

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

Interdisciplinary dialogue is a strange academic beast. It is an activity demanding multiple interpretive skills and phrenesis. It needs the academic care of an exegete, the tact of a diplomat and the understanding of a historian

Berthrong (1994:12).

There are more things in heaven and earth
... than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
Shakespeare, Hamlet Act 1 scene 5

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

This thesis presents a hybrid study between phenomenological research by means of interviewing in education, and reflexology as holistic method of health care. Inherently post-modern, this eclectic composition aims at marrying the Western concepts of phenomenology to the ancient - mainly Oriental - concepts underlying contemporary reflexology, in order to establish the possible value of reflexology for research procedures in education.

Ever since I, the researcher, became involved in holistic health care, I have been fascinated by the paradoxical simplicity and depth of a dialect of logic that demands seeing the life-world of individuals in terms of patterns - what is to a Westerner unusual - of the rhythm of life. This led me to study for the Diploma in Therapeutic Reflexology at The International School of Reflexology and Meridian Therapy. At first, the terminology came forth as something between gibberish and an extreme form of silliness, but in due time I developed an understanding of the poetic style by which human experience is illustrated. What is more, I came to believe that this exquisite form of portraying inextricable connections between biography (usually studied in the social sciences - i.e. education), and biology (usually the domain of the natural sciences) (cf. Myss 1997:40), was worth further exploration.

My subsequent enrolment in a further addition to the basic course, namely the Diploma in Meridian Therapy, meant a further journey into the realm of Chinese thought, and its possible applications as seeing the life-world of an individual through the lens of a coherent, albeit foreign, system of thought that has developed over thousands of years. Once aptly qualified, one is entitled to practise therapeutic reflexology, which means that one can practise reflexology as complementary health care (cf. Barrault 1993; Eichelberger 1993; Oleson & Flocco 1993; Frankel 1997; Hodgson 2000; Stephenson, Weinrich & Tavakoli 2000).

What particularly struck me is the exquisite way in which psychosomatic phenomena are conscientiously described. Indeed, emotional experiences are related to specific illnesses as physical manifestations and/or as congestions on reflex-areas (also known as reflex-points) (Appendix A) and along meridians which can be defined as energy pathways (Appendix B; Dr K Yu 2003: personal interview) by means of a rational, logically consistent and communicable construct of thought. To illustrate: the general observation of someone being 'nervous', can hereby be confirmed in terms of a concert of signs, such as blisters on the little toe; cramps along the back of the leg; headaches at the back of the head; wispy hair; distinct tiredness in the late afternoon; either an extreme fondness of, or a strong adversity to, blue and/or black, as well as the tendency to 'feel cold' and 'being nervous' (Dougans 2000:236-9; Appendix C). What intrigued me, was that, by means of general observation, and the foot-reading as function of reflexology, a portrait-outline of the life of almost any person could be drawn up. (However, it is up to each individual to 'colour such picture' by giving details of his/her life.) From this, it follows logically that reflexological findings could form the catalyst to the sharing of details during a phenomenological interview.

This led to my decision to document one of the most obvious phenomena related to reflexology treatments, namely the tendency of clients to entrust the reflexologist with sensitive information. This may also be true of other services such as hairdressing and beauty salon treatments. However, reflexology - unlike these treatments - provides for a

distinct framework by which to interpret the links between physiological and emotional experiences of people.

The question may arise concerning the relationship of reflexology with education. While this issue will be addressed throughout the study - with special reference to educational research - the basic rationale for this combination will be presented here.

- First, educational research often relates to the *emotional experiences* of participants (Vrey 1979:39). As will be indicated primarily in section 2.3.5, reflexology is mainly concerned about the emotional experiences of an individual. Indeed, reflexology poses a way by which the emotional experiences can be understood in terms of specific physical problems.
- Second, educational research concerns itself with *meaning* as an individual attributes it to experience (Vrey 1979: 32-33). This is congruent with the opportunity reflexology provides the individual to assign his/her own meaning to the psychological interpretation of any specific physical impairment. For example, while the reflexologist may identify a gallbladder problem, and provide the psychological interpretation of the emotion of bitterness and/or anger - it is up to the participant to provide the researcher with his / her own interpretation with regard to what induced such feelings in the first place (Tables 5.1 - 5.10).
- Third, many educational researchers acknowledge the mind/body link, in the sense of giving credit to psychosomatic disease. Reflexology is a way by which to clarify these notions by providing precise links between bodily ailments and psychological interpretations of emotional experience (section 2.3.5).
- Fourth, there is a general movement in the academic world, by which the inextricable links between body and mind are being recognised (Krige 2003:4 & 5). (This issue will be explored extensively throughout chapter two.) This means that clinging to vague connotations (in stead of explicit ones) between physical conditions and

emotional experiences might endanger the relevance of a field of study, as the total picture of the life-world of an individual may be distorted by ignoring significant aspects of reality. Fortunately, the academic world is seen increasingly to embrace interdisciplinary work, and, thereby, academic bilingualism or even academic multilingualism. For example, we have seen the birth of fields of study which have one foot in a particular traditional discipline, and the other foot in another, such as psycho-immunology and behavioural medicine. Each field of study then serves as a complementary to the other field(s) of study, thereby enhancing comprehensive understanding of whichever phenomenon they are employed to deal with.

- It has been stated that "... Western civilization is now facing the pluralism of the emerging global civilization ... cultures [are] recognizing the interconnectedness of the modern world" (Berthrong 1994:14). Therefore, I wish to propose that the field of education commits itself to researching the possibilities that such pluralism holds, in order to have its clients benefit from the cooperation between known and relatively unknown constructs.

To conclude, the time is ripe for researchers in education to explore the possibilities of employing modalities, which provide for an increased understanding of the mind/body link, in order to enrich its own body of knowledge and maintain its relevance in contemporary thinking.

Indeed, it soon became apparent that this study would be inter-disciplinary and inter-paradigmatic at the same time. It is interdisciplinary, because a number of issues will be related to various disciplines in the social sciences, such as psychology and sociology, and various participants in the field of education. At the same time, the study is also inter-paradigmatic, because it involves exploration of issues in terms of Western phenomenology, as well as in Oriental wellbeing-related terms in general, and in reflexological terms in particular.

Seeing that some of the concepts may be unusual to Western thinking, I have decided to include as much background information for referral as is deemed needed to understand

the main concepts used in this study, such as maps of the reflex-areas on the feet, and of the meridian. These can be found in Appendixes A and B respectively.

Therefore, within this context of what is believed to be a complementary approach to well-being, I wish to propose that this study will provide the reader with an approach to phenomenological interviewing which rests on the interface between Western thinking and the classics of Chinese philosophy. The latter is in itself a system of thought that presents a highly respected approach which is firmly established and increasingly being recognised by the West for its worth (Kaptchuk 1983: xv-xx).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the previous section, the main research question follows logically: How can reflexology facilitate phenomenological interviewing in education?

From this question, the following secondary research questions flow:

1. Could the identification of congestions in reflexological terms, serve as significant points of departure to facilitate interviews?
2. Could reflexology be employed as a way to collect significant data during case study research in education?
3. Could a reflexology session be seen as a complementary form of conducting interviews in education?
4. What kind of data could be expected to be collected during reflexology sessions?
5. Is an academic bilingual approach to phenomenological interviewing possible?

These research questions are addressed in full detail in chapter six.

1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

This thesis wishes to establish a methodology grounded on the principles of reflexology, by which to facilitate phenomenological interviews. I believe that it is worthwhile to

investigate whether this approach could enrich existing methodologies employed within Western academic circles in general, and phenomenological interviewing in education in particular.

In order to achieve this aim, I intend to see whether participants would be willing to disclose sensitive information related to the framework provided by the reflexology treatments. In other words, I wish to establish whether reflexology could serve as an impetus for the sharing of details about one's life-world with the researcher. I want to throw further light on my previous observations, namely that gathering of information by means of a reflexology treatment, does not only have significance in terms of the participant's physical body, but even more so, in terms of his / her life-world in general.

These goals can be succinctly summarised as follows: this thesis proposes to see whether reflexology could provide a legitimate framework by which to conduct and / or enrich phenomenological interviewing in educational research.

1.4 ASSUMPTIONS

My first assumption concerns this research *per se*. No single form of collecting data during phenomenological interviews could possibly claim to provide a panacea for such exploration, because no methodology could ever claim to be either totally encompassing or completely flawless. While reflexology is not without blind spots of its own, this thesis wishes to investigate whether it could serve as a complementary approach to interviewing in education. This presents the potential of adding to the rainbow of possibilities for the collection of data during phenomenological interviews for case study research.

The second assumption concerns the reader. It is assumed that he / she is well versed on qualitative interviewing, as phenomenological interviewing is, by its very nature, qualitative. Lastly, it is taken as a given that he / she would be prepared to re-visit traditional approaches to phenomenological interviewing, and to consider the possibility of it being complemented by means of incorporating a 'foreign' approach.

1.5 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

"With a gritty stubbornness, real human disorders (sic: experiences) persistently fall into the tiny spaces between ... words" (Kaptchuck 1983:252). This is said to hold serious consequences for understanding the life-world of individuals. Krige (2003:4) contends that overly linguistic interpretations constitute falseness. De Bono (1991:152) articulates his concerns as follows: "Language is marvellous as a describing system but that does not mean it is excellent as a thinking or even a perceiving system." A comprehensive reflexological approach proposes to be a way of trying to pick up the subtleties that evade methodologies that rely largely on linguistics and/or visual constructs, and which may lack a consistent framework within which significant details of participants' lives may be incorporated.

This reflexological way of interviewing participants may be unique to Western thinking, because a reflexologist always interprets each and every aspect which points to a disturbance of the equilibrium, in relation to the whole, in order to understand patterns of disharmony. For example, 'constipation', 'writers' block', 'cholesterol' and 'arthritis' may all relate to the same emotional experience of 'restricted flow of life' or 'clogging of the channels of joy' (see Table 5.10).

This contrasts with Western thinking, which bases its research models on frameworks that try to define and control variables, and eventually on the distillation of such findings. In reflexological terms, this would be missing the point, since as many details as possible are to be incorporated in order to show interactions among the different aspects that make up the total picture of the life of the individual.

In a certain sense, this holistic approach does incorporate the Western ideas of 'Lebenswelt', 'holism', 'Gestalt', and 'psychosomatic disease'. However, in Western science, the connections between biography and biology are not as clearly defined as in the paradigm in which reflexology finds itself (Appendix D). To explain: congestions on reflex-areas and along meridians reflect patterns of physiological dysfunctions. For

example: the clinical meaning of a bunion, together with other congestions along the (related) spleen/pancreas meridian, together with a congestion on the pancreas reflex-area underneath the feet, may lead to the conclusion that sugar-metabolism may be under stress - which may necessitate dietary adjustments. In other words, findings on reflex-areas provide the opportunity of confirmation by means of interpreting congestions along the meridian.

