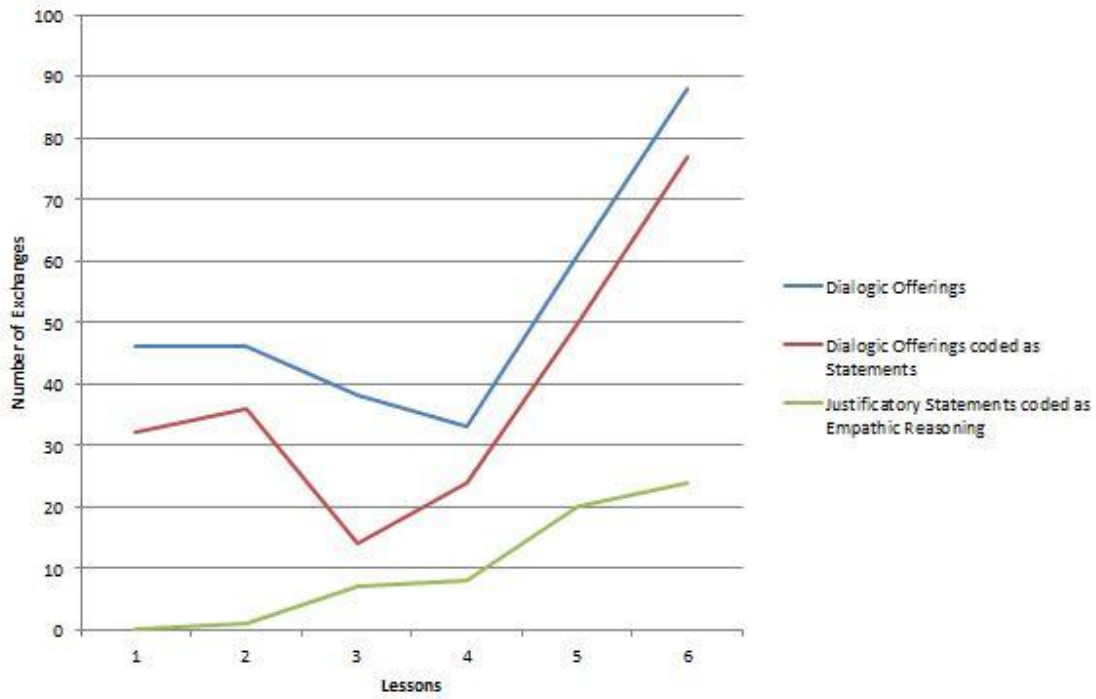


Figure 63. Comparison between Overall Dialogic Offerings, Overall Statements, and Justificatory Statements coded as Empathic Reasoning

The complexity of children's empathic reasoning increased at all three levels of justificatory reasoning across the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy. There were steady increases in children's empathic reasoning at Levels 2 and 3 across the lesson sequence (**see Figure 64**).

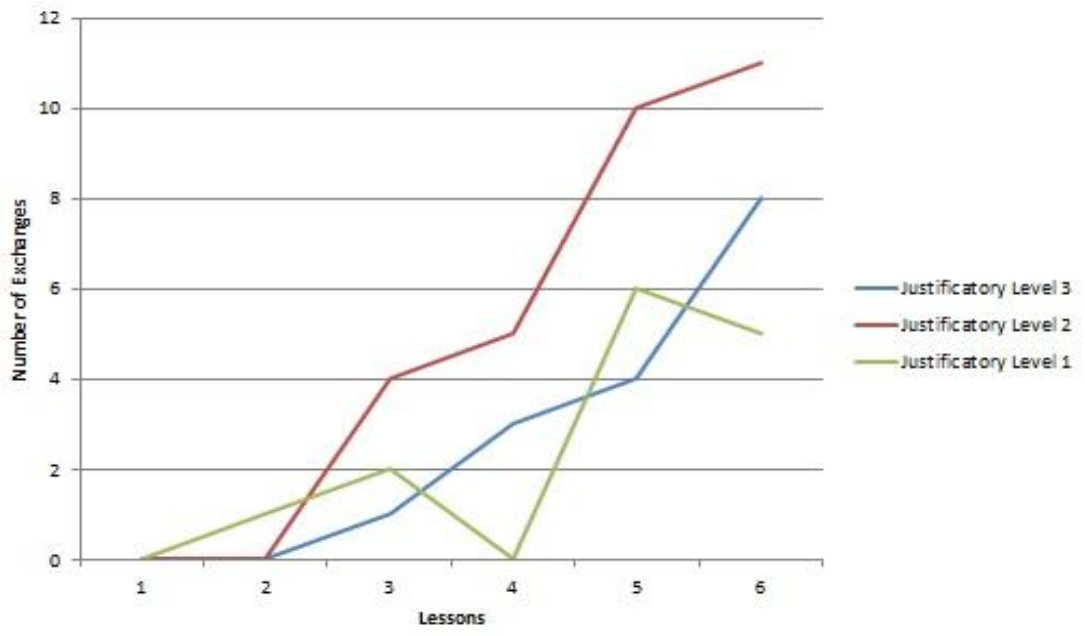


Figure 64. Justificatory levels of empathic reasoning across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.

The increased number of justificatory statements throughout the research indicates that children were able to sustain and develop empathic reasoning at the highest levels over time, supporting a finding that children's capacity for empathic reasoning can be fostered through engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy. This finding for children's empathic reasoning is highlighted when those dialogic exchanges are correlated with exchanges that demonstrated empathic reasoning *regarding others* (**see Figure 65**).

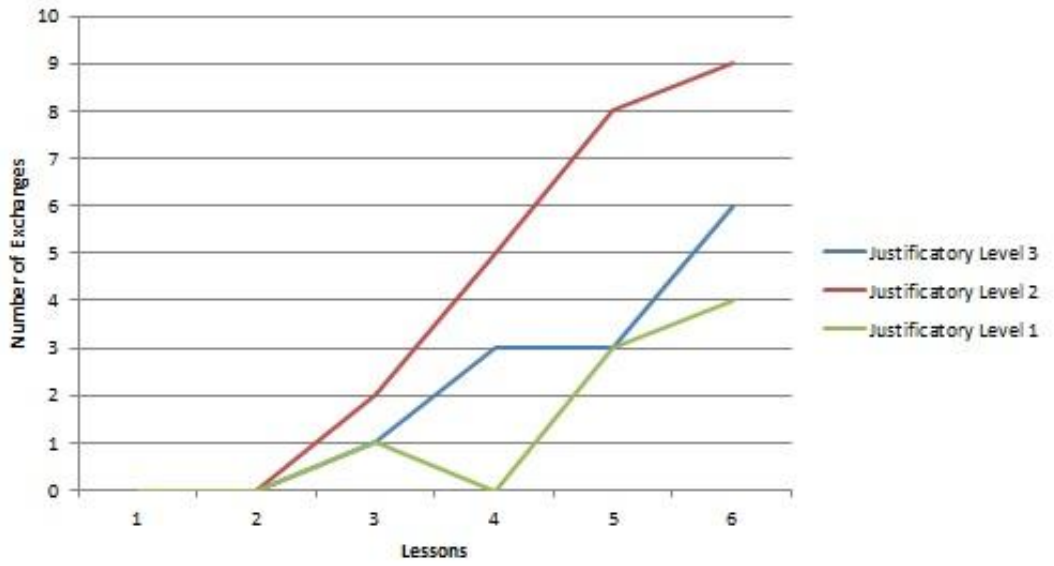


Figure 65. Justificatory levels of empathic reasoning regarding others across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.

The number of exchanges as empathic reasoning shown in the graph (**Figure 65**) is relatively small in comparison with the total number of dialogic offerings in each Community of Inquiry session (**see Figure 63**), however the increase in the two higher levels of justificatory reasoning is a clear indicator that children's capacity to reason empathically has increased in complexity.

This section presented data which demonstrated that the number of dialogic exchanges showing empathic reasoning increased in complexity, as measured by justificatory reasoning levels. This supported a finding that children's empathic reasoning, and the complexity of children's justifications used to support their empathic reasoning can be fostered over time using the Community of Inquiry approach.

7.4 Focus of Empathic Reasoning

The research found that children's capacity for empathic reasoning was fostered through engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy. Analysis and findings from children's dialogue within the Community of Inquiry sessions are presented below. Children offered an increasing number of dialogic exchanges that demonstrated empathic reasoning for others across the research (**see Figure 66**). The number of dialogic exchanges that demonstrated empathic reasoning for others increased from zero in the first two Community of Inquiry sessions up to 19 exchanges in the final session.

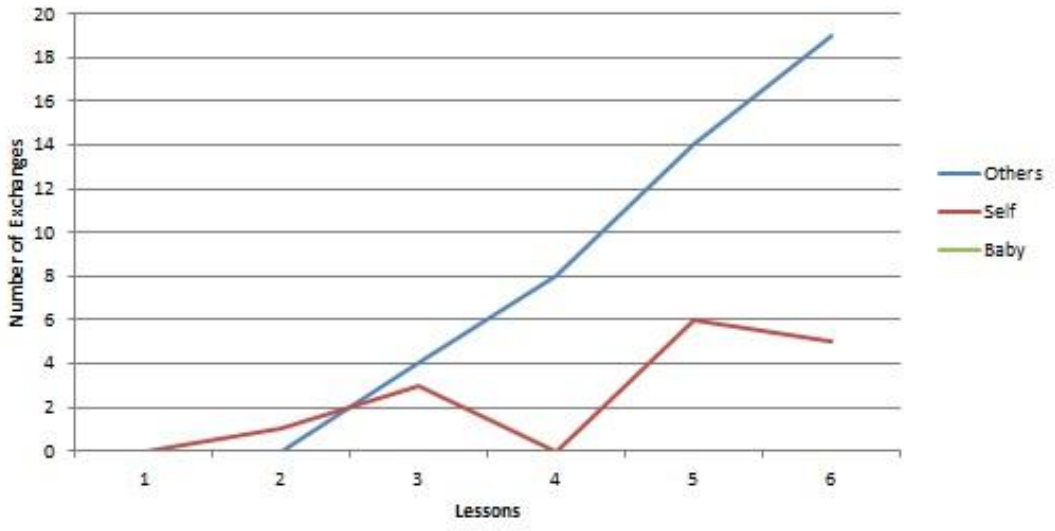


Figure 66. Focus of children's empathic reasoning across the Community of Inquiry Lesson sequence.

7.4.1 Empathic Reasoning Regarding the Baby

There were no instances of empathic reasoning regarding the baby within the Community of Inquiry sessions. This was expected as the mother and baby acted as the primary stimulus for discussion in the Community of Inquiry, and as such provided the

launch point for deeper dialogue about the Big Ideas and Big Questions. In this way, the discussion plans were designed to move from an initial focus on the mother and baby to a wider focus on the emotions of others more broadly over the course of the research. As dialogic offerings coded as empathic reasoning were minimal in the first two Community of Inquiry sessions (where the focus on mother and baby was strongest), it was not surprising that children's empathic reasoning regarding the baby was not observed in the Community of Inquiry sessions.

7.4.2 Empathic Reasoning Regarding the Self

This research found that children engaged in empathic reasoning regarding their own emotional states within the Community of Inquiry sessions. There were 15 examples of children's empathic reasoning regarding the self, where the children's dialogic offerings involved both perspective taking regarding others, and reasoning about emotions.

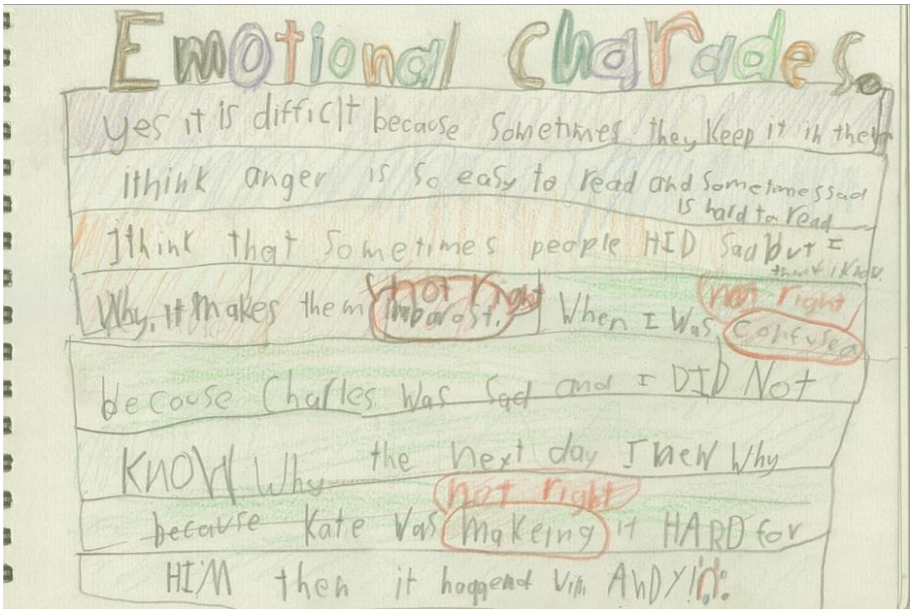
Shane reasoned empathically about his own emotional states and reflected on his own learning about feelings and their consequences for himself and others. '*I think I learnt some other stuff from having inquiries about feelings and if someone is mean to you then you might make them feel sad and hurt their feelings, but if you hurt their feelings you might feel sad'* (**Shane, 7:5, COI6**). Shane was able to reason about his own actions towards others by reflecting on how their actions may influence his emotional state, and how his subsequent emotional response might influence their feelings, resulting in a further impact on his own sense of empathic concern. This is complex empathic reasoning that indicated that Shane was able to reason about emotions and to engage in perspective taking regarding others to support a reflection on his own emotional states. This demonstrated that Shane was engaging in empathic reasoning regarding the self.

Another example of that demonstrated children's empathic reasoning about the self was offered by Tyler who said; *'Well I think if you already have enough empathy and you try to become more empathetic, you might be too empathetic so you might lose all of your friends because you might be worried about something when they don't need help so they might not like you'* (**Tyler, 7:5, COI6**). This exemplar indicated that Tyler understood the role of empathy in friendships, but argued that the consequences for showing too much empathy may be that you lose friends. In doing so Tyler showed that he was able to reason about emotions and to engage in perspective taking regarding others who may react unfavourably if he showed too much empathic concern for their emotional states. This example also demonstrated Tyler's ability to reason about his own emotional states as well as the emotions of others. The combination of these aspects of Tyler's dialogic offering indicated that he was engaging in empathic reasoning regarding the self.

7.4.3 Empathic Reasoning Regarding Others

This research found that children engaged in empathic reasoning regarding others within the Community of Inquiry sessions. Across the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions there was an increase in the number of dialogic exchanges that demonstrated children's empathic reasoning regarding others (**see Figure 66**). This was also evident in children's Empathy Journal responses and artefacts from supporting lessons. Empathic reasoning regarding others occurred when children described how the feelings of others could be difficult to read, but that some visual and contextual cues could support their reasoning about the emotional states of those others. Fergus wrote in his Empathy Journal that recognising people's feelings could be difficult because some emotions were easier to read than others following the 'Emotional Charades'

activity in the third Bridge Lesson (**see Figure 67**). He suggested that some people may try to hide feelings such as sadness because they may feel embarrassed about being sad. Fergus elaborated on this idea and provided an example from his own experience in which he was confused by a friend's emotional state until the following day when he discovered that another child was making life hard for his friend.

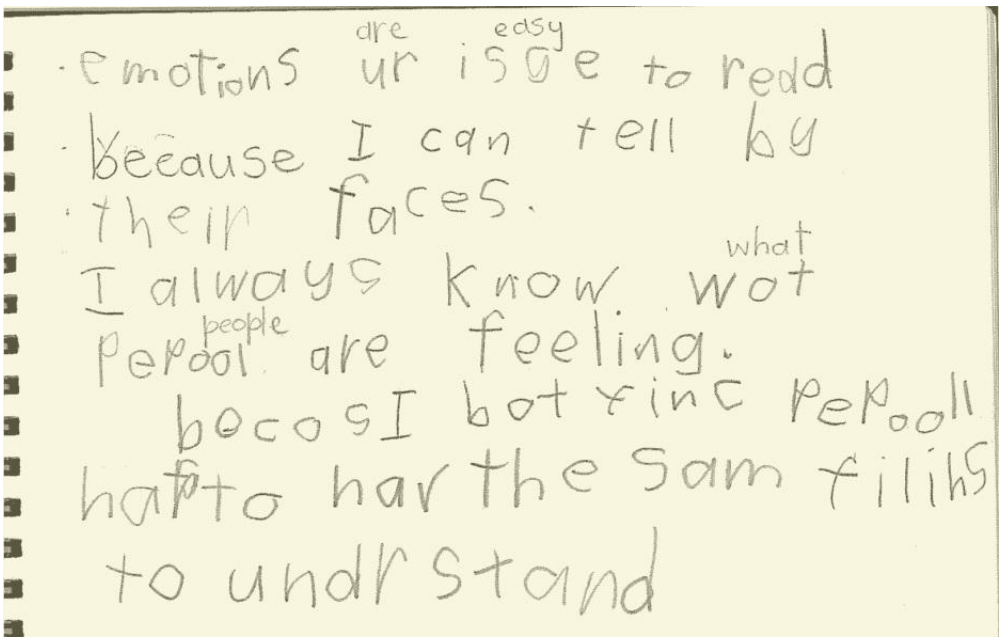


Yes it is difficult (to read someone's emotions) because sometimes they keep it in them. I think anger is so easy to read and sometimes sad is hard to read. I think that sometimes people hide sad, but I think I know why. It makes them embarrassed. When I was confused because Charles was sad and I did not know why. The next day I knew why, because Kate was making it hard for him. Then it happened with Andy (**Fergus, 7:10, BRG3**).

Figure 67. Fergus's Empathy Journal entry for the emotional charades activity showing empathic reasoning about others.

Fergus demonstrated empathic reasoning regarding others when he recognised that the emotional states of others may be difficult to read, and provided a hypothesis

for why he believed this, and then supported his reasoning with an example of a social dilemma from his own experience that involved the challenge of reading the emotional states of others. Another example of empathic reasoning regarding others was demonstrated by Terry in his Empathy Journal response to the same Bridge Lesson activity. He wrote that he felt that he could easily read the emotions of others by looking at their faces (**see Figure 68**), and added that he thought that you did not have to experience particular emotions to be able to read them in other people.



