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Photo-elicitation in qualitative research

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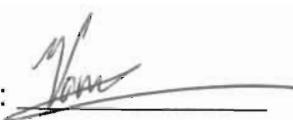
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List of key terms

To orientate the reader as to specific terminology applicable to the study, a list of simplified definitions of key terms is given below.

Autodriving: The term 'autodriving', coined by Heisley and Levy (1991), indicates that the interview is 'driven' by informants who are seeing and possibly hearing their own behaviour, for instance where photographs and/or audio recordings made of informants are used during the interviews as visual and/or auditory prompts during follow-up photo-elicitation interviews (Heisley & Levy 1991:257).

Data: Large amounts of data can be produced when conducting qualitative research; "[t]hese may include verbatim notes or transcribed recordings of interviews or focus groups, jotted notes and more detailed 'fieldnotes' of observational research, a diary or chronological account, and the researcher's reflective notes made during the research ... Transcripts and notes are the raw data of the research. They provide a descriptive record of the research, but they cannot provide explanations. The researcher has to make sense of the data by sifting and interpreting them" (Pope, Zeibland & Mays 2000:14).

Focus dyad or paired interviews: They are found to be particularly useful when children are being interviewed. This method was chosen by Buss (1995:44) because she wished "...to avoid the limitations of the one-to-one adult to child interviews that often elicit monosyllabic responses from children".

Qualitative interviewing: Stimson, Donoghoe, Fitch and Rhodes (2001) define qualitative interviewing as "...the systematic collection of data, through asking questions and carefully listening to, and recording or noting the answers"

Photo-elicitation: This is a methodological tool used for gathering social research data consisting of a combination of ethnography or other qualitative methods and photography. In this methodology, photographs or film is used as

Visual research: This term refers to research work using visually oriented methods and methodologies particularly in the following academic fields: sociology, anthropology, communication studies, cultural studies, media studies, visual culture, photography (still and moving images), symbolic interaction, information technology, visual intelligence, and visual literacy (Banks 2001).

Liebenberg (2005:240) notes that visual methods are particularly useful "...in instances when researchers are crossing boundaries. These methods allow participants to reflect and comment on their lived realities, with minimal influence and bias on the part of the researcher."

Introduction

Background

Interviewing in qualitative research refers to the semi-structured, structured or unstructured social interaction between an interviewer or interview facilitator and interviewee or person with potential information relevant to the research question. Research interviews are typically recorded and transcribed into forms of data that can be analysed, using methods like computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) where various software packages are available to the researcher (Kvale 1996:8). Visual methods have introduced another aspect within the field of qualitative interviewing – that of collaboration between interviewer and interviewee, particularly with the use of the photo-elicitation interview. This method involves the use of relevant photographs as interview prompts that may act as visual memory triggers or as a ‘neutral third party’ for the interviewee, allowing him or her to talk more freely (Banks 2001:88). This study investigates two kinds of photo-elicitation, namely researcher-generated photo-elicitation, where the researcher takes the photographs used during the interview of the research subjects’ world, and participant-generated photo-elicitation, where the research subjects take the photographs used during the interview themselves.

The aim of the study

The aim of the study is to find an optimal research methodology that is both beneficial to qualitative researchers (regarding data quality and interviewee participation) and research participants (regarding enjoyment of the research process and means of expression). This takes the form of a comparison assessing the use of the visual method of photo-elicitation in qualitative interviews. Firstly, photo-elicitation interviews and standard qualitative interviews as two different methodologies are compared. In this study the research subjects are children, and as noted in Chapter 3, photo-elicitation is particularly applicable to young research subjects, as it tends to break down the communication barriers

- the extent to which photo-elicitation interviews conform to the norms and standards of the research community compared to typical qualitative interviews regarding data quality, interviewee participation, enjoyment of the research process and means of expression during the interview; and
- the extent to which photo-elicitation interviews where there is high researcher control over the production of visual material, that is researcher-generated photo-elicitation, conform to the norms and standards of the research community regarding data quality, interviewee participation, enjoyment of the research process and means of expression during the interview, as compared to photo-elicitation interviews where there is low researcher control over the production of visual material, that is participant-generated photo-elicitation.

The design of the study

The research design followed in this study is essentially flexible in nature and involved a series of qualitative interviews. This flexibility took the form of an adaptable design as the research unfolded with exclusive questions aimed at specific groups, relating to their particular experience. Fieldwork commenced with the gathering of visual and written material in and around the school that would be present during the first set of interviews. Three groups were directed to one of three tasks. Group One were given disposable cameras and asked to take a series of photographs, Group Two were photographed by the researcher and Group Three were asked to write a poem. The next stage involved a series of six focus dyad interviews based on the same standardised semi-structured interview guide that was followed throughout the various interviews. The groups were divided according to the presence of photographs taken by the interviewees (participant-generated photo-elicitation), photographs the researcher took (researcher-generated photo-elicitation), and poems the interviewees had written. The second set of interviews were three focus group interviews that were

modern sociology and anthropology. Interview classifications and interview types are mentioned. Interview structure and format are then noted, taking into account research designs that are best suited to qualitative interview methodology. A comparison between interviews and ordinary conversation is provided, and this is followed by a discussion of the role of the interviewer and the negotiation of a research role. Stages of an interview and strategies for structuring an interview are examined next. The three questions used in interviews are subsequently listed, followed by a description of conversation or interview guides. These are followed by a discussion on some of the ethical issues surrounding qualitative interviews. Finally, characteristics of typical qualitative interviews are listed and some practical issues to keep in mind whilst interviewing are noted.

Chapter 3 covers photo-elicitation in qualitative research and attempts to review the use of image elicitation during interviewing, focusing on photo-elicitation. The evolution of terminologies in this area of study is noted. Some case studies are provided where the method has been successfully used by contemporary social scientists, including its use in child-centred research. Finally, mention is made of some of the advantages that researchers have found when using this method.

Chapter 4 covers the design of the empirical components of the study. This is divided into two sub-sections, namely the data collection process and the data analysis process. The data collection process covers the procedure that was followed in the field and what took place prior to the fieldwork, including preparation for the fieldwork. The data analysis procedure deals with the body of textual data, namely the interview transcripts that constitute the core of the analysis. The two themes in the textual data are identified and coding categories that deal with the themes are noted. These coding categories are further divided into coding families and codes.

Chapter 5 covers the results of the empirical study as set out in Chapter 4 and deals with assigning quotes to the pre-formulated codes. The introduction of this

1. The use of visual methods in social research

1.1 Introduction

Photography is typically used as a research tool in the fields of biological and physical sciences as a recording device in order to provide visual evidence. Recently, anthropologists and sociologists have found the camera to be a valuable recording device in their field research. Visual methods as noted by Collier (1986) are particularly useful as a catalyst for eliciting subjective comments from interviewees, where what is 'taken for granted' in their lives is often brought to the fore. In this way such methods become invaluable to researchers in understanding these particular often overlooked aspects of society. Finally, Harper (1998:38) identifies the very essence of visual research with these observations: "Images allow us to make statements which cannot be made by words" and these "images enlarge our consciousness".

Possible uses of photography in the social sciences may include the use of the camera as a recording device, providing a visual record while lending credibility to other observations. Written or oral reports may be enhanced by the inclusion of photographs or slides, thereby providing a more graphic presentation than mere tables or charts, while pictures may be used as secondary devices to elicit information during qualitative interviews (Brown, Peterson & Sanstead 1980). This form of enquiry where photographs are used as interview prompts in qualitative interviews is known as photo-elicitation. It will be highlighted in this study.

1.2 A history of visual research – photography in the social sciences

Since the discovery of photography in 1839 by Louis Daguerre and William Henry Fox Talbot respectively, photography has developed as a method of

Lewis Hine (Hine 1977). These studies portray urban life of that time. Riis photographed and reported on the slums of New York in the 1890s and Hine, who was trained in sociology, captured images of child labour in the mines and newly arrived immigrant workers at Ellis Island. In the work of both Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine, photography's social documentary potential emerged. As a result of their work new labour legislation laws were drafted. The *American Journal of Sociology* regularly featured photographs from 1896 to 1916, which dramatically illustrated the desire for social reform (Heisley & Levy 1991:257).

Photography and sociology were thus historically linked at the turn of the nineteenth century in their quest to explore and document society. However, this marriage did not last very long. Contemporary American visual commentators Emmison and Smith (2000:23) note that:

...visual data in the form of still photographs was a conspicuous feature of American sociology in the early decades of the century... ...photographs disappeared almost without a trace in 1916, and it was not until the late 1960s that they made their next tentative re-emergence and the first professional networks for visual sociology were established.

After 1916, sociologists began to question the value of photographs. Sociologists rejected the use of visual methods and labelled them as 'unscientific' (Becker 1975b; Harper 1988; Stasz 1979). Because of the variable nature of visual data, such as its ideographic and ethnographic qualities, it became challenging for some researchers to quantify the information systematically. Qualitative research methods began to dominate the social sciences, and sociology as a 'science' was questioned, resulting largely in the abandonment of visual research methods until the 1960s (Heisley & Levy 1991:258).

As photographs disappeared from sociology journals after 1916, they consequently vanished from mainstream American sociology. The lack of visual

From 1974 to 1985 the journal *Studies in Visual Communication* was published and in 1987 *Visual Anthropology* appeared for the first time. Today, many anthropologists are members of the Society for Visual Anthropology (Emmison & Smith 2000:23).

One of the first anthropologists to use visual methods in his research was Franz Boas, who directed a professional photographer in his documentation of the Kwakiutl village of Fort Rupert in 1894. Additionally, photographs of masks and rituals were also used by Boas during interviews with research subjects and in the study of movement and dance. At the turn of the century, photographs were used quite frequently in the field and it became standard practice for anthropologists to document and illustrate text with photographs. Photographs however, were not yet used as stimuli in an interview situation in order to gather further data. Visual research reached new heights with Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead's 1942 study *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis*. This classic of visual research, based on fieldwork conducted from 1936 to 1939, features photographs and text as independent entities, where the photographs are used to provide a deeper ethnographic understanding and where neither the photographs nor the text stand alone (Heisley & Levy 1991:258).

Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method authored by John and Malcolm Collier (1986) is a classical work on photography in social research; here the Colliers expand upon the use of photographs in interview situations in order to gain deeper understanding of their research subjects. They are given credit for the development of photo-elicitation as a social science research method.

...photographs are charged with psychological and highly emotional elements and symbols. In a depth study of culture it is often this very characteristic that allows people to express their ethos while reading the photographs. Ultimately, the only way we can use the full record of the

(1991:258), Flaherty is thought to be the originator of the 'participant camera' (see Chiozzi 1989; Rotha & Wright 1980).

Ethnographic films were largely displaced by the entertainment industry because of the dictates of popular culture and the extensive growth of the entertainment motion picture industry. Although Mead and Bateson's *Character Formation* series in Bali was filmed during the 1930s, it was not released for 20 years. However, documentary still photography and photojournalism abounded. *Life* magazine was first published in 1936, and *Look* was published in 1937. The huge, celebrated Farm Security Administration (FSA) project was launched by the United States government to document mid- and post-depression rural America. Dorothea Lange's *Migrant Mother*, Walker Evans's view of Pittsburgh, and Arthur Rothstein's (1936) *Dust Bowl in Oklahoma* are examples of the national treasures that this project produced. Simultaneously, several acclaimed photographers explored and developed the photo-essay. Projects that emerged from this group include *Harlem Document* (1937-1940), *Portrait of a Tenement* (1936), and *Dead End; The Bowery* (1937) (Chairenza 1982; Heisley & Levy 1991:258).

Filmmaking was revolutionised after the war, when lightweight cameras and synchronised sound were developed. *Chronicle of a Summer* (1961) by Luc de Heusch, Jean Rouch and Edgar Mortin was a *cinéma vérité* film about popular 1960s Parisian thinking. In this film, individuals were interviewed and their responses to viewing the interviews were included in the film. After the film was released, they were once again interviewed, and their responses were reported in an article (Morin & Rouch [1962] 1985). Thanks to Morin and Rouch, this form of autodocumentary became a landmark in the *cinéma vérité* style of filmmaking aimed at capturing extreme naturalism using non-professional actors and utilising naturalistic techniques. This became a standard for further ethnographic visual research (Heisley & Levy 1991:259).

(2000:55) note that photography in the fields of anthropology, sociology and ethnography has “led to an insular and theoretically uninspiring subfield”. They claim that in these fields, generally, visual enquiry has not connected to mainstream social theory. They state that photography has typically been used for social documentary or in an illustrative manner where it is sometimes difficult “to see how academic uses of the camera have progressed much beyond the photo-essay of the Sunday newspaper supplements” (Emmison & Smith 2000:55).

Nevertheless, the use of photographs in ethnographic studies has undergone an attitude change as proposed by Chiozzi (1989:44), where photographs are used “neither as visual data nor as notes, but as methodological devices for gathering ethnographic data”. In Bateson and Mead’s (1942) groundbreaking study regarding visual research, *Balinese character*, they found that the Balinese character was best represented when their subjects’ behaviour and interaction with their environment were captured visually. Glimpses of that visual world could therefore be “sensed through photography in a way that it was impossible to convey through the written word alone” (Banks & Morphy 1997:10). The need for the research camera can be further seen in the words of Lewis Hine, a late nineteenth to early twentieth century photographer, educationalist, sociologist and war correspondent: “If I could tell the story in words, I wouldn’t have to lug a camera” (Sontag 1977:185). Emmison and Smith (2000:24) believe that photographs “are forms of data which the researcher has obtained with their camera as opposed to administering a survey, or conducting an interview”.

Arson (1988:431) claims that photography is valuable in anthropological fieldwork. She expands on her use of photography:

In my own research, it [photography] has brought me into areas where I might not have had access without a camera. Once in those areas, I have learned about significant people, places, and moments where my camera

data, i.e. invalid, untrustworthy or implausible data. The first problem faced by anyone interpreting photographs is whether the photographs are plausible or believable. "Because cameras do not take pictures (Byers 1966) the fallibility and selectivity of the picture maker must be scrutinised" (Prosser & Schwartz 1998:125). Pink (2001:33) notes an instance when Hastrup (1992:9) was not able to adequately take the needed 'evidentiary' photographs for her research of the ritual she was witnessing at a certain male Icelandic sheep market. Hastrup (1992:9) states: "[W]hile I was taking them [the photographs] I had the impression that I was making an almost pornographic record of a secret ritual." She continues: "They [the photographs] showed me nothing of the sort but bore the marks of my own inhibition, resulting from my transgression of the boundary between gender categories" (Hastrup 1992:9). She justifies herself by generalising that "pictures have a limited value as ethnographic 'evidence'", and that the "'secret' of 'informants' experiences can only be expressed in words" (1992:9). This is possibly true where written evidence would aid a photographed event. However, photography or video's potential as a realist recording device is always reliant on the individual photographer and the photographic application and is subject to individual subjectivities and creative collaboration. (Pink 2001:33). Harper (1998), cited in Pink (2001:10), takes this idea of collaboration a step further by introducing the concept of a collaborative 'new ethnography':

[V]isual sociology should take on board the postmodern critiques of ethnography and of documentary photography to develop a 'newly integrative visual sociology. ... [V]isual sociology should begin with traditional assumptions and practices of sociological fieldwork and sociology analysis that treat the photograph as 'data', and it should open up to integrate the demands of the 'new ethnography'.

Harper further states that the relationship between researcher and informant should be redefined in terms of the collaborative approach; developed in the 'new ethnography' and postmodern approach to documentary photography, where the

therefore blurring the boundary between the two disciplines where what is said for one, concerning visual methods, can be applied to the other (Emmison & Smith 2000:27).

Sociologist Howard Becker is regarded by many practising visual researchers as the founder of contemporary visual social science in the United States. His article *Photography and sociology* (1974), first published in the journal *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication*, is a commentary on the “occupational ideologies” of photography and sociology. He also makes certain pronouncements on what these disciplines could learn from one another (Emmison & Smith 2000:27). His focus is on social documentary photography, particularly where sociology overlaps with it, for instance in the study of organisations, institutions and communities. According to Becker (1974:11), the use of visual information in the social sciences is little more than a sophisticated use of photography by the sociologist who has a more extensive knowledge of social organisations than the documentary photographer. He goes on to claim that this use of visual material improves upon the deficiencies of documentary photographers. He states that the main problem with the work of documentary photographers is that it is theoretically undeveloped:

Close study of the work of social documentary photography provokes a double reaction. At first, you find that they call attention to a wealth of detail from which an interested sociologist could develop useful ideas about whose meaning he could spin interesting speculation. ... Greater familiarity leads to a scaling down of admiration. While the photographs do have these virtues, they also tend to restrict themselves to a few reiterated simple statements. Rhetorically important as a strategy of proof, the repetition leads to work that is intellectually and analytically thin (Becker 1974:11).

Becker believes that sociologist photographers should record their images in a similar way to that of data collection, namely as a “sequence of action” where

the photographer and the people being photographed affects the material we get? We should, just as we should try to understand the effects of the relationship between the investigator and the people investigated in participant observation or experiments (Becker 1979:9).

Therefore, according to Becker, sociologists typically begin with more “abstract concepts” and move towards “specific empirical indicators” of these concepts, whereas photographers would generally begin with the image and then look for the idea that the image is portraying. The difference between the two, therefore, lies in the way “in which they move between concepts and the indicators or images which reflect these” (Emmison & Smith 2000:27).

1.5 Distinctive uses of photography in research

There are a number of overviews on visual inquiry besides Becker’s attempt at establishing the importance of photography in social science. Wagner’s (1979) edited work includes a far wider variety of uses for photography than Becker’s limited focus on social documentary photography. Douglas Harper, thought of as one of the most vocal commentators for contemporary visual research (see Harper 1988;1994;1997;1998), offers another classification while still retaining the use of photographs in order to portray, describe or analyse society. Wagner (1979) distinguishes between five categories for the use of photographs in social science research:

1. *Photographs as stimuli for interviews.* Wagner lists a number of studies using photographs in this manner. This practice seems to be similar to some types of commercial market research, for instance where participants are asked to match their concepts of what is ideal with idealised visual examples of places or people.
2. *Photographs used as systematic recordings.* The camera is used here as a device to systematically record a series or action sequence, such as animal or bird life, facial expressions, seating arrangements and traffic

categories where photography is used in social science, Harper includes the use of film and video in his four major methodological classifications. These classifications are:

1. *The scientific mode*. This is the use of photographs for storage purposes. It is typically the most common mode of photography in the social sciences. Here the photograph is a means of preserving data for analysis at a later time or as a means of capturing data “too fleeting or complicated to remember or describe in writing”. Harper (1988:61) believes this to be the typical mode of photography in ethnographic research.
2. *The narrative mode*. Harper regards this as the use of photography in order to record the natural unfolding process of social life. Typically the mode used in ethnographic film, Harper (1988:61) believes it can also be a component of still photography.
3. *The reflexive mode*. In the two previous modes of photographic use in the social sciences Harper (1988:61) believes that “the authority of definition lies with the sociologist”. The reflexive mode is different in that “the subject shares in the definition of meaning”. The research subjects are actively involved in the interpretation of images most commonly termed “photo-elicitation”. The researcher could begin by “taking photographs as a wider ethnographic study” and then using them as interview prompts in follow-up interviews (Emmison & Smith 2000:29). The content and format of the photographs are secondary to the information given by the interviewee; the photograph “is essentially a device for generating the (more important) verbal information from the interview” (Emmison & Smith 2000:29).
4. *Phenomenological mode*. Inspired by Roland Barthes’s (1981) *Camera Lucida*, this mode is more about the researchers eliciting their own knowledge by using photographs that have personal meanings attached. This is like the sociologist becoming “both researcher and subject in the reflexive mode” (Emmison & Smith 2000:30). Harper (1988:61) adds that this is possibly the most ‘experimental’ mode where both art and sociology overlap.

the pictures are the stimuli for response and are seen as a neutral non-threatening third party (Collier & Collier 1986:105; Schwartz 1989:151)

Furthermore, as noted by Collier and Collier (1986), the presence of photographs can reduce awkwardness during an interview, for example where there is a large status gap between interviewer and interviewee (i.e. between adult and child) or where the interviewee might feel he / she is taking a test. As mentioned above, the photographs act as a 'neutral third party' allowing direct eye contact to be averted as both parties turn to the photographs (Banks 2001:88; Collier & Collier 1986:105).

Technical procedures followed for a typical photo-elicitation interview usually involve recording interviewees' comments, for example with an audio or video tape recording. The recording could then be transcribed as part of the research data at a later stage. The interviewees' interactions with the photograph are assessed and the conclusions are then incorporated into the data to be analysed (Prosser & Schwartz 1998:124).

Empirically, the use of photography in qualitative research has been divided into two distinct categories (Cheatwood & Stasz, 1979; Collier & Collier, 1986; Denzin & Lincoln 1994). These are photographs taken by research subjects and photographs taken by the researchers themselves. However, three distinct categories of image use in photo-elicitation exist (Banks 2001). Researchers may use photographs to interview participants on their interpretations of images that were either:

- taken by researchers of the interviewee's world;
- gathered from various sources, such as archival or found photographs including corporate collections, newspaper and television or morgue archives; or
- taken by participants or images belonging to them, such as family photographs.

that for photo-elicitation purposes it is important to have “some foreknowledge of the respondent group’s use of photographs”, thus allowing the formulation of “methodological strategies ... and the resulting data assessed within the context of informants’ shared meanings” (Schwartz 1989:120).

In most cases, interviewees are familiar with photographs in one way or another, having been exposed to them in art galleries, the printed press and advertising, or as amateur image makers who own cameras and keep their pictures in family photo albums. Similarities or differences between the interview setting and the other familiar viewing events mentioned above should be explained by the researcher so that interviewees are well informed about what is expected of them during the photo-elicitation interview. Schwartz (1989) and Banks (2001) point out a number of benefits resulting from the use of photographs during the interview:

- Interviewees respond “without hesitation” to images of familiar subjects and places (Schwartz 1989:151).
- The awkwardness of an interview situation may be avoided by giving the interviewees the opportunity to participate in a similar task to that of viewing a family album, something with which they are already familiar.
- Interviewees respond to the photographs as a “neutral third party” (Banks 2001:88). Schwartz (1989:151) notes that “[i]nterviewees often responded directly to the photographs, paying less heed to my presence and the perceived demands of the task than in more traditional formal interview settings”.

Although researchers use other forms of visual elicitation such as drawing-elicitation (Barry 2003; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2001) and film-elicitation (see Samarin 1967; El Guindi 1995), still photography used during interviews has the advantage of being flexible, allowing the researcher choice in viewing circumstances and which images to use. Furthermore, because photographs seemingly replicate human vision, they provide a “non-threatening yet stimulating

According to Victor Burgin (1982:143), the study of signs, known as semiotics or semiology, is aimed, at identifying “systematic regularities from which meanings are construed”. The difference between ‘natural’ and ‘visual’ language was noted during the early stages of structuralist semiology (Barthes 1964). Burgin notes that speech and writing are thought of as ‘natural’ language. ‘Visual’ language, however, consists of a complexity of codes:

... the codes of analogy by which photographs denote objects in the world, the codes of connotation through which denotation serves a secondary system of meanings, and the ‘rhetorical’ codes of juxtaposition of elements within a photograph and between different but adjacent photographs (Burgin 1982:143).