These findings are then to be related to the psychological etiology of the participant. For example: pancreatic dysfunction may be related to an experience of "... the sweetness being gone from life..." (Appendix D). To this effect, the physiological state of the participant now provides the background for an interview on experiences on what is commonly known as the 'abstract level'. As pointed out in section 1.1, *it is up to the participant (interviewee) to fill in the reflexologist (interviewer) with details.*

On a complementary level, the research is concerned with the concepts of the Five Elements, also known as the Five Phases (Appendix C). This framework provides for a set of emblems by which deviations from the equilibrium in terms of aspects such as emotions, colour, smell, seasons, and experiences related to the body clock, could be grouped in order to enhance understanding of the life-world of each individual. It also finds itself endorsed by academics such as Marc Micozzi, (MD PhD, executive Director, The College of Physicians of Pennsylvania, Adjunct Professor of Medicine and of Rehabilitation Medicine, University of Pennsylvania), who are committed to the intensive study of the mind/body link - albeit from a medical point of view. This framework enables one to move from merely commenting that the participant 'looks angry', to confirming such a notion in terms of different aspects related to the wood-element, such as ingrown toe-nails on the lateral side of the big toe, the inability to sleep between 01h00 and 03h00 at night, and a frown between the eyes. (The relation between a frown between the eyes, and anger is also consonant with the work of cartoonists, as they employ this notion to depict this emotion.) The Five Elements are further explored in terms of meaning, and significance for education, in section 2.3.4.

The literature shows that it is common practice for some researchers in the (Western) social sciences - of which education is logically seen as an element - to take 'insignificant' aspects such as the following into account: "... features of heaviness, lightness, sweetness, saltiness, bitterness, sourness, openness, constrictedness, coldness, warmth, roughness, smoothness, sense qualities of sound, touch, sight and taste, and aesthetic properties" (Moustakas 1994:59). These terms correspond with reflexological terminology, which takes it one step further by incorporating such detail within a consistent framework of classification namely the Five Elements.

To summarise, the sensitive experience of individuals is to be related in terms of the following aspects:

- congestions as understood in reflexological terms;
- the physical counterpart of such congestions, as understood in Western terminology;
- the reflexological interpretation of the emotional aspect of the related experience.

These three aspects will then provide the framework by which the interviews are to be steered towards the actual events or circumstances that lead to those emotional experiences in the first place. The pattern of the Five Elements, as a system of categorization by which the process and rhythm of life are interpreted in the Chinese classics, will act as basic confirmation regarding such emotional experiences. Graphically speaking, the empirical study for this thesis could be presented as follows:

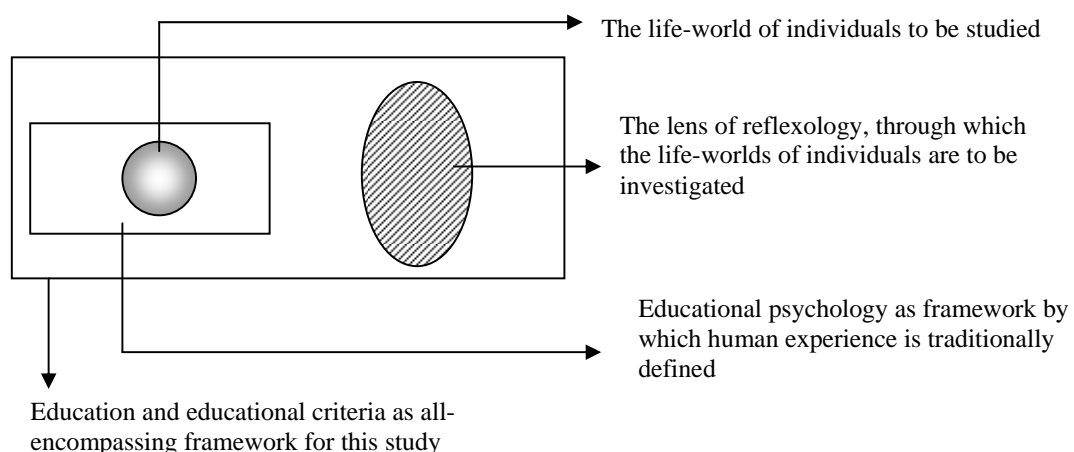


Fig. 1.1. Graphic presentation of the elements of the empirical work

Previous study has shown this to be possible. Two hundred hours of case study work for the Diploma in Reflexology and Meridian Therapy has shown the significance of the interpretation of congestions on reflex-points and along meridians. Already during the early months of the study, I came under the impression that such congestions could act as points of departure for interviews centering around experiences lived through by clients. For example, congestions on the heart- area- reflex, may lead to disclosure of details regarding traumatic experiences. (The heart being the seat of joy has also been expressed in Ps. 4:7, where David said: "You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound.")

To conclude: this thesis proposes to enhance understanding of the mind/body link for the purpose of enriching educational research. This is to be done by means of joining the fields of phenomenological interviewing in education, to the field of physiology by means of reflexological interpretation of physiological conditions - whether latent, or manifested. These interpretations are then to serve as frameworks for interviewing.

1.6 MAIN CONCEPTS

1.6 1 Facilitation

Facilitation in its most basic sense, means 'to make easy'. Within the context of this study, it simply means employing reflexology to ease the flow of information from the participant to the interviewer, during phenomenological interviewing.

1.6.2 Phenomenological research

This is a compound term, which warrants a brief explanation of each term on its own. Phenomenology is derived from the Greek, literally meaning 'the study of what I see' (section 2.2). For this work, phenomenology relates to the life-world of each individual participant being studied and documented as it presents itself.

Phenomenological research relates to the research process being congruent with the spirit and purpose of phenomenology. It is characterised by inductive logic, colloquial speech, flexibility and a holistic approach (Fouche & Delport 2002:81). Furthermore, it allows for the description of experiences through the eyes of the participants (Fouche 2002:273).

1.6.3 Interviews

The term interviews implies communication. During research interviews, this communication is constituted by the flow of information from the participant (sender) to the researcher (receiver and interpreter) (cf. Dubin & Olshtain 1977:54-55). Given the phenomenological nature of this research (section 2.2.2), it is imperative that the interviews should accommodate information on the life-worlds of the participants from a holistic perspective. By implication, the researcher should be able to reach into the map of reality as provided by verbal communication, as well as into non-verbal territory (cf. Jordaan & Jordaan 1990: 432). Appendixes A - E provide the framework for delving into non-verbal territory. At the same time, Tables 5.1 - 5.10 serve to elucidate how this non-verbal information corresponds to verbal disclosures.

The combination of verbal and non-verbal communication is phenomenologically significant, as it reveals reality in the way(s) it presents itself. By analogy, when the dialogue of a film is transcribed and read on its own, it will almost certainly not earn the following and currency that a film in its totality *based on the same dialogue* would. Today, psychologists contend that non-communication is impossible - even if one remains totally silent (Jordaan & Jordaan 1990:731). Therefore, this thesis advocates a form of interviewing that allows non-verbal communication its role as complementary to verbal communication.

Considering that phenomenological interviewing is, by implication qualitative, the interviews for this thesis will be qualitative by nature. Quantitative, positivistic measures such as questionnaires will not feature. Lastly, it should also be noted that the term

'traditional interviewing' relates to traditional, orthodox interviewing congruent with modernist approaches in the West.

1.6.4 Education

Derived from the Latin term *educatio*, it deals with "... the development of the whole nature of man ... through interaction with every phase of his environment ... two distinct phases are involved in the educational process: first, the physical and mental development ... second, the adjustment of the individual to his ... environment ... " (Odhams Dictionary of the English Language, 1970, s.v. "education"; . Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg dictionary of empirical education / educational psychology, 1988, s.v. "education"; "environment"). What is important for this thesis is the term 'environment', because it implies that no form of education as purposeful intervention should be out of line with the ecology/milieu in which the individual finds himself / herself.

1.6.5 Experience

Experience relates to living through circumstances and/or events, and being emotionally touched thereby in a certain way (Vrey 1979:39). Unresolved emotional experiences lead to congestions along the energy pathways that traverse throughout the body. For the purposes of this thesis, these congestions will be identified by means of reflexology, then to serve as pointers towards the initial experiences by which they had been created, during the phenomenological interviewing particular to this thesis.

1.6.6 Reflexology

1.6.6.1 Hermeneutic definition

This definition is threefold, as it sees reflexology as being:

- a gentle art, as much depends on how skilfully the practitioner applies his/her knowledge, and the dynamics between practitioner and recipient;
- a fascinating science, as it is based on physiological and neurological study, and
- an extremely effective form of *therapeutic foot massage*, using a specific pressure technique, which works on precise *reflex-points* on the feet, based on the premise that reflex-areas on the feet correspond with all body parts;
- a non-invasive form of stimulation of the meridians as energy pathways which traverse throughout the body, linking organs and body parts, and also linking the body to the universe, are taken into account. These meridians represent a function without a structure which can be 'seen' with the technology currently available. (The meridian-concept also forms the basis of acupuncture theory, and has been incorporated in the work of physiotherapists of the South African Society of Physiotherapy, who, by Act. No. 50 of 2000, are allowed to provide acupuncture.)

1.6.6.2 Functional definition

Reflexology functions as a way of 'reading-the-feet', whereby patterns of harmony and patterns of disharmony of the life-world of the individual may be described. The patterns by which the details pertaining to each individual participant are to be understood, are presented in appendixes A - D.

1.6.6.3 Definition in terms of South African law

The Allied Health Professions Act No. 63 of 1982, as amended through the years, established a legal definition of reflexology as therapy, by means of employing the term "Therapeutic Reflexologist" to refer to a person who has qualified under this act to legally perform the duties related to the practice of therapeutic reflexology. By

implication, a reflexologist has to qualify in terms of this act in order to imply to any client that his/her treatment would have any form of healing and/or therapeutic value.

1.6.7 Complementary and / or Alternative Medicine (CAM)

This is a widely accepted misnomer, designating Complementary and/or Alternative Medicine (CAM) (cf. Kitai, Vinker, Sandiuk, Hornik, Zeltcer & Gaver, 1998; Wong & Neill 2001), which serves as an umbrella term to include all non-Western strategies which deal with health and well-ness. It has been coined by the Western medical fraternity, which, from its hegemonic position, classifies these strategies as deviant (alternative) from what Western ideologies propose to be the norm. It is a misnomer, because CAM does not deal with medicine in the Western sense, that is, in terms of the germ theory and dichotomising strategies. Rather, CAM demands an understanding of the energies involved in the life-world of an individual, in the body in order to enable the body to defend itself. This means that CAM requires a sophisticated understanding of the ecological nature of the life-world of individuals.

The term 'complementary' is of special significance for this study, as it relates to the intention of establishing whether reflexology could be complementary to traditional phenomenological interviewing.

1.6.8 Intellectual bilingualism

This term relates to the contemporary demand on intellectuals to work across disciplines, and even paradigms, as it acknowledges the interdependence of knowledge. As a derivative of increasing globalisation, it seeks to deal with multicultural enrichment, and is intermittently used with terms such as intercultural studies, interdisciplinary studies, integrative studies and academic eclecticism as it strives to reflect the pluralistic nature of reality. This trend requires of students to build expertise in several different fields, and master the art of combining insights from different paradigms in order to create a complete new whole by which formerly separate fields of study could be cross-fertilised,

and, therefore, enriched. At the same time, it challenges examiners and moderators to build a frame of reference that could readily accommodate notions that rest on the interface between philosophies.