Emotions are easy to read because I can tell by their faces. I always know what people are feeling because I don't think people have to have the same feelings to understand (**Terry, 6:11, BRG3**).

Figure 68. Terry's Empathy Journal entry for the emotional charades activity showing empathic reasoning regarding others.

Terry was able to reason empathically and think critically about the perceived emotional states of others, engaging in perspective taking regarding others, and

reasoning about their emotions to do so. Terry's statements showed that he was able to use visual cues from people's faces as a guide to their feelings, and to reason about the emotional states of those others despite not experiencing similar feelings himself. While these two Empathy Journal entries from Fergus and Terry express very different viewpoints on the difficulty of reading the emotional states of others, by taking the perspective of others and reasoning about their emotions children engaged in empathic reasoning regarding others.

Further examples of empathic reasoning regarding others were demonstrated by Shane and Henry. In response to a question as to whether you can understand someone else's feelings if you haven't experienced them yourself (COI4) Shane suggested that the emotional states of others could be understood by closely observing them and imagining a similar feeling, stating; '*I think you can kind of read their emotion if you haven't had it, because the way that they look you might have had that one before so you know what it feels like, sometimes you haven't but you still might know what it feels like*' (**Shane, 7:5, COI4**). Henry supported Shane's ideas when he added; '*I agree with Shane because you can sort of know if you haven't had the feeling that someone else is having because you can sort of read it*' (**Henry, 6:6, COI4**). In this dialogic exchange, Shane and Henry argued that visual cues can be a useful guide to understanding the emotional states of others, and that their own emotional experiences can help inform their empathic reasoning regarding others when unsure about the emotional states being experienced by others. Further examples were found in children's responses to each other. In response to Wayne's suggestion that he would leave people to sort out their own social dilemma because they were not his problems, Bruce built on Wayne's idea and elaborated on his own thoughts about helping others and the implications for their

own social problem solving. He stated; '*I want to add more to Wayne's thinking because it's a bit like the empathy thing I said yesterday…if you help them they're not problem solving, and if you did it sometimes it would be alright, but if you did it all the time they would rely on you*' (**Bruce, 8:2, COI5**), showing that Bruce was thinking about the long term social emotional needs of the other person. Bruce recognised that empathising and responding to the emotional needs of others is beneficial in the short term, but that continually empathising with someone may be detrimental to the other person's self-control over long periods.

Flint also demonstrated empathic reasoning later in the Inquiry Lesson, when he agreed with Bruce's suggestion about leaving the person alone, but offered a different reason for coming to this conclusion. Flint stated; '*I think we should just leave her alone, because I agree with Bruce that you shouldn't help, but because they might also get angry with you'* (**Flint, 7:2, COI5**). Flint continued by also providing his reasons for disagreeing with an earlier suggestion by Harry that he would tell the sad person that they don't have to feel upset when he said; '*I disagree with Harry because if you say what he said, they might think that actually is a bit mean and get angry or upset with you as well and storm off from you'* (**Flint, 7:2, COI5**). These two statements from Flint showed his empathic reasoning regarding others, and demonstrated that he was able to consider complex multiple viewpoints when reasoning about the emotional states of others.

Further examples which demonstrated children's capacity for empathic reasoning regarding others were offered by Tony and Wayne in the same Community of Inquiry. These offerings showed collaborative reasoning that supported and added to the empathic reasoning regarding others demonstrated by Flint earlier in the

discussion. Tony said; *'I agree with Flint because they might get angry at you and then they would stomp away and you might feel sad'* (**Tony, 8:4, COI5**), and Wayne added; '*well I agree with Flint and Tony because if you go up to a person who is sad they might get even sadder because it is easy to get your feelings hurt even more once they are hurt'* (**Wayne, 8:5, COI5**). These two statements added to the idea that attempting to provide support to someone who was upset may have negative consequences for the person attempting to show empathy. Tony's statement indicated that he was concerned about the possible feelings he may experience if the person reacted angrily, whereas Wayne's reasoning demonstrated that he thought he may upset the person even more if he was to get involved in the altercation.

Later in the Community of Inquiry, Fraser demonstrated empathic reasoning regarding others when he added to Wayne's idea and introduced the notion of being emotionally fragile into the dialogue when he stated; '*I agree with Wayne because if you go up to them they'll be all fragile so they might get even sadder'* (**Fraser, 7:8, COI5**). This exemplar demonstrated Fraser's empathic reasoning regarding others, and showed how an idea initially introduced by Harry was challenged, investigated and refined through dialogic iterations throughout the Community of Inquiry. These multiple examples provided a complex picture of children's capacity for empathic reasoning regarding others, and demonstrated that children could apply empathic reasoning regarding others that supports contrasting ideas about the emotional states of others. Furthermore, these examples highlighted the cyclical nature of dialogue within the inquiry process, and the development of children's empathic reasoning across the Empathic Pedagogy implementation.

Analysis of data found that children demonstrated the capacity for empathic reasoning regarding the self and empathic reasoning regarding others. Children used empathic reasoning to discuss and understand their own emotional states, as well as the perceived emotional states of others.

7.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reported the findings regarding children's empathic reasoning within the Community of Inquiry by presenting analysis of data from a range of sources. These data were taken primarily from dialogue exchanges from Community of Inquiry sessions, and from children's Empathy Journals, both of which have been used to show children's empathic reasoning about the emotional states of others.

An increase in the number of dialogic exchanges demonstrating children's empathic reasoning was found across the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions, with substantial increases in the final three Community of Inquiry sessions. The complexity of children's empathic reasoning was found to increase across the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions, with considerable gains in the two highest levels of justificatory reasoning. The findings concerning children's perspective taking and reasoning about emotions from the previous two chapters, and the findings presented in this chapter have built a comprehensive picture of children's empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy. In the following chapter, the research findings are discussed in relation to the development of young children's perspective taking regarding others, reasoning about emotion, and empathic reasoning through engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy.

8. Discussion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is a discussion of the major finding that there is support for the development of an Empathic Pedagogy to foster young children's empathic reasoning. The results chapters identified the key findings concerning children's perspective taking, reasoning about emotion, and empathic reasoning. Specifically, this chapter will identify and discuss the connections between these findings and the design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy used in this research in light of relevant literature presented in Chapter Two.

8.2 Positioning the Research Findings in Relation to the Literature

The aim of this research was to investigate the ways in which children's empathic reasoning might be fostered through an Empathic Pedagogy consisting of a series of Community of Inquiry sessions that used an experiential stimulus in the form of a mother and baby. The research aimed to investigate the design characteristics of an Empathic Pedagogy that fostered young children's capacity for empathic reasoning, and to investigate the ways in which the Empathic Pedagogy using an experiential stimulus supported the development of young children's empathic reasoning.

The research found that children's empathic reasoning increased through continued engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy that included ongoing engagement with Community of Inquiry sessions. This overall finding furthers the work of researchers such as Schleifer, Daniel, Peyronnet and Lecomte (2003), who found that young children were better able to recognise emotions and empathise with others after

ongoing engagement with the Community of Inquiry approach. The findings support the use of the mother and baby as an experiential stimulus for a Community of Inquiry in providing children with a clear focus and entry point for discussion about the communication of feelings (Gordon, 2009; Schonert-Reichl & Scott, 2009). Additionally, in later Community of Inquiry sessions children's empathic reasoning was most evident following the introduction of other stimuli such as hypothetical scenarios. There were a number of design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy shown to be important in fostering children's capacity for empathic reasoning including the provision of a safe space for open dialogue about emotions, children's observation of social cues including verbal and non-verbal communication of others, knowledge of a range of emotional states that helped children develop a rich emotional vocabulary for describing feelings, and an awareness of the impact that children's own actions can have on the emotional states of others.

These findings provide support for the value of progressive design refinement of the Empathic Pedagogy (A. Collins, 1999; Reimann, 2011). The progressive development of the Empathic Pedagogy enabled the researcher to both identify and evaluate the effectiveness of any design changes in the development of children's empathic reasoning. The opportunity for this adaptability and refinement offered by EDR methodology in ongoing pedagogical design changes reflected the nature of the Community of Inquiry approach at the heart of the Empathic Pedagogy. Community of Inquiry embraces openness and flexibility to follow children' interests and iteratively refine the community of critical learners' understanding of the inquiry questions being explored (Barrow, 2010; Daniel & Delsol, 2004). EDR served to connect with these open

and flexible characteristics and support the pragmatic research aims of uncovering the design elements and the conditions of change that supported empathic reasoning.

A number of design characteristics were found to foster children's capacity for empathic reasoning. These included the use of hypothetical scenarios in Community of Inquiry sessions, designed Bridge Lesson activities such as the Empathy Line and Emotional Charades, and a focus on teacher prompts to elicit children's justifications. Furthermore, additional elements of the design which were largely beyond the control of the researcher, but which had an impact on children's capacity for empathic reasoning were able to be identified. These elements included the length of each Community of Inquiry session, personalised input and opinion from the teacher, and the classroom focus on children's individual executive functions; particularly inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility (Diamond, 2012; Nagel, 2012; National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2011). In the following sections I discuss the key research findings regarding the Empathic Pedagogy, drawing on contemporary literature and previous research studies presented in Chapter Two.

8.3 The Empathic Pedagogy

This section discusses the two key components of Empathic Pedagogy; experiential stimuli and Community of Inquiry. The integral role of these two components is woven throughout Chapter Eight through discussion of the design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy that fostered children's empathic reasoning (**see section 8.4**), and the key features of children's empathic reasoning, including the quality of dialogue and the focus of dialogue within the Empathic Pedagogy (**see section 8.5**). This section broadly discusses these two core components of the Empathic

Pedagogy, and then the following sections examine some of the more nuanced aspects of each.

The finding that children's empathic reasoning was fostered by the Empathic Pedagogy is consistent with previous research demonstrating that engaging children in dialogic inquiry about emotions within a Community of Inquiry can foster their ability to reason about their own emotions and the emotions of others (Daniel & Delsol, 2004; Daniel et al., 2006). This research implemented an Empathic Pedagogy that utilised as the experiential stimulus for Community of Inquiry sessions a mother and baby who visited the classroom for regular discussion and observation of their communication and interactions (Action for Children, 2013; Gordon, 2009).

8.3.1 Experiential Stimuli in the Empathic Pedagogy

The experiential stimulus provided by a mother and baby gave children an engaging focus for inquiry about emotions and the emotional states of others. This is consistent with studies that have examined and acknowledged the benefits of using experiential stimuli to foster children's empathy and reasoning (Cain & Carnellor, 2008; Daniel et al., 2006; Schonert-Reichl & Scott, 2009).

The experiential stimulus was initially important in establishing the children's focus on emotions and non-verbal communication; however this stimulus appeared to be less important for the inquiry process within the Empathic Pedagogy as the lessons progressed. This is unsurprising given that the Empathic Pedagogy was designed to shift children's focus from the baby, to the self, and ultimately outwards to a broader focus on the emotional states of others (**see Table 4, section 3.5.2.2.1**). The initial experiential stimulus was however necessary for creating associations in children's minds between non-verbal communication, the incongruent nature of internal

emotional states, and the visible social emotional cues that were important to the success of later Inquiry Lessons. The experiential stimulus provided children with observational experiences to facilitate affective and cognitive associations. The usefulness of this initial stimulus is consistent with the findings of Schertz (2006) who asserted that experiential stimulus can encourage children's emotional associations to be recalled through peer-mediated dialogic interactions within the Community of Inquiry. The role of Community of Inquiry in Empathic Pedagogy is discussed next.

8.3.2 Community of Inquiry in the Empathic Pedagogy

Community of Inquiry provided the vehicle for the experiential stimuli which established an initial focal point for dialogic inquiry about the emotional states of others. In this regard the combination of experiential stimuli within a Community of Inquiry was perhaps necessary for the richness of the dialogue and empathic reasoning that followed. The reasoning children demonstrated about non-verbal communication and possible incongruence between observed social emotional cues and internal emotional states was arguably influenced by their observations of the mother and baby in Stimulus Lessons.

Particular attention has been paid in this research to the notion of *community* and the development of a community of critical learners within the educational context of school and school environs. In communities where children feel a sense of ownership and connection with their peers, their concerns about the emotional states of others are likely to be most keenly attended to and reciprocated (Saito et al., 2015). Community of Inquiry was used in this research to support this sense of ownership and connection felt within communities such as those developed within classrooms and schools.

This research faced challenges in recruiting a baby from the school community whose age and development fitted within the developmental criteria for this research (**see Appendix H**). Drawing the mother and baby from the immediate local or school community may have stimulated interest for longer due to the ongoing relationships that could be forged over time. It could be however that the experiential stimulus provided by the mother and baby did all it could, and the focus of children's dialogic inquiry moved beyond the need for that particular stimulus. The following section discusses key design characteristics of Empathic Pedagogy that were found to be important factors in fostering children's empathic reasoning.

8.4 Design Characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy

This section discusses the design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy that aimed to stimulate affective response and cognitive engagement through intersubjective, dialogic inquiry that fostered children's empathic reasoning.

Five key design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy were found to foster children's empathic reasoning. These were: (1) Bridge Lessons, and the intentional design of activities within these lessons, (2) stimuli designed to elicit affective response: the experiential stimulus of a mother and baby, and hypothetical scenarios, (3) the Empathy Journal as a vehicle for surfacing children's empathic reasoning, (4) teacher prompts and questions in Community of Inquiry sessions, and (5) time: the duration of the Community of Inquiry sessions, and the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy over time. Each of these key design characteristics is now discussed.

8.4.1 Bridge Lessons

The intentional design of Bridge Lessons supported children's capacity for empathic reasoning in the Empathic Pedagogy. Bridge Lessons provided children with a conceptual link between each Community of Inquiry session and enabled iterative changes to be made to the Big Ideas being discussed, and therefore provided opportunities for children's thinking about Big Ideas to deepen and develop. Changes made specifically to Bridge Lesson 2 and Bridge Lesson 5 positively impacted on children's empathic reasoning and expanded their emotional vocabularies in the Community of Inquiry sessions which immediately followed those lessons and beyond.

Face It™ cards were used in Bridge Lesson 2 (**see section 4.7**). The cards acted as a visual stimulus by providing visual representations of the feelings of others, allowing children the opportunity to recognise the features of a child's (illustrated) face and to imagine what emotional state was being portrayed. Subsequent discussion exposed a range of views about ambiguous representations of emotion, descriptions of the faces and associated feelings, which added to the emotional vocabulary of the participants. Furthermore, by asking children to describe a time in their lives when they had felt the emotion they had chosen, this Bridge Lesson activity encouraged children to engage in perspective taking regarding the self and reflect on the experience of a particular emotional state shown on the face of another. The Bridge Lesson experiences were drawn on by the children during Community of Inquiry sessions where additional opportunities to develop and expand those emotional vocabularies were available.

Children developed an expanded emotional vocabulary through their engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy. This finding is consistent with previous research by Schleifer, Daniel, Peyronnet and Lecomte (2003) who demonstrated that

philosophical discussions such as those facilitated in a Community of Inquiry can help children as young as five improve their ability to recognise and describe emotions. Furthermore, findings indicated that children's expanded emotional vocabulary supported their empathic reasoning in their response to Bridge Lesson activities as well as Community of Inquiry sessions. This supports and confirms the work of Lafortune and Robertson (2006) who explained that critical thinking and the expression of emotions can work together to provide the conditions where the skills necessary for improvement in both aspects are jointly developed. As has been previously described, in this research empathic reasoning describes the combination of reasoning about emotions and perspective taking regarding others. Therefore, these findings indicated that activities such as those designed for Bridge Lessons 2 and 5, along with continued engagement with Community of Inquiry sessions helped extend children's emotional vocabulary. Furthermore, children's extended emotional vocabulary enriched their reasoning about the emotional states of others and benefitted children's capacity to think in a caring manner (LaFortune & Robertson, 2006; Lipman, 2003).

The support provided by the Bridge Lessons designed for this research is consistent with previous research on the increase in emotional vocabulary through engagement with Community of Inquiry (Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger et al., 2010; LaFortune & Robertson, 2006; Lipman, 2003; Schaffer, 1996). Although previous research supports the role of Community of Inquiry in developing emotional vocabulary, the findings of this research suggest that the addition of Bridge Lessons provided additional conceptual links over time in the Empathic Pedagogy; a point now discussed.

Studies have shown that describing emotions verbally helps children to articulate and regulate their own emotional states (Decety & Batson, 2009), and that the

expression of emotions in words helps people improve emotional literacy, and develop empathy for others (Decety & Batson, 2009; Matthews, 2006). The *Faces and Feelings* activity in Bridge Lesson 2 provided opportunities for children to consider their own perspectives about particular emotions, and engage with the views about perceived and personally experienced emotional states. The intentional design of the Bridge Lesson activity worked to encourage children to describe and share their emotional states with others, and so regulate their emotional response within social contexts. As a result, children's empathic reasoning about the emotional states of others and enriched emotional vocabulary is arguably visible in the increased dialogic exchanges and the higher levels of justificatory reasoning seen in subsequent Community of Inquiry sessions (**see Figures 71 & 72**). These increases suggest that children's heightened understanding of their emotional states can also lead to an increase in justificatory levels of reasoning and empathic reasoning.

Not only did the number of dialogic exchanges demonstrating children's empathic reasoning increase, but as the Empathic Pedagogy progressed, children likewise demonstrated higher levels of justificatory reasoning to support their ideas and claims about their own feelings and the perceived emotional states of others. Continued exposure to the thoughts of children's peers in Bridge and Inquiry Lessons and the modelling of justificatory language by the teacher, correlates strongly with children's use of increasingly higher levels of justification to support and defend their ideas. This is consistent with the work of researchers who found that children who engage in dialogue through the Community of Inquiry approach showed significant increases in their ability to reason and provide justification for their claims (Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Millett & Tapper, 2012; Schertz, 2006; Schleifer et al., 2003; Topping & Trickey, 2007a). The research by Schleifer and others was carried out with children in a

kindergarten setting and demonstrated small improvements in children's emotion-recognition and perspective taking. Those results highlighted that reasoning about emotions can be taught to very young children using philosophical discussion within a Community of Inquiry (Schertz, 2006; Schleifer et al., 2003). This current research adds to this body of work by documenting how young children's justifications regarding emotions can be enriched through Bridge Lesson activities such as *Faces and Feelings*, and *Empathy Line* that support children's empathic reasoning in Community of Inquiry sessions.

