

# Opportunities and Possibilities: Philosophical Hermeneutics and the Educational Researcher

Loren G. Agrey

Asia-Pacific International University, PO Box 4, Muak Lek, Saraburi 18180, Thailand  
\*Corresponding Author: [president@apiu.edu](mailto:president@apiu.edu),

Copyright © 2014 Horizon Research Publishing. All rights reserved.

**Abstract** The opportunities that philosophical hermeneutics provide as a research tool are explored and it is shown that this qualitative research method can be employed as a valuable tool for the educational researcher. Used as an alternative to the standard quantitative approach to educational research, currently being the dominant paradigm of data collection and analysis, the hermeneutic approach provides for a variety of interesting possibilities. This concept of research allows one to use interpretation to learn and understand by building on one's own experiences and existing fore-structure while not attempting to remove oneself from the object being studied. When successfully applied, researchers from within the human sciences, and specifically education, can benefit from this alternative method.

**Keywords** Interpretive Inquiry, Hermeneutic Circle, Conversation as Research, Educational Research, Qualitative Research

Level: Graduate Researchers, Education

---

## 1. Hermeneutics and Educational Research

Philosophical hermeneutics, as a research tool, provides opportunities and opens valuable possibilities for educational practitioners and researchers. Smith (1991, 2002) believes that hermeneutical inquiry allows us to inquire what we mean when we use words like curriculum, research and pedagogy. Inquiry will aid in furthering our understanding of what makes it possible for us to speak, think and act in the ways that we do and in relation to those that we as teachers and educational researchers come into contact with, such as peers, administrators, and most importantly, students. He also asserts that we live in a world of mutually affecting entities where our actions have an effect on those with whom we come into contact and conversely where we are also affected by their actions. Hermeneutics not only studies this mutual effect, but also includes an enactment of a particular

kind of responsibility for oneself as an integral part of interpretation of other things and people. This allows for the opportunity of self-understanding to change as one's own interpretations are shown to need revision. This hermeneutical act is both educational and pedagogical as it is an act of simultaneous learning and teaching.

Hermeneutical inquiry also provides an opportunity to ask questions about how meaning is derived in education and how teachers are implicated in that meaning. Further, hermeneutic investigations situate us in a particular historical tradition which allows us to see both how we are guided and constrained by our prejudices and how these prejudices influence our relations with others. The modernist Cartesian constructs of a knowable object, being presented by a teacher who is "in the know" and who is passing on this knowledge to the *tabula rasa* presented in form of students, can be rejected in favour of a more ambiguous, democratic relationship where both students and teachers ask questions together. This newly created space verifies Caputo's (1987) concept of "difficulty" but it also allows for a place where "fusions of horizons" can be achieved. This fusion can only take place if the traditions and experiences of all the participants can be shared. It is the teacher's role to ensure that this "situated facilitation" occurs. (Richardson, 2002a).

Sumara (1994) presents a conceptual revision in curricular understanding based on hermeneutical inquiry. Traditionally curriculum has been seen as a set of "directions" which guide student/teacher interaction so that predictable learning outcomes result. It is this approach to curriculum that has enabled the separation of curriculum and life.

Hermeneutically speaking, this striving for method is a response to our condition of no longer being at home in the world, largely as a consequence of being unaware of our historically effected presence. Method aims to stand in place of this loss of historically understanding and belonging by substituting reflective knowledge with a form of knowledge which pretends to understand everything in advance. Method seeks to exclude the unexpected, the accidental, the mistake. Just as Descartes believed that disciplined human reason could protect against error, the curriculum which is founded upon pre-determined methods and plans believes that adherence to these will ensure effective teaching and

learning (Sumara, 1994, p. 103).

In contrast to a methodological approach, curriculum could be better described as embodied action which allows for students and teachers to experience mutual events that are inextricable from the ever-evolving world in which each is situated.

Turning to the study of pedagogy, Jardine (1998) believes that there is a straightforward sense in which interpretive work is pedagogic in that it is concerned with the regeneration of meaning and allows new understandings to erupt and lets the old and already established and familiar to regenerate and renew itself. Also, interpretive inquiry is pedagogic in the sense that the process of interpretation is not the accumulation of new objective information, but a transformation of understanding.