1.6.9 The mind/body link

This notion poses that emotions related to certain experiences are encoded in the physical body. This thesis aims at exploring if this link (between experiences and its derivative in the physical body) could facilitate phenomenological interviewing in education.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

1.7.1 Ethical measures

The nature of this research dictates firstly that I have to comply with the strict ethical code of reflexology as recognized by the Allied Health Professions Council SA. Moreover, since the study is aimed at matching the participants' physiological condition to their respective biological backgrounds, absolute confidentiality is extremely important, as disclosures may consist of sharing sensitive information.

In short, the following aspects will be complied with during the case study section addressed in chapter 5:

- I assume responsibility for protecting the physical, social and psychological welfare of the participants, and for honouring their dignity, privacy and absolute right to confidentiality and anonymity (Gale & Chapman 1984; Neuman 2000:99-100);
- The participants will each be fully informed about the aims and nature of the research, and about the option to withdraw freely (Borg & Gall 1989:85);

- As deemed necessary, I shall debrief the participants after each session, explaining fully what is being done, as well as the purpose of each aspect of the study (Neuman 2000:229);
- During each session following on the first one, the data collected during the previous session will be discussed with the interviewee concerned, in order to remove any possible misconceptions.

1.7.2 Trustworthiness

Regarding trustworthiness, the term triangulation comes to mind first, since this study is indeed aimed at incorporating information from different perspectives. As seen, reflexology provides for triangulation of methods within its own mode of operation by means of the identification of congestions on the reflex-points, and the confirmation of findings by the identification of congestions along the meridian. These findings then serve as points of departure for the interviews, by which the interviewee can then choose to provide detail regarding experiences that would relate to these congestions.

At the same time, reflexology provides for yet a further way of confirming observations, as the findings are also confirmed in terms of the Five Elements and the patterns of yin/yang (fully explained in section 2.3.3), as given in the Chinese classics. In other words, trustworthiness is established in terms of seeing specifics as reflections of universal dynamics.

A second term which relates to trustworthiness is consistency. In order to establish whether findings from reflexology treatments are indeed consonant with verbal data gained from participants, such data will be recorded by means of a description. This description will then serve as an audit of the findings gained by means of reflexology as a privileged viewpoint for enquiry during case study research in education (see Tables 5.1 - 5.10).

1.7.3 The research methodology

The research method consists of three components: a literature search, interviews with researchers, and thirdly an empirical part devoted to the conduction of interviews and the facilitation thereof by means of reflexology.

1.7.3.1 The literature search

The literature search will comprise of cyber- and printed sources.

The cyber sources include web-page searches. Here I distinguish between resources on the World-Wide Web, and Ebsco Host, Academic Search Premier Database available at UNISA. The page numbers will relate to those numbers appearing when the article has been printed out on the date and at the time of being accessed. These may differ from the original hard copy, but, ordering the hard copy would defy the reason and expense UNISA devotes to having the database established and maintained. The acknowledgement of cyber-sources necessitates the recording of the date of access, since web-pages are not always indefinitely maintained, and sometimes do disappear. Articles presented by researchers working under the auspices of recognized institutions will be selected in order to ensure credibility. Printed sources comprise of articles from journals, newspapers, conference papers and books.

1.7.3.2 Interviews with researchers

Interviews with selected researchers will be conducted in order to enrich the literature study. As far as deemed necessary, this data will be interwoven with consonants thereof found in the literature.

1.3.7.3 Interviews with participants

The method has to serve the purpose of facilitating phenomenological interviews -

primarily by recording what the participant wishes to disclose. As seen, the identification of congestions will serve to link physiological manifestations (or latent physical conditions) with biographical experiences.

In order to achieve this aim, the life-worlds of the individuals to be presented in this work will be approached in the same way Chinese painters of landscapes approach their art, and Chinese doctors approach their patients - namely as a 'landscape' (Kaptchuck 1983: 16). Indeed, incorporating information by means of reflexology presents a step towards including minute but meaningful detail about participants' lives - thereby avoiding blind spots created by eliminating them. This approach should be a step towards minimising research prejudice of deciding what is relevant and what is not.

As a consequence, it can be reiterated that this method presents a research method blended in style, since this thesis presents a way of bringing to the West the philosophical treasures from the Orient, in order to enrich the original Western tradition of phenomenology.

1.7.4 Sample

The very nature of reflexology determines that the practitioner searches for the uniqueness in every person, rather than for generalisations. Therefore, people from all backgrounds were selected, without them having much in common. This approach also coincides with the notion that people from all over the social spectrum could provide valuable insights for those researching the life-world of individuals (Beeld 2000:3). Further detail regarding the sample will be given in chapter four.

1.7.5 Data collection

Reflexology provides for a privileged way of data collection and stimulating data collection by facilitating interviews. Footreading gives insight in the lives of participants that are not available in approaches that depend almost entirely on words, and thus

generates working hypotheses. It is a truly holistic way of stimulating the collection of data, as all the dimensions of the life-world of the participant are taken into account as far as possible.

The reflexology session as such provides for input being given - and data thus being available - as the participants tend to share experiences with the reflexologist. Such information could then be further explored during a discussion of the clinical, and meta-physical meaning of bodily manifestations. More detail concerning the data collection will be given in chapter four.

1.7.6 Data analysis

Data will be analysed by means of appropriate qualitative techniques. These will be fully explained in chapter four.

1.8 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1 ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

This chapter provides an overview of the whole study. It is aimed at helping the reader towards orientation regarding the paradigm within which the rest of the study is to take place.

CHAPTER 2 THE TAO OF PHENOMENOLOGY

This chapter serves as background to the empirical work in the sense that the philosophies that underlie phenomenology and reflexology are being counterpointed. In this way, reflexology is being grounded within Western philosophy in general, and phenomenology in particular, as the severe foreignness of reflexology is hereby relieved. The need for including this exposition lies therein that Western academia in certain areas are still new to the idea of interparadigmatic work (Rao 2002), despite the fact that the

presenting reality is pluralism (Berthrong 1994:3). This chapter advocates bridging the divide between phenomenology and Taoism.

CHAPTER 3

THE FACILITATION OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL INTERVIEWS BY MEANS OF REFLEXOLOGY IN TERMS OF THE TRENDS OF THIS ERA

This part is to be devoted to contextualising this particular thesis within the broad paradigm of the theory that encapsulates the trends of this era, namely post-modern thought. Concerns regarding the appropriateness of incorporating reflexology in Western methodologies for research in education are addressed in terms of the characteristics of post-modernism mirrored by the structure of this study. Therefore, this chapter serves to elucidate the blurring of boundaries between concepts from different paradigms, as light is thrown on the appropriateness of incorporating pre-modern and post-modern ideas to form an eclectic, hybrid construct which would serve the purpose of conducting interviews in education. This chapter allows for the questioning of Western methodologies and strategies.

CHAPTER 4 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter the focus is on what is actually going to happen during the empirical part of this thesis. The procedure of the empirical phase, as well as the rationale behind each step, is outlined. In essence, the procedure of conducting phenomenological interviews by means of reflexology, is explained. By implication, this chapter provides exact instructions towards a strategy by which to bridge the divide between reflexology (as CAM-modality) and phenomenological interviewing.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS

This chapter comprises of the findings of the actual case studies. Here I show what was

found by means of the foot-readings, and how these findings correlate with the life-world of each individual. The ways in which reflexology facilitated the interviews with each participant will be described. Logically, chapter two forms an essential background to this chapter, as the interpretations are determined by the constructs conveyed in chapter two. This information will show in which way(s) reflexology has facilitated phenomenological interviewing in terms of providing information regarding the participants' own experiences.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This chapter presents a final assessment regarding the value of reflexology for educational research by means of phenomenological interviewing. The limitations of the study are also considered, while recommendations regarding further research, and possible applications of reflexology, are briefly consolidated.

1.9 THE ACADEMIC BILINGUAL NATURE OF THIS THESIS IN TERMS OF TRENDS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The academic eclectic approach holds the possibility of this work being misunderstood as, to a certain degree, intellectual bilingualism is often still alien to traditional academia (Dr J Beuster 2002: personal interview; Rao 2002).

However, academic bilingualism forms an increasingly popular feature of studies at university level, as the increase in multicultural encounters with characteristics of globalisation has led to mono-perspectives on reality being replaced by pluralistic perspectives thereof. In due time, the boundaries between disciplines have become increasingly permeable as endeavours at universities strive to reflect the increasingly pluralistic reality. This is evident from the vast number of intercultural and interdisciplinary research, courses, symposia, conferences and periodicals appearing on the academic scene. For example: institutions of higher learning that have committed

themselves to integrate notions across the spectrum of knowledge include amongst others the following:

- *Duke University*, by setting up a Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in Science and Cultural Theory in order to bridge the chasm that has traditionally separated studies in the humanities and social sciences from studies in the natural sciences (www.duke.edu/, accessed 13/08/2003. Outcome of surfing: Google: [University + Interdisciplinary]).
- The *University of Michigan*, by offering courses that stretch across the traditional boundaries of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences (www.nmu.edu/departments/envsci.htm, accessed 13/08/2003. Outcome of surfing: Google: [University + Interdisciplinary]).
- *Washington State University*, by hosting individualised interdisciplinary doctoral programmes (www.wsu.edu/-gradsch/sitedirectory.htm, accessed 13/08/2003. Outcome of surfing: Google: [University + Interdisciplinary]).
- The *University of Edinburgh*, by staging symposia, workshops, exhibitions and conferences which promote interdisciplinary approaches - (www.cpa.ed.ac.uk/bulltinarchive, accessed 13/08/2003. Outcome of surfing: Google: [University + Interdisciplinary]). One of these workshops culminated in an interdisciplinary workshop on robotics, biology and psychology in 1997, for which Veeleart and Peremans developed framework models for robot navigation.
- *Berkeley University*, by requiring of an interdisciplinary major candidate to integrate knowledge from at least three fields and disciplines from the social sciences, humanities and / or professional schools and colleges (webmaster@learning.berkeley.edu, accessed 13/08/2003. Outcome of surfing: Google: [University + Interdisciplinary]).

- Cross-cultural studies are also undertaken by universities such as *The Australian National University* (www.anu.edu.au/culture/, accessed 13/08/2003), and the *City University of Hong Kong* (www.cityu.edu.hk/ccs/FrontPage.htm, accessed 13/08/2003). Outcomes of surfing: Google: [University + cross-cultural]).

In other words, there appears to be a general move towards integration. These initiatives are in keeping with the notions of Held (2000:vii) as he contends:

Social change is no respecter of the boundaries of disciplines and the tidy boxes that social scientists have often tried to squeeze it into.