What early semiotics found in photographs is not self-generating; these ‘significant structures’ find their origins in particular human modes of organisation (Burgin 1982:144). Meaning can therefore be attributed to continual “social and psychic formation of the author/reader, formations existentially simultaneous and coextensive but theorised in separate discourses; of these, Marxism and psychoanalysis have most informed semiotics in its moves to grasp the determinations of history and the subject in the production of meaning” (Burgin 1982:144).

Further studies on semiotics revealed that no one language of photography exists. Victor Burgin (1982:143) states that there is “no single signifying system ... upon which all photographs depend”. What does exist is a “heterogeneous complex of codes upon which photography may draw”. The signification of each photograph is based on a mixture of more than one of these codes, varying in number and type from image to image. Furthermore, the language of photography is rarely ever seen without the influence of language itself, such as captions, texts, or copy. Even a photograph without any written text surrounding it is surrounded by language when it is ‘read’ by the person viewing it.

By defining one sign one would need to define another, and in so doing it would be necessary to refer to a third, and so on. The interpretations are thus extended into an endless chain of ever expanding meaning-making, culminating at the end points of these diverging paths. This process is known as unlimited semiosis (Peirce 1966).

A dialogic model has been developed by Jørgen Dines Johansen (Johansen 1993:246). This model allows for the incorporation of complex and rich multiple elements of interpretation and interaction in turn forming new information. Johansen aimed at undertaking the expansion of Peirce's triadic model, basing it on Peirce's writings. Johansen's new model incorporates a combination of Peirce's dynamic expansion of triangular signification theory and Roman Jakobson's communication approach (Jakobson 1960).

Commenting on *The Invention of Photographic Meaning*, photographer and critic Allan Sekula (1982) observes that photographs are subjects of "cultural definition". Wright confirms this concept when he notes that photographs are recognised as photographs only because individuals have attained a pre-taught cultural understanding. He regards photographs as "products of a particular culture" that are "only perceived real by cultural convention: they only *appear* realistic because we have been taught to see them as such" (Wright 1999:6 in Pink 2001:24, original italics). Photographic meaning, as we will discover in the following section, is therefore "inevitably subject to cultural definition" (Sekula 1982:84).

1.7.2 Photography, reality and meaning

It is interesting to note that it is not natural to see, even though we might think it is. As with all the sensory perceptions "the interpretation of sight is culturally and historically specific" (Classen 1993:12). It is therefore logical to say that all representations based on seeing (for instance drawings, paintings, films and photographs are equally unnatural. Banks (2001:7) notes that the continual flow

The train of thought taken by Susan Sontag (1977), amongst others, is that a photograph represents proof of what happened at a specific moment in space and time, and is therefore closely linked to visible reality. She observes that photographs represent “incontrovertible proof that a given thing happened” (Sontag 1977:5). Even though the picture may be distorted, one always presumes that what is represented exists or did at one time exist. She states that “whatever the limitations ... or pretensions ... of the individual photographer, a photograph – any photograph – seems to have a more innocent, and therefore more accurate, relation to the visible reality than do other mimetic objects” (Sontag 1977:5). Even though it is proof of what has happened and therefore is closely linked to reality, she also notes that it is not a satisfactory representation of reality because that which it seeks to represent becomes distorted by the choice of lens, filter, film, lighting quality and framing. All the above affect the final image and are influenced by the photographer’s interpretation and skill, and contribute to what Sontag calls “bias” (1977:5).

Iconic codes are weaker codes, unlike the strong codes of verbal language. They are limited to personal choices and are therefore more transitory “and in them the optional variants prevail over the truly pertinent features” (Eco 1979:34). Banks (1995 unpaginated hypertext) adds to this by stating that images, as representations of reality, are combinations of social, cultural and historical influences. He notes that photographs are “no more ‘transparent’ than written accounts”, and that even though photography and video have indexical relationships to what they stand for, they are never the less “representations of reality, not a direct encoding of it”. He further states that “as representations they are therefore subject to the influences of their social, cultural and historical contexts of production and consumption” (Banks 1995: unpaginated hypertext). In an attempt to clarify the issue of truth, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996:159), in a discussion on social semiotic theory, note that “absolute truth or untruth” of a representation cannot be established by social semiotic theory, but can only indicate if a certain proportion (whether verbal or visual) of the representation is

propositions made within the system ... in short the overall function of photographic discourse is to render itself transparent.

Sekula's definition (1982) implies that photographs are types of 'utterances' and are messages or carry messages along with them. Furthermore, photographs are said to be 'incomplete utterances' which rely on external variables in order to be readable, making photographic meaning 'context-determined' (Sekula 1982:85). Expanding on this, Sekula points out that the reading of photographs is a learned process. It is impossible for someone unfamiliar with relating a two-dimensional piece of paper with a three dimensional 'real' space to understand the message presented by the image. The photograph for them is "unmarked as a message, [it] is a 'non-message'" until they understand it linguistically when it is explained by someone, giving them the ability to 'read' the photograph. The flip side to this occurrence is that due to the overexposure of images in the world in which we live, images have become an everyday occurrence seen in such places as the printed mass media, family snapshots, books, television and motion pictures. Consequently, "the image itself is taken as 'natural' and appropriate". An example in point would be someone taking a snapshot out of his wallet, and saying, "This is my son" (Sekula 1982:86).

Sontag (1977:4) rationalises that photographs "do not seem to be statements about the world so much as pieces of it, miniatures of reality that anyone can make or acquire". Sontag (1977:161) expands on this thought later in her discussion by stating that it is not photographic images that are real or that one should "regard the image as a real thing". She states that reality now seems more and more like what we are shown by cameras". She asserts that photography allows for "instant access to the real" and that "to possess the world in the form of images is, precisely, to re-experience the unreality and remoteness of the real" (Sontag 1977:164). Photographs do not make 'reality', but it makes images instantly accessible. By way of example, Sontag (1977:165) says that it is now possible for all adults to know exactly what they and their parents and

In truth the daguerreotype plate is infinitely more accurate than any painting by human hands. If we examine a work of ordinary art, by means of a powerful microscope, all traces of resemblance to nature disappear – but the closest scrutiny of the photographic drawing discloses only a more absolute truth, more perfect identity of aspect with the thing represented” (Rudisill 1971 in Sekula 1982:86).

This mythical primitive core meaning that all photographs are imagined to have, uninfluenced by any cultural determination, is what Barthes (1967) calls the photograph’s denotive function. He suggests another level of meaning, this time allowing for cultural influences, which he calls the photograph’s connotative level. Sekula (1982:86) challenges this thinking, claiming that in reality “no such separation is possible. Any meaningful encounter with a photograph must necessarily occur at the level of connotation.” He argues that because of the “folklore of pure denotation” the photograph is elevated to the status of a legal document or testimonial, thereby generating a “mythical aura of neutrality around the image” (Sekula 1982:86). Adding to this, the theory that the photograph is an *analogue* of reality, according to Eco (1979:34), is now obsolete and “has been abandoned, even by those who once upheld it”. He expands on this statement by acknowledging that “the image which takes shape on celluloid is analogous to the retinal image but not to that which we perceive” (Eco 1979:34). Furthermore he claims that

[w]e know that sensory phenomena are *transcribed*, in the photographic emulsion, in such a way that even if there is a casual link with the real phenomena, the graphic images formed can be considered as wholly arbitrary with respect to these phenomena Eco (1979:34, original italics).

In conclusion, it would be useful to quote Counihan (1980), who notes that the early use of photography in anthropology was purely the use of objective

2. Qualitative interviewing

2.1 Introduction

The research interview is certainly a very useful tool for qualitative researchers and a favoured method of obtaining data. Interviewing is “the systematic collection of data, through asking questions and carefully listening to, and recording or noting the answers” (Stimson et al. 2001). Thus, simply asking questions is an effective way of collecting data. Kvale (1996:13) notes that “[i]nterview research is a craft that, if well carried out, can become an art”. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:289), the interviewer and interviewee follow a “general plan of inquiry but not a specific set of questions which must be asked in particular words and in a particular order”. Interviewing techniques may vary widely in approach, but generally tend more towards human conversation. As conversation, the interview is not a neutral tool; the interviewer as the one asking the questions manipulates the ‘reality’ of the interview situation by imposing his/her own personal characteristics, such as race, class, ethnicity and gender. The interview thus “produces situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes” (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:353).

Eliciting a response from another person by asking questions is much harder than it seems at first. There is always the possibility of misinterpretation when spoken or written words are involved, as there is “always a residue of ambiguity” and yet, interviewing is one of the major ways used to understand fellow human beings (Fontana & Frey 1994:361). Interview analysis may also be quite varied because of the unpredictability of interpretation. Qualitative interviews are essentially verbal exchanges where the interviewer directs the conversation in a general direction, while continuing to pursue issues raised by the interviewee (Babbie & Mouton 2001:289). This chapter takes a closer look at various aspects of qualitative interviewing.

Chicago school. Interviews featured specifically in the work of Thrasher (1927), whose study on gang members was based on 130 qualitative interviews, and Anderson (1923), whose study of hoboes relied heavily on in-depth informal conversations (Fontana & Frey 1994:362).

In the 1950s interviewing began to lose both Booth's eclectic flavour and the Chicagoan's qualitative emphasis in favour of interviewing as a quantifying tool. With the advent of World War II, survey research increased tremendously when many sociologists were hired as surveyors by the U.S. armed forces. Over half a million soldiers were interviewed (Young 1966) and their mental and emotional conditions were reported in *Studies in Social Psychology in World War II*, a four-volume survey. This work opened the way for more widespread systematic survey research (Fontana & Frey 1994:362).

Qualitative survey research began to move more into academia, dominating sociology for the next 30 years. This movement was headed by an Austrian immigrant, Paul Lazarsfield. In 1940 he moved to Columbia, where he became the director of the Bureau of Applied Social Research. Another two survey organisations were also formed: in 1941, the National Opinion Centre at both Denver and Chicago was initiated by Harry Field, and in 1946, the Survey Research Centre at Michigan was founded by Likert and his group. At the time, academia was dominated by theory and there was some opposition to this applied, numerically based kind of sociology. Lazarsfield and others were severely criticised by sociologists and other humanists, but the increasing availability of government funds for surveys generated more interest in the area and by the 1950s the universities saw an increase in survey research texts (Fontana & Frey 1994:362). Qualitative interviewing and participant observation methods continued to be practised, but these too adopted some of the scientific rigour found in survey research, especially noticeable in grounded theory (Glasser & Strauss 1967). More recently, postmodernist ethnographers have looked at the controlling role of the interviewer and some of the ethical

According to Stimson et al. (2001), interviews may be formal, specially arranged meetings, or informal, where any opportunity to question people about a topic of interest is taken. Interviews may provide the researcher with:

- the ability to obtain knowledge of different situations, experiences and information that would otherwise remain unexplored; and with
- a description of personal or sensitive issues, past experiences or places important to the research, which would otherwise be inaccessible to outsiders.

Qualitative interviews (see Appendix A, Figure 2) may be roughly divided into two interview classifications, namely cultural interviews that concern the values, norms, standards and taken for granted behaviour of a particular group or society, and topical interviews that focus more on a particular event or process,. The latter type of interview will review what happened, when it happened, where it happened, and why it happened. The three major interview forms are unstructured, open-ended or ethnographic interviews; semi-structured interviews, also called open-ended or in-depth interviews; and structured interviews. These sub-categories may be further divided into interview types, which include topical or oral histories, life histories, evaluation interviews, focus group interviews and photo-elicitation interviews (Rubin & Rubin 1995:26; Bernard 2000).

2.4 Interview classifications

2.4.1 Cultural interviews

The special and shared meanings that group members develop, according to Rubin and Rubin (1995:28), are probed by cultural interviews. This includes the typical activities in which group members engage and their reasons for doing so. Cultural interview style is typically relaxed with the use of open-ended questions. Usually cultural interviews involve re-interviewing the same people more than once, which allows for the further investigation of themes or ideas that have emerged in earlier interviews. More active listening than aggressive questioning is emphasised, where interviewees often communicate culture through stories.

2.5 Interview forms

Three main interview forms or techniques exist, namely unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews.

2.5.1 Unstructured interviews

Terminology such as 'unstructured' or 'non-standardised' may sometimes be applied to the traditional open-ended ethnographic (in-depth) qualitative interviews, mainly because there are not many standardised or pre-structured forms or ways of conducting them. These interviews differ from other interviews as they are open-ended and allow interviewees the freedom to express themselves as they wish. Furthermore, interviewers are encouraged "to offer their opinions, knowledge and experience freely" (Stimson et al. 2001). The researcher takes on the role of facilitator instead of subjecting the interviewee to a series of "pre-determined hypothesis based questions" (Babbie & Mouton 2001:289). This means that the range of topics and responses given are much broader when unrestrained by a detailed interview guide. A flexible approach could also mean that question order and wording could differ in each individual interview, depending on the person being interviewed. The interviewee is encouraged to be frank while providing as much detail as possible. Careful thought about "which questions to ask, how they are phrased and when to use probes and prompts" is the key to successful unstructured interviewing. (Stimson et al. 2001)

Unlike the case with structured interviewing, during unstructured interviews the researchers immerse themselves into the culture or situation being investigated, letting it soak in by physically being there and interacting with the research subjects on a personal level. Contrary to structured interviewing, no pre-formulated category or concept is imposed on the research subjects in order to understand complex behaviour. In Malinowski's *Day in the field* (1989) he used unstructured interviewing to obtain the desired information (in other words, without using structured closed questions or formal approaches to general

2.5.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviewing has many of the same 'freewheeling' characteristics of unstructured interviewing and needs many of the same skills (Bernard 2000:191). One major difference, however, is the use of a conversation or interview guide on which the interview is based. This is a written list of topics or questions that need to be covered in a particular order during the interview. Usually semi-structured interviews are most suited for situations when no follow-up interviews can be scheduled. Most professional surveys are conducted in this manner, where the interviewer has the opportunity to follow up on leads, but has a set of clear instructions to follow. Interview guides are essential if reliable comparative qualitative data is required. Semi-structured interviews work best when dealing with people who are accustomed to time efficiency, such as managers, bureaucrats, and other elite community members. This method implies that the interviewer is competent, prepared and fully in control of the interview situation, but it allows the interviewer the flexibility to follow new leads while not attempting to exert excessive control over the interviewee (Bernard 2000:191).

2.5.3 Structured interviews

When more researcher control is required over format and topics discussed, structured interviewing is used (Stimson et al. 2001). Fully structured interviewing is characterized by interviewee response to an almost identical set of stimuli or a series of pre-formulated questions with limited response categories. After exploratory research has been conducted, structured interviews are often undertaken in order to identify topics for further investigation (Bernard 2000:191).

Typically, a questionnaire or detailed interview guide or schedule, which is a concise set of instructions aimed at enabling interviewers to give oral questionnaires, is used. An example of an instruction would be the following: "If the interviewee claims to have at least one son over the age of 10, ask questions 17b and 17c. Otherwise, go to question 18." This type of structured interview is a

- Time allocations for each question are usually indicated on the interview guide, showing the amount of time to spend on each question or topic; thus ensuring that interviews do not over-run.
- Inexperienced interviewers are able to conduct interviews, as the interview guides are very detailed and precise.

Weaknesses of structured interviews may include the following:

- Unexpected but relevant information may be missed while the interviewer strictly follows the interview guide.
- Even though a strict guide is used, there may be discrepancies regarding how interviewees hear and understand the questions. This could affect comparison between interviewees (Stimson et al. 2001).

2.6 Types of interviews

The various interview types, namely oral history, life history, evaluation and focus group interviews, refer specifically to different approaches to hearing qualitative data.

2.6.1 Topical or oral histories

In topical or oral histories the focus is on interviewing people who have experienced a particular event of historical importance. Through the interview, the event is reconstructed and the interviewees explain the details of the events as they experienced them. Narratives explaining what took place are what the interviewer is looking for. Oral histories are also conducted on culturally important concerns like changing ways of life or rare skills and so forth. In the latter case, narratives will be concerned with processes. For example, in the case of documenting a changing lifestyle the process of change would be documented (Rubin & Rubin 1995:27; Frisch 1990; Grele 1985; Lummis 1988; McMahan 1989).

arise between interviewees with opposing views. Group interviews are not suitable for delicate issues or matters of a personal nature.

According to Rubin and Rubin (1995:140), focus group interviews are a form of evaluation where groups of people are gathered together in order to discuss potential changes or shared concepts. Discussion topics can vary from narrow and specific to broad and general. There is a strong possibility of interviewees not being honest, as what they might answer may not be culturally acceptable. They may try to maintain a front because the interview takes place in front of other people. This is particularly the case with children. Unlike most qualitative interviewing, where the intention is to obtain depth and detail from individuals, focus groups concentrate on a shared experience where ideas are “spark[ed] off of one another” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:140). Typically, focus groups vary in size between six to 12 participants. The researchers label themselves as ‘moderators’ – people who guide the conversation and pay close attention to the relationships between the participants, making sure that they do not “step all over one another”. They entice those who may be shy to talk in front of people and to participate in the discussion (Rubin & Rubin 1995:140; Frey & Fontana 1991; Goldman & McDonald 1987; Morgan 1988). According to Stimson et al. (2001), some of the benefits of focus group interviews could be the following:

- A great deal of information is produced quickly and with fewer expenses than individual interviews.
- Beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and behaviours can be identified and explored more easily.
- Questions that may be useful for individual interviews later on may be identified during focus group interviews.
- Focus groups usually allow people to feel more comfortable during the interview because group discussions are natural forms of communication in communities.

1998; Weiser 2002.) In sociology, this method has been used, among others, in studies on ethnic entrepreneurship, migrant farm workers, homeless children and neighbourhoods (see Harper 1994).

A less conventional photo-elicitation type used in sociology is that which draws from psychology. Photographs which are intended to elicit hidden or suppressed views are used as elicitation devices; these are similar to incomplete sentences or inkblot psychology. This kind of photo-elicitation is aimed at provoking intimate or personal responses triggered by the photograph rather than by describing the content of the photograph. Although this may seem provocative it is not necessarily aggressive, and may be beneficial in that insights are provided that would otherwise not have been given by the use of a more passive means (Prosser & Swartz 1998:124). This method was used by Prosser (1992:397) in his study aimed at understanding how a 'new' school comes to define itself. His study was based on the amalgamation of two modern secondary schools and a grammar school.

2.7 Interview structure and format

2.7.1 Flexible, iterative and continuous research design

Rubin and Rubin (1995:44) point out that qualitative research can focus on relatively unexplored areas and that as a result, early assumptions may be incorrect. Therefore it is normal to have a flexible design. This flexibility is necessary to enable modifications if an existing design is not working or if unexpected insights emerge that need to be further pursued. It may also be necessary to redesign if "a better way to study the original question becomes apparent" (Rubin & Rubin 1995:45). Qualitative study design unfolds gradually, as the researcher listens and hears meaning in the data. Points that seemed important at the start of the study may fade into the background and other seemingly unimportant points may turn out to be of value. The research design should be flexible, adaptable and reliant on the input of the interviewees, not on the researcher's own ideologies or assumptions (Rubin & Rubin 1995:43). This

Another form of flexibility could be exclusive questions aimed at specific individuals, relating to their particular experience or knowledge. This would not necessarily mean formulating the same questions for everyone “so that individuals are asked about the particular parts of a subject that they know best” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:45). Flexibility in formulating questions throughout the process relating to what has been learnt from the interviewees and adapting the design accordingly “keeps the results fresh and interesting” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:45). Rubin and Rubin (1995) point out that because redesign is possible it becomes easy for the researcher to listen objectively to the research subject and adapt the research to fit the situation. The researcher will not just ignore pieces that do not fit the initial concept of the research problem, thus allowing unexpected areas to be fully explored (Rubin & Rubin 1995:45).

Iterative design involves the sequence of broadly gathering, analysing, winnowing and testing, and then focusing particular questions on those best able to answer them. This is repeated throughout the research. This process is initially implemented when the subject is being explored, then when concepts are determined, later when themes are being explored. The iterative process finally stops when the “theoretical saturation point” (Glasser & Strauss 1967) is reached. This is the point where “information you are putting together supports a small number of integrated themes and each additional interview adds no more ideas or issues to the themes on which you are now questioning” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:47). The continuous nature of the interview process means that questions may be redesigned throughout the research project. New topics may be explored whilst still maintaining an organised or focused project enabling core topics to be pursued that will give sufficient evidence to justify the conclusions reached and conclusions that fit the data. Continuous design enables the researcher to be organised and flexible at the same time (Rubin & Rubin 1995:48).

question could also be asked in relation to what the interviewee has just answered (Rubin & Rubin 1995:123).

- Requests for clarification when something has been misunderstood or is not clear to the other person (Schegloff 1992; Moerman 1988). The linguistic term for such exchanges is 'conversational repairs'. This usually takes place right after the misunderstanding or vague statement. Confirmation is asked of what the person thought was meant (Rubin & Rubin 1995:123).

The following differences should be noted:

- Interview conversations in general are a lot more detailed, focused and deeper than normal conversations (Rubin & Rubin 1995:122).
- Pauses between conversation turns are longer, allowing the interviewee the opportunity to elaborate or modify what was said. One of the more obvious differences between interviews and normal conversation is that during the interview the interviewer guides the conversation. This may happen on several different levels, including among others, questions asked, the flow between topics, emotional tone and interaction intensity (Rubin & Rubin 1995:123).

2.7.3 The interviewer as research instrument

Gillham (2000:28) notes that research interviews require a certain skill from the interviewer. This is practical rather than content-related. The interview guide or schedule is typically what the interviewer works from during the interview, but apart from this, skill is required in the areas of active listening, probing all the while, and directing the conversation without dominating it.

Good interviewers will not put words into the mouths of their interviewees, but will allow them to speak for themselves; effective interviewers "are remarkable for the economy of what they say" (Gillham 2000:28). They will 'steer' interviewees, enabling them to reveal what is relevant to the study. The main skill required is to

relationship. Calling the interviewer a researcher may not mean anything to interviewees, as they may not see it as a meaningful category. It may be more appropriate to use a title more acceptable from their world, for example, a journalist, social activist, therapist, historian, author or university professor. It is not necessary to assume the same role with all interviewees, but it is important to identify with some part of their reality. The roles assumed by the interviewer will affect what is said in the interviews. For instance, if the researcher's role is that of a therapist, the interviewees could open up emotionally; if it is that of a social activist they may discuss strategies, and so on (Rubin & Rubin 1995:115).

It may be that people will not talk to a researcher who has adopted a role they dislike or one with which they have had a bad experience in the past; this may be a social worker or a university professor and so forth. In this case it is necessary to reassure the interviewees that their preconceived concepts are not necessarily true for the present situation by being honest and straightforward with them and by gently winning their trust. Sometimes the interviewer is quickly cast into a role that fits into the research group culture but one that will not necessarily encourage open conversations. For example, "in poor neighbourhoods, people who come around asking questions may be seen as social workers, landlords, undercover police or repossession agents" (Rubin & Rubin 1995:115).

The role the researcher is 'cast into' affects what the interviewees are willing to talk about, and how openly they will do it. For instance, MacLeod (1987:174) moved into the role of a student to interview gang members. He describes his approach:

I needed to explain to both groups the proposed study, my role as researcher, and their role as subjects. This I did in a casual way before initiating a conversation on their aspirations. I simply explained that to graduate from college, I must write a lengthy paper and that instead of doing a lot of research in a library, 'I'm gonna write it on you guys down

2.7.5 Stages of an interview

Interviews proceed through distinct stages, beginning with an introduction and entry leading on into the main part of the interview and ending with the exit stage where the interviewer thanks the interviewee and leaves. Gillham (2000:37) lists these stages as:

- introductory phase
- opening and development phase
- central core of the interview
- closing the interview socially and in terms of conduct.