Furthermore, findings from the research carried out by Topping and Trickey (Topping & Trickey, 2007b; Trickey & Topping, 2006; Trickey & Topping, 2007) in Scottish schools with 10-12 year old children clearly demonstrated that there are long lasting impacts on children's verbal cognitive abilities and non-verbal reasoning when they engage in *interactive dialogue* over a sustained period of time, such as the ongoing discussions that occurred in Bridge and Inquiry Lessons within the Empathic Pedagogy. Although the current research was carried out relatively recently, it can be hoped that through ongoing engagement with the emotional concerns of others there will be some lasting impact on children's reasoning about the emotional states of the self and others with increased exposure to an emotional vocabulary within the Empathic Pedagogy implemented in this research.

Increased opportunities for discussion about emotional states has been found to support children's ability to express feeling and empathise with others (Daniel et al., 2006; Decety & Batson, 2009; Schleifer et al., 2003). Bridge Lesson 5 also used the *More or Less Empathy* activity involving small group discussion and individual thinking about eight social situations, as hypothetical scenarios (**see section 4.12**). The introduction

of these hypothetical scenarios in Bridge Lesson 5 was found to impact on the fifth Community of Inquiry session that occurred immediately afterwards. Children's empathic reasoning (**see Figure 63**), as well as justificatory reasoning increased (**see Figure 64**), indicating that the encouragement children received to think deeply about personal empathic responses and actions positively impacted upon their empathic reasoning. Building on both hypothetical scenarios and Community of Inquiry experiences, additional hypothetical scenarios presented as stimuli in Inquiry Lesson 5, further supported children's empathic reasoning. These collective findings indicated that experiencing rich examples of relevant social dilemmas and the opportunity to discuss these within the community of critical learners is likely to foster young children's empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy.

The rich and varied possibilities for the content and delivery of Bridge Lessons is exciting, as this component of the Empathic Pedagogy allows teachers using this approach to introduce materials, activities, and ideas that may be generated in the time between each Community of Inquiry session. Furthermore, the value of Bridge Lessons in cross curricular planning and teaching can enable a focus on the ethical dimensions found in literacy, science, humanities and social sciences or health and physical education curriculum areas. In this way, the Bridge Lessons, and indeed the Empathic Pedagogy itself does not need to be seen as an additional set of lessons, but as a socially rich vehicle that can incorporate a range of curricula in a way that is meaningful for the children involved. Potentially, Bridge Lessons offer a way of engaging cross-curricular perspectives and identifying and engaging underutilised ethical perspectives and opportunities for critical thinking and using these to develop children's empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy.

8.4.2 Stimuli Designed to Elicit Affective Response

The second key design characteristic that fostered children's empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy was the applied use of stimulus material that was designed to elicit children's affective response and foster empathic reasoning. The two forms of stimuli discussed in this section are the ongoing experiential stimulus of the mother and baby in Stimulus Lessons throughout the research, and the hypothetical scenarios used in Bridge Lessons and Community of Inquiry sessions. Both forms of stimuli provided opportunities for children to form a relational basis for interaction and caring. This in turn, supported children's perspective taking regarding the baby, self and others by developing awareness of their own emotional states which in turn was applied to their understanding of the emotional states of others.

8.4.2.1 Mother and Baby Experiential Stimulus

The experiential stimulus of the mother and baby provided children with an engaging focus for inquiry about emotions and the emotional states of others. This is consistent with studies that have examined and acknowledged the benefits of using experiential stimuli to foster children's empathy and reasoning (Cain & Carnellor, 2008; Daniel et al., 2006; Schonert-Reichl & Scott, 2009).

The experiential stimulus was found to be initially important in establishing the children's focus on emotions and non-verbal communication; however this stimulus appeared to be less important for the inquiry process within the Empathic Pedagogy as the lessons progressed. This is not surprising given that the Empathic Pedagogy was designed to shift children's focus from the baby, to the self, and ultimately outwards to a broader focus on the emotional states of others (**see Table 4, section 3.5.2.2.1**). The

experiential stimulus provided children with observational experiences that were found to facilitate affective and cognitive associations. The usefulness of this initial stimulus is consistent with the findings of Schertz (2006) who asserted that experiential stimuli can encourage children's emotional associations to be recalled through peer-mediated dialogic interactions within the Community of Inquiry. In this way, the ongoing interactions with the mother and baby over time provided children with a social emotional anchor to which children could refer during Community of Inquiry sessions. The use of an experiential stimulus was therefore a key design feature of the Empathic Pedagogy that was found to impact on children's empathic reasoning. Children drew on experiences with the mother and baby to connect their thoughts and ideas about the emotional states of others within the Empathic Pedagogy.

Children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding the baby and reasoning about the emotions of the baby, and therefore empathise with the baby's emotional states by connecting intersubjectively in some form with another's emotional experiences. This is consistent with neuroscience research by Christ, Carlo and Stoltenberg (2016) who found that prosocial tendencies such as perspective taking are reliable predictors of prosocial behaviour such as empathic concern, and adds to existing work of Carlo (2006) and Eisenberg, Fabes and Spinrad (2006) who likewise suggested that perspective taking is a reliable correlate of empathy. The children did not engage in *empathic reasoning* regarding the baby; however, this could be because these children had not yet developed the cognitively advanced empathic mode of language mediated association (Hoffman, 2000; Maxwell & DesRoches, 2010). This mode of empathic response requires the observer to be able to connect intersubjectively with another's emotional experience and respond to spoken language

describing the experience (Schertz, 2006). Therefore, children may have been unable to connect the language-driven inquiry in later Community of Inquiry sessions with the emotionally rich intersubjective experiences they had with the mother and baby in early Stimulus Lessons. The experiential stimulus of the mother and baby did however impact on children's empathic reasoning by providing experiences that supported children to connect their thoughts and ideas about the emotional states of others. This is notable because the use of a human experiential stimulus is a unique feature of the Empathic Pedagogy. Although a human stimulus has been used in the Roots of Empathy SEL program, this was not embedded in the design of pedagogy that specifically aimed to engage children in ethical dialogue about the emotional states of the baby in order to develop their empathic reasoning about themselves and others. Therefore, the use of a human experiential stimulus is a necessary and integral characteristic of the design of the Empathic Pedagogy.

Additionally, the Empathic Pedagogy involved a deliberate shift in focus away from the emotional states of the baby towards the self and other; while maintaining the consistent thread of the experiential engagement with mother and baby. The finding that children's dialogic offerings likewise shifted away from the baby is therefore not unexpected. In addition, language mediated association between the emotional experience of this experiential stimulus and future dialogic inquiry was not visible. This was not the case however with additional stimuli that focused children's inquiry on the emotional states of others. As described in Chapter Four (**see section 4.7.2**), an unplanned personal anecdote introduced by the teacher to stimulate discussion in the second Community of Inquiry session evoked high levels of justificatory reasoning from the children. The hypothetical scenarios created in response to this occurrence were

specifically designed to evoke familiar situations that children in this study were likely to encounter in their lived and shared experiences which might have the capacity to evoke an empathic response and stimulate children's curiosity (Fisher, 2013).

8.4.2.2 Use of Hypothetical Scenarios as Additional Stimuli

Using hypothetical scenarios as additional stimuli in the Empathic Pedagogy provided children with opportunities to use their imagination to explore the emotional states of others by associating their own experience with the perspectives of others. This is consistent with the empathic mode of *direct association* (Hoffman, 2000) and the work of Schertz (2006) who suggested that a stimulus that retells emotional events can be used to promote dialogue within a Community of Inquiry that can "serve as a means for students to remember events from their own lives and emotionally relive those events" (p. 11). An important point to note with comparisons between this research and that of many empathy studies such as Hoffman's is the context in which the research was conducted. This research was conducted in the dynamic world of a junior primary classroom as opposed to the clinical settings, from which many empathy researchers such as Hoffman have drawn conclusions. Hoffman (2000) found that mimicry and direct association of emotional states could be triggered with exposure to stimuli for an automatic affective response in children up to eight years of age. With respect to mimicry, the findings of this research suggest that the facial cues provided by the mother and baby were instrumental in the recognition of emotions and social referencing children displayed during stimulus lessons. Research has demonstrated that children's recognition of facial emotion reaches adult levels at around 11 years of age, which is congruent with the findings of this research which showed that children between six to eight years of age are using facial cues to support their understanding of others' emotions, but that this awareness is not consistently used for recognition of

emotional states (Chronaki, Hadwin, Garner, Maurage & Sonuga-Barke, 2014). Use of facial cues for social referencing, and recognition of emotions was visible in both the children's dialogic offerings within the Community of Inquiry sessions and in their written and drawn Empathy Journal entries, highlighting the need for a multimodal approach for children's expression of ideas and feelings within the Empathic Pedagogy.

The rich discussion and empathic reasoning that was stimulated by hypothetical scenarios clearly indicated that these are fruitful design characteristics for fostering children's empathic reasoning. Children's responses to these scenarios were complex and demonstrated that they were able to reflect on their own experiences within and outside of the school setting, and to imagine what others might be feeling when confronted with social dilemmas. Hypothetical scenarios are therefore considered a crucial component of the Empathic Pedagogy, as they provide a flexible and relevant vehicle for stimulating children's discussions about social dilemmas during Community of Inquiry sessions. Furthermore, carefully crafted contextual hypothetical scenarios can enable teachers to design and implement situations that are most relevant to children in a range of classrooms, schools and communities. The use of hypothetical scenarios matches the flexible yet consistent structure of Community of Inquiry approach at the heart of the Empathic Pedagogy, and is an important aspect of the generalisability of the Empathic Pedagogy design.

8.4.2.3 The Role of Experiential Stimuli and Hypothetical Scenarios in the Empathic Pedagogy

The findings highlighted the role of *both* experiential stimuli and hypothetical scenarios in the design of the Empathic Pedagogy in fostering children's empathic reasoning. Both experiential stimuli and hypothetical scenarios were instrumental in

triggering direct association of emotional states for children aged six and a half to eight and a half years of age in the classroom environment. The flexibility in the design and timing of experiential stimuli and hypothetical scenarios was found to be an important design characteristic in fostering children's empathic reasoning. For example, the research highlighted the value of the use of hypothetical scenarios, such as those used in the fifth Bridge Lesson about a familiar social dilemma with friends in the schoolyard, which was an unexpected outcome. This finding was made visible as a result of the iterative nature of the EDR methodological approach whereby alterations to lesson design were made and documented throughout the lesson sequence. This research found that these stimuli clearly supported children's empathic reasoning regarding others within the Community of Inquiry sessions that followed; discussed below.

The use of hypothetical scenarios within the Empathic Pedagogy encouraged children to engage in a collaborative and intersubjective understanding of the emotional states of others and the empathic action that may be required to support those others. In this way, the research supports the use of hypothetical scenarios in classroom environments when incorporated into the design of an Empathic Pedagogy. Children's responses to the social dilemmas presented in the hypothetical scenarios clearly demonstrated their empathic reasoning within the fifth Community of Inquiry session. The experiential human stimulus of the mother and baby was reinforced through the use of additional stimulus material that provided opportunities for children to connect their personal experience of social dilemmas with the imagined perspective of others.

For children in this research, the stimulus of hypothetical scenarios involving familiar (but not immediate) social situations and protagonists provided opportunities to develop and express their empathic reasoning as suggested by Sharp (2004). Sharp

argued that the caring dimension of children's thinking was largely left out of children's formal education and needed to be included. In support of Sharp's claims, the Empathic Pedagogy fostered children's caring thinking as they engaged in perspective taking regarding others and the self. Furthermore, the Community of Inquiry "must form the relational basis for interaction throughout the educational experience if we wish for our educational system as a whole to supplement the fostering of empathic proclivities" (Schertz, 2006). The research therefore supports Schertz's argument, as children engaged in empathic reasoning using dialogue concerning social dilemmas in hypothetical scenarios, and then applied empathic reasoning to real life situations in the classroom. This suggests that the Empathic Pedagogy enabled children to form a relational basis for interaction and caring, and therefore engage in empathic reasoning that involved perspective taking regarding the *self* and *others*. This is consistent with previous research on the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach for developing children's knowledge of emotions, social emotional learning and caring thinking (Daniel et al., 2006; Davey, 2004; LaFortune & Robertson, 2006; Sharp, 2004). Daniel's research in particular demonstrated that children as young as four and five show significant improvement in their emotional and social competence when exposed to dialogic interventions such as the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach used in this current research (Daniel, 2005; Daniel et al., 2006; Gimenez-Dasi et al., 2013).

Perspective taking regarding the self describes Selman's (1980) third stage of self-other understanding (**see section 2.3.2**) whereby children consider their own social emotional perspective at the same time as taking the perspective of others. In this way, perspective taking regarding the self is an indicator that children are developing awareness of their own internal emotional states and are integrating and applying this

understanding when considering the perceived emotional states of others (Schaffer, 1996; Selman, 1980). Children's perspective taking regarding self appears to have been a catalyst for their perspective taking of others that was stimulated by the hypothetical scenarios. Justificatory reasoning used by individuals to explore concepts in hypothetical scenarios or thought experiments, is the same reasoning that would likely be used by those individuals to explain and justify the concepts and ideas found when responding to actual situations they face (Sgaravatti, 2015). The empathic reasoning children used to explore the hypothetical scenarios presented in this research could therefore reflect the justificatory reasoning used by these children in real life when facing social dilemmas involving the empathic distress of others or themselves. This is supported by several children's statements where they justified their ideas using their own experiences in this way. The implications for this finding then, are that the use of hypothetical scenarios that foster children's empathic reasoning within the Community of Inquiry allows children to draw on their own experiences in real life (**see section 2.10**), as well as providing children with opportunities to further develop their empathic reasoning for real life situations in the future where empathic concern for others may be appropriate.

8.4.3 Empathy Journal

The third key design characteristic of the Empathic Pedagogy that was found to support children's empathic reasoning was the use of the Empathy Journal throughout the design implementation. This provided children with a non-dialogic space where they could express their thoughts and feelings in ways that surfaced their perspective taking regarding the baby, self and others, their reasoning about emotions, and ultimately; their empathic reasoning. The Empathy Journal was intentionally designed

to collect data from children that demonstrated their thinking about emotions and the concerns of the baby, the self, and others in multimodal forms beyond the primary data source of the dialogue captured in each Community of Inquiry session.

While the main focus of the this research was on engaging children in dialogic encounter through the Community of Inquiry, the Empathy Journal provided a strong complementary role in young children's social emotional development, and enabled children to connect their prior social and emotional experiences with those of the baby and others throughout the Empathic Pedagogy. Importantly, for some children the Empathy Journals revealed more complex and rich empathic reasoning than was offered in dialogic exchanges, and strongly suggests that the Empathy Journal was viewed as an additional safe space to express their thoughts and feelings. An added value of the Empathy Journal lies in its ability to capture the unspoken ideas of children who may not have had the opportunity or inclination to contribute verbally in the Community of Inquiry sessions. Furthermore, the findings in relation to the Empathy Journals highlight that for some children, having time to think before sharing ideas about emotions may move them to reason empathically. This finding supports the suggestion by Bowles (2008) that class thinking diaries or individual diaries or personal thought journals could be used to supplement the dialogic offerings of children engaging in philosophical inquiry.

Further examples of the importance of the Empathy Journal for surfacing children's perspective taking and reasoning about emotions were found in Lori's Empathy Journal. Lori's thinking in her Empathy Journal highlights the importance of this design characteristic because she only offered two statements during the Community of Inquiry sessions, yet her affective responses to baby Adam, and her

cognitive engagement with the feelings of those around her were clear in her Empathy Journal responses throughout the Empathic Pedagogy implementation.

Additionally, many children were able to express longer, more complex ideas in written form in their Empathy Journals that showed their empathic reasoning. Children's ideas about the acceptance of certain emotions such as sadness, anger and embarrassment, expressed in written form in Empathy Journals such as these were further supported in the safe dialogic space created in the Community of Inquiry. The creation of this safe space for children to express their emotions and thoughts allows for the development of cooperative learning and empathic concern for others (Kristjansson, 2004; Schertz, 2006; Verducci, 1999). Using journaling to provide multimodal forms of engagement and recording of children's empathic reasoning both extends the safe space where children can express their ideas, and allows the teacher to better understand children's thinking that may not be surfaced through the dialogic exchanges within the Community of Inquiry.

The nature of the community of critical learners that evolves when an atmosphere of trust and support are fostered through the use of Community of Inquiry pedagogy is one where children feel safe to express and negotiate ideas about their own emotional states in relation to their lived experiences (Aslanimehr, 2015; Davey, 2004; Fisher, 2013; Sprod, 2001). This can be a challenge for primary school aged children such as those in this research as there is often judgement from peers about the expression of emotion, particularly when that emotion implies a sense of vulnerability or fear, or demonstrates anger or frustration. The demonstration of anger in particular can be negatively related to children's social status amongst peers. In this sense, showing frustration, disapproval or anger towards a peer's ideas during dialogic

encounter can be a high risk reaction for peer social relations within the classroom community (Hubbard & Coie, 1994). Findings demonstrated that children likely felt safe and secure while sharing their thoughts and feelings within the Community of Inquiry as indicated by the increased number of dialogic exchanges that demonstrated children's reasoning about their own emotions across the Empathic Pedagogy (**see Figure 57**). It is therefore critical that the Community of Inquiry not only provides a safe space where ideas can be discussed and sometimes fiercely contested by peers, but that complementary spaces for the multimodal expression of these thoughts and feelings are also provided. This was achieved through the non-verbal space afforded by the Empathy Journals used in conjunction with Community of Inquiry sessions within the Empathic Pedagogy.