As a form of interpretive inquiry, contemporary hermeneutics can be described as the perpetual need to be responsible for our knowledge, our actions and our ontological self which are understood in relation to our historically effected situations. Thus the responsibility of hermeneutics is not about reporting how things are or were. Instead its responsibility entails a mediation of some of the contingencies of life that we experience (Sumara, 1994).

Philosophical hermeneutics reminds us that understanding is implicit in and made possible through communication and Gadamer makes it clear that conversation is central to the process of understanding. Conversation is a process of give and take between self and the other, and is always oriented to something that requires understanding (Smits, 2001).

According to Gadamer the ontological structure of a genuine question is one of openness lying in the direction of that which is questionable. Conversation as a mode of research allows the participants as educators to pursue the question objectively as a problem of practice, while at the same time acknowledging its implications from them as practitioners (Carson, 1984, p. v & vi).

What emerges in beginning a conversation is that it is neither owned by the questioner or the interviewee, but it is an experience in which they both dwell together. No one knows the full story each is living out and this is why dialogue and conversation are salient features of interpretive work. A hermeneutic notion of understanding returns inquiry in education to the original and difficult interpretive play in which we live our lives together and it returns inquiry to the need and possibility of true conversation (Jardine, 1998, 2000). Wachterhauser (1986) posits that it is only through talk that different ways of grouping data can emerge, and that new insights may be gained or new questions asked that will allow for a revelation of understanding or theoretical breakthrough. Thus conversation is necessary to gain a deeper, more adequate understanding of that which is being discussed.

Similar to the hermeneutic circle, interpretive inquiry has no definite beginning or ending points because as a part of the ongoing conversation, inquiry can only slip into that which is already there. This form of inquiry is not concerned with creating new sites of objective inquiry, but rather, it is

about existing in the midst of already-there sites in order to come to a deeper understanding of what the experience of being-there means (Sumara, 1994).

Gadamer expresses the importance of questioning in the human sciences in that its most important function allows truth to emerge.

It has emerged throughout our investigation that the certainty that is imparted by the use of scientific methods does not suffice to guarantee truth. This is so especially of the human sciences, but this does not mean a diminution of their scientific quality, but on the contrary, the justification of the claim to special human significance that they have always made. The fact that in the knowing involved in them the knower's own being is involved marks, certainly the limitation of 'method', but not that of science. Rather, what the tool of method does not achieve must – and effectively can – be achieved by a discipline of questioning and research, a discipline that guarantees truth (Gadamer, 1975, pp. 446 & 447).

Hermeneutics privileges are questioned as a mode of research. The questions are not just of any type but rather are those questions that are not amenable to simplistic answers or solutions. Gadamer felt that one must find the "genuine" question and not view them as absolute or closed with predetermined answers. Hermeneutical inquiry remains open ended. In fact, hermeneutics places greater value on the genuine question than the resultant answers or solutions (Smits, 2001).

Another form of hermeneutical research, closely related to conversation and questioning is that of narrative. Smits (2001) maintains that narrative represents a way that we try to give shape to our understandings. Kerby (1991) also emphasises the role of narrative in research and feels that our understanding of other cultures and people is gained from, and in the form of narrative that are about and by those peoples. The rationale for this has to do with the way that narratives articulate not just isolated acts but whole sequences of events, thereby placing these events within a framing context or history. This form of contextualizing has been recognized as crucial to all forms of understanding. In employing the hermeneutic circle, where parts can be only understood in relation to the whole and conversely, understanding of the whole can only be understood in its relation to the parts, it could be concluded that through the process of narration, understanding of not only how individual acts give meaning to the larger context in which they exist, but also that the milieu of actions gives meaning to the individual acts. In other words, the isolated acts need to be placed in a developing network of other acts so that their significance can be grasped. It is in and through various forms of narratives that our lives, and the lives of others with whom we have shared narratives, have attained meaning.