Rubin and Rubin (1995:129) state that interviews typically pass through seven stages. The first and last stages are important, even during a short interview, and attention to these two stages aids in shaping the content. This is apparent particularly during the introductory phase, where the purpose of the interview is carefully explained. Closure is attained during the final stage and could include a review of what was covered during the central core of the interview. Additional material may even be revealed at this point (Gillham 2000:37; Rubin & Rubin 1995:129).

The introductory phase takes place before the actual interview, and is an orientation of what the interviewee is to expect during the interview. Gillham (2000:38) lists what people concerned need to know before they come to the interview:

- the reason why they in particular have been asked to come to the interview;
- a basic explanation of the purpose of the interview and the intended research project;
- the estimated duration of the interview;
- that the interview is going to be recorded and why;
- the time and location of the interview.

conversations and that people do not stay at these highs for a long time, especially when dealing with deep personal topics. Furthermore, it cautions interviewers not to 'jump' into the middle of the conversation. Finally, this model helps researchers evaluate how well they have integrated the questioning into the various stages of the developing conversational relationship.

The seven stages of an interview are discussed below.

Stage 1

According to Rubin and Rubin (1995:129), interviews generally begin with some sort of icebreaker aimed at putting one's conversational partners at ease and allowing them to know that the questioner's intentions are non-threatening. They note that this may take the form of a mild joke or an observation relating to the topic, but that does not need to be answered immediately. It is also a way to direct the conversation toward the intended topic. This early informal 'chat' is appropriate in order to express interest and show support for the interviewees' experiences (Rubin & Rubin 1995:129). Rubin and Rubin (1995:129) mention that common experiences shared with those of the interviewees can be brought up at this time. This is a way of establishing common ground. Only once the interviewees are at ease it is appropriate to move into a formal introduction. They also note that reassurance that the interviewer is on the interviewees' side is most important. This could take the form of informing the interviewees of ethical issues, such as that the information provided by the interviewees belongs to them (the interviewees), and that it will be presented in the form of quotes in the final report. The interviewer also emphasises that the interviewees' privacy will be respected and protected, for example by providing pseudonyms (Rubin & Rubin 1995:129).

Stage 2

Rubin and Rubin (1995:131) note that this stage entails encouraging interviewees and reassuring them that their input is of value and that they are

- Preceding the interview with a short observation period that enables one to show respect for culture in general although there may be some contrary aspects;
- Being open and honest with interviewees and not rejecting their action out-right. This is important when it is not possible to empathise with an interviewee because of differences in culture or values.

Stage 4

After connecting on both cognitive and emotional levels, the next step in the interview process is to obtain basic facts and descriptions (Rubin & Rubin 1995:134). This could take the form of initially talking broadly about the intended topic of discussion and then focusing on specific points of interest. Answers could be probed or follow-up questions asked in order to direct the conversation. The focus of the conversation, at this stage, is on descriptions of experiences and so forth. The more intellectual or emotionally laden questions are reserved for the next stage of the interview. Typically, interviewees are encouraged “to sketch how they understand their worlds without posing complicated questions that follow up on what they say” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:134).

Stage 5

Up to this stage of the interview the interviewer would have indicated understanding of the subject of discussion and empathised with the interviewee (Rubin & Rubin 1995:134). So far large amounts of information would also have been covered. By this time it is “usually possible to deal with more difficult, emotional, or sensitive matters” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:134). The authors point out that these may include culturally sensitive questions and indications of how interviewees compromised between what they perceived to be right and what they felt they had to do in order to survive. They also state that it is possible to determine what the interviewee might consider to be sensitive by taking note, earlier on in the conversation, of hesitations or the avoidance of part of a question. Thereby material that is stressful to the interviewee should only be

Stage 7

This final stage of the interview should characteristically be an indication to interviewees that the interview is winding down and will be over soon. It may be necessary to ask interviewees if it would be possible to return sometime if further information is required. At this stage it is also possible to review some of the ethics, for instance regarding ownership of material and pseudonyms, with interviewees as “a reminder that the material is theirs and that you will use it with respect” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:138). After the interview has been formally closed, the informal chat that occurred before the interview could be resumed. This is another way of winding down the interview (Rubin & Rubin 1995:138).

2.7.6 Strategies for structuring an interview

Rubin and Rubin (1995:159) note that preparations for the interview include deciding which strategy should be used to arrange the main questions and how to follow up on the questions. There are, amongst others, two common patterns for structuring the interview in qualitative research. The first is the tree and branches model, where the core topic is the tree trunk and the main questions form the branches. Each branch is given equal attention and the level of depth is uniformly maintained across all the main questions. This strategy is useful when there is an overall topic and equal attention can be given to the various components of a complete picture. The second model is that of a river, where there is a merging of different currents into a single flow and then a branching off to form separate streams, which could possibly come together again later. In this model the main questions follow a single current in the river throughout. This strategy is useful when one theme in a bigger picture needs to be examined in greater detail in order to understand more fully (Rubin & Rubin 1995:159).

Even though differences between wording and sequencing do exist between topical and cultural interviews, the necessity for overall coherence is common to both. To maintain this it is necessary to plan ahead and to decide on the balance

2.8.1 Main questions

Rubin and Rubin (1995:147) state that main questions are prepared before the interview and are typically used as a means of directing the interview. The overall topic may be divided into several questions that are used to unify the discussion. Separate main questions need to cover a subject “in ways that suggest an underlying focus” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:147). Questions are worded in order to allow interviewees the opportunity to express their opinions and experiences, but are also narrow enough to keep them on the topic. These questions are usually designed around the interviewees’ unique knowledge of an event or process, depending on whether it is a cultural or topical interview. All the questions may not necessarily be asked during the interview, but interviewees may answer the questions before they are asked or elaborate about something unanticipated but important. If the interview is aimed at tracing an event or investigating a programme, all the questions need to be asked. This may take more than one session to complete (Rubin & Rubin 1995:147).

Rubin and Rubin (1995:147) emphasise three concerns that need to be attended to when compiling main questions:

1. Do the main questions encompass the entire subject?
2. Is there a smooth, logical flow between questions asked, and will they be understood by the interviewee?
3. Do questions match the original iterative design, and evolve appropriately as the research progresses?

2.8.2 Probes

Probes are neutral requests and are specifically aimed at clarifying ambiguous answers, completing incomplete answers or obtaining relevant responses (Neuman 1997:257). Many types of probes exist, both non-verbal and verbal. In some cases a pause of a few seconds, a tilt of the head or a raised eyebrow could work as a probe. Verbal probes could include re-asking the question or repeating the answer given and pausing for a response. Neutral questions such

sided descriptions. Follow-ups develop on top of follow-ups as the information is unfolded and new lines of enquiry are opened up. Follow-ups may also be required when interviewees give contradicting information, unclear statements, and incomplete answers or use unfamiliar terms or new words (Rubin & Rubin 1995:152). Follow-up questions are asked in stages. Firstly, terminology is clarified, then the deeper issues are tackled, and the person is always encouraged to talk. Good follow-up questions are a product of a “trained curiosity, recognising and pursuing puzzles while exploring emerging themes” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:153).

2.9 Conversation / interview guides

An interview guide is a list of all the questions, topics and issues that should be covered during the interview. It may contain “instructions on how to respond to certain answers, the order and wording that questions should be asked in, and probes and prompts to encourage the respondent to produce more information or talk about certain topics” (Stimson et al. 2001). Conversational or interview guides are typically prepared by researchers before the interview is undertaken. Structured interviews require more detailed guides than unstructured interviews. Interview guides are useful as they help the interviewer to remain focused during the interview (Stimson et al. 2001). They are not inflexible once prepared, and can evolve during the course of the interview. They may expand to include new areas of interest that may emerge as a result of follow-up questions. Therefore, each individual interview may have customised interview guides. These guides can be in the form of protocols, outlines or checklists (Rubin & Rubin 1995:161). The checklist is the simplest guide. This is typically the list of topics to cover during the interview. Outlines are the next complex type of interview guide; they typically consist of headings and subheadings, main questions as headings and probes or deeper questions as subheadings, including examples to follow. Protocols are the most detailed guides; they include all the main questions written out in full (Rubin & Rubin 1995:161).

2.10 Ethical issues

Because ethical issues in qualitative research is rightly a topic that deserves a large amount of discussion it is noted that for the purposes of this study only a generalised discussion of ethical issues regarding qualitative interviewing will be covered and no attempt will be made to deal with the entire topic.

Research ethics are about gaining and using information for research purposes without causing harm to the research subjects (Neuman 1997; Rubin 1983). It is important to remember that because the objects of investigation during interviewing are human beings, special care should be taken not to harm them. High quality information is dependent on the co-operation of interviewees, and when they are encouraged to speak openly and honestly, the interviewers are subject to serious ethical obligations (Fontana & Frey 1994:372).

Traditionally ethical issues revolved around the following topics:

- Informed consent. This is consent given by the interviewee, after he or she has been carefully informed about the nature and consequences of the research project, including permission to record the conversation. Interviewees should agree to be voluntary participants, and confirm that their consent is based on “full and open information” (Christians 1998:217).
- The right to privacy and confidentiality. This is the protection of the interviewees’ identity and the identity of the research location. Often pseudonyms are used in place of the interviewees’ own names in order to guarantee confidentiality (Christians 1998:218).
- Protection from harm. This entails physical, emotional or any other harm. Professional etiquette states that “no one deserves harm or embarrassment as a result of intensive research practices” (Christians 1998:219). “The single most likely source of harm in social research” is the publication of private information thought to be damaging by research subjects (Reiss 1979:73; Punch 1994:93).

honest with those you are studying and cause them no harm” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:94).

Rubin and Rubin (1995:95) note that many professional codes and institutional review boards require signed consent statements from research subjects. Such a statement describes the purpose of the research, gives a brief background and points out benefits and risks involved to the participants of the proposed project. The degree of confidentiality is stated and the voluntary nature of the research is emphasised. Research participants sign these forms to show that they understand the risks involved and agree to participate in the project. These ethical standards make the researcher aware of the human nature of their subjects and that “those who are providing the data in the research are people who deserve respect and concern, not objects or impersonal cases” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:95).

A growing number of scholars now maintain that most traditional in-depth interviewing is unethical (Oakley 1981). They say that the techniques used by researchers are really “ways of manipulating respondents while treating them as objects or numbers rather than as individual human beings” (Fontana & Frey 1994:373). The question of whether the quest for objectivity should supersede the humanity of those studied is one that needs to be asked. Blumer’s statement (1982:217) that the methods used by social researchers cannot dictate their images of human beings is highly relevant in this context. Punch (1986) stresses the fact that fieldworkers should exercise commonsense and moral responsibility in dealing firstly with the subjects and secondly with the study.

2.11 Main characteristics of qualitative interviews

As noted above, verbal qualitative interviews follow a particular format, and good interviews have particular criteria which need to be attained. In a typical interview the interviewer will establish rapport at the beginning of the interview. The

Gillham (2000:8) notes that the interviewee's convenience is usually the first thing the researcher attends to when organising the interview. Although it might be a common assumption that people talk more freely in their own environment, however, familiarities can also be inhibiting. It is therefore accepted that meeting on neutral ground, thus freeing the interviewee from "daily constraints that hedge them round" may be less inhibiting while implying confidentiality (Gillham 2000:8). A well organised project that provides interviewees with the required information, gives them a message before they even come to the interview (Gillham 2000:38). Setting and arrangement also convey a message to interviewees. Before the interview begins all practical aspects should be well prepared in order to give a good message, for instance: Are the facilities and chairs comfortable? Does the venue look organised and ready for use? Are refreshments on offer? Gillham (2000) also emphasises that the interviewer's should be neat and look respectable; he or she should be familiar with the recording equipment, and should be waiting in the interview venue well before interviewees arrive. Finally, he states that when conducting an interview, the interviewer can deal with common misconceptions by explaining well beforehand what is to be expected of interviewees during the interview process and what the interview is about. If the interviewer has a clear understanding of the research issues, it is possible for him or her to communicate them simply to the interviewees (Gillham 2000:39).

According to *Qualitative research: interviewing* (2004), the following practical procedures are typically followed during the interview process:

- Unstructured or semi-structured interviews are usually used by researchers to ask questions in field research.
- An interview schedule or guide is typically used in semi-structured interviews; this is a set of questions prepared before the interview used to guide interviewers.
- This method allows for flexibility in that one question's answer may influence the next question asked.

Finally, Rubin and Rubin (1995:164) point out that during early interview sessions, routines of self-evaluation in which the information gathered is constantly evaluated are necessary in order to improve the fluidity of consecutive interviews and the quality of data. Here concepts and themes need to be followed are heard, the level of depth is evaluated and interview structure and fluency are taken into account. The aim is to work with the interviewee in order to attain maximum data quality and to discover themes that could re-shape the research and could become the subject of following interviews. Even if many errors occur, all is forgiven if the interviewees know the researcher is 'on their side'. Self-evaluation is not only useful for discovering mistakes but it also enables the researchers to know what they are doing right (Rubin & Rubin 1995:164).

Gillham (2000:8) states that "an interview makes a demand on the interviewee" by signalling that it is a "special occasion". He says that because people see the interview as something special, more information will be retrieved and that "the willingness of people to work at an interview when it is of no *direct* significance to them reflects the fact that people are often not listened to; that their views and experiences are not treated as being of any account" (Gillham 2000:7, original italics). Qualitative interviews are thus structured with the aim of allowing questions to be asked in a particular way that enables interviewees to feel valued, respected and heard. In good interviews the interviewer attains depth and detail, connects with interviewees and gets invited back. Furthermore, the interview is going well when interviewees give answers to unasked questions, if they anticipate the question before it is asked, or if they suggest possible questions relevant to the topic that the researcher had not thought of,. Finally, when the results of the interviews answer the original research questions, the interview process has been a success. Rubin and Rubin (1995:167) conclude that successful interviews encourage researchers to continue and are the reward of a great deal of hard work.

3. Photo-elicitation in qualitative research

3.1 Introduction

Over the past century photographs used for the purposes of social science research have gone through many phases of popularity, swinging from being very popular at the beginning of the 20th century to being completely ignored. Over the past decade, however, the popularity of visual research has re-emerged. In current fields of sociology and anthropology, particularly in ethnography and documentary photography, visual methods have become more prominent (Walker 1993; Hurworth & Sweeney 1995; Prosser 1998; Banks 1995, 2001; Emmison & Smith 2000; Rose 2001; Pink 2001; Schwartz 1992; Harper 1994, 1998, 2001). It is apparent that the application of visual research methods has become particularly useful in research areas. Chiozzi (1989:44) states that photography has taken on a new face in anthropology where researchers are “to use photographs neither as visual data nor as notes, but as methodological devices for gathering ethnographic data”. The photographs thus become the *process* and not the *product* of field research. An example of where photographs are treated as a *means* of data collection and not as data per se is the photo-elicitation process where images act as stimuli and are used to elicit responses from interviewees.

3.2 Image-elicitation

Heisley and Levy (1991:260) note that, in terms of image-elicitation, researchers typically use standardised visual stimuli, ranging from ambiguous drawings, pictures, photographs or even motion picture or film in order to elicit information from a sample of research informants. These projective tools are arranged by Collier and Collier (1986:125) according to their expected level of response (see Appendix A, Figure 3). This organisation correlates with the observation by Levy (1985:68) that “the more specific the question, the narrower the range of information given by the respondent.” Such projective techniques rely on the logical belief that someone’s behaviour has meaning and is an expression of his

This was the first film to use this method, resulting from technical advancements in sound sync movie cameras that were fully portable. Another example is the film by Linda Conner, Patsy and Tim Asch concerning Jero Tapakan, a Balinese healer. As with Rouch and Morin's film *Chronique d'un été*, both subject and self-analysis of the subject by the subjects themselves was the method used. Thus a conventional ethnographic film was first made of Tapakan, and then her reaction while viewing the first film was recorded as a separate second film. This technique of using reflexive or elicitive devices has consequently been used many times in the production of documentaries (Banks 2001:99; Nichols 1991:44-56).

Like photo-elicitation, film-elicitation can be a very beneficial research tool for social scientists (Banks 2001:99). Insights and understandings that could otherwise have been missed while using any other medium could be picked up by researchers utilising this technique. The moving image – film, video or television broadcast – may be even more difficult for researchers to control than still images, as it is what Banks (2001:99) calls a “wayward medium”. Thus, the fact that there have not been many anthropological film elicitation studies may be because of “the difficulties encountered in constructing films-about-films” (Harper 2002:14), and as Banks (2001:99) notes, because film is a somewhat “wayward medium, difficult to control”. Harper (2002:14) points out that this may be partly as a result of “film’s grounding in time and the spoken word, and the resulting fact that a film can contain very few words relative to an essay or book”. An added disadvantage is that interviewees have to talk about images that are shown to them while viewing the film, but using static images in a film seldom works well (Harper 2002:14).

3.2.2 Elicitation using pictures or abstract shapes

Projective techniques for interviewing were used in the 1950s when interest in motivation research reached a climax. These projective techniques relied on the logical understanding that personality and cultural beliefs influence a person's

(1976) who successfully combined photo-elicitation with effective questions in her seminal work, in which Chicago and London homes were compared.

Photo-elicitation has also successfully been used by psychologists. Heisley and Levy (1991:26) note that family snapshots were used by Fryrear & Krauss (1983) during therapy as projective devices (also see Akeret 1973; Entin 1979, 1982; Wessels 1985). Hurworth (2003) lists a number of researchers in other disciplines who have also used photo-elicitation methods in their studies of the following:

- Ethnic identities (Gold 1991).
- Behavioural studies (Entin 1979; Wessels 1985).
- How to enhance memory retrieval (Aschermann, Dannenberg & Schulz 1998).
- Children / school students (Diamond 1996; Weiniger 1998; Foster, Hoge & Rosch 1999; Salmon 2001).
- Programme evaluations (Brown et al. 1980; Tucker & Dempsey 1991; Buchanan 1998).
- Tools for nursing and medical research (Hagedorn 1996; Higgins & Highley 1986; Magilvy, Congdon, Nelson & Craig 1992).
- Teaching techniques for tertiary students (Killion 2001; Smith & Woodward 1999).
- How to talk about difficult or abstract concepts (Curry & Strauss 1994; Bender, Harbour, Thorp & Morris 2001).

3.3 Three types of photo-elicitation

Three distinct approaches to photo-elicitation are generally accepted in the social science field, based on the production of the images used for elicitation:

- Researcher-generated images where the persons conducting the research use photographs they have taken of their research subjects' world;

It is therefore understood that the primary interest the researcher has regarding the image used in elicitation interviews is not so much the content of the image, but the interviewee's interpretation or explanation of the image concerned (Carlsson 2001). The three photo-elicitation approaches will be studied in more detail below.

3.3.1 Researcher-generated images

Researcher-generated images can be classified as images the researcher has taken during the research project. They are typically used as visual records or for the purposes of visual diaries. These terms may seem the same, but Prosser and Schwartz (1998:122) note an important difference with regard to "the capacities of photography to provide an 'unbiased' record of a reality". They continue that when these images are seen as visual records, "researchers depend upon photography's capacity to provide extra-somatic 'memory'" (Prosser & Schwartz 1998:122). The consequent pictures that the untiring camera produces can then be used at a later time. Two uses of what Prosser and Schwartz (1998:122) term the camera's "reproductive and mimetic qualities" are noted: as complementary or as an adjunct to a field diary, and when visual information (e.g. objects, events, places and signs) need to be systematically recorded or reproduced (Prosser & Schwartz 1998:122). Social scientists have taken these inherent qualities that photographs possess and have used them to their advantage in the data collection process. Researcher-generated photographs, which initially could have been taken for either purpose mentioned above, may be used as projective devices. This typically takes place during interviews, which may be one-on-one or in a focus group setting (Prosser & Schwartz 1998:122).

Images of the interviewees' world taken by the researcher are presented to them hoping that more insight will be gained from the interviewees as they explain and interpret the images for themselves. They are then able to express personal associations or reflections, which can be incorporated into the data. What is interesting is that even though the photographs were taken by the researcher,

The introduction of the camera early in the research project could have some negative effects. Prosser (1992) notes that introducing a camera into his research community of three grammar schools amalgamating into one, would have caused unnecessary stress. Prosser (1992) notes that “[t]he timing of the introduction of a camera to the school was important since the object itself may have caused anxiety and undermined any fragile status in the school” (Prosser 1992:398). He explains that he was able to walk around the school with his camera around his neck, but still in its case only later, after a sports day. This rather carefully measured approach, he states “contrasts starkly with Collier and Collier’s (1986) [approach] who suggested taking photographs from the very first day, using them as social ‘can-openers’” (Prosser 1992:398). On the subject of photographic ‘can openers’ Prosser and Schwartz (1998) also note that the camera can be introduced on the first day as a ‘can opener’ (Collier & Collier 1986; Schwartz 1989) or more gently “...over a period of time using a ‘softly softly’ approach” (Prosser & Schwartz 1998:121; Prosser 1992). They describe this ‘softly softly’ approach used by Prosser (1992) as the process of “walking around the sampling site with a camera in its ‘out of the case over the shoulder like a piece of jewellery’ mode, followed by ‘safe’ photography of buildings, and only much later was ‘serious’ photography attempted when participants were accustomed to photography taking place” (Prosser & Schwartz 1998:121). The point they make is that it does not matter if the camera comes out quickly or gradually, but what matters is that visual sociologists should be able to handle their equipment with confidence and apparent ease in order to perform the necessary task of taking pictures (Prosser & Schwartz 1998:121).

3.3.2 Elicitation with archival or found photographs

The use of archival or found images as interview prompts is also a common form of photo-elicitation. These images could have been gathered by the researcher prior to the interview, or interviewees may bring them out of their own archives (e.g. as photo albums), as they try to verbalise memories during the interview.

There is, however, a danger of over-extrapolation or claiming something exists that is not justifiable, because as in any qualitative study, all data has its limitations (Prosser & Schwartz 1998:122).

Banks (2001:88) notes that even though it is typical for researchers to use simple straightforward photographs, some researchers have on occasion used images that are unfamiliar to both interviewer and interviewee. He continues that when this is the case, it is often difficult for interviewees to know what the intentions of the researcher are, for example when interviewees are asked to talk about unknown images of faces, ink blots or Chinese ideograms, while being deliberately misled by researchers about the reasons for their interpretation. In this case, the controlled usage of photo-elicitation could consist of a series of laboratory-based psychological-type experiments. This type of photo-elicitation is very rarely used in qualitative sociology or anthropology (Banks 2001:88).

3.3.3 Participant photographs

The term 'autodriving' indicates that the interview is driven by informants who are seeing and possibly hearing their own behaviour, for example where photographs and audio recordings made of informants are used during the interviews as visual and auditory prompts. To a certain degree, autodriving allows informants to interview themselves, to provide a perspective of action (Gould, Walker, Crane & Lidz 1974) and to raise issues that are significant to them (Heisley & Levy 1991:257).