Therefore, I believe that the exclusion of knowledge from other cultures results in a false battle to keep out foreign ideas - especially in the age of globalisation and increased multiculturalism. In this vein, I propose that it is relevant to engage in work that crosses the divisions between disciplines and paradigms. This thesis, in keeping with these notions, attempts primarily to bridge the boundaries between reflexology (as a particular modality of CAM) and phenomenological interviewing in education. This means that it is aimed at providing a strategy by which to appropriate reflexology to the domain of educational psychology.

As for myself, considering the kaleidoscope of intercultural philosophies that opened themselves to me as I explored foreign (Oriental) approaches to understanding reality, I cannot any more contend with a mono-disciplinary and mono-paradigmatic (mono-lingual) vision of reality. Consequently, this new stance also filtered through to the way I perceive the life-worlds of others. As time passed, the notion developed that interviewing in educational psychology in particular could be enriched by means of incorporating reflexology. By implication, this thesis does not propose to fit exclusively into any particular domain. Rather, it proposes to fit in with current trends of pluralism and eclecticism in the increasingly pluralistic society of this period in time. Such approach resounds in the words of Prof P Higgs (2002: personal interview), when he articulates the post-modernism challenge to develop the " ... capacity to appreciate the viewpoints of others ...".

1.10 CONCLUSION

As seen, reflexology provides for a privileged, somatic-based view of human life-worlds (see Appendixes A - D). Such approach is in keeping with current notions developing all over the spectrum of the academe. As Krige (2003:5) contends:

The call for *greater emphasis on the body and on the somatic dimensions of knowledge* comes also from recent explorations in *phenomenological* [studies] ... *subjugation of the bodily to the semantic is empirically untenable* (my emphasis).

Therefore, I propose that it would be congruent with current developments to incorporate somatic knowledge when the life-worlds of people are explored.

In conclusion, order to achieve the intended goals, this study proposes to reconcile and harmonise ideas from Western and Oriental paradigms. This approach is in keeping with contemporary thought which poses that topics from differing cultures are to be explored in tandem, in order to be appropriate in an increasingly multicultural, pluralistic society.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TAO OF PHENOMENOLOGY

Entelechy: The intelligence of the body [:] of all the terms cast off by modern science, perhaps [this term] will turn out to be of central importance for future science. In the search for a new paradigm beyond mechanism and blind matter ...post-modern science may rediscover the power and profound meaning encapsulated in this ancient concept

C de Quincey, PhD (2002:41).

The Western mind ... could expand by assimilating new thoughts

Beuster (1991:173).

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As discussed in Chapter one, the aim of this thesis is to explore the possibility of employing reflexology as an interviewing technique by which to facilitate phenomenological research in education (see section 1.3). In other words, the overall aim of this study is empirical by nature, as it involves a collective case study with ten cases (see section 1.3.7.3; Tables 5.1 - 5.10).

In order to support this aim, this particular chapter proposes to establish a philosophical foundation for reflexology as modality befitting qualitative research in the field of education as it is understood in the West, as phenomenological interviewing, by implication, relates to *qualitative* interviewing (Van Manen 1990). In order to achieve this goal, this chapter intends elucidating the correspondences and differences between phenomenology and the philosophy which underlies reflexology in its contemporary form, namely Taoism. Graphically speaking, the primary scope of this chapter could be presented in the following diagramme:

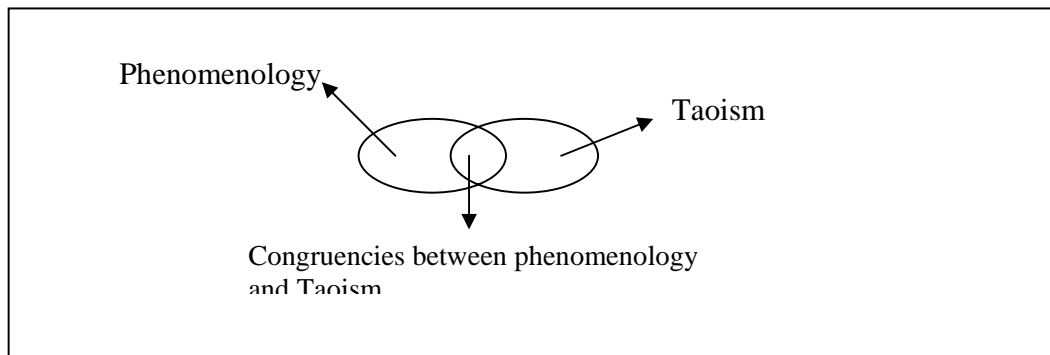


Fig. 2.1 Schematic presentation of the primary areas of interest to be addressed in this chapter.

At this point I wish to clarify why Taoism is brought into the picture, as reflexology has not always been associated with Taoism. In ancient times reflexology was also practised in Egypt (Oxenford 1997:7) and Northern America (Dougans 2000:15). During the early 1900's, reflexological interpretations were made in terms of the body being 'divided' into ten equal longitudinal zones running the length of the body from the tips of the toes to the top of the head, as identified by Dr William Fitzgerald (Ross 2002:20). Dr Fitzgerald proposed that the parts of the body within a certain zone are linked by energy flow to all other parts within that zone. This appears to be the first formal observation of the flow of energy linking distant parts of the body to each other.

At some point - the exact date is unsure - it was realised that, by the practice of reflexology, the meridians (as energy pathways according to Chinese medicine), were being stimulated simultaneously. Of interest, is the fact that physiotherapists - in other words, therapists in the Western tradition - also became aware of the meridian connection during the 1970's, and therapy modalities such as electro-acupuncture has since then become well-established in Western medicine. For example, the establishment of The South African Physiotherapists Acupuncture Association in 1986, could be ascribed to the recognition of acupuncture and its variants falling within the scope of physiotherapy. Furthermore, this link is further being established in South Africa by Dr Bernard Brom

and his following of medical doctors belonging to S.A.S.I.M. (South African Society for Integrative Medicine) (Brom 2003).

The discovery that meridians were involved in any reflexology treatment in any case, led to the concepts of meridianology as a concept which has its roots in Taoism being incorporated in the practice of reflexology, in order to enrich the treatments given (Dr. Pleass in Dougans 2000: no-numbered endorsement page.)

Even so, the Western reader might well ask why Taoist thinking is relevant for educational research. I believe that the value thereof should not be underestimated, as the following researchers endorse the value of Taoism for authentic education:

- Flowers (1998), and Hua, Chang & MacRaven (1999), argue that technology curricula should incorporate elements of Taoism, in order increase harmony between human endeavours and the much needed balance in nature. This is in keeping with the Taoist doctrine which proposes love and respect towards the whole of the universe (Funk and Wagnall's Standard Reference Encyclopaedia 1967:,s.v. "China, philosophy").
- Bender (1990) and MacKinnon (1996) took the issue further by elaborating on the contribution of Taoism towards greater *social* harmony. This is in keeping with the Taoist principle of being respectful towards one's surroundings.
- The value for education lies therein that Taoism advocates a way of "... tailoring human behaviour and expectations to fit within the grander overall pattern" (Palmer 1997: 22) of life in general.

In sum, the principles of Taoism would serve the educational goals in the West in preparing learners more adequately for responsible citizenship than is currently the case with total dependence on Western frameworks. The significance thereof for this study lies therein that these notions are consonant with the impetus for interparadigmatic

dialogue (see section 1.1), as it is suggested that "... we live in a self-consciously pluralistic world..." (Berthrong 1994:32).

In order to achieve the aims for this chapter, the following structure is adopted: a brief overview of those aspects of phenomenology most relevant to this study will be given, which will be followed by a similar discussion of Taoism. The last section will be devoted to the correspondences and differences between the two philosophies.

2.2 PHENOMENOLOGY: BASIC CONCEPTS FOR THIS STUDY

2.2.1 Introduction

While it is beyond the scope of this work to comment at length on the phenomenological movement - as for example, on the differences between Husserl and Heidegger (Giorgi 1999: 1, accessed 16/08/2002) - I will devote this section to a short clarification of those aspects that are most relevant to this study. I will only briefly touch on those aspects that are to be explored in fuller detail in sections 2.4 and 2.5, which deal with the similarities and differences between phenomenology and Taoism respectively.

2.2.2 Phenomenology: a brief overview of the term

Phenomenology is a term derived from the Greek *phainomenon*, as a way by which a researcher discloses the essential aspects of a matter as such matter presents itself (Van Rensburg & Landman 1988:442). As derived from the Greek, it simply means "to appear"; "to become visible"; "to be revealed" (Newman Greek / English Dictionary 1971, s.v. "φαίνω"; Metzger 1978:21, s.v. "φαίνω"). This is in keeping with the ideas of Husserl, who is seen as the father of the phenomenological movement (Ehrich 1999:22; Van Manen 2002: (b), accessed 10/07/2002), as he proposed the basis for a research approach founded on the notion of "*to the things themselves*" (Haardt 1991:xvii; Von Eckartsburg 1998:4). This means that the researcher should not interfere with the way in which the life-worlds of individuals studied present themselves to the world, but

attempts to conceptualise these as they are (Giorgi 1995:31; Vandenberg 1997:4; Van Manen 2002: (c), accessed 17/06/2002). By implication, the final presentation should account as comprehensively as possible for all the dimensions by which the life-worlds studies, are constituted.

To this end, Husserl formulated the construct of phenomenology as the method *par excellence* to elucidate the essential nature of the reality being studied (Husserl 1925/1977:142; Haardt 1991:49; Van Rensburg & Landman 1988:442), by means of an anti-Cartesian, non-dualistic approach (Ehrich 1999:24). In essence, Husserl's vision for a qualitative research method in the humanities was not pure phenomenology, but should rather be seen as *existential* phenomenology (Von Eckartsberg 1989:139). *This qualification of phenomenology is particularly relevant for this thesis, as the focus is on the life-world of individuals, and how reflexology could facilitate research (by means of interviews) thereof.*

2.2.3 Phenomenology: interest, scope and nature

A real growing interest in phenomenology becomes apparent when one considers that more and more societies of interested parties concerned with phenomenology are being formed. Some of these publish journals to enhance research on phenomenology as philosophy (Vandenberg in Vandenberg 1997:13; Outcome of surfing: Google: ["phenomenology + society"], accessed 13/08/2002). Not surprisingly, an internet exploration showed that phenomenology is widely applied in research projects, as tens of thousands of studies based on phenomenological research were identified by the computer. Furthermore, these studies seemingly address aspects of education, from all over the spectrum, such as teacher-student relationships (Luna & Medina 2001); the experiences of teachers in Seventh-Day Adventist schools (Bishop1999); the emotional experience of teaching gifted children and student experiences (Arminio, Carter, Jones, Kruger, Lucas, Washington, Young & Scott 2000). The range is too vast to record here, but this indicates the extent and scope of phenomenological research in education. Therefore, I concur with Ehrich (1999:19), when she states that phenomenology has

been applied in research projects in a whole range of disciplines, as the studies using this methodology range from the natural sciences (cf. Eisen, Harrison & Raymond 2001 and Keeling & Rohani 2002) to the humanities.

As far as the humanities are concerned, phenomenology is mainly employed in areas where the focus is on experiences from ordinary life (Barron 2001; Cornish 2001; Li 2001), which effectively makes it a form of qualitative inquiry. This coincides with the notion of *phenomenology as the study of the life-world of individuals* (Valle & King 1978:10-11). Such experiences had often been studied exclusively within the domain of one discipline or another, while largely excluding the reasoning from the perspective of any other discipline (Vandenberg 1997: 5).