This research built on the foundations of a classroom that was already establishing itself as a community of critical learners. Children were therefore using a familiar structure and processes to engage with the designed stimuli and ideas that were introduced in this research. Children felt safe and secure to engage in reasoning about their own emotions which supports the notion that the Community of Inquiry provided children with an ideal space with opportunities for empathic reasoning to occur. Furthermore, Empathy Journals provided a rich and supportive environment where the classroom could further develop as a community of critical learners in which thinking and dialogue about feelings could occur beyond each Community of Inquiry using a range of modalities. This confirms previous research by Davey (2004) that described how a community of critical learners that developed through sustained use of the Community of Inquiry pedagogy created an *environment of trust* which allowed children to feel safe and confident in expressing their feelings or exploring the feelings

of others in a range of ways. In addition, this research supports Sprod's (2001) assertion that through continued engagement with the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach classrooms can develop into a community of critical learners where challenging ideas and emotions are open for discussion.

As Fisher (2013) stated, the Community of Inquiry aims to create a safe and supportive environment where children's social and emotional skills and dispositions are cultivated along with their verbal and reasoning abilities. The Empathic Pedagogy supported children's empathic reasoning by using the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach combined with a focus on the emotional states of the self and others to create a safe space for open dialogue about feelings. Research from Kovalainen and Kumpulainen (2007), however, emphasises the notion that engaging children in meaningful and productive discussions requires more than the creation of a safe space for learning. A range of participatory modes are constructed within contextually situated communities of practice which also support children in participating dialogically within the community of critical learners developed in the classroom. The findings of the current research supported these claims that the creation of a safe space for participatory interaction and discussion is not the only element required for children to engage in dialogue about emotions. Creating and nurturing a safe space for open and honest dialogue about emotions is a critical foundation to enable children to feel comfortable to express their opinions about the emotional states of others, and reflect on their own perspectives (Aslanimehr, 2015; Edwards, Manstead, & Macdonald, 1984; Phillips, 2011), however providing children with a range of multimodal spaces for empathic reasoning such as that provided by the Empathy Journals was crucial in fostering children's empathic reasoning in the Empathic Pedagogy.

8.4.4 Teacher Prompts and Questions

The fourth key design characteristic of the Empathic Pedagogy found to support children's capacity for empathic reasoning was the teacher prompts and questions used in the Community of Inquiry sessions. The role of the teacher and their pedagogic action as a facilitator of the inquiry process is a critical factor in the successful implementation of the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach and the continued development of the classroom as a community of critical learners (Fisher, 2013; Lipman, 2003; Sprod, 2001). As discussed in Chapter Three, the children were already familiar with the Community of Inquiry process, and the teacher participant was confident in her role as facilitator in Community of Inquiry sessions. In this way, the teacher was open to adapting and refining her use of prompts and questions within each Community of Inquiry session.

The teacher's influence on children's thinking through the inherently uneven power relationship that exists between children and the teacher/adult is a constant challenge for the efficacy of the Community of Inquiry approach (Lushyn & Kennedy, 2003). When the teacher makes a suggestion or proposes alternate viewpoints children will often defer to the teacher, particularly in the early stages of the development of a community of critical learners (Daniel & Delsol, 2004). Teachers therefore need to consider carefully the prompts and questions they use because of the inherent power they wield. Educators can unintentionally influence children's responses to try to please the teacher or find the anticipated or *right* answer. The use of Socratic teaching and questioning can help teachers to overcome this tendency to direct children's dialogue to suit the adult view of the ideas under discussion.

An important design characteristic of the Empathic Pedagogy was the teacher's explicit use of prompts to draw out and support children's justifications. The research

found that as the sequence of Community of Inquiry sessions progressed changes to teacher prompts had a clear impact on children's justificatory reasoning. The teacher plays a crucial part in facilitating critical, creative and caring dialogue within a Community of Inquiry by encouraging children to provide reasons for their viewpoints (Fisher, 2013), which supports Lipman's assertion that teacher prompts within the Community of Inquiry can encourage children to use the language of reasoning more regularly with practice and experience (Barrow, 2015; Lipman et al., 1980; Lipman, 2003). Furthermore, this current research supported the work of Gillies (2016) who found that teachers and students use different, but complementary dialogic approaches to create sustained, collaborative discussion within communities of critical learners. Gillies' (2016) research was however, focused on the exploratory talk produced in Year Seven classrooms with older children. Additionally, the findings further supported the work on exploratory talk by Mercer, Wegerif and Dawes (1999), Mercer and Littleton (2007), and Wegerif (2011) that Gillies and others drew on (Barrow, 2015; Gillies, 2016; Teo, 2013) to underpin theoretical aspects of dialogue used in their studies. The current research confirmed the need for teachers to be explicit in their prompts to scaffold and guide children's dialogic interactions and justifications to better support their empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy.

Teacher prompts were also found to support children's empathic reasoning when engaged in meaningful discussion that involved higher levels of justificatory reasoning about the emotional states of others within the social emotional dilemmas presented in Community of Inquiry sessions. This finding supported and confirmed studies such as those of Kovalainen and Kumpulainen (2007) which concluded that the role of the teacher was critical in supporting student participation in whole group

discussion, and scaffolding children's diverse participatory modes when negotiating meaning in the community of critical learners developed in the classroom. Furthermore, this adds to Barrow's conclusion that some sensitive areas of discussion require teachers to display critical and ethical 'practitioner reflexivity' in supporting children's thinking (Barrow, 2015). By working alongside the teacher to discuss and reflect on the types of scaffolding that prompted children's justificatory reasoning after each Community of Inquiry session this research demonstrated that teacher prompts guided and supported children's empathic reasoning in sensitive and reflexive ways.

The research site was chosen due to the experience of the teacher, and the timing of the lesson sequence engineered so that children would have had enough experience with the processes of the Community of Inquiry; however there were still moments where the influence of the teacher's inherent power and influence over the children was visible. An example of this was seen in the final Community of Inquiry when children were describing whether they felt more empathy for the mother and baby since their visit when the teacher publicly discounted the impact of the mother-baby stimulus and children then went on to make similar statements. The teacher stated: '*I don't think I have any more empathy because of Adam and Sarah's visits. I loved getting to know them, I loved observing Adam and watching him grow, but I'm not sure it had any impact on my sense of empathy'* (**Teacher, COI6**). The position that many children took following this statement by the teacher indicated that they still deferred to the teacher's views on social-moral issues. Shortly after this statement from the teacher, children were asked to offer their thoughts about the questions *'Do you feel more empathy for baby Adam and Sarah now?'* and *'What have you learned about yourself?'* This was a final round where children were told they were to offer their thoughts and not pass. Many children

responded to these questions with level one justificatory statements such as *'I don't think Adam really made me more empathic'* (**Bruce, 8:2, COI6**), and *'I didn't learn anything new about myself when Adam was coming'* (**Henry, 6:6, COI6**). This finding is consistent with the claims of Maslovaty (2000) and others (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Strike, 1996; Tirri, 1999) who highlighted the centrality of the teacher in influencing the values and socio-moral reasoning of children within the classroom, and indicates the hand of this teacher was held more tightly on the tiller of Lipman's metaphorical ship (1990) than was hoped at the outset of this research.

Another example of the teacher introducing her own ideas into the discussion outside of the planned discussion plan happened in the second Community of Inquiry when she described an anecdote from her personal life. This unplanned personal anecdote aligned neatly with the Big Question: 'How do we read other people's feelings?' The discussion that followed was rich and involved children's own ideas about reading visual cues incorrectly. This Community of inquiry session also included the most examples of children reasoning regarding the emotions of the baby (**see Figure 54**), which were primarily offered by the older children with level two justificatory reasoning (**see Figure 53**). This supports the suggestion by Murris (2009) that exploring stories involving an exploration of emotions such as the one offered by the teacher, helps children to develop better understanding of the self and others.

It can be seen from these two examples of unplanned teacher input that flexible and dynamic input from the teacher can have significantly different influences on children's justificatory reasoning and their openness to offer their thoughts within the Community of Inquiry. Additionally, children's own ideas can be encouraged through the use of *scholarly ignorance*: a central Socratic teaching technique whereby the

teacher recognises their own ignorance and uses it as a spur to provoke children's thinking and curiosity, rather than imposing knowledge from outside children's worlds (Fisher, 2013). A teacher experienced with the Community of Inquiry process within a classroom that is developing as a community of critical learners has the freedom and pedagogical insight to draw in their own thoughts and experiences, as well as displaying their own ignorance to provoke children's thought.

This research confirmed findings from other studies which showed that the interactional strategies of teachers varied while engaging in dialogue with children, and that teachers need to be continuously aware of their own influence and adjust their prompts and dialogic participation according to the diverse needs of the learning community of the classroom (Kovalainen & Kumpulainen, 2007). Consequently, this research indicated that even the most experienced and confident teacher, such as the teacher involved in this research, needs to be aware of the impact that of adult words and suggestions can have on children's empathic reasoning within the Community of Inquiry and beyond, and that teachers play a crucial role more broadly in influencing the success of SEL programs such as the Empathic Pedagogy (Jones, Bouffard, & Weissbourd, 2013). The challenge for teachers taking up the Empathic Pedagogy is in finding the balance between enabling children's dialogue to develop and possibly moving 'off-course' from the teacher's expected or intended goals. To achieve this, educators need to know when and how to insert prompts and questions that enrich and guide children's thinking without steering the dialogue in the direction of adult expectations or personal beliefs. The findings presented in this research are a firm reminder of Lipman's powerful analogy of dialogue moving with purpose *like a ship tacking into the wind* (Lipman, 1990). Developing flexible discussion plans where

prompts and questions are thoughtfully used provides a means for the educator's hand to be held lightly but supportively on the rudder as children's thinking develops in Community of Inquiry sessions and the Empathic Pedagogy more broadly. The findings of this research also suggest the need for teachers who choose to employ the Empathic Pedagogy to continue to engage in professional learning and critical reflection of their own dialogic practices to hone and refine their skills in questioning and appropriate responsiveness.

8.4.5 Impact of Time

The fifth design characteristic that had an impact on children's empathic reasoning within the Empathic Pedagogy was *time*; specifically the duration of the Community of Inquiry sessions, and the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy over time. There was a clear relationship between the duration of each Community of Inquiry and the number of dialogic offerings by children (**see Figure 62**). Furthermore, as the Empathic Pedagogy progressed over time, children offered more statements that showed their empathic reasoning at higher levels of justificatory reasoning.

8.4.5.1 Length of Inquiry Lessons

This first time factor was largely beyond the control of the researcher, and was influenced by barriers such as unexpected school events, the mood and confidence of the teacher, and the concentration and focus of the children within the classroom. In Phase One the researcher and teacher discussed the best time and day for the Bridge Lessons, Stimulus Lessons and Inquiry Lessons to be taught and this was maintained wherever possible. There were, however, a number of times where the Community of Inquiry sessions had to be cut short or were interrupted by other school activities encroaching on the allocated times. These unexpected and unplanned alterations to the

anticipated time available for some Inquiry Lessons impacted on the number of dialogic exchanges that children were able to offer.

Children offered more dialogic offerings when the Community of Inquiry sessions were longer (**see Figure 62**). This appears to be an obvious finding, however it is an important one to note because allowing children more time to engage in dialogic encounter within a Community of Inquiry not only gives children the opportunity for more discussion, but more importantly allows more time for collaborative inquiry to develop within a safe space where children feel comfortable to discuss emotionally challenging ideas. Additionally, time contributed to children's engagement with the Community of Inquiry which allowed for self-reflection, deepening of reasoning through dialogic engagement with peers, building of relationships with mother, baby and peers, and the cyclical refinement of ideas and increased understanding of the inquiry focus on emotions. There is no ideal length of time that children need to be engaged in dialogue, so it is difficult to state whether children, if given more time, would have offered more dialogic exchanges that demonstrated empathic reasoning. Previous studies on the implications of teaching through dialogue, have however established that time is a constraining factor for engaging children in productive dialogic interactions; with the contradictory challenge of providing sufficient time for children to think and prepare ideas without limiting conversational flow within the classroom, and providing all participants ample time to contribute within the lesson (Lefstein, 2010; Littleton & Mercer, 2010). In the current research, when Inquiry Lessons were cut short or rushed to reach some form of logical conclusion before time ran out (as in Inquiry Lessons 3 and 4), the richness and openness of children's dialogue involving increased empathic reasoning about others were constrained when compared to that observed in longer

Community of Inquiry sessions. This confirmed findings from previous comprehensive meta-analysis research of SEL programs which found that younger children may need more time to acquire complex skills and practices needed for dialogue about social emotional concerns (Durlak et al., 2011).

8.4.5.2 Progression of the Empathic Pedagogy

The progression of the Empathic Pedagogy over time was a design characteristic that fostered children's empathic reasoning. The intentional design of the Empathic Pedagogy involved an awareness of the need to allow children, over an extended period of time, to develop affective response in their relationships with the baby. Furthermore, the developmental criteria for the baby's age further informed the ideal duration of the Empathic Pedagogy. As was discussed in Chapter Three (**see section 3.5.2.2**), the Inquiry Lessons were intentionally designed to move from an Empathic Focus on the baby, to the self and onto others.

As the Empathic Pedagogy progressed over time there were several encouraging signs that ongoing engagement with dialogue about feelings and the emotional states of others within the Community of Inquiry allowed some socially marginalised children to increasingly engage in dialogue about their feelings. One of those children was Terry, who had difficulty regulating his behaviour in the classroom environment and who was routinely singled out by his peers for breaking implicit social and explicit classroom rules. Terry was a child who experienced difficulties with following the social rules in the classroom, and was often overlooked by many of his peers during Community of Inquiry discussions. Despite his behavioural challenges and being ostracised by many of his peers, Terry demonstrated a keen sense of awareness of the emotional states of others within the Empathic Pedagogy, especially those of the baby. In the third Stimulus

Lesson, Terry reasoned about the emotions of the baby when he recognised verbal cues discussed in previous Stimulus Lessons indicating that the baby was crying with hunger. In the third Bridge Lesson, he demonstrated empathic reasoning regarding others by describing in his Empathy Journal response how he reads the emotions of others by looking at their faces to better understand their feelings. Terry reasoned about his own emotions in an increasingly reflective way in the sixth Stimulus Lesson when he described how one of the changes he had noticed since the start of the Empathic Pedagogy implementation was that he was behaving more calmly during Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons. Furthermore, Terry's three dialogic offerings as statements all came in the final two Inquiry Lessons when he discussed the connection between empathy and friendship. These instances showed that despite struggling to regulate his own emotions and behaviour within the classroom, and showing minimal engagement with his peers within the Community of Inquiry, Terry engaged deeply with the experiential stimulus provided by the mother and baby, and demonstrated caring thinking for others when given the opportunity to discuss and express emotions within the Empathic Pedagogy.

This finding is encouraging for children like Terry who struggle to interact positively in the classroom. It is consistent with research by Gimenez-Dasi, Quintanilla and Daniel (2013), who found that over time the reflection and dialogic interactions that children engage in within the Community of Inquiry can improve young children's social interaction strategies, awareness of their emotional states, and social competence. When children have opportunities to use the skills, dialogic techniques and justificatory language developed in the Community of Inquiry, and progressively develop into a community of critical learners in the classroom and beyond, those

children who have previously had difficulties expressing their own feelings and recognising the emotional states of others may begin to better regulate their emotions and related behaviours. This research showed that children's empathic reasoning is fostered as the Empathic Pedagogy progresses over time, and underlines the importance and potential application of the Empathic Pedagogy for supporting children with social and emotional challenges in the classroom.

In addition, this research showed that the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy over time supports children's increasing awareness of the impact of their emotions on others, and is consistent with research which found that continued engagement with philosophical inquiry can support teacher's engagement with (Haynes, 2008), and understanding of their pupils over time (Scholl et al., 2015). This research adds to Scholl, Nicholls and Burgh's existing work (2015) by highlighting the value of Community of Inquiry for providing educators with ongoing opportunities to seek deeper insight into the life-worlds of students over time, particularly those who, like Terry, often have little opportunity or time to explore their emotions and the emotional states of their peers in regular classroom activities. As has been previously discussed, the Community of Inquiry provides a safe space where ideas and thoughts are openly discussed where children's emotional regulation and social competence is improved, and where teachers can gain insight into children's life-worlds. This research showed that the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy provides a safe and supportive environment where socially marginalised children can better express their feelings without peer or teacher judgement over time.

When implementing the Empathic Pedagogy, teachers and schools need to allow time for this approach to be implemented and for the community of critical learners to

develop in individual lessons and across school terms. This raises the problem of adding to an already crowded curriculum in primary school classrooms. The challenge of this issue of time is a problem teachers face when implementing any new approach such as the Empathic Pedagogy, the solution however, is in the flexibility and robust nature of the Community of Inquiry approach at the heart of the Empathic Pedagogy. As has been highlighted, the Community of Inquiry provides a vehicle for a cross-curricular approach that can draw in each curriculum area within an overarching theme or focus such as *relationships, emotions,* or *developing communities*. Furthermore, the processes inherent in the Community of Inquiry support a range of curricular approaches such as multimodal literacies and inquiry based learning. This flexibility is a true strength of the Community of Inquiry that drives the Empathic Pedagogy.

This section has discussed the key design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy which fostered young children's empathic reasoning in this research. These were designed Bridge Lessons, stimuli designed to elicit affective response, Empathy Journals, teacher prompts and questions in Community of Inquiry sessions, and the duration of the Community of Inquiry sessions, as well as the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy over time. Identifying these design characteristics provides insights into the design conditions that fostered children's empathic reasoning. As such they contextualise the conclusions about the ways in which the Empathic Pedagogy supported the development of young children's empathic reasoning. The following section discusses empathic reasoning in relation to the critical nature of perspective taking regarding others and reasoning about emotion, the justificatory reasoning levels of children's dialogic offerings, and the intentional and progressive design of the Empathic Pedagogy.

8.5 Empathic Reasoning

The major finding of this research is that the Empathic Pedagogy successfully fostered young children's empathic reasoning. As described in the previous section, there were a number of design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy that contributed to this finding. This section discusses the findings related to empathic reasoning by examining three interrelated aspects that this research brought into relief. These are: (1) the relationship between perspective taking regarding others, reasoning about emotion, and empathic reasoning, (2) the justificatory levels of reasoning shown in children's dialogue, and (3) the Empathic Pedagogy design focus on baby, self and others.