Harper (1988) refers to this as "the reflexive mode" where research analysis is based on the interviewee's reality. Heisley and Levy (1991) call this methodological approach "auto-driving", where feedback from interviewees is driven directly by stimuli taken from their own environment. Harper (1988:64) calls photographs that interviewees have produced themselves "reflexive photographs". These images are then used in photo-elicitation interviews as a means of gathering data for qualitative research. Harper, who introduced this

information about particular consumer behaviour. They termed this kind of photo-elicitation “autodriving” in that “the interview is ‘driven’ by informants who are seeing their own behaviour” (Heisley & Levy 1991:261). In the study, interviewees took photographs of their evening meals, and these were used as interview prompts. What emerged were the complexities of family dynamics, allowing for a “negotiated interpretation of consumption events” where interviewer and interviewee reached consensus on negotiated meaning (Heisley & Levy 1991:257). Another benefit over general interviewing was that it allowed the interviewee to have more authority and ‘increased voice’ during the interpretation of such events whilst “... provid[ing] a perspective ... that makes systems meaningful to an outsider. It also manufactures distance for the informant so they see familiar data in unfamiliar ways” (Heisley & Levy 1991:257).

Hurworth (2003) further notes that photo-interviewing has taken on another form called ‘photo novella’, which means picture stories. This is the interpretation of daily routine events or routines photographed by interviewees (Wang & Burris 1994). In this case, as in the case of reflexive photography, cameras are given to interviewees rather than to researchers or professional photographers. These interviewees could range from the likes of children to elderly people or any others in between in order to disclose “life as they see it” (Hurworth 2003). One of the main components of the process of photo novella, according to Hurworth (2003), is the dialogue that takes place when images are shown and the meaning and significance is explained. The fact that the images are grounded in a real experience is what makes them “infinitely more valuable than a set of images created by outsiders” (Hurworth 2003). Thus photo novella is aimed at being a tool for empowering those marginalised individuals without the money, status or power, to have a voice in communicating to policymakers where change needs to take place. This approach was used by Wang, Burris and Xiang (1996) in rural China, in research on issues surrounding the improvement of women’s health (Hurworth 2003).

that way can be discussed. Interviewees can also produce collages made up of magazine photographs in order to stimulate discussion (Landgarten 1993).

Using images produced by participants is a highly collaborative photo-elicitation method. Because the pictures were taken by the interviewees themselves, they are able to explain their intention and the context in which the images were taken, thus it becomes easy to express their motives to the interviewer. Researchers are given a complete view into their subjects' worlds, making this method a truly inter-subjective engagement (Harper 1988:64).

3.4 Some examples

The following section will note various examples where social researchers have used the three different approaches to photo-elicitation.

3.4.1 Researcher-generated photo-elicitation

This type of photo-elicitation has featured in a number of research projects in the fields of anthropology and sociology. Photographs used during the interviews could either have been taken by the researchers with the purpose of using them in follow-up photo-elicitation interviews, or they could initially have been taken by the researchers for other purposes, and used later in the interviews (Banks 2001:88). Key contributors, amongst others, are:

- Inglis, J. J. (1991): Eleven photographs Inglis took of Albert Town near Wanaka, South Island New Zealand, were shown to six residents in order to get their feedback. He hoped to learn more about Albert Town by using photographs during his interviews than he would have if he had used more traditional in-depth interviews.
- Schwartz (1992): This researcher studied the changing identities of the American farming community in the small agricultural town of Waucomain, north-western Iowa. She initially documented the town by walking around and photographing people and places. She later used these photographs in photo-elicitation interviews with the residents. She discovered that with

- Modell and Brodsky (1994): Archival photographs were used in their study of a steel town where they initially asked interviewees for verbal accounts. Later, they used archival photographs in follow-up interviews and finally they asked interviewees to talk about their own pictures of the area (Smith & Woodward 1999).
- Susan Weinger (1998): Archival pictures were used as elicitation devices with children. The study focused on poverty-stricken children and their perception of future career opportunities.
- Smith and Whitney (2002): Images from Donna Ferrato's photographic documentary book *Living with the enemy* were used as elicitation devices in their research into battered women and family violence.
- Crouch and Swan (2003): Photographs from the World Vision archives were used in their focus group interviews of a number of survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia. They used images of past horror to investigate the process survivors went through of discovering and attributing meaning to the images.

3.4.3 Photo-elicitation with participant photographs

In the fields of anthropology and sociology, a number of researchers have used participant photographs or 'reflexive' photography in their various studies, as a means of acquiring information by using them in follow-up photo-elicitation interviews. These include:

- Van der Does et al. (1992): Research subjects accompanied University of Amsterdam graduate students who allowed them to select images to be taken in The Hague's Schilderswijk neighbourhood for their project on 'ethnic integration'. Follow-up photographs were taken after five key interviewees looked at the photographs and made suggestions.
- Harrington and Lindy (1998): This method of photo-elicitation was used in their study of the impressions freshmen students had of first-year life at a four-year comprehensive public university. A group of randomly selected freshmen students documented their impressions of university life by

interviews the photographs that were taken by the interviewees during their outdoor excursions were examined by both interviewer and interviewee. The photographs allowed significant moments to be identified “during and after the experience and it captured a greater level of detail than the participants could retain by themselves alone” (Loffler 2005).

3.5 Photo-elicitation with children

Thorny methodological issues invariably arise when investigating viewpoints held by young people, particularly when it comes to very young children. Standardised, status quo research tools, like surveys or verbal interviews, are unsuccessful in gaining complete access to young people’s meanings – unless these tools undergo transformation or are supplemented. One alternative discussed by Pellegrini (1996) and Fine and Sandstrom (1989) is that of participant observation, which has accompanied interviews and surveys in research conducted with minors (Clark 1999:39).

Although surveys and interviews are commonly used in children’s studies, they are problematic for various reasons:

- When interviewing very young children, who have not yet acquired verbal skills, traditional verbal interviewing greatly limits the researcher regarding questions and issues they can follow, as “[t]he verbal interview relies primarily on linguistic communication” (Clark 1999:39). The cognitive development of young children is also a challenge to the researcher who tries to ask abstract questions without a tangible context (Clark 1996).
- Generally, young children very rarely use question-and-answer formats to share thoughts among their peers, thus placing a typical interview “outside their sociolinguistic repertoire” (Clark 1999:40).

Critical assessment of the interview process has been addressed by both Mishler (1986) and Briggs (1986). They particularly investigated the communication of meaning in a social context. Briggs (1986) stresses the empowerment of

mention their own fatal prognosis” (Clark 1999:49). In this way they were able to maintain the “reciprocal roles” they had formed with doctors and parents. Clark (1999:49) notes that this kind of dynamics could greatly limit what is shared with social science researchers. For Clark (1999:49):

Children’s framings of reality constitute singular social worlds: pervasive, full of impact, and woefully under-explored. Child-centred researchers need tools for circumnavigating the complexities of these worlds from a youthful angle. The use of photography in autodriven interviews is a valuable tool for opening up children’s worlds to researchers, and for giving children opportunities to actively interpret their own experience.

Clark (1999) encouraged children to talk about their chronic illnesses by using photographs that the children had taken as elicitation devices during the interview; she refers to this as ‘the autodriven interview’ (Clark 1999:39). She was interested in revealing the “children’s perspectives as arbiters of their own experience” (Clark 1999:39). In her research she describes and recommends “autodriving” – a term she borrowed from Heisley and Levy’s [1991] research into adult consumer behaviour – as a useful tool that enables researchers to “reach into children’s and teens’ own social worlds” (Clark 1999:40).

Heisley and Levy (1991:275) refer to the term ‘autodriving’ as an interview ‘driven’ by informants, who after hearing or seeing their own recorded behaviour comment on it. Audio, video or still photographs are used during the interview as visual stimulants for interviewees to comment on. Clark (1999:40) notes that during her ‘autodriving’ experience with youth, photographs taken by the young people (or if needed with either peer or parental help) were used. Single-use cameras were given to the children or parents and they were instructed on how to use the camera. The photographs were processed and printed before the interviews took place. These pictures became the basis for discussion, where each child described his or her experiences pictured in the photographs (see

environmental researchers, Buss (1995:343) used two action-centred methods – focus dyads followed by photo journals (Garbarino & Stott 1992). By using these methods, the children were able to observe and document what they experienced as “environmental interactions” in their everyday life (Buss 1995:343).

The project was introduced to the class by asking the children if they would like to be “co-researchers in the field” (Buss 1995:343). They all agreed to take the cameras home and photograph life in their community, neighbourhood and school over the weekend. They could include people in their photographs of places they liked and places they did not like. Before they left the classroom, some of the places the children thought they would photograph were listed on the blackboard (Buss 1995:43).

Each child each took a camera home and documented his or her community. The children later arranged the photographs into personal photo-journals, adding written comments next to the pictures in order to express feelings and thoughts. Focus dyads or paired interviews were conducted with the children in order “[t]o augment and follow up on the photo journal method” (Buss 1995:43). Buss (1995:44) intended these interviews to “fill in the gaps in the photo journals, and add some layering and depth to the children’s written observations.”

Buss (1995:44) set up a table outside the classroom door at each location where the interviews took place. The students were sent out by the teacher in pairs. The focus dyads lasted between 30 and 45 minutes when the children looked at each other’s books. Each pair of children was asked “a series of open-ended questions designed to make a link between critical socio-spatial theory and the themes depicted in their journals” (Buss 1995:44). Buss (1995:44) notes that “the method of inquiry was more conversational and the format was organic and flexible”.

- During the interview pictures became “projective stimuli”, allowing the interviewees to reveal their thoughts, attitudes and behaviour with minimal prompting from the (adult) interviewer.
- The interviewees were able to easily identify with the photographs that they or their peers had taken. They were able to readily express personal experiences involving themselves, their family, or friends.
- The photographs provided a valuable, lasting, non-verbal record for the researcher.
- Comparisons, differentiating between smokers and non-smokers, were made possible based on the photographs.

Mauthner (1997:17) recommends a “child-centred approach to data collection which views children as subjects rather than objects of research”. In Clark’s study (1998) of the physical experiences and vulnerability of young children suffering from diabetes and severe asthma, she points out some advantages to using the autodiving technique (Clark 1999:42). It was found that using the photographs in the interviews helped in “developing a more child-centred understanding” (Clark 1994:43). The photographs were particularly helpful in capturing and introducing areas of content that could easily have been misunderstood or missed from an adult perspective. For example, threatening situations like fear of death, teasing from their peers or how adults underestimated them, were depicted in some photographs. Thus the discussion of these themes became easier during the interview. Clark found that the children were happy to discuss these topics, but she noted that it could have been more to do with “the way autodiving affected the *process* of the interview” and that the photographs became “a mediating prop aiding the interview process – substantially contributing to levels of rapport and child involvement – and as a window into emotional or abstract ideas” (Clark 1999:43, original italics).

Clark (1999:43) states that even during adult interviews there is a marked “asymmetry of power”; she notes that this problem is however more notable

- The photographs were “tangible props” when feelings or situation were referred to during the interview (Clark 1999:44).

Research by Weinger (1998), Buss (1995), Clark (1999) and Butler (1994) indicates that child-centred researchers can have increased “access to youthful experience in interviews” (Clark 1999:41). As noted by Heisley and Levy (1991:263), a “perspective of action, for the scene being observed” is attained during the autodriven interview when the interviewee tries to explain the photograph to the interviewer, thereby making the photograph meaningful for the interviewer or outsider (Clark 1999:41). Autodriving also provides a way of allowing the interviewees space whereby they are able to distance themselves from the event or experience depicted in the picture. Interviewees are able to see things that are familiar to them in a different way and they are encouraged to express themselves more freely and more deeply (McCracken 1988). Clark (1999:41) also notes that autodriving gives children the opportunity to maintain some form of control over the interview situation as the children’s photographs indicate the topics to be included in the interviews, and commenting on the photographs gives the children the opportunity and right to find their own interpretation for the image (Clark 1999:41).

As seen from the above, researchers using the autodriving technique found it to be beneficial when interviewing young people. However, as noted by Butler (1994), some minor reservations about the technique do exist. The cost of supplying each participant with a camera and film as well as developing and printing costs make this an expensive process. Furthermore, families who had many other things on their minds, often forgot to take pictures of their daily lives or they either took the pictures only on the first day after getting the camera or on the last day before returning it to the researcher.

Clark (1999:49) also found that these potential problems with the camera existed in her study. She makes the final point that even though the autodriving

- Photo-elicitation helps to communicate by combining verbal and visual language. Hurworth (2003) found that interviewees carefully studied the images, reacting to cues found in the images more carefully than expected with the use of written cues alone.
- Photo-elicitation provides more detailed, longer and more interesting interviews compared to typical verbal interviews. Hurworth (2003) claims that interviewees found the photo-elicitation interview to be easy to follow, interesting, less tiring, and their analysis and reflection was greatly helped by the combination of photographs and verbal stimuli. Collier (1979:281) adds that during Cornell University tests “we compared the value of interviewing with and without photographs and discovered that the picture interviewer could continue his interrogations indefinitely, as long as he continued to bring fresh photographs. In contrast, the exclusively verbal interviews became unproductive far more quickly. In terms of subsequent content analysis, picture interviews were flooded with encyclopaedic community information, whereas in the exclusively verbal interview, communication difficulties and memory blocks inhibited the flow of information.”
- Photo-elicitation allows for the accumulation of much richer data than what standard verbal interviews would normally yield (Hurworth 2003). Carlsson (2001:126) concurs with this viewpoint by saying that “photographs are superior in their ability to convey experiences compared with spoken and written words only”.
- Loffler (2005) found that by using photographs during interviews for his research entitled *Looking deeply in: using photo-elicitation to explore the meanings of outdoor education experiences*, the photographs allowed for a deeper conversation. Furthermore, the level of meaning and understanding between the researcher and the interviewees was much greater.
- Schwartz (1989:152) also noted that interviewees did not hesitate to respond to photographs presented during the interview. Their inhibitions

The interviewing in particular became an exceptional source of rapport and a method of eliciting detailed information about economic transactions, technical skills, and social variables. More importantly, the interviews encouraged the informants' active participation in the research program by demystifying the photographic research process.

Consequently, social scientists have successfully used photographs as a means of gleaning necessary information from their interviewees.

3.7 Conclusion

Compared to other data-gathering methods, not much has been written on incorporating visual methods into the qualitative research process, and even less on how to use photographs successfully during interviews. Regardless of this fact, photo-elicitation interviews have been successfully used, particularly in the area of cultural studies, and have been used in diverse disciplines covering a variety of topics. This chapter therefore attempted to review the use of image elicitation during interviewing, focusing on photo-elicitation, while note was taken of how terminology has changed. Furthermore, some case studies where the method has been successfully used by contemporary social scientists were reviewed, including its use in child-centred research. Finally, mention was made of some of the advantages that researchers have found when using this method.

pictures would be taken in and around the school it would not involve sending them home with the cameras. This eliminated the risk of their losing the cameras and thus jeopardising the study.

Initially, I planned to give the children a handout explaining what they would be doing and why. But after compiling the handout and getting feedback from my supervisor, that the handout looked more like a thesis than a handout for children, I decided to write a simpler handout for the children and use the first one as a means of informing the parents and headmaster of the research that would be conducted with the children at the school (See Appendix B). The second handout (see Appendix B) was written in a conversational style – something that the children could better relate to – and with clear instructions for each group (e.g. Take a self-portrait; Take a group photo with yourself and your best friend; Take a group photo with your three best friends; Take a self-portrait with the objects you brought along that define your identity). I was further advised to make the handout clear enough that the participants would not feel confused as to what to expect and to offer some examples of what was expected. I also included a schedule of the main events that were expected to happen in the handout. In the schedule I informed them that we would first have a group meeting and a picture day and I gave them the date. I also informed them that we would meet later in groups of two and then in groups of four, and finally as a class group. In a discussion with the teacher about possible issues relating to the parents and children, we decided to get written consent from the parents before starting the process. The children would get their parents' signature on the first handout and return it to the teacher.

Many of the children were from single parent, middle to lower income class homes and they were all black or coloured. I planned to give them the same brief, namely to bring things from home that they felt were expressions of themselves. Furthermore, only one group would be supplied with cameras in order to take pictures of themselves and their peers. I planned to photograph the

- If they were interested in participating in sport and how this affected their identity;
- How they felt about the clothes they wore;
- Whether brand clothes were important;
- What music they enjoyed; and
- Their favourite and least favourite places at school.

Along with these topics I planned to ask them to discuss how they would visually express these themes. Those who had cameras could do so with the camera, those who did not have cameras could use words to explain this during the interview and those I took pictures of could express how they would rather have taken the picture.

Day 1 (introduction of project)

After meeting with the teacher and discussing the procedure an appropriate time to visit the class was decided on. Two handouts (see Appendix B) were prepared. I gave the handouts to the children when I met them. The first handout entailed an explanation of what the exercise was about and an introduction of the topic to be discussed, namely visualising identities, which had been prepared especially for the children. Furthermore, the procedure to be followed was also listed, namely photographs to be taken by some of them and of some of them by myself, and an explanation of the ensuing interviews. Also included in the handout were examples of what to bring from home in order to illustrate what they felt were expressions of their own identity. The second handout for the parents/guardians explained the whole procedure and was given to them in an envelope for their parents/guardians.

Each point in the children's handout (see Appendix B) was carefully explained to them to ensure that they understood everything clearly. They were all excited to be participating in something different. When I told them that it was about visualising their identity and that they would have to think about their identity and

writing their poems, and they were in some of the others' pictures. At the end of the photo day I told them that our next meeting would be the following week. I planned to show Group One index prints made from their cameras. They would then be asked to choose pictures that would be printed and used in their interviews. I also planned to choose pictures to print from those I had taken of Group Two. The interviews would start with Group Three (the group without pictures). I thought that it would be best to start with them before they could talk to the others about the questions. Instead of pictures they would use their poems during the interview.

The children really enjoyed themselves and gave me a group "Thank you Tracy" at the end. They told their teacher it was the best class they had had all year. The teacher later told me that they were too excited to concentrate on any other schoolwork for the rest of the day; she had to read them stories.

Progress discussion on 16 Aug. 2005

On discussing my progress with my supervisor, the interview procedure was addressed. We started off by reviewing the draft questions of the interview guide. As part of the refinement process we adjusted them and we addressed the point that the questions needed to be standardised for all three groups. The questions had to direct the conversation back to the interview topic, namely their identity. So even if they began talking about their least favourite teacher (as some of them had already done while I was taking pictures of them) I would need to bring them back to the interview topic by probing.

Questions like the following would be asked: a) Would you be a different person if that teacher wasn't there? b) Does that define who you are? c) What sorts of things define who you are? d) How do those experiences shape who you are? These types of questions would be useful in directing the conversation and keeping it on the topic (see Appendix B).

interview was taking place on Friday (19 August), the following two should be scheduled for Monday (22 August).

After the focus dyad interviews, group interviews would be scheduled, in which all four members of the group would participate. They would all be interviewed the same day in order to lessen the chance of the children talking to one another about the questions. The three group interviews of four participants per group were scheduled for the following Monday (29 August). Questions to be addressed in this session were specific for each group (see Appendix C).

Examples of questions are the following:

For Group Three: a) Would you have preferred to have used pictures to help express yourself during the interview?

For Group One: a) Did pictures help you to express yourself during the interview and if so, how? b) Do you think it would have made a difference if I had taken the pictures, and if so, why?

For Group Two: a) Did pictures help you to express yourself during the interview, and if so, how? b) Do you think it would have been better if you had taken the pictures, if so why?

A final group interview with the whole class would wrap up the interviews (see Appendix C). Questions to be addressed in this interview would be about the exercise, for example: a) What was this exercise like? b) Do you think you were in a good/bad group? c) Do you think the pictures helped in the interview? / Do you think pictures would have helped in the interview? d) Which pictures do you think were most helpful during the interview? Do you think it would have made a difference if I had taken the pictures? (directed at Group One) Do you think it would have made a difference if you had taken the pictures? (directed at Group Two).

inhibitions and quickly opened up. They talked freely about all the questions whether they were using photographs to help answer the questions or not. This interview lasted 50 minutes. These two seemed to be more outgoing and talkative than the ones in Group Three. Perhaps they felt more comfortable since they were friends, or perhaps it was partly because I had already met them during photo day. This may have made them more willing to confide in me. This is in accord with Schwartz's (1989:125) comment that "the camera itself became an important means of entering into the social life of the community". Schwartz also found that the "families welcomed [her] among them" (1989:125). Similarly, I was not perceived as a threat to them and they felt they could confide in me. They consequently offered very personal information (for instance about their fathers, dreams of boys and even underwear choices). When asked if they were still nervous at the end of the interview, they answered in the negative (see Appendix D for transcript of this interview).

The next interview also started off tentatively as the children warmed up to me as interviewer. The pictures seemed to be more useful during this interview, especially with Candy, as she did not talk much at the beginning, but when asked to comment on the pictures of her friends she seemed to be able to talk more freely. Both girls in this group spoke of their role models, for example TV or movie personalities and why they liked them. This helped them to think about themselves and project their thoughts onto something else, namely their hero. Both groups in Group Two commented on how the photos looked professional and how nice the pictures were.

In the Group One interviews, the photographs featured more in the questions that they could be used in; for example about their friends, and the school. They seemed to be very shy and not particularly outgoing children. I noticed that with questions that had no photographs as prompts, I had to probe more frequently in order to get them to answer, and even then I felt they still held back. I noticed the difference when they could point to a picture and talk about it and hold it in their

- Do photo-elicitation interviews where there is high researcher control over the production of visual material (i.e. researcher-generated photo-elicitation) conform to the norms and standards of the research community than photo-elicitation interviews where there is low researcher control over the production of visual material (i.e. participant-generated photo-elicitation)?

In examining these questions one must ask: What are the norms and standards of qualitative interviewing in the research community and what are the norms and standards of photo-elicitation in the research community? Chapter Two covers typical qualitative interviewing, as well as what is expected of the researcher conducting the interview and what the interviewee can expect during the interview. Furthermore, criteria for a good interview and what is considered to be useful data are listed. Chapter Three covers typical photo-elicitation interviewing and the difference between researcher-generated photo-elicitation and participant-generated photo-elicitation interviews. Photo-elicitation interviews share much of the same norms and standards and criteria for a successful qualitative interview.

With this in mind, the coding categories for transcript analysis were based on what makes for a successful interview, as listed in the literature review. This included the following:

- Interviewee participation. Were the interviewees shy? How did they experience the interviews? Did they enjoy the experience? Which interviews (with photos or not) were more enjoyable for the participants, and where could they feel comfortable and relaxed?
- Length of answers. Did they answer with very brief answers or did they express themselves openly and freely?
- Amount of probing necessary on the part of the interviewer in order to answer the question satisfactorily. More probing means a less responsive interviewee and a not too successful interview.