A turning point came in the attitude of the Western mind, which has been significantly illustrated by Van Manen's statement that educational phenomenological research in pedagogy cannot be isolated from psychology, psychiatry and medical science (Van Manen 1997:53). In this, he conveyed a movement away from the artificial dichotomies between various aspects of pedagogy. Simply put, this means that, when the life-world of a child is being studied, the boundaries between disciplines should not be so rigid that the researcher cannot move from one discipline to another in gathering and interpreting incoming data, as all aspects of life are at play in the lives of individuals. This is in keeping with the proposed hybrid nature of research in the post-modern era - an aspect I will address more fully in the next chapter where I ground this thesis by means of reflexology in terms of post-modern eclecticism.

Furthermore, this notion of Van Manen regarding the diffusion of ideas from various disciplines and fields of study in the phenomenological approach, is in keeping with Husserl's intention, of pure phenomenology looking at the *subjective experience*, and equating such study with psychology. "Pure phenomenology, as a science referring to pure subjectivity, can of course also be called psychology ... in a very determined sense." (Husserl 1925/1977: 166). This connection between phenomenology and psychology is further supported by Faber (1943:567). He proposed that phenomenology should actually

serve psychology, in the sense that psychological research could be enriched by the phenomenological approach. In other words, it seems to have been agreed upon by a number of academics of note that the phenomenological approach should encompass insights from all disciplines that touch on reality for the individual whose life-world is studied.

This means that the phenomenologist should work *holistically* when observing the individual in his / her life-world. By implication, the outcome should also reflect this approach, rather than by quantitative measures such as statistics. This is often achieved by means of "thick description", for example:

Robert often reminds me that I am not his mother. I put on his coat and give him a small hug. "You are not my mother." I spend the afternoon cooking spaghetti sauce which Dennis, his father, says is Robert's favourite meal. When dinner is served, Robert announces, 'My mom doesn't make me eat this stuff.' I persist in my efforts to say that I care and suggest that I read a story. Robert agrees; he loves stories. He sits rigid next to me taking care that none of him touches any of me. He giggles as my voice changes for Growly Bear and I am encouraged. As the story nears the end, he moves perceptibly closer. The moment is broken by his quip, "My mom reads more better stories. I love my mom. You are not my mother."

Schmidt (2002:117)

Such detailed, *subjective awareness* and *description of a particular experience* as a stepmother is used to explore aspects of motherhood, such as "... the difference between 'being' a mother and 'trying' to be a mother." (Van Manen 2002 (a):117). Furthermore, it opens the door for discussion regarding the sociological aspects of sharing the life of a marriage partner with children from a previous marriage.

What should be clear from this extract of phenomenological writing, is that there is *no control of data*. There is *no statistical analysis* that requires that some aspects significant to the individual be ignored; instead, *the person involved is allowed to relate each aspect that she finds as crucial (essential) to her experience*.

In sum, I wish to echo the general conclusion that it is exactly this approach of looking at the phenomenon *holistically*, that has led to the increased popularity of phenomenology amongst researchers. It is increasingly realised that this comprises a significant way of learning to understand reality in terms of interconnectedness.

2.2.4 Origin and history

Phenomenology originated from the need to deal with the crisis of Western civilization in general, and Western research methods in particular. During the late 1800's, technological advances aroused great respect for the scientific method, which led to the assumption that research methods employed in the natural sciences could also be applied to the study of human livelihood. This, in turn, led to the extensive application of the scientific approach to research in the humanities. Furthermore, the academia of the time who were mesmerised by the scientific method, accused existentialists, such as Hume and Kant, who proposed that *experience* should not be ignored, of uttering words that were no more than "empty shells" (Cottingham 1996:16).

By the 1960's, it became clear that reality cannot be fathomed by human logic, and that, by applying the scientific - or, as it is also referred to, the positivistic - method to the humanities, led to the perception of research in the humanities being "... disengaged ... from the flow of concrete human experience" (Stikkers 1985:211). The arrogant application of such methods has been criticised by various academics. For example, Giorgi, Barton and Maes (1971:208-9) accused the positivistic approach of actually *preventing* access to human experience. In later years Giorgi also drew attention to the fact that the scientific method could never really fulfil its intended goal of giving an authentic view of human livelihood, since the subject / participant to be studied invariably presents with the same conscience as the researcher him / herself (Giorgi 1995:24-5). This makes the subject / participant *qualitatively different from the objects studied in the natural sciences*.

Other researchers have added their voice to the limitations of the scientific approach. May (1983:49) criticised positivism on the ground that it proposes a body/mind split, which he called "... the cancer of psychology". A few years later, DeRobertis (1996:5) raised the issue of the symbolic nature of human beings which is not addressed by the experimental approach of positivism.

While the influence of positivism has not been escaped in the present (Rao 2002), Husserl already proposed a solution as far back as 1925, when he suggested that researchers should explain phenomena as they present themselves in the real world (Husserl 1925/1977). Such method - the phenomenological method - would provide the researcher with a strategy by which to view whatever is to be studied " ... as they appear" (Van Heerden-Johnson 1993:25), in an unbiased way, by reaching " ... the things themselves" (Durnwalder 2002:1, accessed 25/06/2002).

2.2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, I propose that the phenomenological method requires the holistic conceptualisation of the reality of human livelihood, rather than interpretation according to pre-conceived ideas. The way in which phenomenology finds resonance within Taoism will be illustrated in section 2.4.

2.3 TAOISM: BASIC CONCEPTS FOR THIS STUDY

2.3.1 Introduction

I devote a small part of this thesis to Taoism, in order to enlighten the reader with regard to the basic and most relevant concepts of this particular Oriental philosophy. I will point out the most obvious correspondences between phenomenology and Taoism as those arise. The section that follows this one will attend to such analogies in more detail. As said, the rationale for a discussion of Taoism lies therein that Taoism as philosophy

(known as *Tao Chia*), as opposed to *Tao Chiao* (which refers to the religion of Tao) (Palmer 1997:20-1) has been embraced by reflexology for its value-adding properties.

2.3.2 Origin and significance

Taoism as a philosophy originated in ancient China, apparently as the writings of Lao Tzu (Funk & Wagnall 1967, s.v. "China, Chinese philosophy"; Kwok, Palmer & Ramsay 1994:3), written in about the sixth century B.C. (Grigg 1990:xi). Tao literally carries the meaning of "road", "street" or "path", relating to the most respected *way of living that would be holistically proper* (Palmer 1997:26-7). It is a philosophy that envisions reality from a holistic perspective. When applied to human life, it takes all aspects thereof into consideration. For example, conditions of the physical body of a person are interpreted with consideration of the whole context (read: Gestalt) of human existence (Dougans 2000: 41-45; Grigg 1990; Dr K Yu, 2003: personal interview). In this sense, Taoism corresponds with the holistic, Gestalt approach of Western philosophies in education.

I further theorize that the Taoist philosophy became religionised out of *respect for nature* as the Taoists developed a high regard for nature, based on their observation of nature indirectly *bestowing wisdom* on people by means of consequences for certain behaviours. For example, this notion led to sayings such as: "What is built on rock / cannot be pulled down" (as to take wise decisions); "A great tree which takes a crowd to span its base / started from a tiny seed..." (as encouragement); and "Nothing in the world is softer than water ... / but we know it can wear away the hardest of things" (as the rationale for the non-use of violence or force in relationships) (Lao Tzu in Kwok et al 1994: 145; 165; 195). I propose that this is in keeping with Western understanding, as with reference to the quotation at the beginning of the chapter. While there was no Other to worship, Taoists' awe at nature made them realise the inevitability of the existence of a Being as the source of all life:

Before the world was
 And the sky was filled with stars ...
 There was
 A strange, unfathomable Body
 This Being, this Body is silent
 And beyond all substance and sensing
 It stretches beyond everything
 ... so I call it TAO.
 (Lao Tzu in Kwok et al 1994: 84)

In Chinese thought, the Tao can thus be seen as an awesome power beyond logical reasoning or description, which rules all creation. Furthermore, the Tao is largely unfathomable and beyond human control. In this sense, Taoism echoes phenomenology, as both philosophies propose that some aspects of reality cannot be subdued by humans and lie beyond human reasoning and logical understanding. Furthermore, I believe this notion finds its counterpart in the semi-Western and Western religions of Judaism and Christianity, when it is reiterated: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth ...and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." (Genesis 1:1-3). At the same time, it seems as if phenomenology is still struggling with the idea of this Being. This is suggested by the way that Derrida would cross out words yet still retain them in his striving towards finding essences:

Man in his essence is the memory [or memorial ...] of ~~Being~~, but of ~~Being~~. This means that the essence of man is a part of that which in the crossed intersected lines of Being puts thinking under the claim of a more originary command.

Derrida (1974/1976:xv).

This struggle to define the being of man in terms of his Creator, has sedimented in the realisation of the flaws in human logic, that has lead to the establishment of phenomenology as method of research.

As an antidote to this lack of adequate consciousness, the following advice is given regarding developing an understanding of reality, when the Tao te Ching claims:

Stay in harmony with this ancient presence,
and you will know the fullness of each present moment.
(Lao Tzu in Freke & Gandy 1997:59).

I propose that the significance for research in education specifically, lies therein that total understanding will never be possible. The limitations of our own cognitively-sound constructs should thus be acknowledged.

This now brings us to the schemata for examining this harmony between forces in nature, namely the concept of yin/yang, and its potential role in research in education.

2.3.3 Yin/Yang and its significance for educational research

Humans are manifestations of the natural interplay of yin and yang. They are not separate
from the processes that generate, sustain, and reabsorb them.
(Toropov & Hansen 2002:163)

The yin/yang concept provides a way of classifying " ... oppositions and complementaries in the physical and metaphysical worlds" (Po-tuan 1987:3; Palmer 1997:5). This concept is of special significance for this thesis. In the words of Toropov & Hansen (2002:59), " ... yin and yang originally referred to the dark and sunlit sides of a mountain ... the shadowy and sunny sides of the mountain combine to make a unified whole; they ... do not struggle with one another." Therefore, in terms of the yin/yang concept, philosophies and approaches that may seem like opposites, can complement each other, and do not have to be mutually exclusive. This makes interparadigmatic and interdisciplinary studies such as this thesis indeed possible. In other words, this principle can be seen as fundamental to suggesting that reflexology (as CAM-modality) could serve to enrich phenomenological interviewing.

There are also other ways in which the yin/yang concept is relevant for education in general. For example, at first level, this classification is similar to the opposites, or antonyms many children in the West are taught, namely day (yang) versus night (yin); male (yang) versus female (yin); light (yang) versus darkness (yin); positive (yang)

versus negative (yin) (Dougans 2000:190). These distinctions are seen as emanating from the thought of a higher order of being, as it is said:

Tao produced the One.
The One produced the two
The Two produced the three.
And together they produced ten thousand things.
The ten thousand things carry the Yin and embrace the Yang
And through the blending of the ch'i they achieve harmony.
(Lao Tzu in Dougans 2000:203; original punctuation).