8.5.1 Relationship between Perspective Taking of Others, Reasoning about Emotion and Empathic Reasoning

As discussed in the review of literature, empathy involves affective and cognitive elements. Likewise, empathic reasoning involves the concurrent affective element of perspective taking of others, with the more cognitive element of reasoning about emotion. The Empathic Pedagogy succeeded in drawing together these elements within the content and structures of the Stimulus, Bridge and Inquiry Lessons, and providing children with increased opportunities to express their empathic reasoning through intersubjective and dialogic encounter within the Community of Inquiry, in written form in their Empathy Journals, and as a community of caring, critical learners. This adds support to the work of researchers and educators who have stated that dialogic pedagogies that use experiential stimuli, such as the Community of Inquiry at the heart of the Empathic Pedagogy, encourage development of affective and cognitive aspects

such as perspective taking of others and reasoning about their emotions (Fisher, 2013; Fisherman, 2010; Lipman et al., 1980; Schertz, 2006; Sharp, 2004).

This research showed that children's perspective taking regarding others increased across the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy, and was seen primarily in their dialogic exchanges within Community of Inquiry sessions. As stated in Chapter Five (**see section 5.4.3**), children's perspective taking regarding others was also shown in their Empathy Journal responses. To support their perspective taking of others, children drew on their observations and social cues of the baby, their personal experiences with social dilemmas and emotional distress, as well as their thoughts of how an imaginary other may be feeling in hypothetical scenarios. The increase in children's perspective taking regarding others was fostered through the intersubjective space created in the Community of Inquiry at the heart of the Empathic Pedagogy, and supported through engagement with the experiential stimulus of the mother and baby, as well as the designed Bridge Lesson activities.

The ongoing dialogic encounter maintained in the Community of Inquiry across the Empathic Pedagogy created a safe intersubjective space that supported children's capacity for perspective taking regarding others (Lipman, 2003; Mohr-Lone, 2000; Rogoff & Toma, 1997; Schertz, 2006). The circular physical structure of the Community of Inquiry itself allowed children to clearly observe the social emotional cues of their peers. Children need to develop the ability to carefully observe the social cues of those around them to be able to take the perspective of others and to reason empathically about their emotional states. Active observation of the physical expression of the emotional states of others is critical for developing empathy (L. Carr et al., 2003; Decety & Batson, 2009; Shamay-Tsoory, 2010), and can help children to attune and adapt their social interactions and empathic response to match the perspectives of others.

The Community of Inquiry used in this research followed the accepted structure and process of being conducted in a circle with participants facing each other, which further supports children's recognition and response to the social and emotional cues of those around them as children are encouraged to closely observe their peers (Fisher, 2013). Within the Community of Inquiry children are required to watch and listen closely to each other to critically evaluate and discuss the viewpoints and claims of their peers. As Schertz described, the Community of Inquiry provides the ideal structure for observation and mimicry of social cues because; "the circular positioning of inward-facing bodies allows for optimal facial contact, which promotes the rapid transfer of feeling states and behavioural displays" (Schertz, 2006, p. 10). This view was evident in the findings of this research which demonstrated that children were able to observe the social cues of others and recognise how these indicators could support their perspective taking and reasoning about the emotional states of others. Therefore, the inward-facing circular structure of the Community of Inquiry provided the physical conditions necessary for children to closely observe the social emotional cues of others during dialogic exchange with their peers, and was similarly used during Stimulus Lessons with the mother and baby to foster children's empathic reasoning.

Exposure to human experiential stimuli in this research provided children with further opportunities to closely observe the verbal and non-verbal social cues which occurred when the mother and baby interacted during rich emotionally laden experiences. The Empathic Pedagogy provided children with opportunities to observe and discuss the social and emotional cues of people through continued interactions with the human stimulus of the mother and baby. This is particularly important given that the findings indicated that children closely observed the social emotional cues of others

during Stimulus and Inquiry Lessons, and demonstrated how exposure to human stimuli within the Empathic Pedagogy supported children's empathic reasoning. This finding supports the findings of other studies in neuroscience (Gallese et al., 2004; Olsson & Ochsner, 2007) and pedagogy (Durlak et al., 2011; Sorin, 2004) which showed that observation of human stimuli supports the development of social emotional competencies needed for perspective taking, and fosters empathic concern for others. Observing and noticing social cues in the baby's physical behaviour was common during Stimulus Lessons, and children's dialogic offerings during Community of Inquiry sessions often demonstrated this awareness of social and emotional cues.

Furthermore, children were able to listen to and discuss the mother's description of the ways in which she reads the emotional cues of the baby to best respond to him, and how she sees him reading the emotional cues she displays. In this way, the Empathic Pedagogy that incorporates a human stimulus supported children's empathic reasoning by providing conditions that allow for the opportunity to closely observe the social and emotional cues of others. This finding adds to research carried out in the Roots of Empathy program in the Lanarkshire Council area of Scotland (Action for Children, 2013) which found that children were better able to recognise and respond to the emotional states of others after continued observation of a baby, and discussion of emotional states in the classroom. Additionally, in this current research the focus on the non-verbal communication of emotion between the mother and baby, and the instances of miscommunication that were described provided rich stimuli for dialogue about emotions in the Community of Inquiry sessions that followed each visit. This was most evident in the first three Community of Inquiry sessions where children demonstrated that they were able to take the perspective of the baby in particular when considering

the emotional states of others. The following section discusses children's dialogic exchanges in terms of quality, as measured using levels of justificatory reasoning.

8.5.2 Quality of Children's Dialogue: Levels of Justificatory Reasoning

This research examined children's statements offered in Community of Inquiry sessions to help make the quality of children's reasoning visible. These levels of justificatory reasoning provided insight into the depth and complexity of children's empathic reasoning, and were independent of the categories of perspective taking, reasoning about emotion and empathic reasoning. This research found that over the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy the number of children's dialogic exchanges showing perspective taking, reasoning about emotion, and empathic reasoning increased in complexity, as measured by justificatory reasoning levels. This is important because it shows that progressive engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy supports children's increasing use of sound evidence to support their empathic reasoning. This finding is consistent with research which found that young children's reasoning can be supported by the teacher using dialogic pedagogies such as the Community of Inquiry used in the Empathic Pedagogy (Daniel & Delsol, 2004; Lipman et al., 1980; Nucci & Turiel, 2009). Furthermore, this shows that foundational dispositions for children's sound empathic reasoning such as the ability to listen to others, the confidence to talk to others, and the offering of reasons for statements of opinion (Littleton & Mercer, 2010); are supported in the Empathic Pedagogy. Additionally, practice and reinforcement of these dispositions across the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy fosters the development of reasonableness as a social disposition which helps bridge the gap between thought and action (Haynes, 2008; Splitter & Sharp, 1995). In this way, the finding that children's perspective taking, reasoning about emotion, and empathic

reasoning were increasingly more complex in terms of levels of justificatory reasoning shows that the Empathic Pedagogy fostered the development of more reasonable forms of dialogue about the empathic concerns of others.

The following section discusses the findings related the focus of children's perspective taking, reasoning about emotion and empathic reasoning as the Empathic Pedagogy progressed over time. The focus of children's dialogue within the Community of Inquiry sessions, their engagement with Stimulus and Bridge Lessons, and their written offerings in Empathy Journals was related to the baby, the self, and others.

8.5.3 Focus of Children's Dialogue: Baby, Self and Other

As described in detail in Chapter Three, the Empathic Pedagogy was intentionally designed to focus young children's dialogue and reasoning on the empathic concern for the baby, the self, and others as the implementation progressed, with a deliberate shift in focus towards the emotional states of others. The specific outcome that this was intended to achieve was for children to make use of the baby as experiential social emotional anchor throughout the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy, to connect the ideas about understanding the baby's emotional communication to their own experience of and knowledge about emotions, and to ultimately use their developing understanding to reason empathically about the emotional concerns of others in social dilemmas. This section discusses the ways in which this intentional design process impacted on young children's empathic reasoning for each of these foci.

8.5.3.1 Dialogue about the Baby

The findings showed that children were able to take the perspective of the baby. This was evident across the Empathic Pedagogy in their dialogic offerings within

Community of Inquiry sessions and Empathy Journal entries. Children used a range of techniques to support their perspective taking regarding the baby. These were: (1) close observation of the social cues that the baby was taking from his mother and vice versa, (2) drawing on observations of baby Adam's past experiences in the classroom, and (3) using their own understanding of emotional states to imagine what baby Adam might be feeling or thinking. This research showed that children also reasoned about the emotions of the baby, and justified their reasoning by suggesting that the baby was developing his relationships with the children across the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy over time. Furthermore, children justified their reasoning about the emotions of the baby using some of the same support used for perspective taking regarding the baby.

Children used these techniques to support their perspective taking regarding the baby, and reasoning about the emotions of the baby in the third Community of Inquiry session when Fergus described the baby as a *feeling reader* who picked up on the social cues of others (**see section 5.4.1**). Noticing how the baby was attuned to the emotional states of others and using this understanding to support thinking about the baby's emotional states shows perspective taking regarding the baby. Furthermore, children were able to use these techniques to take the perspective of the baby and reason about the baby's emotions in their Empathy Journals.

Children's dialogue about the baby adds support to research that has shown how children's exposure to experiential stimuli and intersubjective engagement with others can engage their caring thinking (Murris, 2009; Striano, 2011) and empathic concern for others (Gordon, 2009; Schonert-Reichl & Scott, 2009; Sorin, 2004; Spiteri, 2010). Overall, the empathic focus on the baby in the first third of the Empathic Pedagogy strengthened the affective dimension of children's concern for others, and enriched

children's empathic reasoning over time. Beyond the initial empathic focus on the baby, children were supported to engage in dialogue about their own emotions as the Empathic Pedagogy progressed over time.

8.5.3.2 Dialogue about the Self

Children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding the self to support their thinking about the emotional concerns of others. This was evident across the Empathic Pedagogy in their dialogic offerings within Community of Inquiry sessions and Empathy Journal entries. Children primarily drew on their own experiences to support their perspective taking regarding the self and imagine how others might feel in the hypothetical scenarios and Bridge Lesson activities. This research showed that children also reasoned about their own emotions, and justified their reasoning by indicating that sometimes their own emotions could impact on their social problem solving. Children also suggested that development of relationships could also impact on their empathic concern and response to others over time. Children also engaged in empathic reasoning regarding the self, by drawing on their perspectives of previous emotional experiences, and reasoning about their own emotions to support their emotional concern for others.

These findings supported existing research on the inherent value of children's engagement with the Community of Inquiry over time because of the cyclical refinement of ideas that can lead to increased understanding of the inquiry focus by the community of critical learners involved (Fisher, 2013; Haynes, 2008). The progression of the Empathic Pedagogy over time was supported by the iterative nature of the EDR methodology used in this research, and allowed for a shift in focus from the self to the other while allowing children to draw on understandings about their own emotional perspective gained in earlier Stimulus, Inquiry and Bridge Lessons. This cyclical deepening of the focus on the empathic concern for others highlighted some contextual

factors that impacted on children's thinking about the emotions of others in relation to their own perspectives.

For several children, their empathic reasoning for others was impacted by competing ideas about the need to self-regulate emotions and develop in internal sense of their own emotional states. Their focus on the individual as the one responsible for their own empathic distress may have been influenced by a school-wide focus on the development of executive functions. It was observed that throughout the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy there was a focus on the three executive function skills of working memory, inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility relevant to children's individual thinking, self-regulation and taking responsibility for their own needs rather than relying on others for help. It is clearly important for children to develop these capacities for ownership of their own learning and behaviour; however it appeared that this focus on internal and individual responsibility for emotional responses may have reduced some children's sense of community responsibility and empathic concern for others within the Empathic Pedagogy.

For some children, the responsibility to exhibit individual inhibitory control when emotionally challenged may have taken precedence over the need to support others within the school community. It might be assumed that this implies that these children did not empathise with other children in distress; however it may be that these views came from a place of care and concern for the distressed child and the need to support individual inhibitory control in social emotional dilemmas. This is consistent with previous research into children's effortful control which showed that children who demonstrate high levels of inhibitory control themselves tend to exhibit high empathic response to emotional distress of others (Diamond, 2012; Eisenberg et al., 2011;

Semrud-Clikeman, 2007; Zhou et al., 2012). Therefore, children's empathic reasoning regarding others was informed by their perspective of themselves and a learned understanding of the need to manage one's own emotional states without empathic support from others being needed. Clearly, further research is needed to explore how these seemingly incongruent yet complementary aspects of individual and community functioning may interact.

Furthermore, while executive functioning has traditionally been researched in relation to so called emotionally-neutral *cool* processes such as de-contextualised cognitive problem solving, there are increasing calls for executive functioning to also be researched in relation to *hot* systems such as emotionally-laden contexts (Zhou et al., 2012). The current research was not focused on the relationship between empathic reasoning and executive functioning; however, the findings do suggest that further research in classrooms could add to the understanding of children's executive function development and its impact on empathy related behaviour in response to experiential human stimuli such as those used in the Empathic Pedagogy.

Overall, the empathic focus on the self in the Empathic Pedagogy strengthened the cognitive dimension of children's concern for others, and supported children's empathic reasoning over time through reflection on their own experiences of emotional distress, and the need for possible empathic action for others. Beyond the empathic focus on the self, children were supported to engage in dialogue about the emotions of others as the Empathic Pedagogy progressed over time; as discussed in the following section.

8.5.3.3 Dialogue about Others

Children were able to engage in perspective taking regarding others and to reflect on the emotional states of others from a range of perspectives to support their reasoning about others' emotions. This was evident across the Empathic Pedagogy in their dialogic offerings within Community of Inquiry sessions and Empathy Journal entries. Children used evidence from various sources to support their perspective taking regarding others, their reasoning about the emotions of others, and their empathic reasoning for others. These sources included (1) awareness of social cues such as facial cues and non-verbal indicators, gained through observation and discussion with the mother and baby over time, (2) drawing on their own experiences of social dilemmas and empathic distress to imagine how others might feel, and the impact that emotions can have on all people involved in a social dilemma, and (3) the understanding that developing relationships with others can support inference making about their emotional states and anticipated responses. Overall, this research showed that children's empathic reasoning regarding others was fostered through engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy over time. The dramatic increase in the number of dialogic offerings coded as empathic reasoning from the third Community of Inquiry session onwards showed that children's empathic reasoning was fostered through ongoing engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy as the design focus moved towards the emotional concern for others (**see section 7.4 & Figure 66**).

An example of children's empathic reasoning regarding others was seen in the fourth Community of Inquiry session where children discussed the role of social cues in supporting their understanding of the emotional states of others. Dialogic exchanges about possible indicators of the emotional states of others reinforces the value of the Empathic Pedagogy in supporting children's emotion recognition and management,

establishment and maintenance of positive relationships, and empathic concern for others (Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2012). Furthermore, engaging with the Empathic Pedagogy may be even more beneficial for children who have limited engagement with peers beyond the classroom, or who may live in social and familial contexts where there is little support for their healthy social emotional development. While the exact familial and social circumstances of the children in this classroom were not the focus of this research, the findings related to children such as Terry (**see section 8.4.5.2**), as well as the overall increase in children's empathic reasoning through engagement with discussion about the emotions of the baby, self and others provide strong evidence for the efficacy of the Empathic Pedagogy in supporting young children's social emotional development and fostering the disposition to care and empathise with others (Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative, 2014; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2012; Striano, 2011).

Overall, the shift in empathic focus towards the emotional states of others brought together the affective and cognitive dimensions of children's concern for others, through the increased application of perspective taking regarding others and reasoning about emotions as the Empathic Pedagogy progressed over time. Children's dialogue about others showed that the Empathic Pedagogy provided the conditions necessary for fostering young children's empathic reasoning beyond Hoffman's theory that young children are not able to imagine the emotional experiences of others beyond their immediate social contexts (Hoffman, 2000). Children clearly demonstrated that their growing awareness of the inner emotional states of others, coupled with their deepening sense that those others may be experiencing those emotions differently from

themselves allowed them to better understand their own emotional states, their developing sense of self, and to more readily apply empathic reasoning skills within the Community of Inquiry. Children were consistently moving beyond the stage of veridical empathy much earlier than Hoffman proposed, and were actively engaging in perspective taking of unknown others beyond their immediate surroundings through engagement with the hypothetical scenarios presented in the Empathic Pedagogy developed in this research. The Empathic Pedagogy, therefore, has been shown to provide the space and conditions that can support movement towards the level of Empathic Concern for Another's Life Condition at a younger age than theorised by Hoffman (1990; 2000), and affirmatively answers the question as to whether children less than 12 years of age could demonstrate true empathy if given opportunities for dialogic exchanges within the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach (**see Chapter 2.3**).

8.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the findings regarding children's empathic reasoning when engaging with an experiential stimulus through the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach were discussed in the context of the broader literature. Specifically, the findings were discussed in relation to the overall research aims and two research questions regarding the design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy employed, and the ways in which children's empathic reasoning might be fostered through a series of Community of Inquiry sessions that involved experiential stimuli within an Empathic Pedagogy. Through engagement with the Empathic Pedagogy that was designed and refined throughout this research, children's empathic reasoning was fostered.

Some key design characteristics of the Empathic Pedagogy that fostered children's empathic reasoning that were discussed included: (1) conceptual links made by Bridge Lessons, and the design of activities within these lessons, (2) the use of stimuli designed to elicit affective responses such as the mother and baby experiential stimuli and hypothetical scenarios, (3) the intentional use of an Empathy Journal to provide children with opportunities to show their empathic reasoning in multimodal ways, (4) teacher prompts within Community of Inquiry sessions that supported children's justificatory reasoning, and (5) the duration of Community of Inquiry sessions as well as the progression of the Empathic Pedagogy over time.