Table 1: Data analysis procedure

Determinants of data quality	
I) Behaviour conducive to data quality: – Interviewee participation – shy/comfortable, etc.	
– Length of answers and amount of probing necessary	
(II) Data quality: – contradictions/honest, open answers, etc.	
Themes in the textual data:	
A) Photo-elicitation interviews compared with normal qualitative interviews (with poems).	B) Researcher-generated photo-elicitation interviews compared with participant-generated photo-elicitation interviews
Which method of interviewing raised or lowered data quality?	Which photo-elicitation method raised or lowered data quality?
1) How responsive interviewees were based on above determinants of data quality when using/not using photographs to answer questions during the interview	1) How responsive interviewees were based on above determinants of data quality when using their own photographs/ photographs taken by the researcher to answer questions during the interview
2) Enjoyment of the data-gathering process: Which pre-interview procedure was enjoyed more by interviewees: poems or photographs?	2) Enjoyment of the data-gathering process: Which pre-interview procedure was enjoyed more by interviewees: taking the pictures themselves or having the pictures taken by the researcher?
3) Means of expression during the interview: What did interviewees find useful in terms of expressing themselves during the interview: poems or photographs?	3) Means of expression during the interview: What did interviewees find useful in terms of expressing themselves during the interview: photographs they had taken or ones taken by the researcher?
4) Other	4) Other

Pre-formulated and in vivo codes, grouped into themes and coding families based on Table 1 are tabulated in Table 2 as follows:

Coding families	Codes
	<p>Themes A & B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewees laughed when shy: This was noted when an interviewee said that he/she laughed when shy. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • Interviewees gave information that another group had neglected to give: At times interviewees offered information the other groups had neglected to mention. This was possibly because the other groups did not feel comfortable enough to give privileged information, or perhaps they simply did not know the facts. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • Interviewees sang and acted: Interviewees became so excited that they sang their favourite song and acted like their favourite singer. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • Interviewees were not willing to offer personal information: At times when the interviewees were asked about personal information like whether they had a boyfriend/girlfriend, some interviewees preferred not to talk. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • Interviewees interacted with each other freely: Interviewees felt comfortable with each other and spoke freely about one another. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • Interviewees offered information about each other: This was similar to their interacting with each other freely, but in this case it occurred when interviewees told something personal that the other interviewee would not necessarily have offered themselves. This could be about girlfriends/boyfriends, etc. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • Disjointed interaction between interviewer and interviewee: Interviewees misinterpreted or misunderstood the question asked by the interviewer. Interviewee and interviewer seemed to be operating on different levels of understanding, 'shooting past each other' so to speak. (Applicable to Themes A & B)
ii) Behaviour conducive to data quality: Length of answers and amount of probing necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewees gave short answers and interviewer had to follow up with probes: When interviewees gave short answers this prompted the interviewer to follow up with probes. Short answers made probes necessary. Probing occurred a great deal when interviewees were typically shy and unwilling to offer information freely. Finally

Coding families	Codes
	<p>when the children's answers were incomplete or confusing, the follow-up probe was totally unrelated, causing them to lose their train of thought. (Applicable to Themes A & B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewees did not answer the question: During some interviews interviewees answered in a confusing manner. When probed, they did not give clear answers and they were not asked any further questions on the topic, as they seemed unable or unwilling to answer. (Applicable to Themes A & B)
<p>2) Enjoyment of the data-gathering process: Which pre-interview and interview procedure was enjoyed more by interviewees: Theme A – poems or photographs? Theme B – taking the pictures themselves or having the pictures taken by the researcher?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons why interviewees liked the procedure: Interviewees were asked directly about their perceptions of the whole procedure. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • How interviewees felt at the beginning of the interview: Interviewees were asked directly about how they felt at the beginning of the interview. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • How interviewees felt at the end of the interview: Interviewees were asked directly how they felt at the end of the interview, nervous/comfortable, etc. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • What Group Three interviewees thought of the picture-taking process: Group Three were asked what they thought of the other groups taking pictures, and were asked about their reaction to the photography session if they had participated in the other group's activities. (Applicable to Themes A & B) • Training on how to use cameras: Interviewees in Group One were asked directly if they thought that they had received adequate training in using the disposable cameras before they were sent off to take their own photographs. (Applicable to Theme B) • Interviewees in Group One were comfortable about taking pictures: Interviewees from Group One were asked directly if they were comfortable about taking the pictures. (Applicable to Theme B) • Interviewees preferred someone else to take the pictures/to take the pictures themselves: Interviewees' responses to the question of whether they would have preferred to have someone else take pictures for them or if they had enjoyed taking the pictures themselves. (Applicable to Theme B)

Coding families	Codes
	had taken the pictures instead of themselves. (Applicable to Theme B)
4) Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewees were less nervous in pairs: Interviewees' reaction to the focus dyad group setup during the interview. • Interviewees' interest in photography was kindled by the project.

4.3 Conclusion

Chapter 4 covered the design of the empirical components of the study. This was divided into two sub-sections, namely the data collection process and the data analysis process. The data collection process covered the procedure that was followed in the field and what took place prior to the fieldwork, including preparation for the fieldwork. The data analysis process dealt with the body of textual data, namely the interview transcripts which were the core of the analysis. The two research questions were initially stated and two themes in the textual data were identified based on them. Coding families were consequently noted that would deal with these themes, and codes were assigned. Chapter 5 covers the results of the empirical study that were described in Chapter 4.

images are subjective to personal interpretations and to the meaning-making process (see Chapter 1). Schwartz implies that ambiguous photographs presented in the context of photo-elicitation interviews have a wealth of qualitative data waiting to be discovered by attuned interviewers.

This study was conducted in a controlled environment and, as suggested by Kvale (1996) and Secondulfo (1997), interviews were open-ended but remained semi-structured as a standardised interview guide was used throughout the various interviews. Children were the research subjects and were all members of the same Grade 7 class. Furthermore, the children were interviewed in paired focus dyads and as noted by Buss (1995:43), “[t]hey seemed to stimulate each other as each member of the pair triggered memories and thoughts for the other child”. Because children were the research subjects of this study, some important guidelines need to be noted at this time. Firstly, researchers dealing with children as mentioned have the responsibility to ensure that the research work “is enriching to both you and your young participants” (Matthews & Tucker 2000:299). Appropriate “child-centred” (Mauthner 1997:17; Clark 1999:42) or “child-friendly” (Parkinson 2001:138) research methods should thus be chosen when dealing with minors. Kvale (1996) found he had to heed this responsibility to his young research subjects when he interviewed school children with the aim of investigating the effects of a grading system on the children. The pupils were only partially informed about the purpose of the study. Kvale (1996:156) found that during the interviews their reports were “general and vague” as some of them were embarrassed about reporting on some of the ways they would relate to specific forms of grading behaviour. Kvale would have liked to have investigated this further in order to gain more reliable and detailed data, but chose instead to give preference to the “well-being” of the children (Kvale 1996:156). Secondly, Cappello (2005:170) observes that traditional interviews with children can be problematic “in the light of our responsibilities to our young participants”. This is because children quickly grow tired of talking about their experiences in a traditional interview setting. Additionally, finding the words to

are less involved in the pre-interview process of capturing images and participant-generated photo-elicitation where there is a low level of researcher control during the pre-interview procedure of image capture (see Chapter 3). It is noted that in both cases photographs were the tools that helped keep the children interested during the interview and encouraged engagement (Mathews & Tucker 2000) whilst developing “genuine curiosity in the research agenda” (Cappello 2005:171). It is further noted that when photographs are used as a means to elicit statements from interviewees as opposed to interviews where no visual stimuli are used, it is no longer the researcher alone who poses the questions; the pictures are the stimuli for response and are seen as a neutral non-threatening third party (Collier & Collier 1986:105). Furthermore, as stated by Collier and Collier, any awkwardness during an interview can be lessened when photographs are present.

Because photographs can help in limiting awkwardness in the interview setting, (Collier & Collier 1986:105), it is necessary to ask whether there is any difference in interviewee participation and quality of data resulting from the type of photographs used during the photo-elicitation interview, that is, researcher-generated photo-elicitation or participant-generated photo-elicitation. One of the most important stages of the interview process is the initial establishing of rapport with research subjects. This begins when interviewees are made to feel more comfortable at the beginning of the interview and continues when they are given the reassurance that they are important and that they are being heard throughout. Interviewees are thus allowed to relax in what would normally be a stressful situation. Interviewers can help them to feel accepted and by so doing become accepted into their worlds. Typically interviewees will open up more easily and speak freely about the topic of discussion when they are put at ease. Cappello (2005:177) found that photographs helped establish rapport when, at the beginning of each photo interview with young schoolchildren, she introduced the children to the photographs for the first time; this “was the children’s first glimpse of the pictures and successfully established rapport” (Cappello

natural result in the case of researcher-generated photo-elicitation, as the interviewees would already have participated in at least one photography session with the interviewer prior to the interviews and thus become more familiar with him or her. On the other hand, as noted by Heisley and Levy (1991), Clark (1999), Butler (1994) and Buss (1995) amongst others, researcher-generated photo-elicitation interviews have the advantage of being windows into the participants' worlds, allowing the researcher the opportunity to interact with the child on his or her level as they have captured what they find important themselves. What is of interest here is thus an analysis of the two groups' interview transcripts, comparing their participation during the interview, the quality of their answers, and their enjoyment of the whole process.

5.2 Study results

To recapitulate, the themes addressed by the study are:

- (1) the extent to which photo-elicitation interviews conform to the norms and standards of the research community compared to typical qualitative interviews regarding data quality, interviewee participation, enjoyment of the research process, and means of expression during the interview, and
- (2) the extent to which photo-elicitation interviews where there is high researcher control over the production of visual material, that is researcher-generated photo-elicitation, conform to the norms and standards of the research community regarding data quality, interviewee participation, enjoyment of the research process and means of expression during the interview, than photo-elicitation interviews where there is low researcher control over the production of visual material, namely participant-generated photo-elicitation.

The following coding categories were identified in order to address these themes:

1. **Determinants of data quality:** How responsive interviewees were during the interview when
 - using/not using photographs to answer questions during the interview;

Table 3: Group number, interview type and transcript location key

Group number	Type of interview	Interview numbers	Location of transcripts
Group One	Focus dyad participant-generated photo-elicitation interview	Interviews 1.1 and 1.2	Appendix D
Group Two	Focus dyad researcher-generated photo-elicitation interview	Interviews 2.1 and 2.2	Appendix D
Group Three	Focus dyad qualitative interview with poems	Interviews 3.1 and 3.2	Appendix D
Group One group interview	Focus group of 4 participants	Interview 4.1	Appendix E
Group Two group interview	Focus group of 4 participants	Interview 4.2	Appendix E
Group Three group interview	Focus group of 4 participants	Interview 4.3	Appendix E
Final plenary interview	Class focus group interview	Interview 5	Appendix F

1. Determinants of data quality:

Clarifications, contradictions and collaborations: In the course of the interviews there were times when the interviewees did not understand what was being asked, and there were times when I did not understand what they were saying. This resulted in additional probing, yet sometimes this did not help in understanding them completely. Conversely, there were times when they interacted freely amongst themselves and felt comfortable to express themselves freely amongst each other and with me as interviewer.

i) Behaviour conducive to data quality: Interviewee participation – shy / comfortable etc.

Interviewees were feeling shy or concerned: At times the interviewees were particularly shy, especially at the beginning of the interview.

C - They're so cute and fluffy and ...they ...like I don't know how to explain.' [Lenganzwe; *Interview 3.1: Line 169*]

Interviewees were not nervous: In response to the direct question – “Are you still feeling nervous?” This did not take place in interviews 1.1, 1.2 and 3.2.

In interview 2.1 Karen admitted to being shy at the beginning, when asked if she was still shy at the end she responded that she was feeling less shy:

'A - OK... I think that's all. But I have one last question... Are you still nervous?

C - Not a lot, no...

A - So you feel much better now?' [*Interview 2.1: Lines 685-687*]

In the same interview Lillie explains how she feels interviewees respond to the interview situation:

'B - Well the thing is that when you start an interview... it's always very nervous but when you have to answer questions, it's quite frustrating because you don't know what the questions are going to be so it's quite un-nice, but then as you get to get along and talk... it's like meeting a new person, you don't know what that person's like and... so you don't know what to say or not to say, you don't know what will hurt the person or not, so you're all nervous, so ja...' [*Interview 2.1: Lines 688-693*]

Zanella in interview 2.2 also indicated that she was shy at the beginning of the interview; when asked how she felt at the end of the interview she responded positively:

'A - OK, thanks I think that's the end of the interview, do you feel more comfortable after talking with me?

B - Yes.' [*Interview 2.2: Lines 507-509*]

way, so my first question is, please explain how you would define your identity.

B - ...um, what do you mean, in what way?

A - Well explain who you are, tell me what you like to do?' [*Interview 3.1: Lines 21-25*]

Josea also indicated he was unsure of procedure when he hesitated in answering a question about his friends and asked whether he could mention names:

'B - My friends here at school, here at school... OK, ja, I got friends, actually I think everyone is my friend, but my closest friends are the four guys, three guys in my school, can I mention names?' [*Interview 3.1 lines 61-63*]

At the beginning of interview 2.1 the procedure was not clear for Lillie either and she repeated what she understood would happen during the interview:

'B - So basically you're just going to ask us questions...?' [*Interview 2.1: Line 12*]

Later in that interview after Lillie had talked a great deal, Karen asked for the original question to be repeated:

'C - Can you repeat that question please?' [*Interview 2.1: Line 87*]

In interview 2.2 there were a number of instances where interviewer and interviewees did not understand one another too well. When questioning them about their school there was a misunderstanding because of terminology used:

'A - OK. So tell me a bit about this school. Are you proud to be associated with this school?

B - Ja.

B - Yes I am, because in my class ... we most always win matches.

A - What matches are these?

A - Oh it's for security.' [*Interview 2.2: Lines 187-196*]

Interviewees talked about a difficult topic: During some interviews interviewees opened up about difficult topics. Some difficult topics were easier to discuss with the aid of photographs, for instance talking about girls or boys. Or if they felt comfortable enough during the interview, to open up and talk about their unhappy home situation and the lack of fathers in their lives. This did not take place in interviews 1.1, 1.2 and 3.2.

In interview 2.1 Lillie and Karen were very talkative and they found it easy to talk about their personal life, especially since both came from homes where their fathers were like strangers to them:

'C - Ja, I live with my mother, my grandfather, my grandmother my great-grandmother, and my uncle, we live in a double storey, I don't live with my father, my real father ... he doesn't come and visit me often now, this whole year I haven't seen him, so I don't worry about that, I don't actually think about him.

A - OK

B - But he's married to another lady, and his wife can't have children ... so before he had me, he had ... another child, a girl, Lisa, she's my step-sister, so her cousin is Sharon and Sharon's sister used to come here last year. Step-cousins.

A - So have you seen your step-sister?

C - No, haven't seen her.

A - You've never met her?

C - Ja I have met her, my father took us one day to meet her, we went to the beach; we got along well ...

A - Oh, OK.

C - She's in Groote Schuur High school, she's in Grade 9 now.

A - OK' [*Karen; Interview 2.1: Lines 390-405*]

B - Yes... Kanya different woman, and then it's Hope and this other child, different woman.' [Lillie; *Interview 2.1: Lines 406-418*]

In interview 2.2 Zanella and Candy talk about their boyfriends and the boys in their class:

'B - ...I'm not in a relationship, but I have friends...

C - You know there's a guy...

B & C - (Laugh).

A - OK,

B - And you...

C - And me...

B - Ja, she has a relationship.

C - I have one but I don't see him like every day. I see him sometimes on the weekends... And here school I do have friends, but no boyfriends. But the Grade Six boys, I'm not friends with the Grade Seven boys.

B - Ja,

A - But not close friends... like you have with girls...

C - Ja...

A - You don't feel you can confide in them...?

C - Ja

B - Sometimes you can, but not like that... close friends, ja.' [*Interview 2.2: Lines 92-107*]

In interview 3.1 Josea and Lenganzwe both mention very briefly that they have single parent families:

'B - OK, my father died in 1992, and I'm left with my mother. She looks after me and stuff. Ja.

C - I only stay with my granny and my mother and my cousin, son actually my Daddy is going to marry another person so, my mother is just looking after me.' [*Interview 3.1: Lines 158-160*]

A - OK, so you can't really understand what they say... it's different.

C - Ja.' [*Interview 1.2 Lines 62-77*]

In interview 3.1 Lenganzwe was unable to express herself easily when asked what subjects she liked or disliked:

'A - OK, maths, you particularly don't like. And what about you Lenganzwe?

C - ... I need to think about this... I don't know...

A - you don't know, OK, that's fine, OK you told me a little about yourself, can you explain a little more about your personality, how do you see your personality?' [*Interview 3.1: Lines 43-46*]

Later in interview 3.1 Lenganzwe found it difficult to explain why she liked cats more than dogs:

'C - Ja, actually I love cats. I love cats more than dogs.

A - Oh, is there a reason?

C - They're so cute and fluffy and ...they ...like I don't know how to explain.' [*Interview 3.1: Lines 167-169*]

In interview 3.2 Nathin was also finding it difficult to talk about girls:

'B - Me, I don't have girl friends, but I do hang out with girls, but...

A - ...they're not close friends

B - Ja.

A - OK, is there a reason for that?

B - Girls... they like to talk about something I don't know, sometimes I get confused. So I just leave it.

A - OK, so you can't understand them...

B - Ja. They're too complicated.' [*Interview 3.2: Lines 107-114*]

Interviewees laugh: Generally when interviewees felt comfortable with each other and the interview setting they were able to relax and laugh. However, they

C - Oh, you should see what they do when they swim... they go on their bare bums and they slide on the ground... (laughs) there's like water on the floor and they slide...

A - Where?

B - In the toilet.

C - In the boys' toilet...

A - In the toilet?

C - So you see all the children are in the classrooms doing work and there's nobody in the toilet so they like slide from one across, like this, but they do it on their bums.

B - That's really their favourite place...

C - Ja really (laughs).

A - They told me that it was their favourite place because only they're allowed in there no teachers...

B - Oh it was the "gents"...

C - Oh the "gents" only for the Grade 7's

C - Ja and did they tell you that they're not allowed going in there.

B - Ja they're kicked out now.

A - Why?

C - Because the one messed up the... soap thing... the liquid thing that you wash your hands with...

B - Ja.

A - They broke it

B - No they didn't break it, they wasted it, and then the same boy was throwing up tissues up there, so they said no, so they messed in there so they're not allowed in there any more.' [Interview 2.1: Lines 323-348]

Interviewees sing and act: Interviewees who became so excited that they began singing their favourite song and acting like their favourite singer. This occurred only once in the study, in interview 2.1.

'C - Basically she's asking if you have a boyfriend...

B - No (laughs).

A - No?

B - I can't tell you...

A - Oh, OK, is it a secret...

B - Yes, secret.' [*Interview 1.1 Lines 79-84*]

In interview 3.1 Josea was not willing to open up freely. When probed, he gave very careful answers, taking caution not to say too much:

'B - I used to play soccer for a club, but then I left, I don't know why but I guess... I did it for about two years, it was fun but, I left...

A - No reason?

B - Not really.' [*Interview 3.1 Lines 188-191*]

When asked more personal questions about special friends of the opposite sex in interview 3.1 Lenganzwe answered carefully while Josea was apparently not comfortable to share private information. He refused to comment at all:

'A - OK, have you got any friends that's the opposite sex, have you got any guy friends, or have you got any girl friends, tell me about them...

B - Ja, I think they are my friends...

A - Are they your class members?

B - Ja.

C - Ja, If we speak to them play sometimes with Josea like play cards with them, ja.

A - OK, but are they just your class friends, not a special girlfriend or boyfriend?

C - No, they're just my class friends...

B - No comment.' [*Interview 3.1: Lines 77-85*]

B - Ja, whenever you're called into the office you always think that you've done something instead, even if it's about something else... you always think "what have I done this time?" [Interview 1.1: Lines 103-115]

At times Roy was a little closed; not easily sharing personal information. The photograph of the garden, with a little prompting by Brenda along the way, sparked a conversation that led to him admitting that he likes nature because of his father's influence:

'A - And what's this picture here? (Points at picture of garden.)

C - ...it's the garden, outside... the garden...

A - ...is this your favourite place too?

C - No, the toilets... theirs is the garden (pointing at Brenda)

A - Why did you take this picture?

C - I like plants.

A - ...you like plants?

B - He likes nature.

A - oh, OK... so please explain a bit about that.

C - Well, I couldn't get into the toilet, the top toilets are locked, so my next favourite thing is gardening and that, because my father is really into nature and that... so I follow in his footsteps.' [Interview 1.1: Lines 156-167]

In interview 2.1 there were 28 instances where Karen and Lillie interacted with each other freely. They were good friends and were apparently able to talk without inhibitions. Some of those instances are the following:

'A - Oh, OK and are you shy, or do you think you're outgoing?

C - A bit shy, like now, I like laughing when I'm shy.

A - Oh, OK.

B - And she likes making up stories.

C - I like that.

C - Ja we always win, but the boys... ..with Helderberg...

B - ...the boys with Helderberg, they don't win...

C - ...because...

B - ...the field is too muddy.

A - Oh, and they don't like that?

B - Ja, we don't have muddy fields here and they're not used to that.

B - They are used to the dry ground... ..but we girls, OK, we're OK, we win... ja.

B - Ja'. [*Interview 2.2: Lines 120-129*]

Later in the same interview when talking about their favourite place Candy and Zanella answered as one person:

'A - OK... OK please tell me about your favourite place at school.

B - Well it's the garden of course, because it's pretty and it's quite nice... but it's very cold.

C - In winter you know... in the morning if you like go in the garden it's actually freezing.

B - And if you come there later it's quite warm in the garden, but anyways... it's very nice...' [*Interivew 2.2: Lines 180-183*]

Interviewees offering information about each other: This is similar to their interacting with one another themselves freely, but in this case interviewees told something personal that the other interviewee would not necessarily have offered themselves. This could be about girlfriends or boyfriends, etc. In interviews 1.2, 3.1 and 3.2 no information was offered by the other interview partner. This may have been because they were not close friends as in the case of interviews 2.1 and 2.2, and therefore they could have been more reserved.

In interview 1.1 Roy and Brenda were comfortable talking with each other, and seemed to be able to talk freely about each other. Brenda commented on Roy's academic abilities in certain subjects:

C - Ja, he likes watching girls, jumping up and down.' [Interview 1.2: Lines 110-115]

In interview 2.1 Karen and Lillie were very talkative and there were several occasions where they offered information about one another. Here Lillie admits that Karen is her best friend, which accounts for their being comfortable with one another and for their relaxed manner during the interview. This also possibly aided the quantity and quality of information they both offered in general. The use of the photograph in this dialogue as an unemotional third person clearly made it easier for Lillie to talk about her best friend who also happened to be sitting across from her:

'B - My best friend is in Grade Seven in my class, this is her...

(laughs) that's her (pointing at picture of Karen [Appendix G Set C Image C6]), and my best friend is a little bit flashy...

C - You see I get shy now...

C&B - (Laugh)

B - She's very pretty, and ...she's ...she talks so much, just like me ...and when we talk I want to talk, then she wants to talk, we kind of don't give each other a chance to say something, because every time I talk, then she wants to talk, then when she talks I want to talk. Kind of a mix up. And she likes playing with boys. You see I'm a tomboy, she likes playing with boys, you see Karen, she's always talking to the boys.

C - I'm also a tomboy

B - We're both tomboys I guess, no she's not a tomboy.

C - I'm a Tomish Boyish (laughs).

B - I'm a tomboy, you see we play with the boys, do stuff that boys do.

C - Ja, excepting flirting with the girls.

B & C - (Laugh).

B - No, no, except that (laughs)

B - And Karen is the "look at me" type.

B&C - (Laugh).