It should be noted that this classification of reality does not suggest that one aspect of reality could be inferior or superior to its opposite, but rather that *these pairs of opposing forces represent the complementary energies of the universe, being in a constant state of flux according to aspects such as the time and the seasons* (see Appendix C in conjunction with Tables 5.1 - 5.10, where this knowledge is applied). *The ideal situation is where these elements are in balance.* This division of yin/yang is seen as "blending yin and yang" (Po-tuan 1987:3), and is the concept of most prominence in this study, as it refers to a very simple form of balancing between activities. It is also this aspect of yin/yang that is particularly presented by the famous yin/yang sign, which has been adopted by the existential phenomenologists, in order to show the interdependence between the phenomenological as understood, and existential as lived, terms (Von Eckartsberg 1998:16).

In general the significance for educational research lies therein that this approach provides for a paradigm whereby to determine whether, for example, a curriculum poses a threat to one one-sided development and thereby suppressing the development of possibilities that could bring balance in the development of the human being - a sentiment which has been much echoed by the advocates of equivalent left-brain-right-brain development (Kitchens, Barber & Barber 1991; Neethling 1996; Springer 1993). For example, the development of creativity (yin quality) could be sacrificed in favour of technological development (yang quality), or the development of the gentle yin emotions (e.g. sensitivity) could be sacrificed for the one-sided development of the more vibrant yang emotions, such as strength, ambition and confidence.

The yin/yang thought presents two further divisions, "fostering yang while repelling yin" and "transcending yin and yang" (Po-tuan 1987:3). "Fostering yang while repelling yin" refers to the need for world-transcending higher consciousness, as united with the needs of all biographical existence. It is expressed in the Taoist slogan "being beyond the world while living in the world" (Po-tuan 1987:3). These notions can be interpreted in religious terms, as well as in secular terms. Regarding the first interpretation, it relates to " ... unconsciously following the laws of God." (Liu I-ming as quoted in Po-tuan 1987:4). Since this thesis does not represent a study of religion, the focus for the appropriating of these notions during the case study work will be on the secular interpretations, which relate to "the body obeying the mind", or "desire conforming to reason" (Po-tuan 1987:4).

What I find especially significant for education in general, is the aspect of "repelling yin". This involves the aspect of practising mundane activities until they can function as automatisms, and thus be useful, rather than obstruct higher thought. For example, practising the spelling of words until it becomes an automatic skill, should enhance writing skills, as writing content can then proceed more fluently. In the case of someone educated for work in a pharmacy, those receiving medicine can be more secure.

The concept of "transcending yin and yang" represents the idea of rising above the material world. In the religious sense, the individual has to try to subdue his / her own mind, while focussing on the mind of the Tao, which is seen as radiantly bright. This implies that man exists in terms of a relationship with a Creator; a relationship that cannot fully be grasped cognitively. For research, this means that some aspects of the life-world of individuals are beyond understanding. At the same time, "transcending yin and yang" also means to tame the "wandering mind", in order to be able to focus on higher thought (Po-tuan 1987:5). To this end, I propose that it resembles the description of the skill of concentration, which is known to be most important in intentional learning.

In sum, yin/yang provides for a way of sensible classification of aspects of reality and of differentiation in dealing with a number of aspects of human reality. Thus seen, it could be significant to education and educational research, but as a topic could not be exhausted within the scope of this section.

The significance of the yin/yang -theory for this study lies in the following:

- It serves to underwrite the importance of adopting a holistic view of the life-world of an individual, as it deals with the mind/body/spirit connection;
- Yin/yang theory is particularly congruent with the phenomenologist notion that statistics do not serve the purpose of true understanding of the life-world of individual people;
- It forms the basis for the understanding of the classification system of the Five Elements addressed in the next section, which is a way of incorporating details about the life-world of individuals (see section 2.3.4; Tables 5.1 - 5.10);
- The practice of reflexology relies heavily on the balance between various forces relevant to the total functioning of the human being, and therefore, in the holism of the relationships in which the individual whose life-world is being studied, is engaged;
- The phenomenological-cum-reflexology approach should provide for a matrix by which to duly map the Gestalt of relationships that the individual person whose life-world is being studied, is engaged in.

Therefore, I believe it is fair to say that an approach that acknowledges and applies the yin/yang theory, could enrich research in the humanities in general, and education in particular. The complementary principle of the yin/yang concept provides an intrinsic, philosophical basis for allowing reflexology to serve as complementary to

phenomenological interviewing. Therefore, reflexological interpretations need to take into account the ways in which *human experience* is characterized by these life forces.

2.3.4 The concept of the Five Elements and its significance for educational research

This concept, namely the Five Elements, also known as the Five Phases, is one of the basic descriptive frameworks of Taoism (Po-tuan 1987: 8), relating to the four main directions on the compass, plus the centre (Ergil 2001:31; Kwok et al 1994:26;). In this sense, it recognises the significant links between human reality and its surrounds.

Furthermore, The Five Elements provides for a further way of organising significant clinical realities (Kaptchuk 1983:348), as realities already classified in terms of yin and yang, can now be further organised into fire, water, metal, wood and earth (Dougans 2000:190). These stand for conscious knowledge, real knowledge, sense, essence and intent respectively (Po-tuan 1987:8).

To explain: real knowledge is seen as intuitive knowing, which relates to aspects such as conscience and knowledge about survival, while conscious knowledge is knowledge formed by education and experience. This knowledge allows for the forming of useful habits, such as being able to read, write and calculate. This means, amongst others, that academic knowledge and moral development should be inclusive - a notion which finds its resonance in the work of Western psychologist, Lawrence Kohlberg (Sprinthall and Sprinthall 1977: 238-266; Van den Aardweg & Van Den Aardweg 1988: s.v. "Kohlberg"). The significance of the third factor, namely the senses, lies therein that learning takes place through them, while the capturing of essences (fourth constituent) is needed for true understanding of human life in terms of "mind and body" (Po-tuan 1987:14). This corresponds with the idea of phenomenology as pedagogy being qualified "essence revealing thought" (Van Rensburg & Landman 1988:342). With regard to the empirical research, the significance of incorporating as many senses as is

the case with reflexology, lies therein that triangulation of the sense perception of the researcher is also enhanced (see section 4.4.2.4 (iii)).

The Five Elements also provides for systems whereby details that often get lost, could be classified in order to provide confirmation of earlier findings (see Tables 5.1 - 5.10). For example, certain conditions experienced by individuals could be confirmed by a relatedness to certain colours and tastes. This is because our bodies can be understood in terms of our atomic structure, which is also the case regarding the emission of colours and the atomic structure of tastes (see Appendix C and section 2.3.5.). Thus, we would - albeit on an atomical level - be drawn to or repelled from certain colours or tastes. While explaining the physics behind this reasoning is beyond the scope of this work, I will show in my case study work how the fine detail gained from participants is incorporated by means of this schemata.

The value of the Five Elements for educational research has not been exhausted. In terms of this study it will suffice to say that it has the potential to provide a way of allowing details identified during observation, to be woven into the Gestalt of the findings. As the case studies will show, this framework will enable the researcher to take useful cognisance of much detail which makes up the life-world of the individual - rather than deciding at random what is relevant and presenting a arbitrarily distilled picture of the life-world of the individual.

2.3.5 The body as energy and the significance of this notion for educational research

The rationale for discussing the human body in terms of energy lies therein that both the teachings of Taoism and reflexology see the body in terms of the ch'i (energy) without which the concept of the body is unimaginable. Moreover, the verb "be-ing" by itself suggests some kind of "movement", rather than a "thing". This idea of "being" was extensively explored by the well-renowned phenomenologist, Heidegger, who proposed

that we are "no-thing" (Dallmayr 1992:37; Vadakethala 1970: 54-55), but should rather be perceived in terms of "*being*" (read: energy).

Even in Western scientific terms, it is common knowledge that the human body - as all other entities on earth - consists of atoms, which are made up of sub-atomic particles. These particles are not really things - but, rather *energies* (Singnet 2002:1, accessed 22/07/2002). This corresponds with Einstein's notion that mass (the perceived human body) cannot be understood without taking its interchangeability and interconnectedness with the speed of light and energy, into consideration (Freke & Gandy 1997: 126-131). At the same time, ancient Chinese thought has, beside the principle of energy (ch'i), also a term for the universal principle of organization (Li). It has been said:

The Taoist ... use of the concept ch'i, applying to mean matter and energy, predated by more than a thousand years their equivalence by Einstein in Europe... Western scientific notions of matter-energy ... are not nearly as comprehensive as the Chinese idea of ch'i - which includes forms of "subtle energy" yet to be detected by modern scientific instrumentation

De Quincey (2002:43).

While quantum theory formally teaches that energy is emitted from the body, its manifestation is also often seen in art, especially in Christian art. The latter often depicts saints with a halo as a circle of light around / over their heads, or even with the whole body emitting the light of what is commonly known as the aura. While Western philosophies only recently started paying attention to this phenomenon, albeit from the point of view of scholars in the medical field (Micozzi 2001), Oriental philosophies have been doing so for centuries. Indeed, Oriental peoples interpret this energy in terms of meridians (China), and chakras (India). The significance for this study lies therein that the body/mind dichotomy is non-existent within this paradigm. It interprets physical problems in terms of blockages in the flow of energy through the body, which are related to realities within the wider sphere of existence. This provides for a way by which events and social experiences - as well as the emotions that were integrated during their happening - could manifest in physical form (Denning 1995:2; Dr K Yu 2003: personal

interview). The value for educational research lies therein that it provides a system of understanding the psyche as a whole (Coward 1985:114, on Jung). In sum, the concept of the body as energy will be significant for the interpretations of the life-worlds of the participants during the case study work to be documented in the fifth chapter of this thesis.

In the rest of this section the integrated significance of the meridians as energy pathways, and their significance to the biological and biographical functioning of individuals, are discussed. In terms of Appendix D, I present the reader with basic details regarding the relation of physical problems to meridians, and the most general interpretation thereof on the level of the psyche - also called the "second level interpretation". A single physical manifestation may relate to more meridians than one; this means that such manifestation should be read in concert with other physical indicators (Tables 5.1 - 5.10).

It should be obvious that physical conditions cannot be explained in a straightforward way. For example, cancer of the lung may relate to extreme sadness, as well as an unwillingness to forgive. Some conditions may not be that obvious, as with the person who suffers from various restrictions regarding physical movement - including constipation to the point of bleeding - and who, incidentally, also finds it hard to compose any kind of writing or show any kind of creativity. In such a case, the lack of fluency in physical terms manifests in terms of a lack of fluency in cognitive terms. Thus, the researcher should develop the ability to understand the life-world of the human being in poetic terms, rather than according to statistical rules (Ehrich 1997:38, on Van Manen). This is consonant with the definition of reflexology, which poses that it has the dimension of being an art (section 1.6.6.1).