Validity in hermeneutic research also takes a different form than that of the natural sciences. Carson (1984) follows Gadamer's lead and posits that there exists no privileged externalized way of determining validity. But this does not mean that hermeneutic research can be considered without

the capacity to show validity. Practical action has its own “validity for practical purposes” which is derived from the actors stock of knowledge and also from the knowledge that he or she must act. Research findings show that the meanings of the participants as the acting subjects have a validity as the representations of those meanings for participants. Continuing in the same vein, the hermeneutics of Gadamer and Ricoeur allow for a further validity beyond the intersubjective agreement by turning outwards from these internalized meanings to a common world. Thus hermeneutic research contains a self-implicated validity, oriented towards practical action.

To complete the survey of the application of hermeneutics to educational research it would be valuable to compare and contrast this form of inquiry with that of the prevailing scientific research methods which have become the privileged, dominant forms of research in both the natural sciences as well as much of the field of education. Positivist inquiry, based on scientific methodology, grew out of Enlightenment thinking which asserted that everything of value can be knowable and that which is not knowable, does not count as knowledge or truth. Unfortunately, this approach, when applied to the human sciences and education is clearly an impoverished method. Jardine (1998) contrasts the two forms of inquiry and shows that while the scientific approach is effective in the world of natural science, there is no direct applicability to educational research. With scientific inquiry, ambiguity or a lack of clarity is seen as a problem that needs to be fixed. Repeatable occurrences are the only ones that are considered significant and this approach requires that a substantial amount of respondents will cite the same experiences, use the same words and concepts and speak in the same terms. An isolated incident can never have meaning but must be replicated to prove that it is meaningful.

Another characteristic of positivist research is that the researcher is removed from the research other than being merely an observer and collector of data. This objectivity rules out any unanticipated interchanges even though they still occur. Those who utilize this method view these occurrences as anomalies and they remain meaningless with no claim to further understanding and truth. The stringent evaluative criteria of validity and reliability provide the researcher with a belief in the accuracy and dependability of the results.

In contrast, hermeneutical inspired interpretive inquiry suggests that there is a truth that is to be understood in the experiences that cannot be proven by the methods employed in the scientific approach and which the empirical approach would omit because of their non-replicable nature. Interpretive research begins, not in the controllable methodology of technical science, but rather in the tangled ambiguity of the incident itself. The task of interpretation is to evoke the meaning of these actions and to attempt to understand what they are saying to us about our shared lives. A claim to truth is made as we peel back the intimate layers inherent in the incident and relate it to our lived reality.

Interpretive inquiry does not stake a claim to what the incident means, once and for all. Instead, it explores the possibilities of what understandings can be brought to light through exploration of its ambiguities. Hermeneutic inquiry allows for a reading and a re-reading of possibilities. It approaches the unknown as familiar by relating it to prior knowledge and also views the familiar as alien by viewing it from a new and different perspective.

Richardson (2002b) views hermeneutical inquiry as seeking neither answers nor silence. Instead, it accepts the ambiguity that comes with interpretation. It is the ability to see what is questionable that typifies the hermeneutic search for meaning. Hermeneutical inquiry is not synonymous with the search for absolute meaning. Instead it is a difficult and exploratory searching with the goal to come to a mediated sense of meaning in one's life.

Another feature of interpretive inquiry that adds strength to its approach is that it offers the reflexivity required to see the deceptive allure of the subjective-objective split. Research does not entail an investigation into something that exists outside of our own subjectivities. Instead, it is a practice of knowing that constructs the reality to know about something else. Thus, learning about teaching is not something separate from learning about one's own self (Smits, 2001).

In reviewing the differences between the major paradigms of research, it is abundantly evident that hermeneutic inquiry provides a legitimate philosophical structure for educational research. Avoiding the detached, observational approach, it allows for interpretation of an activity from within the ambiguities of unique experiences. Sumara (1994) has succinctly summarized the nexus of hermeneutical inquiry and educational research in four major points. First, this type of research seeks to locate sites for inquiry that situate interpreters in the midst of activities related to some topic of mutual interest. Second, it seeks to situate all participants in activities which allow the path of inquiry to be “laid by walking”. In hermeneutic inquiry, method depends upon interpretations given to questions which “present themselves” rather than questions that are predetermined. Third, hermeneutic inquiry does not seek comfortable situations or solutions, but rather seeks the rupture – the breach - in order to illuminate what is silenced and deferred in the ordinary course of daily events. And finally, hermeneutic inquiry must never devolve into reports of what was done, discovered or concluded, but must show the ongoing and co-evolving relationship between doing, knowing and being.