But the Grade Six boys, I'm not friends with the Grade Seven boys.'
 [Interview 2.2: Lines 92-101]

Disjointed interaction between interviewer and interviewee: This occurred in the case of interviewees who misinterpreted or misunderstood the question asked by the interviewer. Both interviewee and interviewer seemed to be operating on different levels of understanding, 'shooting past each other', so to speak. This only took place in interview 3.2 when Nathin was talking about his family. His comments were unclear and further probing did not clarify the situation until the end of the dialogue:

'B - I don't have a brother, but I do have one cousin.

A - OK.

B - He's younger than me, he's ten years old. Sometimes he's annoying, but sometimes he's not.

A - OK.

B - Yes.

A - Do you see him often?

B - Yes. We like to play with each other; soccer, we like to play soccer sometimes. Also I like him.

A - So how often do you see him?

B - Every day, he lives at my house.' [Interview 3.2: Lines 207-217]

ii) Behaviour conducive to data quality: Length of answers and probing necessary

Short answer and follow-up probes: The fact that interviewees gave short answers resulted in follow-up probes response from the interviewer. Because of short answers, probes would be necessary. Probing occurred a great deal when interviewees were typically shy and unwilling to offer information freely. Finally interviewees may have opened up, giving honest open answers towards the end of a series of probes.

noted in interview 2.1 only when Lillie admits that she is an extrovert and Karen also mentions that she likes to talk:

'A - OK, are you outgoing...

B - Ja, I'm outgoing, an extrovert

A - You like people...

B - Ja I like people, social, I'm the social type person, I don't think you'd ever see me sitting alone, well, at times I do sit alone, there are times when you just feel like sitting alone and thinking and not always with people, but most of the time you see me with friends talking to someone. But if I alone probably just need a little bit of space, I'm not the person to ...push everybody away, I like talking. I love talking too much... Ja, and what else, I do like making jokes, sometimes gets me into trouble, but, ja...

C - Can you repeat that question please?

A - OK, your character...

C - I'm a person who likes talking, in my last report from Grade Five already. In Grade Four I used to talk with myself, talk to my pictures like what colour should I colour you.

A - Oh.

C - In Grade Four also in my report is Karen tends to talk, I don't listen I just talk I like talking...' [*Interview 2.1: Lines 76-92*]

Long answer, off the topic of the question: Interviewees offer particularly long answers, moving away from the topic of discussion. This occurred during interviews with particularly talkative interviewees. I would need to stay focused and directed in order to maintain control of the interview situation. This only occurred in interview 2.1 where it happened 7 times.

Both girls in interview 2.1 were very talkative and often when they got going they would just talk about anything that came into their heads, an example is where

In interview 1.1 Both Roy and Brenda were expressing their feelings about one of their classmates. Venting occurred twice in this interview:

'B - Sometimes he talks English and you can't understand.

C - Nobody understands him... (laugh)

B - Nathin... ..he always says things that don't make sense... like, I don't know... he's crazy that boy, maybe he's from another planet.

A - Oh, OK...

B - He always says things that you don't understand, he tries to make jokes, but they're not funny.

And he says you people don't have a sense of humour. He can't tell good jokes.

A - But no one understands him...

B - No...

A - Maybe he only understands himself.

B - Ja.

C - Could be...

B - And he likes following Josea... he can't go anywhere without him. He always tries to be like him.' [*Interview 1.1: Lines 56-69*]

Venting occurred twice in interview 1.2. In one case Eddie and David passionately expressed their dislikes around school:

'A - Oh... something else...?

C - Ja, there are no school uniform for like when you play soccer, you must wear shorts and takkies and white shirt... ja.

A - Oh, so they don't have...

C - Ja, I don't like it...

B - ...and the other thing I don't like is that soccer children don't have like a kit to wear... like pants... that we must wear another short pants that's blue and white with a school badge. That's what I don't like.

A - So, you'd prefer to have a kit, like an athletics kit or something...

let's say that you're telling a child to get into line ... like now, I'm not a prefect, but always when they're standing in line they irritate me they play they talk and everything, so I say stop it, and she (the teacher) says you stop it you stay in your line, you... And I'm like, Ma'am they're irritating me, but she says you look...' [*Interview 2.1: Lines 201-223*]

In interview 2.2 Zanella and Candy also felt strongly about some topics. Venting took place 5 times during that interview. One particular time was the topic of fashion and in this case Candy's lack of independence in purchasing her desired clothing:

'C - Like... fashion, I love the new style, the new fashion. But my mother she sometimes buys me clothes that I don't want. So that's why I prefer going with her shopping. Like on Christmas, she says that I mustn't go buy myself clothes...

A - That you mustn't buy clothes?

C - ...that I mustn't, like my father he wanted to give me money to go buy myself, that I must go alone, then my mother said no.

A - So she wouldn't let you.

C - Ja, I don't know why, because ... she likes the olden days clothes sometimes, and I don't like them. So I tell her that I don't want that. Then she says that you're going to see people are going to be wearing this, and then I say no, I don't like this, they may be wearing this but I don't want it.'

[*Interview 2.2: Lines 377-387*]

In interview 3.1 Lenganzwe expresses her dislike of the situation of her having to give up her African dance classes. Venting only occurred once during this interview:

'C - I used to do African dance at Dankisu, but then I left because they didn't think about children like after like maybe they just did classes till six o' clock and we have homework to do, lots of home work, so that's why I left it because they didn't think about us.' [*Interview 3.2; Lines 192-194*]

A - Oh, he wants to bite you.

C - He bit my cousin, he bit my cousin's finger open already.

A - His finger...

C - ...but he's smart, he doesn't go for your shoes...

A - Ja...

C - ...he goes and sits on the front of your foot and crawls up onto your pants you got on and he tries to pull that down and then he bites you...'

[*Interview 1.1: Lines 286-296*]

In interview 2.1 rambling on took place 6 times during the interview. One such case was when Lillie and Karen were talking about the kitchen and what they do there:

'C - Oh, (looking at the picture of the kitchen [Appendix G Set C Image C11] in the kitchen, I like that too, because we eat there.

B - We're always making food there ...

C - And I made a vegetarian dish, I love it, it was "Hay stacks" with chips... mmm...

B - It was very nice ... But the boys ... we said we mustn't take too much so that we don't finish it ...

C - I just took little bit.

B - We just took a little bit, and they made fun of me when I took some and then we said "look at you guys, you taking a lot", and they said "but we didn't say that..." [Interview 2.1: Lines 280-288]

In interview 2.2 Cindy rambles on about her father and cousins:

'C - Me, I live with my mother, but sometimes my father comes to visit, because he like, he works in Jo'burg, so like some weekends he come to visit us. And then like maybe December holidays, some of them go to Jo'burg to my uncle, he's got two children. A girl and a boy. One is like 18 or 16 and the other is 14. So like, it's nice when you go there, it was actually nicer when we were little children, because we used to play there

In interview 2.1 Lillie talks about herself:

'B - Ja I like people, social, I'm the social type person, I don't think you'd ever see me sitting alone, well, at times I do sit alone, there are times when you just feel like sitting alone and thinking and not always with people, but most of the time you see me with friends talking to someone. But if I alone probably just need a little bit of space, I'm not the person to ...push everybody away, I like talking. I love talking too much... Ja, and what else, I do like making jokes, sometimes gets me into trouble.'
 [Interview 2.1: Lines 79-85]

In interview 2.2 Zanella talks about their love for the garden:

'B - Ja, but we enjoy the boys coming there, you know the boys, they make us laugh of cause, you know the boys are very entertaining. So now the boys prefer going there and we chat and then maybe they hear us because we're laughing so loudly, because Josea and Nathin and Eddie they like telling jokes, and David, so , we enjoy their company, because we're always laughing around them. But no teachers are there, no more laughing.' [Interview 2.2: Lines 229-233]

In interview 3.1 Josea expresses why he'd like to attend a bigger school:

'B - Because a bigger school means more fun, I don't like... there's more people to socialise with, because like for instance we are five boys in our class, it would be nicer if we were like eight or something.' [Interview 3.1: Lines 101-103]

In interview 3.2 Natalie talks about her friendship with the boys:

'C - I enjoy being friends with boys, because they, like if you do something to them, they will not be, like angry with you for a whole month. They discuss it and say sorry and stuff... but girls... I don't really enjoy them.
 A - They can be more difficult...

B - Sometimes ... I don't know ...' [*Interview 1.2: Lines 92-99*]

In interview 2.2 Candy and Zanella were discussing brand clothing and when asked if their friends mind if they wear brands, Zanella gave an easy answer by saying her friends don't mind:

'A - So do think it's not a good thing then to wear brands, because other people could get jealous.

C - Ja.

C - But if for example, if they have it they don't get jealous but if they don't have it, sometimes they do.

B - Actually my friends don't mind.' [*Interview 2.2: Lines 429-434*]

In interview 3.1 Josea also gives a canned answer when asked about brand clothing:

'A - OK. And what about brand clothing, brands...

B - ja, it is, it is good, but sometimes it's like a waste of money, to buy brands, but if you've got the money then you can do it, but also think of the future...' [*Interview 3.1: Lines 234-236*]

In interview 3.2 Nathin mentions that his mother is strict, but he doesn't complain about it, as most teenage boys would, he rather gives a canned answer:

'B - I live with my mother, my father lives in Grahamstown, my mother's quite strict about schoolwork, certain times I need to do my school work, the fun stops ...

A - OK, and you do your work ...

B - Yes, very strict about school work.

A - How do you feel about that?

B - I'm OK with it, because I know I need to work sometimes.

A - Ja?

B - Sometimes I need to work more ...

A - Ja... So you think your mother's fair with you?

B - ... and jeans, but the T-shirts I don't care about.

A - So what jeans are good?

B - Like Levi's, also Lacoste, all those nice jeans ...' [Brenda; *Interview 1.1: Lines 332-340*]

There was a seeming contradiction in interview 2.2 when Candy and Zanella explained that the bathroom was their least favourite place because it was so smelly, and I had already heard from some of the boys that it was their favourite place. On asking the girls about this they clarified the situation:

'A - OK ... the guys were telling me that they liked the bathroom, it was their favourite place.

B - Well, it's their place, ja ... They like it because they're always sitting there chatting.

A - But don't they smell the bad smell?

C - I don't think so ...

B - ... I think they're used to it.

C - I think they're used to the smell, because that smell has been there for years so ...

B - They're used to it.' [*Interview 2.2: Lines 287-293*]

In interview 3.2, Josea and Natalie were telling me about themselves. In this instance Natalie did not agree with Josea's admittance of being shy and she indicated this by shaking her head:

'A - OK. You told me about your characters, you're a little shy (indicating towards Natalie).

C - Yeah, I'm shy...

A - How would you explain your character? (Speaking to Josea)

B - I'm funny, shy a little, yeah, not a lot.

C - (Shakes her head)' [*Interview 3.2: Lines 45-49*]

A - Ja, be honest it's good.

B - Ja.

A - OK, any reason?

B - I just don't like it, well, no like certain subjects, not all schoolwork. Ja. Which is maths.' [*Interview 3.1; Lines 38-42*]

During interview 3.1 Lenganzwe was unclear while describing her family, prompting further probing, but this still did not provide a clear, understandable answer:

'C - I only stay with my cousins and they're like my brothers and sisters, so I'm like the only child, but my cousins are like my sisters and brothers, so we are really, really close.

A - So how many cousins do you have?

C - Twelve,... ja twelve.

A - Twelve, wow!

C - Ja.

A - And you all live in one house?

C - No...' [*Interview 3.1: Lines 149-156*]

In the same interview Josea was asked about music, and his answer was unclear. He did not seem to understand the question very well or he did not want to give too much information when probed:

'A - Oh, what about music – did you ever do music lessons?

B - Not music lessons, but I rap.

A - OK, so tell me a bit about that.

B - A bit about that ... ja, and I ... what do you want to know about that?

A - Well how did you get interested in that?

B - Oh, how I got interested, well ever since I was small I liked music a lot, but I was, let's just say you heard it somewhere and you liked it.

A - And you tried it yourself ...

B - Ja I do it myself.

A - What did he do?

C - No, he, I like him as the Grade Sevens, when I was in Grade Six, Grade Seven boys ...

A - OK.

C - Well, the other day he said something which I told my mother, my mother came to the school. Well, Joe hasn't forgotten about this. But that until now, he keeps on bugging me about that.

A - So, you find your parents are a bit interfering?' [*Interview 3.2: Lines 219-229*]

Interviewees did not answer the question: During some interviews interviewees answered in a confusing manner. When probed they did not give clear answers and they were not asked any further questions on the topic as they seemed unable or unwilling to answer. This did not occur in interviews 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 or 2.2.

In interview 3.1 Josea was talking about his family but did not give clear answers, and when probed further he did not answer fully:

'A - OK, now I want to ask you a little bit about your family, if you don't mind. If you have brothers or sisters please tell me about them.

B - I'm the only son.

A - You're the only child?

B - Ja.

A - OK.

C - I only stay with my cousins and they're like my brothers and sisters, so I'm like the only child, but my cousins are like my sisters and brothers, so we are really, really close.

A - So how many cousins do you have?

C - Twelve.... ja twelve.

A - Twelve, wow!

C - Ja.

B - Because we could take our own pictures, walk around the school having fun, and stuff ...

A - You enjoyed that ...

C - Freedom of choice.

A - Freedom of choice ... why was that important do you think?

C - Because if somebody gives you a camera and tells you exactly what to take and where to take it you can't call that your own picture.

A - So what did you think ... did you have freedom of choice?

C - Yes.

A - OK, anyone else?

D - I was excited, and loved taking the pictures, because we could take any picture when we were finished doing what we were supposed to do.

A - Ja, and then you took other ones of your friends and so on.

E - Had lots of fun.

A - Please tell me why.

E - It was nice taking the pictures.' [*Interview 4.1: Lines 3-20*]

In Group Two's group interview they also all enjoyed the procedure, especially posing for the pictures and not doing class work:

'A - I just have a few questions now, this is about the whole procedure ... firstly, anyone can talk. What were your impressions of the whole procedure that we did? ...tell me what did you think of it.

B - Good.

All - Ja, (laughs).

C - Excellent.

D - Out of this world.

C - Masterpiece, I liked it because it was taking photos. And I liked the sound of it.

A - Oh.

D - And I loved taking photos, because I could pose ...

All - (Laugh and talk at once.)

'E - My group was fun, really, really fun.

A - OK, tell me why.

E - ... must I give reasons ...?

All - (Laugh.)

E - ... it was fun, staying here and knitting and stuff ... and the other groups were gone, and we didn't do some work ... that was very nice. No work.' [*Interview 5: Lines 25-30*]

How interviewees felt at the beginning of the interview: Interviewees were asked directly about how they had felt at the beginning of the interview.

Group One had mixed reactions to being interviewed. Some were nervous, others were not:

'A - ... What about how you felt during the interview. When we started the interview, were you shy and nervous ...

B - I wasn't shy ... I wasn't shy.

A - OK, why?

B - Because we knew that we were going to have an interview, and we also know the person that we were going to have the interview with.

A - OK, so you felt comfortable with me ...

B - Ja.

E - I was shy.

A - Why were you shy?

E - I'm nervous, I don't know ...

A - You look a bit shy and nervous now ... why ... is it difficult?

E - Yes it is.

A - OK, why ...

E - I don't know ...

A - Try to think why ... OK, anyone else?

D - I was a little bit nervous ... I didn't answer the questions well ...

D - She wouldn't make showbiz ...' ' [Interview 4.2: Lines 89-91]

Group Three were mostly nervous. Only one person was not nervous at the start of the interview:

'A - OK, how did you feel during the interview?

E - Very scared.

D - I felt nervous ... very bad, at the end of the time it wasn't so bad, but firstly I was just nervous.

A - OK, that was my next question, did you feel nervous at the beginning, and was there a reason for that.

E - Ja, because I was nervous, the only way I could be less nervous was to keep on fiddling with my paper.

A - Ja ... so that helped, when you did something with your hand.

E - Ja, that helped.

D - Ja, I felt quite nervous, because I thought that you might ask me difficult questions, but ...then when the time goes by, the questions were easy ... and I was fine.

A - You didn't know what I was going to ask you ...

D - Ja.

A - That was what you were nervous about

D - Ja.

B - I'm used to this kind of stuff ... the TV everything, I'm not nervous ... I'm used to this kind of stuff.

A - You've done it before, this sort of thing?

B - Ja.

E - I was nervous, really, I was nervous ...' [Interview 4.3: Lines 14-34]

How interviewees felt at the end of the interview: Interviewees were asked directly how they felt at the end of the interview, nervous/comfortable etc.

D - Ja, because at first I was all nervous about the questions and that ... but as time went by, I got used to it ...

A - OK.

B - ... and, no I was not nervous from the start so it was like, cool all the way through the thing.

C - I was also fine, at first a little nervous but I didn't mind ...' [*Interview 4.3: Lines 35-46*]

What Group Three interviewees thought of the picture-taking process:

Group Three were asked what they thought of the other groups taking pictures, and their reaction to the photography session if they had participated in the other group's activities:

'A - ... if you did help participating with the other groups, being in their pictures etc. What did you think about that?

B - About the pictures ... us helping there ...

A - Ja, doing that ...

All - Yes, it was nice, fun.

A - OK, why do you say that?

B - Because it's just something that we don't normally do every day ... it's different, also like fun at the same time ... it's like we were also learning something about each other and stuff but doing in a fun way.'

[*Interview 4.3: Lines 117-125*]

In the final class interview, however, Josea was not so happy about the others' picture-taking time. He was, in fact, a little jealous of the others, even hinting that the procedure was not fair and it would only be fair if a Group Three participant won the camera prize:

'A - Didn't you help with Group One, help them taking pictures ...

D - No, they just like took about three pictures of us, and bye ... Because we couldn't say like take a picture of me, take a picture, because we're gate crashing their party. So we just had to write poems ... even if they

Interviewees in Group One were comfortable taking pictures: Interviewees from Group One were asked directly if they were comfortable taking the pictures:

'A - And were you comfortable taking the pictures?

All - Yes.' [*Interview 4.1: Lines 122-123*]

Interviewees prefer someone else taking the pictures to taking the pictures themselves: Interviewees' responses to the question of whether they would have preferred to have someone else take pictures for them or if they enjoyed taking the pictures themselves:

'A - Do you think you would have preferred to have someone else take the pictures?

All - No.

A - You would prefer to take your own pictures?

All - Yes.' [*Interview 4.1: Lines 124-127*]

Even Group Three noted that they would have liked to have had the chance to take the pictures themselves:

'A - OK ... if you were in one of those groups would you have preferred to have taken your own pictures, or would you have liked someone else to take pictures of you?

B - I don't know, our own pictures?

A - Well, like what Group One did, you know you guys helped them, would you have preferred to have done that?

B - Oh, yes, yes ...

A - OK, why?

B - It's no offence, it's better than writing ...

A - OK, why?

B - Because you get to play outside ... it's like an example, you don't get to play around with a camera every day ...

A - Ja.

A - Do you think, just for instance the subject matter of the pictures, not really the quality of the pictures, now think about what was taken ... do you think you would have taken the same pictures?

D - No.

C - No.

B - Not at all.

E - Not everything.

D - Maybe some ...

A - OK, why not?

D - ... because like I told you, you get a camera, you're so excited you just go that's nice, flash flash, that's nice, flash flash ... you don't think like what am I going to use this one for, so at the moment you ... "that's nice ..." you know you take all the time.

B - And some of the pictures you maybe would have two or three pictures of yourself in them ... because you wouldn't want to take pictures of yourself.

D - ...and you'd be taking pictures of your classmates all the time, because they'd be like "Take photos of me, take photos of me."

A - So do you think it would have made a difference during the interview if we'd have used pictures someone else took or pictures you took?

All - Yes.

E - If you took pictures ... you could choose something more interesting...

D - It would make a difference because firstly if one of us had to take and we had to use their pictures, wouldn't be so helpful, because there might be a blur and there might be something skew or something like that and it wouldn't come out nice ...

A - Quality ...

D - Ja, quality.

B - It depends if you can take pictures ... because some people can, and some people can't, Like also Brenda, when she was taking pictures, other people were like "take pictures of me, take pictures of me"...

What would interviewees do differently or what they did not like:

Interviewees' responses when asked directly if they would have done anything differently or if there was anything they did not like

All the groups said they would not have done anything differently when asked this question, even Group Three. However, they later indicated the contrary in the final class interview:

'A - What would you have done differently?

All - No, nothing.

A - Nothing, you liked everything?

All - Yes.' [*Interview 4.1: Lines 128-131*]

'A - OK, was there anything that you didn't like about it [the procedure]?

All - No.' [*Interview 4.2: Lines 25-26*]

'A - ... was there anything you didn't like about it [the procedure]?

All - No, it was all just fine.

D - ... it was nice ... something different ...' [*Interview 4.3: Lines 11-13*]

'D - Can I just say that some people like us did not get the chance to play around with the cameras, so ... that was a bit ... a bit ... even I'm not just speaking for myself here, I'm speaking for every single person in this group.

All - (Laugh.)

A - OK, ja, I want to hear ...

D - ... we say that, we all say that ... we could have just got a chance just to take one photo, one picture, just one ... because we really ...

It was like we just write the poem and ... it wasn't nice ... it was fun for us, but not as fun as they got to play around with the cool stuff and we just had to play around with the pen and paper. It wasn't like ...'

C - To help you through.

A - And did they help you?

C - Yes.

A - ... anyone else ...

B - Don't know ...

A - But do you agree with Roy though?

All - Yes.' [*Interview 4.1: Lines 100-108*]

At the end of Interview 1.1 Brenda and Roy were asked if the photographs were helpful:

'A - ... do you think the photos were helpful?

B - Yes they were.

A - Why?

C - It makes it easier to explain.' [*Interview 1.1: Lines 388-391*]

Group Two were undecided about the role of the images. Some did not think they helped them to feel less nervous during their interview but they all agreed that they helped in some way:

'A - OK, What do you think the role of the pictures was in the interview, what do you think they were there for?

B - To help us ...

D - To help us be at ease and less nervous.

A - But you said that didn't really help.

B - But it helped her ... (Indicating Karen)

D - Ja, it helped her a lot ...

B - Since Karen is the shy one ...

D - Ja ... she's shy in interviews, but you should see her outside, she's ... not at all shy.

C - I didn't like these kind of things, cameras, recorders ...

D - She wouldn't make showbiz ...

Group Three thought that the role of the poems was to help me as interviewer to understand them, the interviewees, better and not to help them relax during the interview:

'A - OK ... what do you think the role of the poems was in the interview?

B - What do we think?

A - Ja, tell me why do you think I asked you to bring them in.

B - Just to ... like it's easier if you wrote it down, you read the poem before ... and you can see before like what kind of person we are and that kind of stuff. So that helped ...

A - So you think it helped me ...

B - Yes, ja.

A - ...to understand you better?

B - Ja.

A - OK ... did the poems help you to feel more comfortable during the interview, do you think?

All - No.' [*Interview 4.3: Lines 66-76*]

Did the poems help in the interview: Interviewees in Group Three were asked directly if their poems were helpful during the interview.

Lenganzwe in Group Three only indicated that her poem was helpful because she felt less nervous when she played with the paper:

'A - OK, now you had poems ... do you think the poems helped you during the interview?

E - Yes, very much.

A - OK, why?

E - (Laughs.)

A - ... was it because you were nervous and you were playing with it?

E - I was playing with it, ja ...

A - But you didn't really refer to the poem in the interview ... none of you did actually ...