A relevant list of physical dis-eases and their psychological, symbolic consonants are tabled in Appendix D. This list is by no means complete, as no register on human dysfunction could ever claim to be. It intends to give the observant reflexologist-researcher an idea of the possible magnitude of what is generally seen as physical problems. It is for the participant (Interviewee) to provide the researcher (interviewer)

with facts regarding the genesis of any particular physical condition. As Myss (1997:67) eloquently articulates:

Because Divine energy is inherent to our biological system, every thought that crosses our minds, every belief we nurture, every memory to which we cling translates into a positive or negative command to our bodies and spirits.

In certain academic circles in the West, the link between the biological and biographical dimensions of the life-world of individuals are in a certain rudimentary stage of development. For example, certain medical researchers interpret a stomach ulcer solely in terms of stress and/or a bacterium known as *Helicobacter priori* (Firschein 1999: 28; Tufts University Health and Nutrition letter 1999:1; Awosika-Olumo, Fallon & Trangle 2002). What is ignored, is that many more people have this same bacterium in their stomachs, yet are not suffering the same consequences. (In fact, this is the same for almost any illness: while the exposure to germs or viruses or certain conditions may be similar, not everyone succumbs to the ill effects.) Reflexology, drawing the notions regarding the body-as-energy, would take more factors into account. The reflexologist would interpret the pain and bleeding of ulcers in terms of lack of love, emotional pain, self-criticism and self-hate leading to self-destruction (Appendix D). This interpretation is then employed as a basis to facilitate interviewing.

In broad terms, the significance of the Taoist approach for educational research lies therein that conditions of the body of the individual whose life-world is to be studied, interrelate un-separably with conditions of the mind. Although this notion of the body/mind link has been suggested by a number of phenomenologists, for example, Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Van Manen (2002(a)), there is no evidence that any Western phenomenologist has actually succeeded in establishing the body/mind/spirit link as exquisitely as has been done by holistic practitioners who tapped into Oriental thought, such as Carl Gustav Jung and Myss (see Appendix D).

2.3.6 Concluding remarks

The short study of Taoism and other related, highly relevant concepts - for example, the chakras as energy vortexes - revealed that educational research based on this philosophy could be enriched thereby. Various aspects of the human mind could be evaluated by means of an unusually wide-inclusive interconnectedness with regard to experiences of individual human beings. As a philosophy which has its beginnings eight centuries ago, I propose that it still has value for those involved in educational research by means of phenomenology as construct by which to investigate the life-world of individuals. Indeed, concerning Taoism as "the way", this system of thought represents itself here as related to understanding the life-worlds of individual people in terms of holistic matrixes, as seen in Appendixes A - D and applied in Tables 5.1 - 5.10.

2.4 SIMILARITIES BETWEEN PHENOMENOLOGY AND TAOISM RELEVANT TO THIS STUDY

2.4.1 Introduction

This section is devoted to showing the parallels between phenomenology and Taoism, in order to unite the relevant philosophies from West and East respectively, so as to satisfy the aims of this interparadigmatic thesis that includes a collective case study of ten cases.

A full assessment regarding the complex congruencies between the two theories is not possible here. Therefore, we have to look again at the preliminary reasons for undertaking this study in the first place. According to the rationale behind this study, the focus should be on how research in education by means of interviewing could be aided by reflexology, which is, as seen, significantly dependent on Taoist reasoning, with specific reference to researching the life-world of the individual. Therefore, this part of the thesis will concentrate on those aspects of phenomenology and Taoism that respond directly to such life-world research. In other words, I will elucidate phenomenology in terms of Taoism, in order to show how these two philosophies resonate with each other

towards the aim of aiding research of experiences of individuals. To this end, I will look at the most prominent congruencies between these two philosophies by means of drawing a parallel between the work of a small number of Western philosophers and Taoism. Thereafter, I will elucidate the relevance thereof for research in education.

2.4.2 Visiting prominent similarities between phenomenology and Taoism

As pointed out, this section will focus on a number of what is considered the most important similarities and differences, within the context of this study.

2.4.2.1 Holistic nature

Both philosophies mentioned require a holistic approach, in the sense that existence should be understood in terms of the oneness of its cosmic relations. When Husserl formulated his ideas regarding phenomenology, he did it with the aim of "... reclaiming the unity of the lived world ..." (Lippitz 1997:69). In a very basic sense, he advocated a methodology that would overcome the artificial dichotomies in the study of human life. In essence, Husserl's phenomenological approach requires of researchers to give a holistic view of the lives to be studied.

This ideal was taken seriously by a number of phenomenological thinkers. For example, Merleau-Ponty contended that the human body has the same universal qualities of the greater cosmos (Nuttall 2002). This implies a need for research into human topics, in the cosmological sense. This has been scientifically illustrated, as each cell contains the DNA-prototype as blue-print for the whole body (Marieb 2000:67), while the structuring at atomic level has been equated to the structure of the universe (Clark 1994). This corresponds significantly with Chinese philosophy, which "... propounds the idea that the macrocosmic order is also reflected on the level of the microcosmic" (Beuster 1991:107). This is in keeping with the expressed need for a holistic approach in investigating subjects (Pyllko 1998:28-9; 99) which, again, resonates the notion that all mature science believes in a cosmic whole (Clark 1994; Freke & Gandy 1997: 126-8, on Einstein,

Newton, and Pascal as mystics). This corresponds to the principle of the reflex-areas on the feet (Appendix A), as well as to the integration of cosmology as pertaining to this era (see section 3.3.7).

Merleau-Ponty (1962:453) took this idea of addressing the life-world of an individual holistically to new heights when he contended that "Man is but a network of relations." According to Merleau-Ponty, we are only to be seen as being-in-relation. This notion is, by its very nature, in keeping with reflexology, which poses that each individual should be seen within the context in which he / she finds him / herself (Dougans 2002).

While the phenomenological approach has been widely applied by educational researchers such as Langeveld, Buytendijk and Bollnow (Van Manen 1997:14), I believe that Carl Gustav Jung came closest to point out profound bonds between Chinese thought and Western philosophies regarding the holistic nature of the psyche of man (Coward 1985:5; Wilkinson 1992, accessed 16/08/2002). The question may be raised regarding Jung's inclusion, as he never specifically claimed to be a phenomenologist, nor an educator. The reason lies therein that Jung (as a medical practitioner) was profoundly interested in seeing the lives of individuals as they present themselves to the world, and in terms of as many dimensions as possible. This approach in effect, made him a phenomenologist - albeit without it being specifically articulated. In a certain sense, it also made him an educationalist, because by knowing the life-world of individuals in terms of its full spectrum of realities, one would, inevitably, touch on the aspect of education. Indeed, this inclusive approach is no longer a matter of preference, but rather a matter of necessity for survival (Asmal 2001:83). In other words, the life-world of individuals should be seen in terms of reality in its broadest sense. In similar vein, Jung postulated the following regarding the life-worlds of individuals:

- The empirical world of both the physical and psychological realm rests on an underlying unity which, in the Jungian sense, corresponds with the idea of synchronicity as " ... an inherent purposiveness in the universe" (Beuster 1991: 26). Beuster explains that the "unknown" forces in the universe could be explained

biologically by means of the example of a certain slime mould. Single cells thereof would grow independently, and then unite at a given point in time, forming an integrated organism with a head filled with spores. By then, this organism has developed the ability to move by itself. The head would finally burst open, spreading the spores (Beuster 1991: 41-42). By implication, the underlying unity of all reality sometimes defies human logic, even though it may be observable (see section 6.4). This concept of a force underlying all processes in the universe is congruent with the Chinese concept of "Li", which presupposes that there is an universal, organising principle to "ch'i" (De Quincey 2002:42).

- The self could be understood in terms of a holistic perspective that pre-supposes that all aspects of the human life-world are interlinked. In this, Jung postulated that the human psyche could be understood in terms of the chakras (Coward 1985:114). In this sense, he was in agreement with Myss (1997: 68-76; 287) and Pretorius (2002:10). Jung further postulated that wholeness could only begin with fixation on a god-like figure (King 1999, accessed 16/08/2002) and the re-sacralization of sex (Von Raffay 2000:6, accessed 16/08/2002). In this sense, he stressed the importance of the links between the crown chakra, namely the energy vortex that is specifically linked to spirituality, and the root chakra, which deals with pro-creation and belonging to the tribe. I propose that this makes sense in terms of the ritual of those religions - for example, Judaism - that engage in circumcision for religious purposes, because the root chakra symbolises the genitals, and, by circumcision for religious purposes, the Jewish are constantly reminded of the religious connotation to sexuality.

- The human mind should be seen in terms of three different levels of consciousness, namely the conscious level of the ego; the personal level of unconsciousness in terms of dreams and memories, and the deepest level of consciousness, namely the collective unconscious, composed of the pre-dispositions of universal human reactions, namely the archetypes (Coward 1996:3). For example, specific aspects of consciousness, such as dreams, should be interpreted in terms of universal symbolism. In this vein, a phallic symbol should be seen in terms of spiritual power,

rather than in terms of sexuality, as Freud postulates (Boeree 2002, accessed 14/08/2002). This idea is particularly consonant with the I-Ching, which contains sixty-four different archetypal states (Beuster 1991:96), in the form of the hexagrams.

- In fact, Jung's quest for cosmication was so strong, that he employed the help of astrology - as developed in the tradition of serious calendar-making by Taoists in ancient China (Palmer 1997:22), in order to develop a further understanding of the lives of individuals (Betterman 2002, s.v. "Jung and Astrology"; [Zodiac Master Jung and Astrology](#) 2002:1, accessed 14/08/2002). In this way, Jung took phenomenological understanding of the life-worlds of individuals to dimensions unusual to Western academic thought.

In sum, Jung's understanding of the holistic nature of all reality in general, and of human existence in particular, corresponds distinctly with Taoist text, as both Jung's philosophy, and Taoist thinking, considers all aspects of reality as integrated (Beuster 1991:107).

In conclusion, I wish to assert that phenomenology has been employed by a number of researchers in education and related topics, and that the approach could be rendered holistic for its "... emphasis on the wholeness of the world as it unfolds in its sensory splendour, as opposed to the traditional ... efforts toward the reduction of ... experience into quasi-mathematical ... categories" (Chessick 1999:1, accessed 16/08/2002). In the sense of holism, Husserl's idea resembles Taoism, as this philosophy, too, requires a holistic, cosmological view of human lives (cf. Dougans 2000: 187). Indeed, the idea of the meridians connecting all parts of the body and connecting the body to the universe, appreciates the notion that no single facet of human existence - by implication, human experience - could be studied without taking the broader physiological, social and spiritual facets of reality into consideration.

2.4.2.2 The requirement of a transcendental approach

In order to discuss this aspect, we first have to consider the term transcendental.

Ontologically seen, this refers to an attitude that does not depend on logical reasoning, but rather on a way of understanding that goes beyond ordinary perception or conception (Odhams 1970, s.v. "transcendental").