## **2. The Hermeneutic Circle: Implications for Educational Research**

To fully appreciate the hermeneutic approach to educational research, a comprehensive understanding of the hermeneutic circle and its relation to educational research must be explored. This special circle describes the relationship between the parts and the whole of

understanding. To understand a part, the whole must be understood, and for the whole to be comprehended, one must understand the individual parts. Merriam (1998) reveals the nexus between the hermeneutic circle and qualitative research, positing that this type of research can reveal how all the parts of the data work together to form a whole, which also allows the whole to inform an understanding of the parts. A researcher must enter the hermeneutic circle with a genuine entry question which is one that is real rather than abstract and one to which the researcher does not already know the answer or anticipate the response (Seidman, 1991). Genuine entry questions deal with practical concerns, are relatively simple and open and do not imply an answer.

Ellis (1998) further conceptualizes the hermeneutic circle by illustrating that the forward arc of this circle allows the researcher to make initial sense of the participant, text or data. The backward arc is one of introspection as one evaluates the initial interpretation and searches for further confirmation or contradictory inconsistencies while realizing that an inquiry into what was absent in the data is as important as engaging that which is present. The role of researcher includes the act of reflexivity in which one also assesses their own relation to the discussion and evaluates their own responses to the issues raised within the conversation. The researcher's own forestructure, pre-understandings, experiences, and theoretical positions are considered an integral part of the interpretation and understandings generated within the hermeneutic circle. A co-emergence of meaning results when all participants actively engage in this reciprocal form of conversational research.

### **3. Hermeneutics, Language and the Educational Researcher**

Building on Gadamer's (1975) concept of the fundamental role that language plays in understanding and interpretation, hermeneutics considers language as the foundation of understanding. The language of the interpreter enables a more complete understanding but in that no researcher has a full command of language, it can also limit understanding. Furthermore, language changes over time which allows our interpretations to be transformed. A researcher using the hermeneutical foundation needs to take responsibility for not only for his or her own language but also for the language of others since the researcher is the primary instrument of the research. Their language provides interpretation and understanding of meaning and these interpretations reflect a spatio-temporal nature which indicates a mirroring of influences from time, place and community (Ellis, 1998, Gadamer, 1975).

### **4. Interpretive Inquiry as a Mode of Research**

“The aim of interpretive inquiry is not to write the end of

an existing story but to write a more helpful beginning for new stories” (Ellis, 1998, p. 10). In her explication of the nature of interpretive inquiry and its importance as a mode of research, Ellis explains how hermeneutics clearly informs this form of research. As opposed to presenting a final solution to a problem, interpretive inquiry's hermeneutical approach allows for more fecund thought processes in our endeavours to gain wisdom and provides an openness to further inquiry. Interpretive inquiry draws on Gadamer's (1975) “fusions of horizons” concept where our forestructure or prejudices change when they come into contact with the horizons of others. This fusion occurs as an expansion of each person's horizon is enlarged due to the conversation of the interlocutors. An openness to consider and examine life in its complexity and its totality characterizes the hermeneutically inspired interpretive inquirer. An authentic interest in the research participants is evident through an openness, humility and concerned engagement. Hermeneutics inherent holistic approach facilitates laying down the path as one walks along, which in turn, allows for creativity to emerge in the attempt to understand meaning. Creativity encourages openness which allows for new and original interpretations to emerge.

Ellis (1997) uses the metaphor of an unfolding spiral to further explicate the processes of interpretive inquiry. Each loop in the spiral represents a separate activity which entails data collection and interpretation. The questions for each new loop have been generated by what was revealed by the dialogical encounter of the previous loop. Each loop's findings usually uncover new understandings which may alter the direction of the research. A sense of revelation takes place as some findings will match what the researcher expected but some can result in unexpected surprises which may cause the researcher to understand the original question differently. This bringing to light of new and interesting dimensions is an integral part to interpretive inquiry and also allows for a more complete understanding of the hermeneutic circle. The forward arc allows the researcher to understand the data filtered through one's pre-understandings. The return arc revisits the initial interpretation to re-examine it to see what may have been missed in the initial interpretation.