The design changes made to specific Bridge Lessons supported children's empathic reasoning and provided rich learning for children to carry forward into the Community of Inquiry sessions that followed. The use of planned stimuli in the form of hypothetical scenarios supported the ongoing experiential stimulus of the relationship with the mother and baby that was at the core of the Empathic Pedagogy. The Empathy Journal was shown to be a crucial design element which provided children with increased opportunities to reflect on their own feelings and thoughts, and show their empathic reasoning about the baby, the self and others. The prompts and questions that the teacher used across the Empathic Pedagogy further supported children's justificatory reasoning within Community of Inquiry sessions. The duration of Community of Inquiry sessions impacted on the depth of the reasoning that could develop as more time was used for dialogic encounter with peers. The progression of the Empathic Pedagogy allowed children to build relationships with the mother and baby, as well as with peers within the community of critical learners, and to enrich their empathic reasoning regarding others through reflection on previous Stimulus, Inquiry

and Bridge Lessons over time. The school day is generally broken into discreet blocks of time that can often limit the intentions of the teacher, and in teaching, time is often a factor that can make or break certain lessons. Added to this is the impact that spontaneous and unexpected interruptions can have on classroom lessons. In this research there was a clear relationship between the amount of dialogic offerings that children offered and the length of time of each Inquiry Lesson. But more than this, it was also clear that when Community of Inquiry sessions went for longer children had more space to develop their ideas and engage in empathic reasoning that involved more complex justificatory reasoning.

Features of the Community of Inquiry approach at the heart of the Empathic Pedagogy that further supported children's empathic reasoning that were discussed were: (1) the provision of a safe space for children to be able to discuss their emotions and inquire into the emotional states of others, (2) the focus on children's observation of social emotional cues, (3) the development of an expanded emotional vocabulary, and (4) children's growing awareness of the impact that their own emotional states can have on others.

The pedagogical features of the Community of Inquiry worked hand in hand with the methodological approach of EDR to provide the conditions necessary for children to engage in the Empathic Pedagogy developed in this research. The safe space that was created in the Community of Inquiry provided children with the confidence to explore their own emotions and discuss the emotional states of their peers and others. Those children who may not have had a strong voice in the classroom outside of the Community of Inquiry found that their ideas , opinions and insightful understanding of the emotions of others was relevant and valuable within the Empathic Pedagogy

developed in this research. The circular layout of the Community of Inquiry allowed all children to clearly observe each other and notice the facial and non-verbal cues being displayed by their peers as they expressed their thoughts and feelings. Children engaged with a wider lexicon of emotions in the Empathic Pedagogy that they were able to draw into their dialogic exchanges within the Community of Inquiry sessions. By requiring children to provide justifications for their thoughts about the emotional states of others and to reflect on their own experience of emotional distress in social situations children demonstrated insight into their own impact on the emotions of others. An intriguing aspect that impacted on children's empathic reasoning within the Community of Inquiry was the ways in which children sometimes justified their social and ethical positions in relation to their understanding of the classroom focus on the importance of executive functioning. This is certainly an area which could be further explored in future research. The following chapter presents the final conclusions from this research into the Empathic Pedagogy and its impact on fostering children's empathic reasoning.

9. Implications, Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This section presents the implications and limitations of the research into the Empathic Pedagogy presented in this thesis and finishes with suggestions for future research based on an summary of the most exciting findings from this research.

The limitations presented should be kept in mind when considering future research designed to extend the findings beyond the context of this current research. The small scale design limits the generalisability of the findings however the depth of observation and engagement has enabled a fine-grained depth of analysis. There are also limits in the time available in one school year to embed a practice and analyse its effects. A continuing program of Empathic Pedagogy would extend knowledge of its impact on different cohorts of children, in a range of contexts that were not possible in this research.

The biggest challenge of this particular research was in locating school sites that were already using dialogic pedagogies, and that explicitly articulated the use of the Community of Inquiry approach in their school context statements or websites. This is not to say that other schools were not using the Community of Inquiry pedagogical approach, but that it is more likely that it was being used and advocated by individual teachers or small groups of teachers who have encountered philosophy with children and its techniques. This was not unsurprising, as it was already known by the researcher that the Community of Inquiry approach was not widely used as a whole school approach to philosophy education, and that teachers feel increasingly under

pressure to 'cover' the learning areas of the Australian Curriculum in their day to day teaching to the detriment of some general capabilities including ethical, intercultural, personal and social (Reynolds, Ferguson-Patrick, & Macqueen, 2017). This is particularly true in light of the increased focus being placed on literacy and numeracy, as well as the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2015).

The research has demonstrated the efficacy and value of Empathic Pedagogy however the consequent implications of such findings need to be considered. How can the research findings be translated into practice?

There is a strong argument for the use of dialogic pedagogies such as Community of Inquiry and the Empathic Pedagogy put forward in the general capabilities of the Australian Curriculum which require schools to employ innovative teaching methods to build children's capacities for critical and creative thinking and ethical understanding (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2013). Furthermore, in trying to cover all curriculum areas in separate and conceptually disconnected ways, teachers run the risk of superficial coverage and engagement with key learning areas. Through a focus on the skills and dispositions gained via the general capabilities, the implementation of the Empathic Pedagogy can provide the 'connective tissue' across curriculum areas that can support children's rich in-depth learning in a range of ways.

Perhaps the idea that the introduction of philosophical and ethical inquiry into classroom practice would add one more thing, might turn many teachers away. This research, however, adds weight to the understanding that while the addition of alternate pedagogical approaches such as the Empathic Pedagogy does involve time to develop, this approach can efficiently complement existing pedagogies by providing a

safe space to explore any number of issues across curriculum areas, not just in SEL. While there are competing and dominating messages about the importance of some curriculum areas over others, both the EYLF (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009) and the Australian Curriculum (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2014) position children's empathy development as an important educational goal respectively in describing the pedagogical practices and general capabilities that inform teacher practice in early years and schooling settings. The Empathic pedagogy is clearly needed, and can provide educators with a vehicle for exploring SEL in meaningful ways that support the goals of these curricula through specific curriculum areas such as Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) or as a broader cross curricular approach that can foster children's critical, creative and caring thinking in a range of contexts.

Passion for fostering children's critical, creative and caring thinking and skill in facilitating a Community of Inquiry are necessary attributes of any teacher wanting to implement an Empathic Pedagogy in their classroom. Additionally, the adoption of the Empathic Pedagogy school-wide would support the progressive development of children's empathic reasoning over time. As such, a limitation for future research or any practical application of the Empathic Pedagogy is the interest and persistence of the teacher and the school community in implementing this approach. The process of choosing experiential stimuli to use within an ongoing series of Community of Inquiry sessions is a fairly straightforward prospect, however, it is the ongoing development of the teacher's own acceptance of the dynamic and fluid nature of the Empathic Pedagogy which may prove challenging. Having said this, the development of the classroom as a community of critical learners should be the goal of any teacher who values the general

capabilities of critical and creative thinking, and ethical understanding that the Australian Curriculum sets out as necessary for students to develop (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2013). Furthermore, the nature of the Empathic Pedagogy as a place where SEL occurs in dynamic and often unplanned ways is in itself a limitation of this approach. For many teachers, allowing children's thinking and dialogue to follow lines of reasoning that are unexpected may prove to be a challenge. This challenge, however, is necessary because children need opportunities to think deeply and widely, and the challenge some teachers may experience when giving over some power and control is vastly outweighed by the benefits for children's social emotional and empathy development and for the professional growth of teachers. As Hoffman (2000) so rightly stated; "empathy is the spark of human concern for others, the glue that makes social life possible" (p. 7). Teachers who implement the Empathic Pedagogy need to be willing to let children guide the lines of inquiry as much as possible. The teacher in this research used a particular form of Community of Inquiry which was primarily driven by questions and lines of reasoning that were already considered, and in so doing children's agency in determining how far their inquiry deviated from the course set by the teacher was limited in many ways. In giving more power to children in determining the course that their inquiry takes, there may indeed by rocky seas for the teachers, but the benefits for the community of critical learners who develop the empathic reasoning skills to find a common understanding of social dilemmas are great.

This research has demonstrated that an Empathic Pedagogy can be used in classroom settings to foster young children's empathic reasoning. The use of an experiential human stimulus, in the form of regular classroom visits from a mother and

baby, was shown to provide children with a rich focal point from which to launch discussion about their own social and emotional concerns, as well as those of others. Furthermore, this research showed that children's empathic reasoning is fostered when these children experience dialogic encounters within the community of critical learners that is nurtured in the Community of Inquiry approach at the heart of the Empathic Pedagogy. The research found that the Empathic Pedagogy provided children with opportunities to develop a broader emotional vocabulary, resulting in a deeper awareness of the varied perspectives of others within their classroom, and the dialogic space to engage in philosophical and ethical inquiry about their own emotions as well as the emotions of others. The Empathic Pedagogy provided the ideal conditions for fostering young children's empathic reasoning beyond their immediate social contexts (Hoffman, 2000) and supported children's movement towards the level of Empathic Concern for Another's Life Condition at a younger age than suggested by Hoffman.

By employing the Empathic Pedagogy in the classroom, educators can not only foster young children's empathic reasoning within the Community of Inquiry, but also provide support for children's empathic reasoning to extend beyond classrooms to playgrounds, schools, and into broader society to build an expanding community of critical *and caring* learners.

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Appendix A: Teacher Information Letter

Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences

School of Education

St Bernards Road

Magill SA 5072

Teacher Information for PhD Research Project (UniSA)

An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school

Research Team Contacts	
Mr. Martyn Mills-Bayne, PhD candidate	Dr. Victoria Whitington, Associate Supervisor
w: 83024154 m: 0416180356	W: 83024334
Martyn.Mills-Bayne@unisa.edu.au	Victoria.Whitington@unisa.edu.au

Dear Teacher,

My name is Martyn Mills-Bayne and I am currently undertaking a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) in Education at the University of South Australia. The major part of this award is the implementation of a research project designed to increase knowledge and understanding about aspects of education. The project that I have developed aims to investigate the use of the Community of Inquiry method as a tool for promoting the development of empathy in young children. This project offers you the unique opportunity to be involved in the co-construction and delivery of a series of lessons that aim to foster the social emotional development of your students. These lessons will allow me to participate in and record the discussions, drawings and other work that children produce when they are thinking about the thoughts and feelings of others. As the Community of Inquiry method is already being used in the school, I will be working with you to make the lessons fit within current practices. I am inviting you and your class to be involved in this unique opportunity to participate in this research project.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this project is to:

1. Investigate the effectiveness of Community of Inquiry teaching methodology for fostering the cognitive and affective elements of empathy.
2. Document how young children engage with learning through the Community of Inquiry method using various multimodal processes that aim to provide insight into what has been meaningful to the children involved.

Participation

Teacher participation in this study will involve the implementation of six Community of Inquiry sessions and six supporting lessons across terms 3 and 4, 2012. The construction of these Community of Inquiry sessions and complementary lessons will be negotiated between teacher and researcher. It is anticipated that these lessons will cover 6 topic areas drawn from the *Roots of Empathy* program, and will be designed during the term leading up to the implementation phase in term 2, 2012. Data could be collected in various ways including audio/video recording of lessons, child drawings and child directed digital photo-stories. To help inform the data gathered from students I will ask you to keep a journal, and engage in a semi-structured interview relating to your experience and the experiences of participating students in your class which will not involve written or detailed responses. Your participation in the study will involve teaching as part of your normal school classes and will not compromise student's learning. Rather, it is anticipated that the experiences will have benefits that will enhance learning and student wellbeing.

Your participation in the study is voluntary. If you do agree to participate, you can withdraw from participation at any time during the study without comment, penalty and without any impact on your current or future relationship with the PhD researcher or UniSA. Your decision to participate will not impact in any way upon your current or future relationship with UniSA.

Expected benefits

It is expected that the study will benefit you and your students in a number of areas. Students will be benefit cognitively and emotionally through activities and discussion focused on social emotional development that is meaningful and relevant to their everyday lives. We will work together as a collaborative team using teaching methods that are familiar to you, and Community of Inquiry sessions will be tailored to suit your particular style. As there is also a commitment to capturing 'children's voice' through Community of Inquiry methods and child-directed activities, valuable insight into your students will be a further benefit. The lessons that

your class will be involved in will support learning across several areas, as well as student wellbeing and relationships with others. You will benefit from this study by working in a collaborative teaching team with a researcher dedicated to creating positive social emotional outcomes for your students. A summary of the research findings will be provided to participants at the completion of the study.

Risks

There are no risks for teacher participants in this study beyond normal school work. Any data collected will be coded to ensure anonymity. The study has Ethics approval from the South Australian Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) and the University of South Australia Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

Confidentiality

Throughout this study all records containing personal information will remain confidential and no information that could lead to identification of any individual will be released. You and your site will not be identifiable in any publications or teaching materials arising from this study. This will be ensured through the use of codes to identify participants involved in the study, and pseudonyms for any reference to the school, teacher or individual children in any publications. Participation in this study involves audio or video recording. Access to data involving your voice, image or artefacts produced will be restricted to the researcher and research supervisors. Digital audio and video recordings will be stored on a password protected, secured server at UniSA, Magill. All hard copy information collected for this study will be securely stored, and destroyed after seven years in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007.

Consent to Participate

If you agree to participate, please sign the written consent form (enclosed) to confirm this.

Questions and Further Information

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or study supervisor named above if you have any questions or would like further information regarding this study.

Concerns Regarding the Conduct of the Study

This study has been approved by the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the study or questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the UniSA Ethics and Compliance Officer, Ms Vicki Allen on 83023118 or email Vicki.Allen@unisa.edu.au. The Ethics and Compliance Officer is not connected with this study and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an impartial manner.

Appendix B: Teacher Consent Form

Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences

School of Education

St Bernards Road

Magill SA 5072

Teacher Consent for PhD Research Project (UniSA)

An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school

Research Team Contacts	
Mr. Martyn Mills-Bayne, PhD candidate	Dr. Victoria Whitington, Associate Supervisor
w: 83024154 m: 0416180356	W: 83024334
Martyn.Mills-Bayne@unisa.edu.au	Victoria.Whitington@unisa.edu.au

I (name).....

hereby consent to the participation in the research project entitled: 'An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school'.

- I have read the Teacher Information Letter and the purpose and nature of the research project have been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part in the research project.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research project at any time without comment or penalty and that this will not affect my standing with the researcher, UniSA, or my employer now or in the future.
- I understand that while any information gained in the research project may be published, I will not be identified and my personal details will remain confidential at all times.
- I understand that the research project will involve digital audio and video recording during lessons and related activities.

Participant Consent

Name of Participant:.....

Signed:..... Date:.....

Researcher Confirmation

I have provided information about the research project to the research participant and believe that s/he understands what is involved.

Researcher's signature:..... Date:.....

Big Questions

My research project is about finding answers to some BIG questions

- *Is Community of Inquiry a good way to learn about our feelings and emotions?*
- *Does talking to each other about our own feelings help us to better understand other people's feelings?*
- *What do children think is important about feelings and emotions at school?*



What is it all about?



Hi, my name is Marty. I am a student like you, but my school is called university, and my work is learning about how children think.

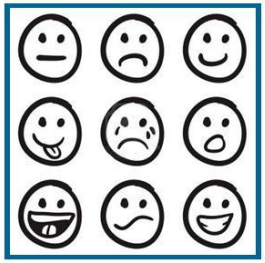
This brochure is to tell you about why I would like your help to understand some of my BIG questions about how children think and feel.

I am trying to learn more about how children learn to talk and think about the feelings of other people. The best way for me to learn about what children think and feel is to watch and listen to you talking to each other.

The Community of Inquiry lessons you already do are one way for me to do this. I can listen to what you say and see what you write, draw or make in these lessons.

Can you help me answer some BIG questions?

Information for Students from Ms Johnson's classroom



How we think and feel about other people in a Community of Inquiry

Martyn Mills-Bayne, PhD student

What will we be doing?



A baby and her Mum will be visiting your classroom.

We will be watching the baby play. We will look and listen to the baby to try to work out what she is thinking and feeling.

The Mum will be there to help the baby and to tell us about her.

The baby and her Mum will visit our class 6 times so that we can see the baby grow and learn over time.



What do I have to do?



You will be asked to be a part of this project. If you agree, and your parents agree, then you will be asked to:

1. Watch the baby and Mum.
2. Ask questions about the baby's thinking or feelings.
3. Be part of the Community of Inquiry lessons to talk about questions we have about the baby and Mum.
4. Write and draw about what you have learned from the baby and Mum.
5. Make a Powerpoint story about what you learned.

* All of this will be during school time.

You do not have to be a part of the project if you don't want to, and even if you do agree, you can change your mind at any time and that is OK.



Martyn Mills-Bayne
PhD Candidate
University of South Australia

P: 8302 4154
M: 041 618 0356
E: Martyn.Mills-Bayne@unisa.edu.au

Appendix D: Parent/Caregiver Information Letter

Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences

School of Education

St Bernards Road

Magill SA 5072

Parent/Caregiver Information for PhD Research Project (UniSA)

An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school

Research Team Contacts	
Mr. Martyn Mills-Bayne, PhD candidate	Dr. Victoria Whitington, Associate Supervisor
w: 83024154 m: 0416180356	W: 83024334
Martyn.Mills-Bayne@unisa.edu.au	Victoria.Whitington@unisa.edu.au

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

My name is Martyn Mills-Bayne and I am a registered teacher who is currently undertaking a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) in Education at the University of South Australia. A major part of this award is the implementation of a research project designed to increase knowledge and understanding about aspects of education. The project that I have developed aims to investigate the use of the Community of Inquiry method as a tool for promoting the development of empathy in young children. I will be working with your child's classroom teacher to implement lessons specifically designed for the project. These lessons will allow me to see and record children's discussions when they are talking about their own thoughts and feelings and those of other children. I am inviting you and your child to participate in this interesting and beneficial research project.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this project is to:

1. Investigate the effectiveness of Community of Inquiry teaching methodology for fostering the cognitive and affective elements of empathy.
2. Document how young children engage with learning through the Community of Inquiry method and compare children's views of thinking about empathy with information from parents and teachers.

Participation

Child participation in this study will occur as part of your child's normal school classes. There will be several lessons based on the current Community of Inquiry sessions already occurring in your child's classroom. These lessons will cover 6 topic areas, will be designed by the researcher in collaboration with the classroom teacher, and given across term 2, 2012. Data will be collected in various ways including audio/video recording of lessons, drawings and a digital photo-story project.