Would pictures have been better than poems: Interviewees in Group Three were asked directly if they thought pictures would have been better as prompts than poems during their interview.

Josea in Group Three indicated that pictures are easier to understand than words:

A - OK, do you think if you had had images instead of poems would that have made a difference during the interview ... if you'd had pictures?

B - Ja, I think it might have helped ...

A - Why?

B - Because you see, a picture is better than ... it's like better than ... like radio and TV, if you see a thing it's actually better for your brain ... I don't know if I'm making sense ...

A - Ja.

B - ... it understands more, than words... [Interview 4.3: Lines 81-88]

Later in the interview there was a mixed reaction to the question. Some thought that writing about themselves was better because it made them think about who they were, and they felt that was better preparation for their interview than pictures would have been. They also noted that pictures may only have been applicable when answering certain questions:

A - But do you think it would have helped to have pictures during the interview?

D - I think it would have been the same because writing ... you still think about who you are ... I think it's the same.

A - OK ...

C - Pictures, I don't really like picture, listening is better.

A - Ja, but you think that would have been better than just writing something or just talking without anything.

C - Ja.

A - OK ... the pictures, do you think it's easier to explain if you have

A - Because some of the questions you could speak about the photos hey?

B - Yes.

A - OK so you all agree that the photo's helped ...

All - Yes.

A - OK, I remember there were some questions about your friends ... do you think they were helpful there?

B - Ja, because we could look at them, and think what they liked to do, sometimes ... ja' [*Interview 4.1: Lines 65-78*]

Likewise Group Two thought that some of the pictures were helpful:

'A - OK, do you think the pictures helped you during the interview?

All - Ja.

B - Some.' [*Interview 4.2: Lines 46-48*]

In Interview 2.2 Candy and Zanella indicated that only some of the photographs were helpful during the interview:

'A - Do you think the photos were helpful?

C - Some of them.

B - Ja some, because some were just sitting there.' [*Interview 2.2: Lines 510-512*]

Did the photographs help make the interviewees more comfortable:

Interviewees were asked directly if the photographs had helped make them less nervous.

Group One agreed that the pictures helped them to feel less nervous during the interview although none of them could remember why. Eddie, however, admitted that one of the pictures made him more nervous during the interview:

'A - OK ... do you think the pictures helped you to feel less nervous?

B - Some of the pictures ... and some make you nervous.

D - Because we already knew what we wanted to say, and because and you like as you went along you could ... and you understood ... you asked us questions ... that you could answer they were easy, they weren't hard so they didn't help as much.

A - They didn't help so much ...

B - But they did help to identify the people that you could see, and talk about.

A - Right, in that way helpful ... didn't really help you to feel less nervous though ...

All - No.' [Interview 4.2: Lines 46-57]

'A - OK, What do you think the role of the pictures was in the interview, what do you think they were there for?

B - To help us ...

D - To help us be at ease and less nervous.

A - But you said that didn't really help.

B - But it helped her ... (Indicating Karen)

D - Ja, it helped her a lot ...

B - Since Karen is the shy one ...' [Interview 4.2: Lines 81-88]

Photographs helped with answering questions: At times the photographs triggered new information, helping interviewees to express themselves more easily.

When talking about fashion, Eddie and David were able to refer to their pictures, which helped them to express their taste in clothing:

'C - Ja this is just a photo about my own self ...ja (Referring to photo [Appendix G Set B Image C8])

A - OK, please explain about yourself there, and why you were wearing those clothes ... because I asked you to wear something ...

In interview 2.2 Zanella uses the photograph of Candy to express her friendship with her even though she is sitting next to her. From there she explains what it is that she likes about her friend:

'A - OK, can you tell me a bit about your friends please?

B - Well, she's my friend (points at the picture [Appendix G Set D Image D5]) and I like spending time with her, because I like her stories, she's very talkative, that's why I laughed at the part when she said she's quiet at times, because she's really talkative.

A - OK.

B - She's wild, I know ...she likes playing, you know entertaining, because she's very fussy ...' [*Interview 2.2: Lines 58-64*]

Similarly, in interview 2.1 both Lillie and Karen uses a photograph (what Banks (2001:88) terms "a neutral third party") as a means of talking about their friendship even though the girl in the photograph is sitting right next to them.

'B - My best friend is in Grade Seven in my class, this is her ...(points at picture [Appendix G Set C Image C6]) that's her, and my best friend is a little bit flashy.

C - You see I get shy now ...

C & B - (Laugh.)

B - She's very pretty, and ... she's ... she talks so much, just like me ... and when we talk I want to talk, then she wants to talk, we kind of don't give each other a chance to say something, because every time I talk, then she wants to talk, then when she talks I want to talk. Kind of a mix up. And she likes playing with boys. You see I'm a tomboy, she likes playing with boys, you see Karen she's always talking to the boys.' [*Interview 2.1: Lines 113-121*]

'A - OK, Karen, tell me a bit about your best friend.

C - My best friend is here, this one (points at the photo [Appendix G Set C Image C6]), she likes jumping on my back ...what she just said everything,

D - Because the interview with the other person, like you talked and got used to each other ...

A - So you preferred to have a group of two, more than just you speaking to me?

D - Ja.

C - Sometimes, you get nervous alone ... very nervous, but since the other person is there, you're not very nervous ...

A - So that helps?

C - Ja.' [Interview 4.3: Lines 147-155]

In the final group interview Nathin and Candy once again appreciated the fact that they were interviewed in a group of two rather than alone:

'E - And we also found out something about other people there. So that's what we also liked ...

A - During the interview?

E - Ja, ja.

A - Because you were in a group of two in the interview ...

E - Ja.

A - ... do you think that was useful? If I'd just interviewed you, one person ...

C - I don't think if you'd just interviewed one person it would have been nice.

All - Ja.

C - Because some people are like shy, not comfortable ... That's what I'd say.

H - So you preferred to be in pairs?

All - Ja.' [Interview 5: Lines 43-54]

Interviewees' interest in photography was peaked by the project:
Interviewees' interest in photography was noted.

Code families and codes		Interviews					
		1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2
	Interviewees were not able to express themselves freely	A	P	A	A	P	P
	Interviewees laughed (frequency per interview duration)	8	3	24	5	1	1
	Interviewees laughed when shy	A	A	P	A	A	A
	Interviewees gave information that another group neglected to give	A	A	P	A	A	A
	Interviewees sang and acted	A	A	P	A	A	A
	Interviewees were not willing to offer personal information	P	A	A	A	P	A
	Interviewees interacted with one another	P	A	P	P	A	A
	Interviewees offered information about each other	A	A	P	P	A	A
	Disjointed interaction between interviewer and interviewee	A	A	A	A	A	P
2) Length of answers and probing necessary							
	Short answer (frequency per interview duration)	85	69	24	44	51	64
	Long answer (frequency per interview duration)	15	29	99	27	12	13
	Follow-up probes (frequency per interview duration)	89	85	82	70	70	95
	Extrovert	A	A	P	A	A	A
	Long answer off the topic of the question	A	A	P	A	A	A
	Venting (frequency per interview duration)	1	1	8	5	1	7
	Rambling on	P	P	P	P	A	A
2) Quality of data: contradictions / honest, open answer							
	Honest, open answer (frequency per interview duration)	20	17	16	18	10	20
	What interviewees thought I wanted to hear	P	P	A	P	P	P

Coding categories addressing themes	Photo-elicitation interviews	Non-photo-elicitation qualitative interviews
		photographs here and there.
Means of expression during the interview	They all agreed that the photographs were there to help them through the interview or to help them to be less nervous. They thought that only some of the images were helpful, particularly in identifying people or things that came up in the interview.	They thought that the poems were to help me to understand them better during the interview; however they admitted that the poems had also helped them to prepare for the interview by allowing them the opportunity to formulate their thoughts about the topic and write them down. One person thought that photographs would possibly have been better than poems. The others did not agree because they felt better prepared through writing the poems. They also mentioned that photographs would only have been applicable for certain questions.

Table 8: Comparison between photo-elicitation types – Theme 2

Coding categories addressing themes	Participant-generated photo-elicitation	Researcher-generated photo-elicitation
Behaviour conducive to data quality: Length of answers; amount of probing; collaboration	In the interviews where interviewees took their own photographs, participation was generally lower than the researcher-generated photo-elicitation interviews.	It was found that in the interviews where the photographs had been taken by the researcher, participation was higher than in the interviews where interviewees took their own photographs.
Data quality	Both groups had a similar quality of responses, with quality slightly higher in	The quality of responses was varied in the different interviews but evened out

6. Conclusion

6.1 Summary of the preceding chapters

Chapter 1 investigated the role of photographic images in social research by firstly looking at the history of visual research; following its development and various social science applications, especially in the areas of anthropology and sociology. Core social researchers like Howard Becker and Franz Boaz added to the acceptability of the medium as a viable and valuable social research tool. Later the Collier brothers built on this new visual awakening by introducing a method of using photographs in interview situations in order to gain deeper understanding of their research subjects. They are thus credited with the development of photo-elicitation as a social science research method and note that:

...photographs are charged with psychological and highly emotional elements and symbols. In a depth study of culture it is often this very characteristic that allows people to express their ethos while reading the photographs. Ultimately, the only way we can use the full record of the camera is through the projective interpretation by the native (Collier & Collier 1986:108).

Following the history of visual research, the use of photographs as visual data sources in their various forms was investigated, special note was taken of the change in thinking that photographs should be used “neither as visual data nor as notes, but as methodological devices for gathering ethnographic data” (Chiozzi 1989:44). Harper (1998) was credited with the founding of a ‘new ethnography’ in which interviewees and interviewer form a new entity in which collaboration between both parties takes place, and where the “meaning of the photograph is constructed by the maker and the viewer, both of whom carry their social positions and interests to the photographic act”. The next section covered the social scientist as photographer and the difference between photographer

conversation was then noted, followed by the role of the interviewer and the negotiation of a research role. Stages of an interview and strategies for structuring an interview were examined next. The three questions used in interviews were listed, followed by a description of conversation or interview guides. Some of the ethical issues surrounding qualitative interviews were discussed. Finally, characteristics of typical qualitative interviews were listed and some practical issues to keep in mind whilst interviewing were provided.

Chapter 3 explored the use of photographs as visual stimuli during qualitative interviews. This method, called photo-elicitation, was examined in some detail in this chapter. The various types of image elicitation were listed, one of which is photo-elicitation. Subsequently a discussion of the various types of photo-elicitation was entered into. These approaches were distinguished by the type of pictures used as elicitation devices, namely photographs taken by the researcher (researcher-generated photo-elicitation), photographs taken by the research subjects (participant-generated photo-elicitation) and the use of found or archival images for photo-elicitation. This study was concerned with the first two photo-elicitation approaches. A section followed in which some case studies where researchers have used the various photo-elicitation approaches successfully were discussed. It was noted that Photo-elicitation is particularly suitable for those instances in social research where images have greater impact than words. This is clearly the case in social studies involving children. With regard to this aspect, Prosser and Schwartz (1998:123) noted that photo-elicitation is a useful tool when dealing “with children, and those who respond more easily to visual, rather than lexical, prompts”. The final section of Chapter 3 thus investigated the successful use of photo-elicitation in studies involving children where the advantages of using this type of methodology were noted by several child-centred visual researchers.

The case study presented in Chapters 4 and 5 offered an opportunity to reflect on some of the theory discussed in the earlier chapters. This study was

Photographs were present in all the photo-elicitation interviews, and in the qualitative interviews poems the interviewees had written on the topic of discussion were present. It is important to mention that the results of this study are context specific and thus cannot be easily transferred to other settings. Furthermore, the comparability is limited because of existing variables like group dynamics, interviewees' personality, command of the language in which they were interviewed and the relationship to their interview partner. The following coding categories were identified in order to address these themes.

- Determinants of data quality: how responsive interviewees were during the interview when they used/did not use photographs to answer questions during the interview, and when referring to pictures they had taken themselves or to pictures taken by the researcher. Based on criteria set by the research community for interviewing, this was further divided into the following sub-categories or coding families: (I) Behaviour conducive to data quality: (i) interviewee participation – shy / comfortable etc. (ii) length of answers and amount of probing necessary; (II) Data quality: contradictions/honest, open answers and so forth.
- Enjoyment of the data-gathering process: Which pre-interview procedure was more enjoyable for interviewees: Did they favour poems or photographs? Did they prefer taking the pictures themselves or having the pictures taken by the researcher?
- Means of expression during the interview: What did interviewees find more beneficial as a means of expressing themselves during the interview: poems or photographs, referring to pictures they had taken themselves, or referring to pictures taken by the researcher?
- Other

The interviews held for the purpose of this study regarding photo-elicitation compared to typical qualitative interviews showed that in the case of **data quality**, the quality of responses was varied in the groups that had photographs

they had actually helped them to feel less nervous, and they thought that only some pictures were useful in identifying people or things they wanted to talk about.

Based on the analysis of the data and statements by the interviewees, the following findings were made:

- Photo-elicitation interviews conform more to the norms and standards of the research community regarding data quality, interviewee participation, enjoyment of the research process and means of expression during the interview than interviews where no photographs were present. However, all of these depend on the personality of the participants, namely whether they were outgoing or shy and their relationship to their partner, for instance whether they were friends or not;
- Both researcher-generated and participant-generated photo-elicitation interviews conform more or less equally to the norms and standards of the research community regarding data quality, interviewee participation, enjoyment of the research process and means of expression during the interview. However, as was the case above, these findings are context-specific and they are limited in that variables exist, such as interviewee personality, and interviewees' relationship with each other and with the interviewer.

6.2 Implications for theory and practice

This study was concerned with assessing the use of the visual method of photo-elicitation in qualitative interviews. Firstly, a comparison was drawn between photo-elicitation interviews and standard qualitative interviews. Secondly, the use of photo-elicitation as a research methodology was investigated by comparing two photo-elicitation approaches, namely researcher-generated photo-elicitation and participant-generated photo-elicitation. This study was, therefore, concerned with the evaluation of each method according to a set of norms and standards upheld by the research community regarding data quality, interviewee

The findings in this study confirmed what was said in the literature review chapters, the following points noted by visual researchers affirm what was found in the study.

- It was said that photo-elicitation interviews were preferable to standard qualitative interviews, particularly when dealing with children (Prosser & Schwartz 1998). This was clearly evident in this study as the photo-elicitation interviews prompted more detailed information from the young participants. Furthermore, they were more at ease in the interview setting, possibly because the photograph acted as a neutral third party.
- Photo-elicitation enhances communication by combining verbal and visual language. Hurworth (2003) found that interviewees carefully studied the images, reacting to cues found in the images more carefully than expected with the use of written cues alone. This was particularly noticeable with the presence of both visual and written cues. Interviewees did not even look at the written cues during their interviews, unless they were asked directly about them. However, the photographs were useful, particularly in identifying things and people interviewees wanted to discuss.
- Photo-elicitation provides more detailed, longer and more interesting interviews when compared to typical verbal interviews. Hurworth (2003) claims that interviewees found the photo-elicitation interview to be easy to follow, interesting, less tiring, and their analysis and reflection was greatly helped by the combination of photographs and verbal stimuli. It was also found in this study that the interviews where photographs were present were longer, with more detailed in-depth responses than the purely lexical ones. Interviewees were also more likely to divulge personal information in the interviews where photographs were present.
- Photo-elicitation allows for the accumulation of much richer data than what standard verbal interviews would normally yield (Hurworth 2003). Carlsson

- Dell Clark (1999) found that the inclusion of images in the interview process brought reality into the interview setting and thus facilitated questions and responses. The photographs acted as projective stimuli allowing interviewees the chance to reveal their own thoughts, attitudes and behaviours. It was clear that in this study interviewees identified with some of the pictures they had taken or that had been taken of them, allowing for relevant personal anecdotes to be expressed.
- According to Caldarola (1988:440), photo-elicitation is seen as a core collaborative technique in visual research: “[t]he interviewing in particular became an exceptional source of rapport and a method of eliciting detailed information...” This was particularly evident in the interviews where the interviewees were comfortable with each other and with me, the interviewer. This was evident in the interviews with Group Two, as they were friends and had already become familiar with me during the photography session when I was taking the pictures.

6.3 Possibilities for further research

This study contributes to our understanding of the role of photo-elicitation in qualitative research in that it has showed photo-elicitation to be an effective methodological tool for qualitative researchers because the use of photographs as elicitation devices contributes to the quality of data and heightens interviewee participation. Furthermore, photo-elicitation was found to be beneficial to interviewee participants because they enjoyed the research process and it helped them to express themselves during the interview. Thus the value of combining the visual and the narrative was clear in that the data gathered was substantially enriched and perhaps more importantly, allowed the participants to enjoy the research process. With the use of photo-elicitation a new empowering dynamic was introduced into the research context in the study in that this methodology promoted easy access to information that would normally prove

continually re-negotiated as time goes on and as new norms and standards are accepted.

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Appendix A

Figures

Figure 1: Peirce's triangular formation of signification
(Danesi, 1993:6)

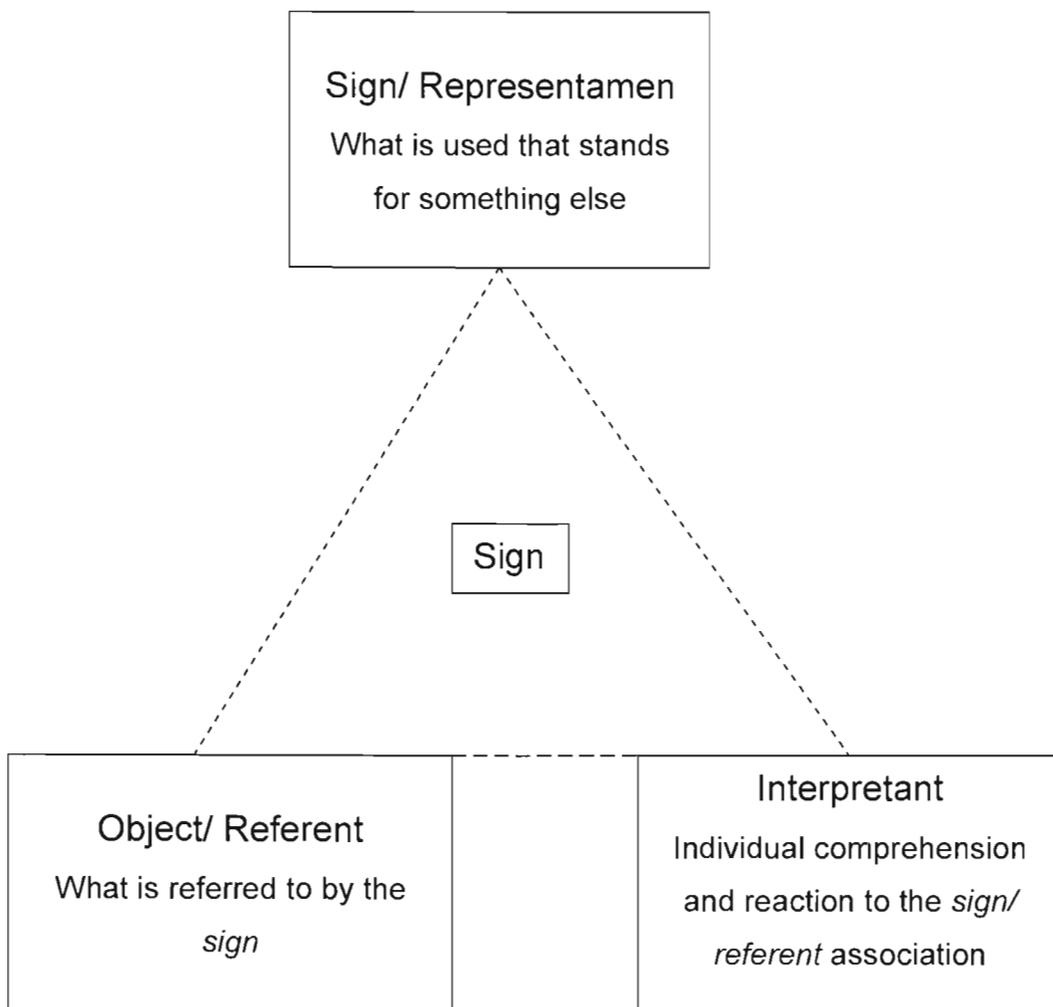


Figure 2: Interview classifications (Rubin & Rubin 1995:26)