Writing is also an integral component of the interpretive process. Understandings grow and new meanings have emerged as one begins the writing process. It has turned out that it is not necessary to know everything that is going to be written about as one starts to write because through the writing process new insights will and indeed do surface as the composition flows. The revelation as a result of writing has allowed me the researcher to question, provide clarification and form more elaborate understandings and meanings of what is being explored. It also has provided a pedagogical opportunity in that, when made public, the writing of this account will instruct others about these understandings. The goal is that a rich, descriptive writing will enable readers with different horizons to construct their own interpretations of the findings.

Along with the emergence of new meaning through the writing process, self-criticality and reflexivity, or the self-awareness along with a perception of the relationship between oneself, the investigator, and the research environment became vital to the interpretive inquiry. After a reflection on the entire study itself, the questions asked, the meanings that emerged and the impact of one's own forestructure, it is evident that they provide an appreciation of the shortcomings of one's own pre-understandings. This is a necessary part of the writing in that it shows how a researcher's understandings have been transformed by the new meanings inherent in the research itself. As one recognizes how one's own views have changed due to the insights gleaned in the research process, this recognition itself helps bind the research narrative together and provides a unity of structure of not only the stories of the participants but also of one's own story.

## 5. Hermeneutical Conversations as Method of Research

Engaging in hermeneutic conversation is a co-operative approach to research that provides for a generation and sharing of knowledge between those involved in the conversation and which also allows co-emergent meanings to emerge (Carson, 1986). In further explanation of this type of research method, Feldman (1999) describes the characteristics of conversational research as where a conversation occurs between or among people in which both are co-participants. It is a cooperative venture with a direction given to the conversation. As a result of the conversation, new understandings arise. This dialogue consists of connected remarks in which the contributions of both participants are mutually dependent. Both must be considered partners in this joint activity. Gadamer (1975) indicates that a genuine conversation does not lie within the will of either partner but rather takes its own twists and reaches its own conclusion. The participants do not know what will ultimately emerge from the conversation. The hermeneutic circle is an active component of conversational research in that, as understandings provide structure to the conversation, the conversation itself creates new understandings. A conversation produces new and unique understandings that shape the participants responses and the direction of the conversation. "All conversations result in new understandings for all participants" (Feldman, 1999, p. 136). These co-created understandings have epistemic value in that knowledge is created, the product of this dialogic activity.

Carson (1986) further describes the characteristics of conversational research asserting that it does not have linear logic but rather has the appearance of "discursus" or a running from place to place. It is poetic in style and rejects the positivist bent for proof and assertions. Instead, through a profusion of examples, references and recollections, understanding emerges through the conversation. This

friendly and natural form of research is amicable rather than authoritative and allows for co-emergent meaning to be created. "Conversational research... makes possible a deeper understanding of the reality of our situations as educators" (Carson, 1986, p. 84). Individuals' attitudes, beliefs and values emerge from the conversations. Carson's description of conversational research illuminates the difference between this method of inquiry and what he calls the traditional data gathering technique of interviewing. In the traditional form, the interview is designed to elicit information which is of relevance to the researcher but not necessarily to the person being interviewed. Conversational research embraces both parties as co-participants and provides meaning and relevance to all involved. The information gleaned is of central importance to both discussants engaged in the conversation in the fact that both glean meaning and understanding about their relationship to the topic at hand. The researcher is attempting to understand the participant's perspective and ways of making meaning (Hutchinson & Wilson, 1994), while the participant is also endeavouring an understanding of how the revelations about self impact their very being.