Your child's participation in the study is voluntary. Your agreement to your child's participation can be withdrawn at any time without comment, penalty and without any impact on your child's current or future educational programs, relationship with the school, teacher, PhD researcher or UniSA.

If you do not agree to your child participating, your child will still be able to take part in the activities as part of their ongoing school lessons, however, any work your child produces will not be collected and steps will be taken to ensure that their face is not imaged, and that they are not identified through the data collection process.

Parent/caregiver participation in this study will involve a questionnaire about your child's experiences during the research project.

Your participation in the study is voluntary. Your agreement to participate can be withdrawn at any time without comment, penalty and without any impact on your current or future relationship with the school, teacher, PhD researcher or UniSA.

Expected benefits

It is expected that the study will benefit your child in a number of areas. Your child will have the benefit of investigating real-world problems related to their own, and others' social emotional

development that are apparent in the classroom, the playground and in the broader community. The lessons that your child will be involved in will support learning across several areas including Literacy, Studies of Society and the Environment, as well as student wellbeing and relationships with others. A summary of the research findings will be provided to participants at the completion of the study.

Risks

There are no risks for your child in this study beyond normal school attendance. There will be no risk to parent participants in this study as coding will be carried out on surveys to ensure anonymity. The study has Ethics approval from the South Australian Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) and the University of South Australia Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

Confidentiality

Throughout this study all records containing personal information will remain confidential and no information that could lead to identification of your child or yourself will be released in any publications or teaching materials arising from this study. This will be ensured through the use of codes and pseudonyms for any reference to the school or individual participants. Access to data from parent interviews and data involving your child's voice, image or artefacts produced will be restricted to the researcher and research supervisors. Digital audio and video recordings will be stored on a password protected, secured server at UniSA, Magill. All hard copy information collected for this study will be securely stored, and destroyed after seven years in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007.

Consent to Participate

If you agree for your child and yourself to participate, please sign the written consent form (enclosed) to confirm this. There is also an assent form for your child to complete. Your child's participation will only be approved if both parental consent and child assent are given. My aim is to value the rights of your child in being an integral part of the decision to participate in this research study.

Questions and Further Information

Please contact myself or the study supervisor named above if you have any questions or would like further information regarding this study.

Concerns Regarding the Conduct of the Study

This study has been approved by the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the study or questions about your or your child's rights as participants, please contact the UniSA Ethics and Compliance Officer, Ms Vicki Allen on 83023118 or email Vicki.Allen@unisa.edu.au. The Ethics and Compliance Officer is not connected with this study and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an impartial manner.

Appendix E: Parent/Caregiver & Child Consent Form

Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences

School of Education

St Bernards Road

Magill SA 5072

Parent/Caregiver & Child Consent for PhD Research Project (UniSA)

An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school

Research Team Contacts	
Mr. Martyn Mills-Bayne, PhD candidate	Dr. Victoria Whitington, Associate Supervisor
w: 83024154 m: 0416180356	W: 83024334
Martyn.Mills-Bayne@unisa.edu.au	Victoria.Whitington@unisa.edu.au

I (name).....

hereby consent to my child's participation in the research project entitled: 'An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school'.

- I have read the Parent Information Letter and the purpose and nature of the research project have been explained to me. I understand and agree to allow my child to take part in the research project.
- I have read the Information Brochure with my child and discussed the research project with him/her. I understand the purpose of the research project and my child's involvement in it.
- My child has an understanding of his/her participation requirements.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw my child from the research project at any time without comment or penalty and that this will not affect our standing with the researcher, UniSA, or my child's educational program at school now or in the future.

- My child understands that he or she may withdraw from participation in the research project at any time.
- I understand that the research project will involve digital audio and video recording and photography during lessons and related activities.
- I give permission for these digital recordings, images and photography to be used in publications and teaching materials arising from this research project.
- I understand that while any information gained in the research project may be published, my child will not be identified and their personal details will remain confidential at all times.

Parent/Caregiver Consent

Name of Child Participant:.....

Signed:..... Date:.....

Statement of Child Assent

Your parent or caregiver has given permission for you to be involved in this research project. This form is to ask for your agreement to be involved. By circling one smiley face below and printing your name you are indicating that this project has been discussed with you and that you agree to participate.

I DO NOT want to do it: 

I DO want to do it: 

Child's signature:..... Date:.....

Appendix F: Parent/Caregiver Consent Form

Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences

School of Education

St Bernards Road

Magill SA 5072

Parent/Caregiver Consent for PhD Research Project (UniSA)

An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school

Research Team Contacts	
Mr. Martyn Mills-Bayne, PhD candidate	Dr. Victoria Whitington, Associate Supervisor
w: 83024154 m: 0416180356	W: 83024334
Martyn.Mills-Bayne@unisa.edu.au	Victoria.Whitington@unisa.edu.au

I (name).....

hereby consent to the participation in the research project entitled: 'An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school'.

- I have read the Parent Information Letter and the purpose and nature of the research project have been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part in the research project. I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research project at any time without comment or penalty and that this will not affect my standing with the researcher, UniSA, or my child's educational program at school now or in the future.
- I understand that while any information gained in the research project may be published, I will not be identified and my personal details will remain confidential at all times.

Participant Consent

Name of Participant:.....

Signed:..... Date:.....

Appendix G: Mother & Baby Recruitment Flier

Can you and your baby help?





Do you and your baby want to help foster children's empathy for others?

I am looking for a mother/father and their new baby to be an integral part of a research project about children's empathy development at [redacted] Primary School.

If you are keen to help foster children's empathy by being yourself, sharing your baby's experiences and answering children's big questions, then please talk to me, ring me or email me to find out more.

UniSA

Martyn Mills-Bayne
[redacted]
8302 4154
Martyn.Mills-Bayne@unisa.edu.au

This project has been approved by the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee.

	Birth–1 month	2-3 months	4-5 months	6-9 months	10-12 months
Visual development	Responds to motion. Prefers large bold pattern. Shows preference for attractive faces.	Scans finer patterns. Prefers female to male faces and can discriminate more easily between them. Recognises and prefers mother's face.	Colour discrimination is adult-like. Increasingly relies on relational information to differentiate faces. Distinguishes emotionally positive from emotionally negative facial expressions.	Scans visual field and tracks moving objects more efficiently. Increasingly perceives facial expressions of emotion as meaningful wholes.	Continues to improve...
Sensory development	Turns eyes and head in general direction of sounds.	Engages in exploratory mouthing of objects. Identifies location of sound more readily.	→	→	Screens out sounds not used in native language etc.
Motor development	Can hold head erect when supported. → Lifts self by arms. → Rolls from side to back. →	→	→	→	→
		Grasps objects. → Rolls from back to side. →	→	→	→
			Sits alone. → Crawls. → Pulls to stand. → Transfer objects	→	→
				Stands alone. → Walks alone. → Pincer grip	→
Emotional development	Social smile emerges. → Detects emotions by matching tone and expression etc. →	→	→	→	→
		Laughter appears. → Expresses happiness when interacting with familiar people. →	→	Anger and fear increase in frequency and intensity. → Uses mother as secure base. → Regulates emotion by approaching and retreating from stimulation. → Detects meaning of others' emotional signals. → Engages in social referencing. →	→
Baby timeline	Born @ end of April 2012	July 2012 →	→	→ December 2012	

Appendix I: Mother & Baby Information Letter

Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences

School of Education

St Bernards Road

Magill SA 5072

Parent Information for PhD Research Project (UniSA)

An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school

Research Team Contacts	
Mr. Martyn Mills-Bayne, PhD candidate	Dr. Victoria Whitington, Associate Supervisor
w: 83024154 m: 0416180356	W: 83024334
Martyn.Mills-Bayne@unisa.edu.au	Victoria.Whitington@unisa.edu.au

Dear Parent,

My name is Martyn Mills-Bayne and I am a registered teacher who is currently undertaking a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) in Education at the University of South Australia. A major part of this award is the implementation of a research project designed to increase knowledge and understanding about aspects of education. The project that I have developed aims to investigate the use of the Community of Inquiry method as a tool for promoting the development of empathy in young children. I will be working with the classroom teacher to implement lessons specifically designed for the project. These lessons will allow me to see and record children's discussions when they are talking about their own thoughts and feelings and those of other children. I am inviting you and your child to participate in this interesting and beneficial research project and be a central part of the lessons being implemented.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this project is to:

1. Investigate the effectiveness of Community of Inquiry teaching methodology for fostering the cognitive and affective elements of empathy.
2. Document how young children engage with learning through the Community of Inquiry method and compare children's views of thinking about empathy with information from parents and teachers.

Participation

Parent and Child participation: There will be 6 lessons that you and your child will be required for. These lessons will cover 6 topic areas, will be designed by the researcher in collaboration with the classroom teacher, and given across term 2, 2012. During the 6 lessons you and your child will be involved in audio/video recording will be used to observe the spontaneous reactions of the classroom children to your child, yourself and the relationship between you both. If you do not want either your child or your own identity to be protected, then steps will be taken to ensure that your faces are not imaged, and that you are not identified through the data collection process.

Your child's participation in the study is voluntary. Your agreement to your child's participation can be withdrawn at any time without comment, penalty and without any impact on your current or future relationship with the school, teacher, PhD researcher or UniSA.

Parent participation in this study will involve a semi-structured interview about you and your child's experiences during the research project.

Your participation in the study is voluntary. Your agreement to participate can be withdrawn at any time without comment, penalty and without any impact on your current or future relationship with the school, teacher, PhD researcher or UniSA.

Expected benefits

It is expected that the study will benefit participant's social emotional development that is apparent in the classroom, the playground and in the broader community. The lessons that your child will be involved in will support learning across several areas including Literacy, Studies of Society and the Environment, as well as student wellbeing and relationships with others. A

summary of the research findings will be provided to participants at the completion of the study.

Risks

There are no risks for your child in this study and you will be able to comfort or remove your child if they become distressed in any way during lessons. There will be no risk to parent participants in this study as coding will be carried out on surveys to ensure anonymity. The study has Ethics approval from the South Australian Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) and the University of South Australia Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

Confidentiality

Throughout this study all records containing personal information will remain confidential and no information that could lead to identification of your child or yourself will be released in any publications or teaching materials arising from this study. This will be ensured through the use of codes and pseudonyms for any reference to the school or individual participants. Access to data from parent interviews and data involving your child's voice or image will be restricted to the researcher and research supervisors. Digital audio and video recordings will be stored on a password protected, secured server at UniSA, Magill. All hard copy information collected for this study will be securely stored, and destroyed after seven years in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007.

Consent to Participate

If you agree for your child and yourself to participate, please sign the written consent form (enclosed) to confirm this.

Questions and Further Information

Please contact myself or the study supervisor named above if you have any questions or would like further information regarding this study.

Concerns Regarding the Conduct of the Study

This study has been approved by the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the study or questions about your or your child's rights as participants, please contact the UniSA Ethics and Compliance Officer, Ms Vicki Allen on 83023118 or email Vicki.Allen@unisa.edu.au. The Ethics and Compliance Officer is not connected with this study and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an impartial manner.

Appendix J: Mother & Baby Consent Form

Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences

School of Education

St Bernards Road

Magill SA 5072

Parent/Caregiver Consent for PhD Research Project (UniSA)

An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school

Research Team Contacts	
Mr. Martyn Mills-Bayne, PhD candidate	Dr. Victoria Whitington, Associate Supervisor
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Martyn.Mills-Bayne@unisa.edu.au	Victoria.Whitington@unisa.edu.au

I (name).....

hereby consent to the participation in the research project entitled: 'An exploration of Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical tool to foster empathy in the early years of school'.

- I have read the Parent Information Letter and the purpose and nature of the research project have been explained to me. I understand our involvement and agree to take part in the research project.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw, or withdraw my child from the research project at any time without comment or penalty and that this will not affect my standing with the researcher or UniSA.
- I agree to allow my child to participate in the research project.
- I understand that the research project will involve digital audio and video recording and photography during lessons.
- I give permission for these digital recordings, images and photography to be used in publications and teaching materials arising from this research project.

- I understand that while any information gained in the research project may be published, I will not be identified and my personal details will remain confidential at all times.
- I understand that while any information gained in the research project may be published, my child will not be identified and their personal details will remain confidential at all times.

Participant Consent

Name of Participant:.....

Signed:..... Date:.....

Researcher Confirmation

I have provided information about the research to the participant and believe that he/she understands what is involved.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Appendix K: Coding Manuals for Data Analysis

1. Coding Manual for Question Major Sub-Categories

Questions coded as:	Descriptor	Example
Questions about process	Questions about dialogic and administrational processes including own thinking process (metacognition), classroom rules, teacher expectations, COI group norms etc.	Henry: *"Didn't we say we were going to put our hands up?"* Rick: *"What are scenarios?"* Carl: *"Can we pass?"*
Questions about perspective	Questions about how others may be thinking or feeling about a situation.	Bruce: *"When he started making the sounds how did you know what he was saying?"* Jim: *"Can you tell what a dingo is thinking by its face?"* Flint: *"How do you know what Adam is feeling?"*
Questions about action	Questions about physical objects, actions or events including physical attributes, motor development, motor processes etc.	Rick: *"What if you don't know how to write?"* Carl: *"Has he been playing with toys more and crawling?"* Rick: *"Can you use your hands to communicate?"*
Questions about emotion	Questions about their own emotions, the emotions of another or the process of having or expressing emotions.	Andrea: *"Can you have a feeling but you don't know what feeling it is?"* Rick: *"Do you read people's faces correctly?"* Lori: *"Why do we have feelings?"* Shane: *"Do you know when he is angry?"*

2. Coding Manual for Reasoning Minor Sub-Categories

Statements coded as:	Descriptor	Example
Reasoning about process	Evidence of child thinking about dialogic and administrational processes including own thinking process (metacognition), classroom rules, teacher expectations, COI group norms etc.	Logan: *"I can't think."* Buddy: *"I was just saying to myself that the other question wasn't as big as the normal questions that we do."* Kevin: *"Teacher didn't you say that only Fraser could take his shoes off, and Terry has got his off."*
Reasoning about perspective	Evidence of child thinking about how others may be thinking or feeling about a situation.	Henry: *"I agree with Kevin because when Adam squeals Sarah would've heard squealing lots so she must know what it means."* Rick: *"I disagree with the bit that Harry said because when he said 'it's alright you don't have to cry', I think it would be a little mean because it's their emotions and not his because he might not cry but they feel like they do."*
Reasoning about action	Evidence of thinking about physical objects, actions or events including physical attributes, motor development, motor processes etc.	Fraser: *"He's smiling."* Fraser: *"I agree with Bruce because you can do writing instead of talking because if you can't do sign language you can write."* Kylie: *"If I saw someone hurt or sad I would go over to them and help them feel better."*
Reasoning about emotion	Evidence of child thinking about their own emotions, the emotions of another or the process of having or expressing emotions.	Fraser: *"If I was sitting there watching it I would feel quite sorry for the person who's walked off crying, but I wouldn't do anything."* Shane: *"I think Adam felt happy because the first time he came he didn't know us and it looked like he started to know us and today he already knew us so he was happy."* Fraser: *"He might not have any*

		friends and so if he looks sad then he might not get any friends, but if he looks happy he might get new friends if he doesn't have any friendships."

3. Coding Manual for Perspective Taking Minor Sub-Categories

Statements coded as:	Descriptor	Example
Perspective taking of mother	Evidence of thinking about how the mother might act or feel.	Henry: *"I agree with Kevin because when Adam squeals Sarah would've heard squealing lots so she must know what it means."* Harry: *"I agree with Bruce that when Sarah is anxious then Adam is anxious but she's got energy on her face so that she tries not to show it then."* Lori: *"Do you always read Adam's feelings correctly?"*
Perspective taking of baby	Evidence of thinking about how the baby might be feeling or the possible intent of his actions.	Harry: *"I think Adam was excited to see us again because he knows all of us now."* Buddy: *"I think Adam was a little bit calmer than he was a couple of weeks ago because he sort of recognised us and wasn't moving around lots."* Harry: *"When Adam was sitting down I saw his hand going to his chest, and I think that would mean 'strong' maybe."*
Perspective taking of peers	Evidence of thinking about the feelings or actions of peers within the classroom or the 'community of critical learners'.	Andrea: *"Say if Wayne and Glen were playing soccer and Glen wanted to play football and I was watching, I would say you could play half of each."* Shane: *"If two of my friends were sad and one was angry and one was sad I'd probably feel sad as well."* Tyler: *"you might be too*

		empathetic so you might lose all your friends because you might be worried about something when they don't need help so they might not like you."
Perspective taking of others	Evidence of thinking about the possible feelings or actions of people (or animals) beyond mother, baby and peers.	Fergus: *"They would think he's a cry baby."* Henry: *"I think if you be nice to people you can make more friends by being empathetic and if you be nice to them they'll like you more and they'll start being empathetic."* Wayne: *"I disagree with Bruce because if the person you were showing the writing to couldn't read then you would have to find some different way of communicating."*

4. Coding Manual for Statements into Levels of Justificatory Reasoning

Statements coded as:	Descriptor	Example
Justificatory Reasoning Level 1	Statements with no justification or supporting examples	Jim: *"I'm not sure."* Carl: *"I think you could point to the person and tell them to go down or over to the side."* Harry: *"I disagree with myself about the person crying."* Henry: *"I didn't learn anything new about myself when Adam was coming."*
Justificatory Reasoning Level 2	Statements with some justification. Builds on other statements, uses examples or evidence of reasoning to support statement.	Flint: *"I think Adam and Sarah can also speak to each other because Adam's movement."* Shane: *"I agree with Buddy because you can still get friends even if you're not empathetic."* Wayne: *"Well what if the person you help is not all that nice and they think 'well they*

		just helped me so I don't have to do anything back' so they might not always make friends with you."
Justificatory Reasoning Level 3	Statements with strong justification. Builds on other statements, uses multiple relevant examples or clear evidence of sound reasoning to support statement.	Bruce: *"I disagree with Flint because he probably took a long time because he didn't have any teeth."* Harry: *"I agree with Henry because I've actually been nice to people because if you're mean to people then people won't like you anymore, and then if all of your friends hate you then you don't have any friends and you try to make friends with them and they don't accept it and another day they do accept it."* Flint: *"Well to answer Henry's question that he said about the first question about 'should we try to be more empathetic?'. He asked if you could still have friends if you're really mean. You couldn't if there is a really mean bully and you start being mean to them, they might think that you're mean and they like you because you're mean."*

Journal Writing Ideas:

- What did you learn about Adam today?
- What did you learn about yourself today?
- What happened in the COI?
  - What were your thoughts?
  - What were your questions?
  - What was the most interesting point?
  - Has your thinking changed?