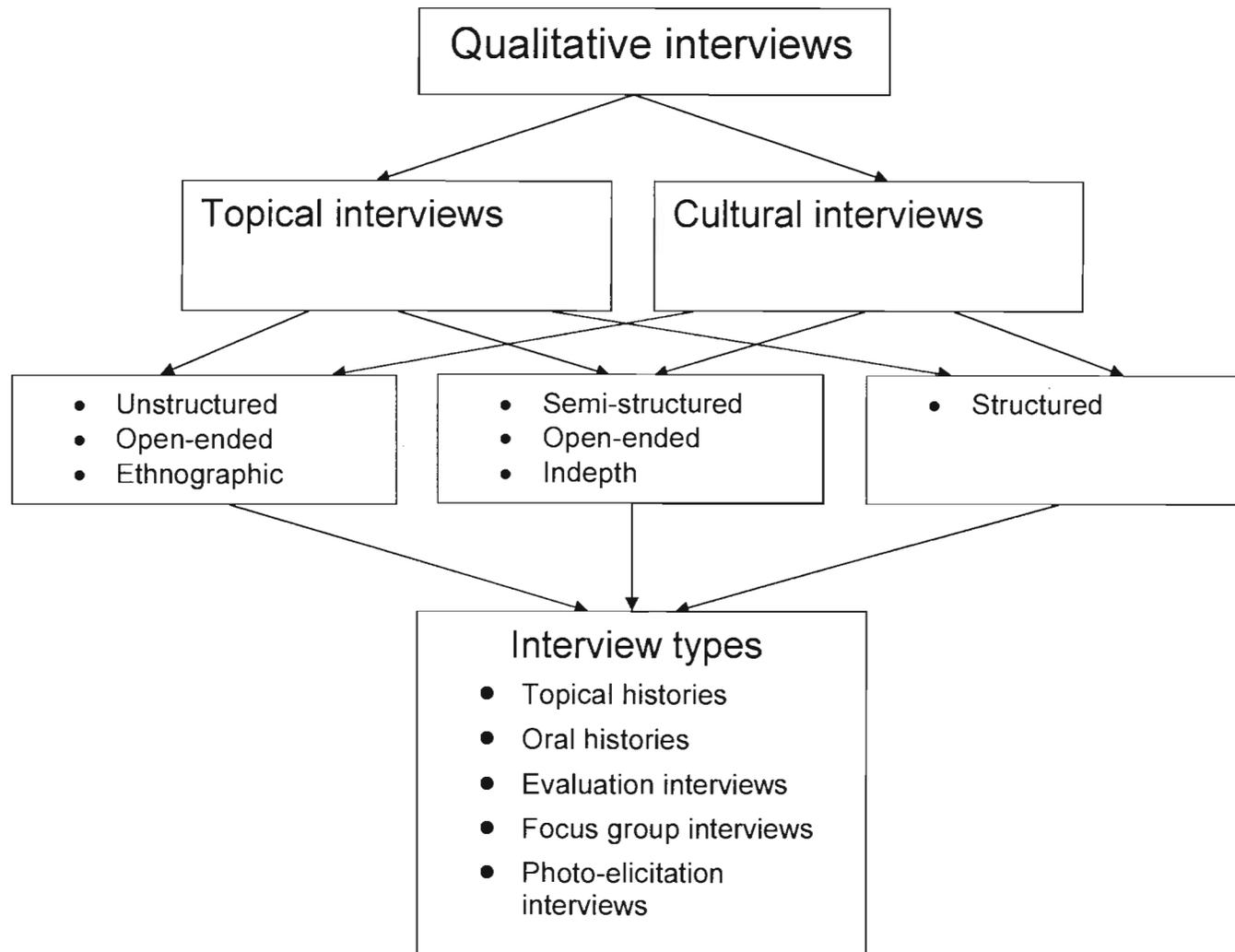
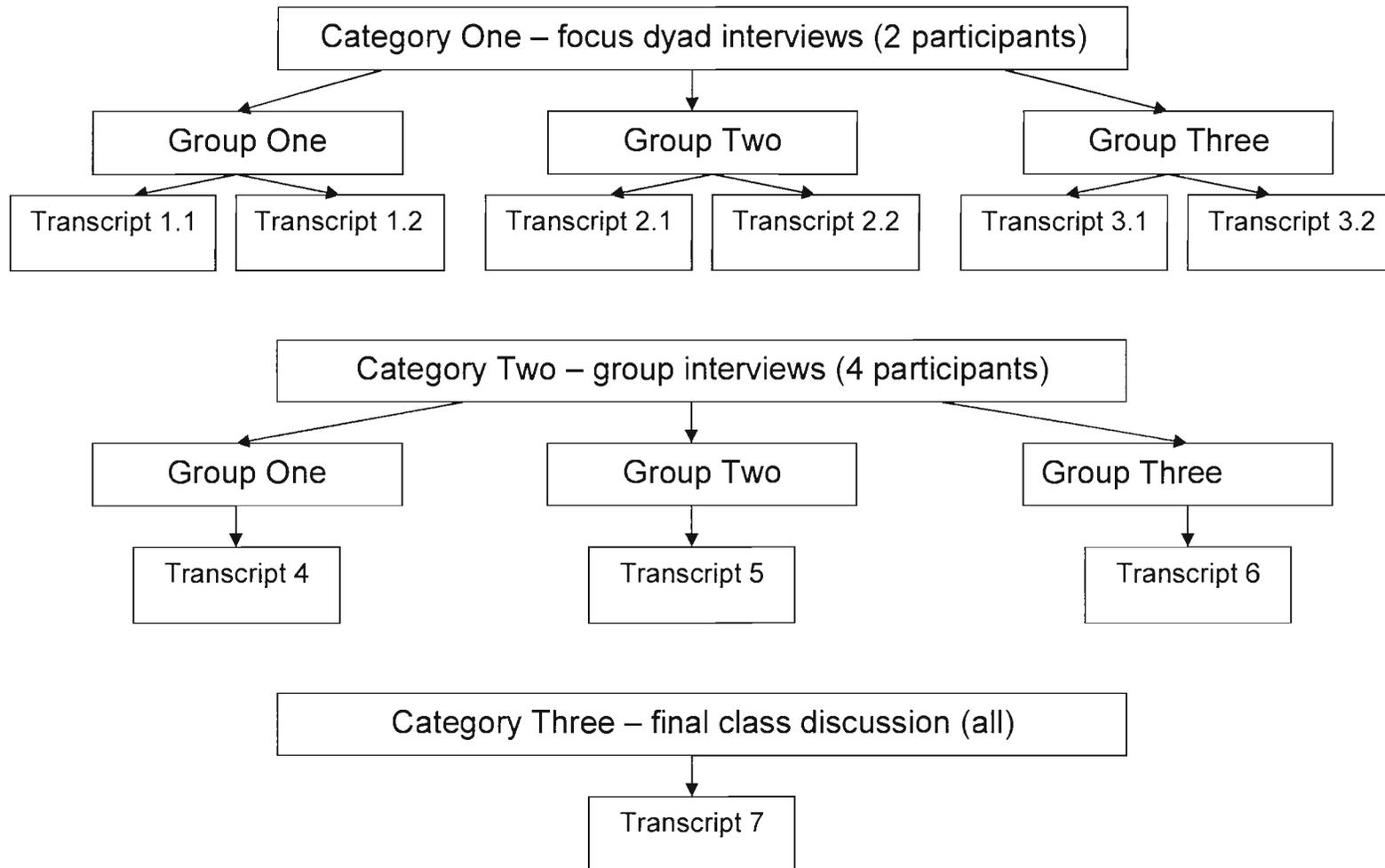


Figure 3: Projective tool for psychological testing and expected level of response
(Collier and Collier 1986:125)

<u>Extreme abstracts</u>	<u>Semi-abstracts</u> (Thematic appreciation tests)	<u>General representations</u>	<u>Lowest level of abstraction</u>
<p>(Rorschach, ink blot tests)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of self at subconscious level. • Fixations and sexual emotions • Very free associations thoughts triggered in subconscious and conscious. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submerged, unrealistic sentiments of self. • Free association regarding situations that could be possible in the 'real world'. 	<p>(clear line drawings)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong feelings of circumstantial reality. • Free association of universal issues. • Positive self image regarding supernatural, universal and cultural values. 	<p>(Photographs of familiar things)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exacting descriptive and reportage style. • Sweeping encyclopedic explanations. • Precise ID of circumstance or event. • Lack of submerged psychological responses. • Lack of free association.

Figure 4: Body of textual data



Appendix B
Project orientation forms

Orientation of the research project (for the participants)

You as part of the grade seven class at Hillcrest will be taking part in research for a masters thesis. You will be divided into three groups with four children per group. Interviews will take place later where the groups will be split in half with two children for each interview. A second interview will take place where your first group of four will participate in that interview. The theme will be "visualising identities". Because this is for a research project I will record the interviews on audio tape. To keep your names confidential, when I write about you in the article you will be given false names and if any of your pictures are to be published you will be asked first. In order to divide you into groups in a fair way, all your names will be written on pieces of paper and drawn. At the end of the project you will again take part in a lucky draw where you stand the chance of winning a camera of your own. If you are in groups one and two you will be asked to bring things from home that you feel are expressions of your self identity and which can be included in photos, these could be for example sports equipment like a tennis racquet or a ballet outfit, pictures of family members, a copy of the family tree, pictures of favourite pets, favourite clothing or jewellery etc. You can also dress especially for the picture by wearing something that particularly expresses who you are.

- Each member of group one will be given disposable cameras and asked to take pictures in and around school. This will happen on Friday the 12th of August - which is a 'civies' day. You will be asked to take pictures that express your personal identity. (1) Take a self portrait, (2) Take a group photo with yourself and your best friend (one only), (3) take a group photo with three of your best friends, (4) take a self-portrait with the objects you brought from home that define your identity (5) take a picture of your favourite place at school (6) take a picture of your least favourite place at school. The cameras will be collected at the end of the day and your photos will be used in the interviews later.
- Each member of group two will also be asked to bring things from home that you feel are expressions of your self identity i.e. some sports equipment like a tennis racquet, family photos, favourite clothing etc. You can dress in a way that especially expresses who you are. You will be photographed at school by myself on the same "civies" day as group one. The photographs will be used in the interviews later.
- Each member of group three will be asked to write a short poem or story about your personal identity and what makes you unique. Include how you would express your individuality visually if you had the chance i.e. what kinds of clothes you like to wear, what they look like and what image are you presenting to others etc.

Thank you for your help
Tracy Pompe (0722576527)

Orientation of research project (for the parents/ guardians)

The grade seven class at Hillcrest will be taking part in a social research project for a masters thesis. They will be asked to participate in group interviews, firstly in groups of two and later in groups of four. The class will be divided into three groups with four children per group. The topic to be discussed is "visualising identities". The interviews will be recorded and transcribed for the purposes of the research project. This project could possibly be published in an academic journal so the children's names will be kept strictly confidential. They will be given pseudonyms when referred to in the article and photographs will only be included by consent. The children will be divided into groups by means of a lucky draw in order to be fair. At the end of the project they will again take part in a lucky draw and the winner will be given a camera as a gift.

- Each member of group one will be given disposable cameras and asked to take pictures in and around school. This will happen on Friday the 12th of August - which is a 'civies' day. They will be asked to take pictures that best describe their personal identity. This will include self portraits, where they can dress especially for the picture by wearing something that particularly expresses who they are. They will therefore be asked to bring things from home that they feel are expressions of their self identity and which they can include in their photos. The cameras will be collected at the end of the day and their photos will be used in the interviews to be conducted later.
- Each member of group two will also be asked to bring things from home that they feel are expressions of their self identity and dress in a way that especially expresses who they are. They will be photographed at school by myself on the 12th of August. The photographs will be used in the interviews to be conducted later.
- Each member of group three will be asked to think about their personal identity and write a poem or story about what makes them unique and how they would express their individuality visually if they had the chance.

Thank you for your help in making this research project a success,
Yours faithfully
Tracy Pompe (0722576527)

Appendix C
Interview guides

Focus dyad interview guide

Orientation of ethical issues:

1. What will take place is a semi-structured, semi-standardized, open-ended interview lasting approximately 30-45 minutes. This is a standard form of data collection used by qualitative researchers.
2. The interview will be recorded and the information you supply will be written up and analyzed to be included in an academic dissertation and possibly published as an article in a peer review journal.
3. To ensure that you remain anonymous you will be given fake names, when referred to or quoted in the report.
4. If any image in which you appear is published you will of course be consulted first in order to gain your permission.
5. During the interview I will be taking notes.

1) Please explain how you would define your identity.

Probe a) Please explain who you are to me the same way you would if you were describing yourself to someone you met for the first time.

Probe b) Please tell me what you like to do.

Probe c) Please tell me what you don't like to do.

Probe c) Please tell me what kind of character you have i.e. outgoing, shy, friendly etc.

2) Please tell me about your friends.

Probe a) Please tell me about your friends at school i.e. who they are and which class they are in.

Probe b) Explain why you are friends with them and what you do together.

Probe c) Please tell me about friends of the opposite sex, in what sense are they friends i.e. are they your boyfriend or girlfriend?

3) Are you proud to be associated with the school? Why / why not?

Probe a) How do you feel when you take part in interschool functions i.e. are you proud to represent your school and cheer for them?

Probe b) What good things would you describe of your primary school experience that help define who you are.

Probe c) What bad things, if there are any, would describe of your primary school experience that help define who you are.

Probe d) Where is your favorite place at school? Why do you like it?

Probe e) Where is your least favorite place at school? Why don't you like it?

4) If you want please tell me about your family.

Probe a) If you have brothers or sisters, please tell me about them and how you fit into the family hierarchy i.e. are you the oldest?

Probe b) If you like, please tell me about your parents.

5) If you have pets please tell me about your pets.

Probe a) How do your pets help define who you are?

5) Please tell me about your extra mural activities.

Probe a) How important is sport to you, which sports do you take part in?

Probe b) How important is music to you, which instruments do you play?

Probe c) Explain how both sport and music add to your picture of who you are or how you see yourself.

6) How important is fashion to you?

Probe a) What about brand clothing? How important is it to be seen wearing brand clothes by your friends?

Probe b) What about the price of these items of clothing?

Probe c) Why do you or don't you wear brand clothing?

7) Questions raised earlier are now addressed.

Probe a) Earlier you said.....

8) They are given a chance to add anything to the interview.

Probe a) Is there anything you would like to say that you feel we left out in the interview?

Group interview guide

- 1) What were your impressions about the whole procedure we went through?
 - a) Did you enjoy it? Why / why not?
 - b) Was there anything you didn't like or enjoy? If so what?

- 2) How did you feel during the interview?
 - a) When we started the interview were you shy / nervous? If so why?
 - b) When we finished the interview, were you still shy / nervous? Why / why not?
 - c) Did the pictures help to make you less nervous / did your poems help you feel less nervous during the interview?
 - d) Did the pictures / poems make it easier for you to express yourself in the interview?

- 3) What do you think the role of the images / poems was during the interview?
 - a) How helpful were the images / the poems to you during the interview? How so / how not?
 - b) Did the images / poems help you to feel more comfortable, did they help you to feel safe during the process? If so why? Or why not?
 - c) Do you think if you had images instead of poems / poems instead of images you would have felt more comfortable during the interview? if so why? Why not?

- 4) How do you feel about the training on taking the pictures was it adequate? (Group One)
 - a) Were you comfortable taking the pictures yourself or would you have preferred that I took the pictures for you? Why / Why not?
 - b) What would you have done differently? Why?
 - c) Do you think it would have made a difference during the interview if someone else took the pictures or you took the pictures?
 - d) Do you think the pictures spoke for themselves? i.e. - How much did you need to explain the pictures during the interview?

- 5) What do you think of the pictures I took? (Group Two)
 - a) Were the pictures what you'd have taken yourself if had the camera yourself?
 - b) What would you have done differently? Why?
 - c) Do you think it would have made a difference during the interview if we used pictures someone else took or pictures you took?
 - d) Do you think the pictures spoke for themselves? i.e. - How much did you need to explain the pictures during the interview?

- 6) Would you have preferred to have had pictures during the interview rather than poems? If so why / if not why not? (Group Three)

a) If you did help participate in taking pictures or were in the other groups pictures, what did you think?

b) would you have liked to take your own pictures or have someone else take pictures for you?

c) Would you have liked to use pictures in the interview? why ? why not? if yes, Do you think it would have made a difference if someone else had taken the pictures or if you'd have taken the pictures yourself?

7) Do you think we left anything out in the interview? would you like to talk about anything else?

Final plenary group interview guide

- 1) Please feel free to share with everyone your impressions of the whole process we went through – taking the pictures, writing the poems, doing the interviews. Each group – compare what you did.
- 2) How did the pictures compare, the ones you took the ones I took?
- 3) Share any final thoughts on the project; did you enjoy it, why/ why not?

Appendix D

Focus dyad interview transcripts

(See attached compact disk for full transcripts)

Appendix E

Group interview transcripts

(See attached compact disk for full transcripts)

Appendix F

Plenary transcript

(See attached compact disk for full transcripts)

Appendix G

Photo sets

(See attached compact disk for colour photographs)

Photo set A



Image A1



Image A2

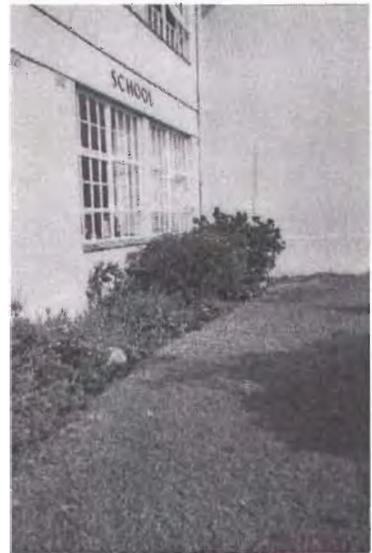


Image A3



Image A4



Image A5



Image A6



Image A7



Image A8

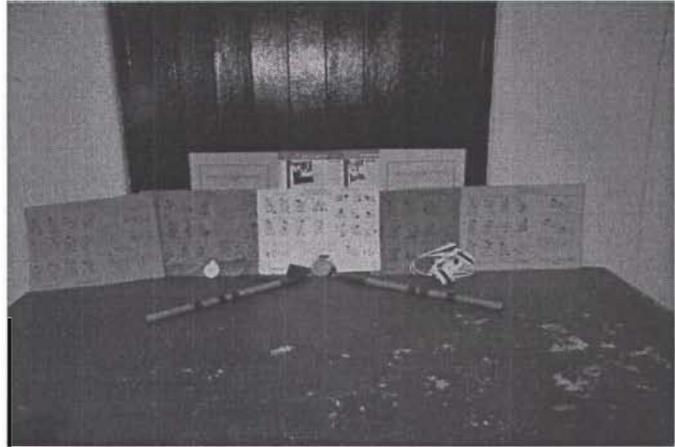


Image A9



Image A10



Image A11



Image A12



Image A13



Image A14



Image A15



Image A16



Image A17



Image A18

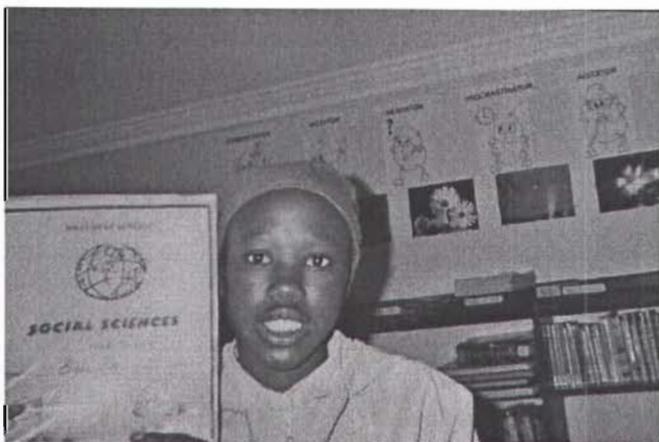


Image A19

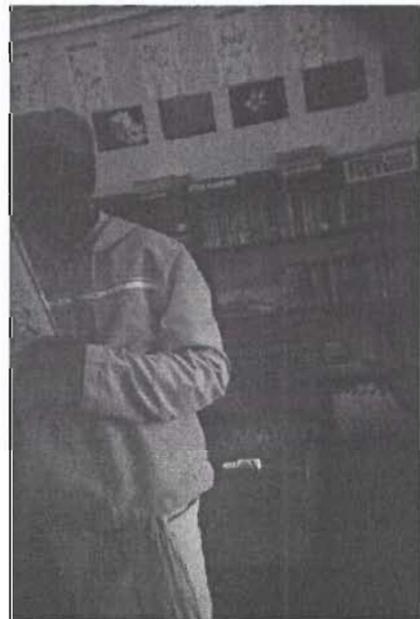


Image A20

Photo set B



Image B1



Image B2



Image B3



Image B4



Image B5

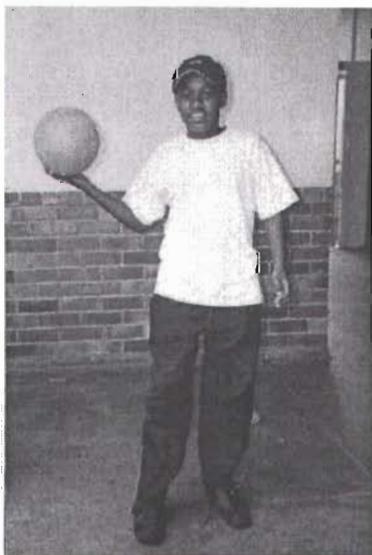


Image B6



Image B7



Image B8



Image B9



Image B10



Image B11



Image B12



Image B13



Image B14

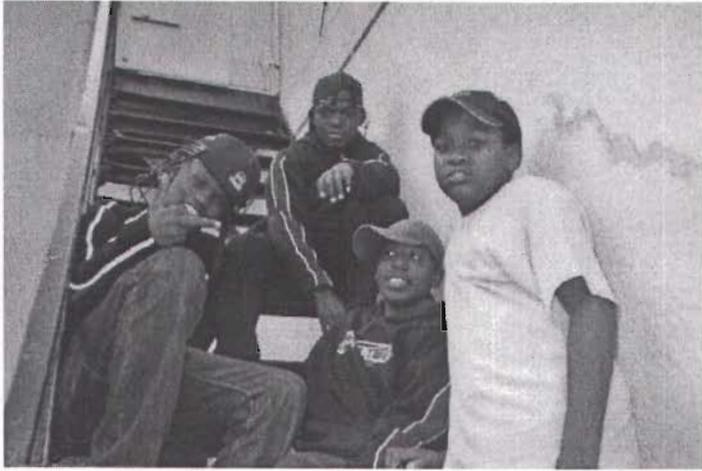


Image B15



Image B16



Image B17

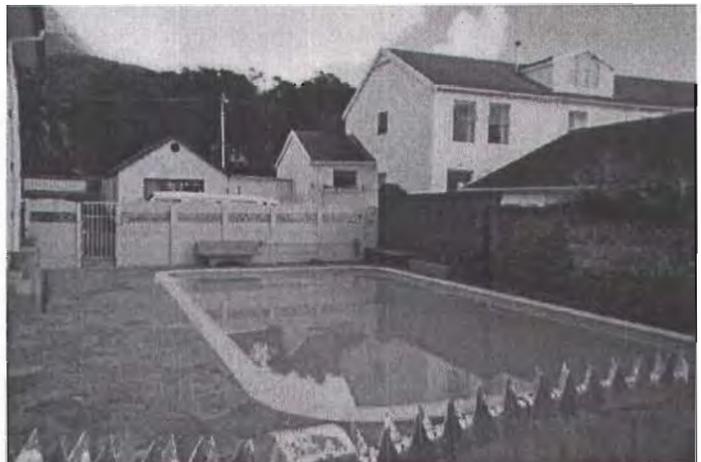


Image B18

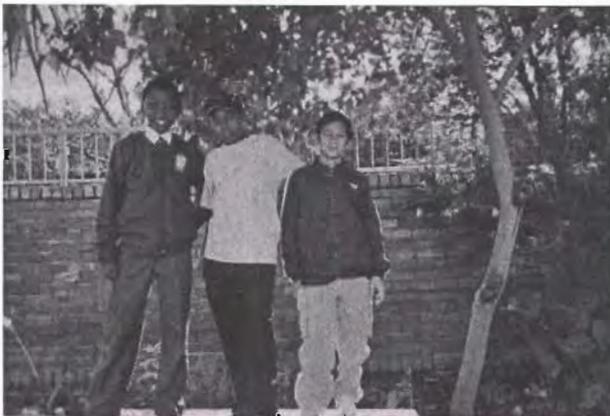


Image B19



Image B20

Photo set C



Image C1



Image C2*



Image C3



Image C4



Image C5



Image C6



Image C7*

***Note:** the following images are the same in both photosets C and D as they were applicable to both focus dyad interviews; the participants were in the same group during the photo session Image C2 and D15; Image C7 and D4



Image C8*



Image C9



Image C10



Image C11



Image C12



Image C13*

***Note:** the following images are the same in both photosets C and D as they were applicable in both focus dyad interviews; the participants were in the same group during the photo session Image C8 and D7; Image C13 and D10



Image C14



Image C15*



Image C16*



Image C17*



Image C18*



Image C19*



Image C20*

***Note:** the following images are the same in both photosets C and D as they were applicable to both focus dyad interviews; the participants were in the same group during the photo session
Image C15 and D14; Image C116 and D15; Image C17 and D13; Image C18 and D18;
Image C19 and D19; Image C20 and D20

Photo set D



Image D1



Image D2



Image D3



Image D4*



Image D5



Image D6



Image D7*

***Note:** the following images are the same in both photosets C and D as they were applicable to both focus dyad interviews; the participants were in the same group during the photo session Image D4 and C7; Image D7 and C8



Image D8



Image D9



Image D10*



Image D11



Image D12



Image D13*

***Note:** the following images are the same in both photosets C and D as they were applicable to both focus dyad interviews; the participants were in the same group during the photo session Image D10 and C13; Image D13 and C17



Image D14*



Image D15*



Image D16



Image D17



Image D18*



Image D19*



Image D20*

***Note:** the following images are the same in both photosets C and D as they were applicable to both focus dyad interviews; the participants were in the same group during the photo session Image D14 and C2; Image D18 and C18; Image D19 and C19; Image D20 and C20