It is the conversation that is evocative of lived experience and which reveals a complexity of reactions, feelings, thoughts, perceptions, assumptions, prejudgements, and presuppositions (van Manen, 1977) along with ambiguities, confusion, variety and paradox. These all enable teachers to locate meanings that they place on the events, processes and structures of their lives and to connect these meanings to the social world around them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Thus, an authentic mosaic of perceptions and thoughts is produced. The conversation between researcher and participant evokes the lived experience of both, with the aim of shared understandings. This conversation offers the opportunity to be known, to increase self-understanding, to share something with the other, as well as the prospect to delight in the intersubjective nature of human understanding. In asking someone to participate in this type of research, we are, in a sense, extending an invitation to conversation and the researcher becomes an integral participant within the research which allows the conversation to be as one human being to another so that it confirms the other. The researcher is genuinely present, committed and open to the participant as well as allowing meaning from one's own experience to emerge in the conversation. Thus the researcher is fully implicated in the research project, also. The most important personal characteristic for a researcher employing the method of hermeneutic conversation is a genuine interest in the people that they are engaging in the interpretive inquiry and they must communicate this acceptance and interest throughout the conversational process (Seidman, 1991; Ellis, 1998). It is imperative to realize that other people's self-narratives are important in and of themselves and that they offer something to their own. Other's stories are to be valued highly and not viewed instrumentally merely as good sources of data. In the same way, a researcher's own narratives are vital in the conversation to help create

co-emergent meanings.

The art of questioning within a conversational research model revolves around the lived experience of the participants. The hermeneutic researcher may ask only one general question at the beginning (Hutchinson & Wilson, 1994) or have a select few open-ended questions that can be referred to but which are only used as a guide. Open-ended questions establish the territory to be explored while allowing the participant to take any direction he or she wants. They do not presume an answer (Seidman, 1991). This openness allows the meaning to emerge through the language. Carson (1986) posits that it is necessary for the openness of the question to be preserved and not cut off by rapidly forming opinions and conclusions. This dialogic relationship will present surprises and unexpected insights. Mishler (1986) stresses that one should allow respondents to continue in their own way until they indicate they have finished their answer. By doing this, their own narratives are more likely to emerge. While showing interest and acceptance with follow-up questions, the researcher must also convey an impression of relaxed conversation with no need to rush or say everything in one day (Ellis, 1998).

Carson (1986) notes that autobiographical reflection or reflexivity is an important aspect of conversational research. Not only are participant teacher's voices heard but the researcher him-or herself is clearly implicit in the research also. As a co-participant in the conversations, the researchers own experience contributes to the overall understandings and meanings which emerged from the conversational dialogue. Meaning is constructed as all participants, including the researcher, engage in the conversations. Participation in a study based on philosophical hermeneutics such as interpretive inquiry has provided the participant-teachers with a more complete understanding of how the research topic impacts practice and their very selves. As Jalongo and Isenberg (1995) claim, teacher narratives which are woven together or in the same context as other teachers will connect them to the lives of many teachers.

## 6. Analysis

Analysis of data by the interpretive inquirer entails a thorough and careful listening to the language of the teacher participants. All conversations should be recorded and transcribed which allows for a careful interpretation and deconstruction of what each discussant related, not only in regards to their pedagogical practice but also their beliefs, hopes, goals, frustrations, and attitudes they relate to the topic under discussion. Morse (1994) indicates that a careful listening and comprehension of the conversations allows for a rich, detailed description of each participant's narrative.

An integral part of data analysis is the notion of triangulation, or the use of multiple sources of data or methods to confirm the findings, which ensures the integrity of the inferences one draws from the data (Schwandt, 2001). Merriam (1998) posits that this notion, while taken from

positivist research methods, can be adopted and applied in qualitative studies if the researcher relies on a holistic understanding of the situation to construct plausible explanations about the phenomena under study. Triangulation may be achieved through several methods which included analyzing the data that emerges from the conversations, along with having each participant, including the researcher, keep a reflective journal to record the personal thoughts, reflections and observations which arose from the conversations. Another source of triangulation of the data can be found in a final "grand" conversation where all participants were able to discuss themes from earlier conversations and draw conclusions of meaning for themselves. This, as well as comments from the reflective journal, provided an opportunity for the exchange of ideas and also for deep reflection on part of the participants. A final form of triangulation may be achieved when drafts of the research is reviewed by each respective participant to ensure that the researchers descriptions of each experience were appropriately portrayed. These multiple methods and data sources helped ensure the integrity of the inferences drawn about the data.