Appendix M: Welcome Visit

Welcome Visit

(Delivered day prior to first visit by Sarah & Adam) +30min

1. Explain to class that we will be having our first visit from Sarah & Adam tomorrow

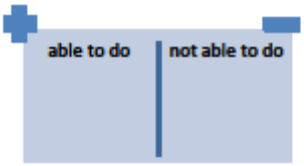
2. Describe procedural elements:
   - We will make a semi-circle around the mat
   - Sarah & Adam will be at the open end and inside the circle
   - We will make sure we stay where we are sitting: why?
   - We will need to be quiet and calm around Adam: why?
   - Adam may not feel safe to be away from Sarah: why?



3. Hypothesise
   - Adam is 2 months old…what will he look like?

   (Draw a picture of what you think Adam will look like before you meet him in your Empathy Journal on one half of your page)

   - What do you think Adam will be able to do?
   - What do you think Adam won't be able to do?



   (Oppositional chart on whiteboard)

   - How do you think <u>you</u> might feel about meeting Adam?
   - How do you think <u>Adam</u> might feel about meeting us?
   - What do think the <u>Sarah</u> might be thinking/feeling about coming into Studio 8?

   (Write feeling verbs randomly on butcher's paper, cut up, draw Venn diagram on floor with three attributes and have children place the words…with reasons)

   (Do this quickly with little discussion…then question placement when all complete: <u>Does anyone see a feeling that could fit somewhere else?</u> Children give reasons, then group decides whether to move it or not)



4. Summarise by explaining that we will revisit these ideas after we have met Sarah & Adam

Appendix N: Welcome Visit 2

Welcome Visit 2

First visit by Sarah & Adam prior to recess (10.30-11.00) +30min

1. Explain to class that we will be having our first visit from Sarah & Adam this morning

2. Remind about procedural elements:
   - We will make a semi-circle around the mat
   - Sarah & Adam will be at the open end and inside the circle
   - We will stay where we are sitting because…
   - We will be quiet and calm because…



3. Introduce Sarah & Adam
   - This is Sarah and I will let her introduce Adam to you…
   - What is Adam's daily life like?

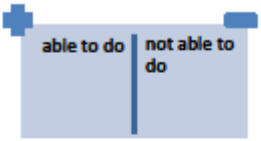
4. Observing the baby
   - Quietly watch Adam and see what you observe about him

5. Asking questions
   - Focus on the thinking we did yesterday and come up with any questions you want to ask Sarah, or that you might ask Adam if you could

6. Farewell to Sarah & Adam

7. Summarise (after recess)
   - What did you learn from Sarah, or observe about Adam?
   - What was he able to do?
   - What was he not able to do?

   (Use the Oppositional chart on whiteboard)



   - How did <u>you</u> feel about meeting Adam?
   - How do you think <u>Adam</u> felt about meeting us?
   - What do think the <u>Sarah</u> thought/felt about being in Studio 8?

   (Use Venn diagram)



8. Empathy Journal
   - Draw a picture of Adam next to the picture you drew in the last lesson
   - Write or draw something about the visit today

Appendix O: Community of Inquiry Session 1: Talking without Words

COI Session 1: Talking without Words

Stimulus

(Delivered even week before recess) +30min

- Sarah's update: any news about Adam's experiences/development
- Children's questions

Community of Inquiry

(Delivered even week after recess) +40min

Discussion Plan:

- Does Adam think/feel?
- How does Adam communicate this?
- How does Sarah know what Adam needs?

Big Questions:

How do babies 'talk' to us without using words?

Do we talk to each other without using words?

Empathy Journal

- What did you learn about Adam today?
- What did you learn about yourself today?
- Draw or write about the visit.
- What happened in the inquiry?
  - What were your thoughts
  - What were your questions
  - What was the most interesting point
  - Has anything changed

Appendix P: Community of Inquiry Session 2: Faces and Feelings

COI Session 2: Faces and Feelings

Stimulus

(Delivered even week after recess) +30min

- Sarah's update: any news about Adam's experiences/development
- Children's questions

Community of Inquiry

(Delivered even week after 5 min break) +40min

Discussion Plan:

- If Adam and Sarah 'talk' without always using words how do they communicate?
- What do their faces do?
- How does Adam share his thoughts & feelings?

Big Questions:

Can we tell what someone is thinking & feeling without them telling us?

How do we 'read' other people's faces?

Do other people's feelings affect our feelings?

Empathy Journal

- What did you learn about Adam today?
- What did you learn about yourself today?
- Draw or write about the visit.
- What happened in the inquiry?
  - What were your thoughts
  - What were your questions
  - What was the most interesting point
  - Has anything changed

Appendix Q: Community of Inquiry Session 3: Mismatched Messages

Lesson 3: Mismatched Messages

Forming Questions

(Delivered even week after recess) +15min

- Reminder of the Big Idea and the Big Question for this week's COI
- Children to formulate and write their own question (on blue paper)
- Children to formulate and write their own wondering (on green paper)

Stimulus

(Delivered even week after recess) +20min

- Sarah's update: any news about Adam's experiences/development
- Children's questions

5 minute break outside

Community of Inquiry

(Delivered even week after 5 min break) +40min

Discussion Plan:

- How does Sarah read Adam's feelings?
- How does Adam read Sarah's feelings?
- How can you tell what you are feeling?
- How can you tell what other people are feeling?
- Can we ever be sure?

Big Questions:

How do we 'read' other people's faces?

What happens if we get it right/wrong?

How can we be sure that we read people's feelings/emotions correctly?

Empathy Journal

- What did you learn about Adam today?
- What did you learn about yourself today?
- What happened in the inquiry?
  - What were your thoughts?
  - What were your questions?
  - What were your wonderings?
  - What was the most interesting point for you?
  - Has anything changed?

Appendix R: Community of Inquiry Session 4: Emotions and Empathy

Lesson 4: Emotions and Empathy

Forming Questions

(Delivered even week after recess) +15min

- Reminder of the Big Idea and the Big Question for this week's COI

Stimulus

(Delivered even week after recess) +20min

- Sarah's update: any news about Adam's experiences/development
- Children's questions

5 minute break outside

Community of Inquiry

(Delivered even week after 5 min break) +40min

Discussion Plan:

Scenario A: *you are sitting outside watching a group of friends playing a game while you finish your recess. One of your friends doesn't like the way another friend is playing the game, yells at them and storms off. The other friend walks away with their head down and you see tears in their eyes. What emotions do you have? What do you do?*

Scenario B: *same situation, but this time the person who walks away with their head down is from another class and you don't know them very well. Are your emotions the same? What do you do?*

Scenario C: *same situation, but this time you don't know any of the children.*

Big Questions:

What are emotions?

Are emotions private?

How do we feel about other people's emotions?

Empathy Journal

- What did you learn about Adam today?
- What did you learn about yourself today?
- What happened in the inquiry?
  - What were your thoughts?
  - What were your questions?
  - What were your wonderings?
  - What was the most interesting point for you?
  - Has anything changed?

Appendix S: Community of Inquiry Session 5: Mothers and Others

Lesson 5: Mothers and Others

Forming Questions

(Delivered even week after recess) +15min

- Reminder of the Big Idea and the Big Question for this week's COI

Stimulus

(Delivered even week after recess) +20min

- Sarah's update: any news about Adam's experiences/development
- Children's questions

5 minute break outside

Community of Inquiry

(Delivered even week after 5 min break) +40min

Discussion Plan: (scenarios to be introduced as the general discussion progresses)

Scenario A: *you are sitting outside watching a group of friends playing a game while you finish your recess. One of your friends doesn't like the way another friend is playing the game, yells at them and storms off. The other friend walks away with their head down and you see tears in their eyes. What emotions do you have? What do you do?*

Scenario B: *same situation, but this time the person who walks away with their head down is from another class and you don't know them very well. Are your emotions the same? What do you do?*

Scenario C: *same situation, but this time you don't know any of the children.*

Big Questions:

Do we need empathy?

Why do we respond differently to different people? ...at different times?

Do you care if Adam is feeling sad and crying? Why? What about other babies?

Empathy Journal

- What did you learn about Adam today?
- What did you learn about yourself today?
- What happened in the inquiry?
  - What were your thoughts?
  - What were your questions?
  - What were your wonderings?
  - What was the most interesting point for you?
  - Has anything changed?

Appendix T: Community of Inquiry Session 6: Making Connections

Lesson 6: Making Connections

Forming Questions

(Delivered even week after recess) +15min

- Reminder of the Big Idea and the Big Question for this week's COI

Stimulus

(Delivered even week after recess) +20min

- Sarah's update: any news about Adam's experiences/development
- Children's questions

5 minute break outside

Community of Inquiry

(Delivered even week after 5 min break) +40min

Discussion Plan:

- What can help us develop empathy?
- Does talking about our feelings help?
- Does thinking about how other people might feel help?
- Do circumstances make a difference?
- Do you feel more empathy for Adam & Sarah than you did at the start?

Big Questions:

What does empathy do for us?

Can we/should we try to be more empathic?

Empathy Journal

- What did you learn about Adam today?
- What did you learn about yourself today?
- What happened in the inquiry?
  - What were your thoughts?
  - What were your questions?
  - What were your wonderings?
  - What was the most interesting point for you?
  - Has anything changed?

Appendix U: Bridge Lesson 1 (Welcome 2 – Talking without Words)

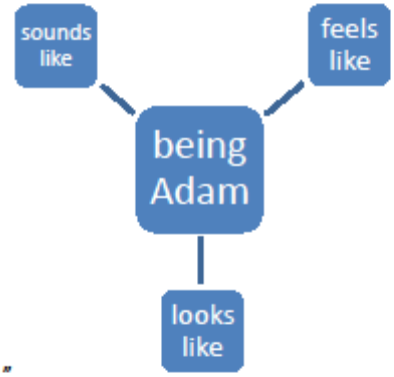
Bridge 1: Summarising Welcome 2 & Priming for COI Session 1

(Delivered on odd week between Welcome Visit 2 and Session 1: Talking without Words) +30min

1. **Summarising:**

   - Discussion circle: I want you to think back to our visit from Sarah and Adam, and I want you to try to imagine what that experience was like for Adam
   - You do not need to make the noises or movements that Adam did…this is about using your senses and thinking about Adam's perspective on his visit
   - Find some space and get into a position similar to Adam: describe what you see/hear/feel/smell

   (record responses and ideas about perspective taking in chart form eg. Y-chart)



   - Writing in Empathy Journals:
     "When I met Adam I felt…"

     "I think Adam was feeling……about being in Studio 8."

2. **Priming:**

   - Discussion circle:
     - Were you surprised by something Adam did?
     - Were you surprised by something Adam didn't do?
     - Did anyone expect Adam to talk?
     - Could we tell what Adam was feeling?
     - How can you tell?
     - What do Sarah & Adam do to 'talk' to each other?

Appendix V: Bridge Lesson 2 (Talking without Words – Faces and Feelings)

Bridge 2: Summarising COI Session 1 & Priming for COI Session 2

(Delivered on odd week between Session 1: Talking without Words and Session 2: Faces and Feelings) +30min

1. **Summarising:**

- Discussion circle: I want you to think back to our last COI. Who can summarise the discussion?
- Had Adam changed since his first visit?
- How well can you communicate your feelings without using words?

Activity

Using Face It® expression cards (QuirkyKid 2009), choose a face, describe the feeling it shows, and share a time when you felt the same way.

- Writing in Empathy Journals:

"When I met Adam I felt..."

"I think Adam was feeling.....about being in Studio 8."

2. **Priming:**

- Discussion circle:
  - Were you surprised by something Adam did?
  - Were you surprised by something Adam didn't do?
  - Did anyone expect Adam to talk?
  - Could we tell what Adam was feeling?
  - How can you tell?
  - What do Sarah & Adam do to 'talk' to each other?

Appendix W: Bridge Lesson 3 (Faces and Feelings – Mismatched Messages)

Bridge 3: Summarising COI Session 2 & Priming for COI Session 3

(Delivered on odd week between Session 2: Faces and Feelings and Session 3: Mismatched Messages) +30min

1. **Summarising:**

- Discussion circle: I want you to think back to our last COI.
- Share your Journal entry
- Look at your Green Question
- Did you get some kind of answer?
- Did YOUR wondering/question help us understand the BIG question?

Activity

Emotional Charades

3 students at a time stand in front of class with headbands that have an emotion written on them. Students take it turns asking the class to show them the emotion they have. Class have to use their face to try to express the matching emotion.

2. **Priming:**

- Discussion circle:

Mini COI to expand on ideas discussed in last lesson.

Focus in on the big question:

'How can we be sure that we read people's emotions correctly?'

- **What helps us?**
- **Can you explain?**
- **Can you give an example?**
- **Can anyone build on or add that answer?**
- **Does anyone have a different idea?**

Scenario A: *You see Sarah and Adam at the shops. You say 'hello', but then Sarah answers her phone and moves away from the pram to talk. Adam is starting to wriggle and squeal more, but Sarah isn't hearing or seeing this.*

- **Do you know what Adam is feeling?**
- **What emotions do you have?**
- **What do you do?**

Appendix X: Bridge Lesson 4 (Mismatched Messages – Emotions and Empathy)

Bridge 4: Summarising COI Session 3 & Priming for COI Session 4

(Delivered on odd week between Session 3: Mismatched Messages and Session 4: Emotions and Empathy) +30min

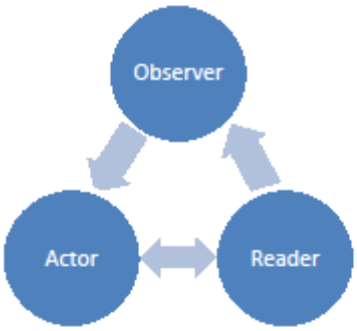
1. **Summarising:**

   - Discussion circle: I want you to think back to our last COI.
   - Had Adam changed since his first visit?
   - Share your Journal entry
   - How can we be sure we are reading feelings correctly?

Activity

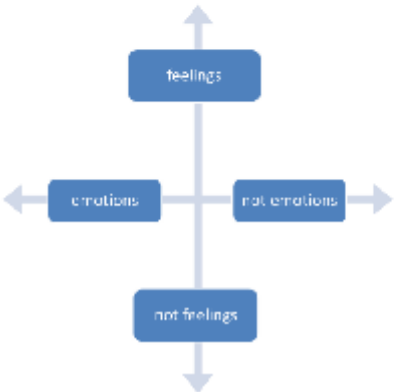
Without using words take turns to try to show others how you feel

(work in groups of 3: Actor/Reader/Observer)



2. **Priming:**

   - Discussion circle:
     - Draw horizontal line on floor, label feelings/not feelings
     - Use feeling cards
     - Give definitions for feelings
     - Have children place cards and justify choice
     - When finished add vertical line to make quadrant, label emotions/not emotions
     - Give definitions for emotions
     - Have children move cards and justify



Appendix Y: Bridge Lesson 5 (Emotions and Empathy – Mothers and Others)

Bridge 5: Summarising COI Session 4 & Priming for COI Session 5

(Delivered on odd week between Session 4: Emotions and Empathy & Session 5: Mothers and Others) +30min

1. **Summarising:**

   - Discussion circle: I want you to think back to our last COI.
   - Share your Journal entry

Activity

More or Less Empathy

Explain that we will be sorting scenarios on a continuum of empathic actions. Students get into groups of 3 and take a card that describes a scenario relating to empathy. Groups are given 5 minutes to discuss their scenario and where on the continuum they agree it should go. Decisions must be agreed on by the group with an explanation as to why this was decided. Class comes back to circle and places cards on continuum one at a time. After all cards are placed the class discusses placement, and cards can be moved if agreement from the group occurs.



2. **Priming:**

   - Discussion circle:

Mini COI to expand on ideas discussed in last lesson.

Focus in on the big question: 'Do we need empathy?'

- Why?
- Can you explain?
- Can you give an example?
- Can anyone build on or add that answer?
- Does anyone have a different idea?

Scenario A: *You see Sarah and Adam at the shops. You say 'hello', but then Sarah answers her phone and moves away from the pram to talk. Adam is starting to wriggle and squeal more, but Sarah isn't hearing or seeing this.*

- Do you know what Adam is feeling?
- What emotions do you have?
- What do you do?

Scenarios:

Asking if a friend needs help

Helping a friend who is sad

Helping a stranger who is sad

Being nice to someone who is mean

Playing with a new student

Smiling at someone you don't know

Feeling sad when a friend is sad

Feeling happy when a friend gets something you want

Appendix Z: Bridge Lesson 6 (Mother and Others – Making Connections)

Bridge 6: Summarising COI Session 5 & Priming for COI Session 6

(Delivered on odd week between Session 5: Mothers and Others & Session 6: Making Connections) +30min

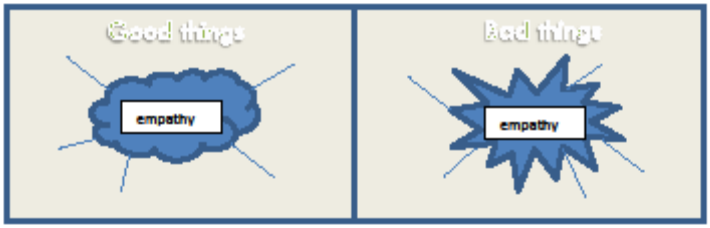
1. **Summarising:**

- Discussion circle: I want you to think back to our last COI.
- Share your Journal entry

Activity

- Weighing up empathy:

  Make a list of all the positives/negatives about empathy
  Be creative
  Get as many ideas down as you can
  Think about our last COI



2. **Priming:**

- Discussion circle:

  Mini COI to expand on ideas discussed in last lesson.

  Focus in on the big question: 'Do we need empathy?'

  - Why?
  - Can you explain?
  - Can you give an example?
  - Can anyone build on or add that answer?
  - Does anyone have a different idea?