## 7. Conclusion

While the predominant paradigm of educational research has been rooted in positivist quantitative data gathering and analysis, it has become clear that alternatives bear consideration, especially within the human sciences. Educationists, such as teachers and educational researchers can benefit greatly from a qualitative approach in which philosophical hermeneutics forms the basis for understanding. Interpretive inquiry does not demand that the researcher exclude the self as a dispassioned observer but rather a co-participant in the research in which meaning and understanding are gathered through collaborative efforts of the researcher and the other participants. When this is achieved a rich narrative can be constructed which others may draw upon and resonate with as it is compared to their own experience. In this way, educational research can take on new and exciting dimensions not previously experienced.

---

## REFERENCES

- [1] Caputo, J.D. (1987). *Radical Hermeneutics*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- [2] Carson, T.R. (1984). *A hermeneutic investigation of the meaning of curriculum implementation for consultants and teachers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton.
- [3] Carson, T.R. (1986). Closing the gap between research and practice: Conversation as a mode of doing research. *Phenomenology + Pedagogy*, 4 (2), 73-85.
- [4] Ellis, J. (1997, November). *Workshop on qualitative research*.

Workshop conducted at Kingston, Jamaica.

- [5] Ellis, J. (Ed.). (1998). *Teaching from understanding: Teacher as interpretive inquirer*. New York: Garland Publishing.
- [6] Feldman, A. (1999). The role of conversation in collaborative action research. *Educational Action Research*, 7 (1), 125-141.
- [7] Gadamer, H.G. (1975). *Truth and method* (G. Barden & J. Cumming, Trans.). London: Sheed and Ward.
- [8] Hutchinson, S. & Wilson, H. (1994). Research and therapeutic interviews: A poststructuralist perspective. In J.M. Morse (Ed.), *Critical issues in qualitative research methods* (pp. 300-315). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [9] Jardine, D. W. (1998). *To dwell with a boundless heart: Essays in curriculum theory, hermeneutics, and the ecological imagination*. New York: Peter Lang.
- [10] Jardine, D. W. (2000). *"Under the tough old stars": Ecopedagogical essays*. Brandon, VT: Foundation for Education Renewal.
- [11] Kerby, A.P. (1991). *Narrative and the self*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- [12] Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- [13] Miles, M.B. & Huberman, M.A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [14] Mishler, E.G. (1986). The analysis of interview-narratives. In T.R. Sarbin (Ed.), *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct* (pp. 233-255). New York: Praeger.
- [15] Morse, J.M. (1994). "Emerging from the data": The cognitive processes of analysis in qualitative inquiry. In J.M. Morse (Ed.), *Critical issues in qualitative research methods* (pp. 23-43). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [16] Richardson, G. H. (2002a). A Border Within: The Western Canada Protocol for Social Studies Education and the Politics of National Identity Construction. *Revista Mexicana de Estudios Candienses*. Número 4, Otoño, 31-46.
- [17] Richardson, G. H. (2002b). The death of the good Canadian: Teachers, national identities, and the social studies curriculum. New York: Peter Lang.
- [18] Schwandt, T.A. (2001). *Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [19] Seidman, I.E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- [20] Smith, D.G. (1991). Hermeneutic inquiry: The hermeneutic imagination and the pedagogic text. In E. C. Short (Ed.), *Forms of curriculum inquiry*. (pp. 187-209). New York: State University of New York Press.
- [21] Smith, D.G. (2002). Hermeneutic scholar. In M. Wolfe & C. Pryor (Eds.), *The mission of the scholar: Research and practice*. (pp. 183-200). New York: Peter Lang.
- [22] Smits, H. (2001). Living within the space of practice: Action research inspired by hermeneutics. In T. Carson & D. Sumara (Eds.), *Action research as a living practice*. (pp. 281-297). New York: Peter Lang.
- [23] Sumara, D. J. (1994). *The literary imagination and the curriculum*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton.
- [24] van Manen, M. (1977). Linking ways of knowing with ways of being practical. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 6 (3), 205-228.
- [25] Wachterhauser, B. R. (1986). *Hermeneutics and modern philosophy*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.