In this sense, phenomenologists, such as Husserl, hold that human realities can only be understood " ... in a transcendental, philosophical manner" (Lippitz 1997:69). Indeed, the reliance on pure reason and language as a handicap to understanding the life-world of people is articulated by Bataille (quoted in Pytko 1988: 15-16), who maintained that *"...words drain almost all life from within us ... there subsists in us a silent, elusive, ungraspable part."*

This need for a beyond-logical approach was further advocated by Heidegger, when he claimed: *"Thinking begins only when we have come to know that reason, glorified for centuries, is the most stiff-necked adversary of thought"* (Henry 2001: 1121). As a phenomenologist, Heidegger articulated the intellectual understanding of the mystery of "Being" as limited (Heidegger 1961: 105; 109) in his fierce questioning of the Cartesian method (Von Eckartsberg in Valle, 1998:11) and called for an understanding of Dasein as transcending to a world of its own temporal determination (Vadakethala 1970:36; 42). Indeed, Heidegger's attempt to overcome the limitations of Western thought has been described as striving *"... to see the form of the formless, and hear the sound of the soundless"* (Dallmayr 1992:37). This is in keeping with Oriental philosophies of experiencing what lies beyond Western reasoning (Von Eckartsberg 1998:11).

It is appropriate to refer to the contribution of Merleau-Ponty towards a transcendental approach to understanding the life-world of individuals. Indeed, it has been said that his efforts to understand human existence, was meant to transcend the "... Cartesian dualism that separates body and soul" (Boss 1979:129). To this aim, Merleau-Ponty argued extensively in his attempt to show that the scientific approach is not adequate, since "... the human body is defined in terms of ... an indefinite series of discontinuous acts, significant cores which transcend and transfigure its natural powers" (Merleau-Ponty

1962:193). Since human existence surpasses existence which is definable in naturalistic terms, there is a need for a philosophical approach for research:

De filosofie van Merleau-Ponty tracht te eenzijdigheid van deze beide richtingen [read: realism and idealism] te boven te komen. Hij is ervan overtuigd dat noch het realisme noch het idealisme rech doen aan de volle werkelijkheid van de menselijke existentie.

Bakker (1965:17).

Indeed, Moss (1989:73) sees Merleau-Ponty's rationale for taking this stand as resting on his belief that "... the psychological level of human experience and behaviour reveals a richness of organization that not only parallels - but also surpasses - the more primitive organization evident at the levels of reflex formation or neurological function" , which poses the " ...challenge [of] exploring the higher level organisation of psychological life."

Jung's system of belief allowed for a transcendental approach to the understanding of the transcendental aspects of human existence. For example, he proposed that perception should not only rest on input at the conscious but also at the unconscious level, as the latter provides a door into the Transcendent (Ross 1997:2, accessed 14/08/2002). In other words, *understanding the life-world of individuals requires transcending interpretation according to orthodox intellectually-based models* (Coward 1985:96). [While Jung also concentrated on the existence of the archetypes in the collective unconscious, I will not discuss that in detail, as it does not bear particular relevance for this particular thesis.] This need for conceptualisation beyond the restrictions of cognitive understanding has been reiterated in various academic circles. For example, Hamilton (2002) recognised the reality of the absence of philosophical "hooks" (her own words) by which to categorise all realities of human existence. She concluded that *all that there is to know about the subject, cannot be understood in terms of normal reasoning*.

In sum, both phenomenology and Taoism as philosophies require of the researcher in the humanities in general, and in education in particular, to be appreciative of the complexities of human nature which surpasses the empirical realm (Beuster 1991).

2.4.2.3 An attitude of non-control of data

Phenomenology requires of the researcher to refrain from controlling variables, but rather to look at all aspects of the phenomenon to be studied. In Van Manen's own words, "Phenomenology is not an empirical analytic science" (Van Manen 1990:21). This means that the methodology - contrary to the scientific method - takes on a subjective approach, in the sense that the *experience* of the subject/participant is of cardinal importance. In other words, variables are not controlled, while significant aspects of experience are recorded.

Interestingly, this is in keeping with what has recently been found in mainstream science in the West. It has been discovered that it is not possible to control all variables - not even in the simple experiment of trying to establish the acceleration caused by gravity on a falling object (Beuster 1991:13). Furthermore, this sentiment regarding the approach of the researcher is also consonant with Taoist thought, as the Tao Te Ching clearly states:

To act as if you know it all is catastrophic;
And if you try to control it
You will stare into your empty hand.
Lao Tzu (in Kwok et al 1994:165).

This clearly suggests that educational researchers should be respectful towards the greater wisdom in the universe. In this regard, I wish to propose that the Taoist approach in terms of "wu-wei" or "non-action" (Coward 1996:7) is in keeping with the phenomenological approach. Both systems of thought conclude that the interpretation of reality should not be subject to control by models of what is humanly understandable (Cottingham 1996:117).

Moreover, these notions suggest that researchers in the humanities in general, and in education in particular, should rise above popular (scientific) notions, and view the real life-world of the individual as it is. The outcome of research into the life of an individual would then be discourse rather than distilled knowledge - especially in the non-conclusive form of figures and graphs (Van Manen 2002 (a)).

In order to achieve the position wherein scientific knowledge does not interfere with the research procedure, an attitude described in Western philosophy - which also applies to educational philosophy - as reduction is needed. This implies that, as far as possible, one should set aside one's own assumptions by trying to transcend one's frame of reference, and allow the phenomenon to present itself on its own terms (Van Rensburg and Landman 1988:446). This approach of innocence is echoed in Taoist thought: "If you want to know ... take a look at little children" (Lao Tzu in Freke & Gandy 1997:147). As an outcome the phenomenological movement away from pre-cast notions in order to let the subject of study speak for itself, supposes divorcing oneself from pre-conceived ideas or the framework of the natural sciences (Husserl 1925/1977:167) and a willingness to give recognition to the [subject's] field of significance (Bensusan 1998:168).

This attitude towards knowing is also reflected in Taoism. It suggests that the mind should, as appropriate, be 'empty' in terms of the limitations to perception posed by clinging to pre-cast ideas.

If you mould a cup you have to make it hollow:
 it is the emptiness within that makes it useful.
 In a house or room it is the empty spaces
 - the doors, the windows - that make it useable.
 They all use what they are made of to do what they do,
 but without their nothingness they would be nothing.
 (Tao Te Ching 1994: 11; Loya, Ho & Jih 1998:128; spacing as in translation.)

Put differently, in order to be beneficial to understanding of a phenomenon, the researcher has to operate from a state of consciousness that is void of the usual habits of non-transcendental study of existence.

In conclusion, I propose that the significance of phenomenology and Taoism for research in education lies therein that studies of the life-worlds of individuals should be free from any kind of pre-conceived ideas and control of data as humanly possible (Kruger 1982:38), and should rather focus on subjective experience.

2.4.2.4 A focus on the essences of existence

The term essence refers to that quality of any phenomenon that is fundamental to it, and that is central to its existence. In this section I will show that both phenomenology and Taoism focus on the essence of the life-world of the individual.

As far as phenomenologists are concerned, it is generally understood that to be able to understand a phenomenon by means of the phenomenological method, requires an understanding of the essences as fundamental aspects or essences of this life-world (Van Rensburg & Landman 1988:342-4). Indeed, the imperative for concentrating on essences as the way to understanding human existence is expressed by Merleau-Ponty (in Bannan 1967:12):

The need to proceed by way of essences ... [lies therein that] ... our existence is too tightly held in the world to be able to know itself as such at the moment of its involvement, and it requires the field of ideality in order to become acquainted with and to prevail over its facticity.

In other words, in order to understand the life-world of any individual, research should be done against the background of a matrix of essences as those aspects of such a life-world that is central to the existence thereof.

This shows a striking resemblance towards this focus on central key dynamics which lies in the following command of Lao Tzu: "Go towards the hub that is the centre" (Kwok et al 1994:57). Hereby he explained the significance of keeping central issues in mind. The

theme of centeredness was also particularly relevant to Jung, who explored the significance of the mandala, as a unity that:

... mirrors the natural division of the World into four seasons, four directions ... the four functions of the psyche
 [1] rational thinking opposite feeling ...
 [2] sensation ...
 [3] practical awareness of facts and objects, opposed by intuition, and
 [4] indefinable sixth sense which operates by way of direct insight ...
 hunches A wholistic awareness (my numbering)
 (Roberts 2000: 5, accessed 14/08/2002).

For the *educational researcher*, it means interpreting particularities about the life-world of an individual in terms of these essences relating to our being in the quest for an increasingly holistic understanding of the life-world of individuals. This concept is illustrated by the notion that "mental knowledge" is only like a map to real knowledge. In other words, "...like a finger pointing at the moon: "... the finger is not the moon and who remains fixated with the finger will have missed the point" (Freke & Gandy 1997:11). This means that the focus should not be on a particular method, but on the phenomenon. By implication, a method that would account for all the known dimensions of the phenomenon should be employed, in order to enhance understanding. In this sense, a review of the earlier section on the body as energy in section 2.3.5 is suggested. The energy systems explained in this section promote an in-depth understanding of the essences of human life as far as possible (Coward 1985:114-123, on Jung; Tables 5.1 - 5.10).

Furthermore, it has been evident from the literature that Taoism leads to the constitution of patterns to capture reality (Kaptchuk 1983:16). Indeed, the I-Ching specifically reveals reality by means of the patterns of the hexagrams (line figures consisting of any combination of six yin and/or yang lines) (Beuster 1991:110; Bullock 2000:23-33; Denning 1995: 5-9).

This brings us to the dilemma of the non-understanding of human nature. I believe that, even though a holistic view would enable one to understand another to a high degree, it is

never possible to understand another human being in full. I would like to explain this notion metaphorically according to the Genesis story: when God breathed His breath into Adam (Gen. 2:7), He breathed something of Himself into him. Therefore, each person is predisposed towards the Good, as, being made by God in this way. Every person carries something of the incomprehensible character of God in him, and, would therefor, be esoteric himself. Nevertheless, for the purposes of endeavours such as research and health practice it is important that one does have modalities by which one could draw up a profile of whoever one studies. (See section 2.4.2.6.)

2.4.2.5 An understanding of the flux between interdependent realities

Here we need to understand that we are talking about the continual changes that are part of reality. These can be likened to the natural cycles composed by opposites such as day and night, or birth and death (see section 2.3.3; Appendix C). What I propose here is that both the phenomenological movement, as well as Taoism, relate to this countenance of reality.

Solowski (1985:21) held that phenomenological analysis has to recognise dimensions of the whole in terms of "presence and absence, sameness and otherness, rest and motion." This notion about reality has been explored extensively by Heidegger in his "Sein und Zeit", in which he proposed our existence being in progress, undergoing change as we live (www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/GERM/g272/heidegger.html: 1, accessed 24/07/2002). Merleau-Ponty (1962:235) also described the forces constituting the life-world of individuals as in a state of flux to each other, when he maintained: "... my body is a ready-made system of equivalents and transpositions ..." - especially as the term "transpose" in particular relates to the event of "changing places" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 1990, s.v. "transpose"; "transposition"). This idea is significant in terms of Western thought, as it is well-known that Einstein brought into question Newtonian physics by removing the concept of a fixed and unchangeable universe. Indeed, it is said that, when he presented mathematical proof that space and time change - relative to the observer, the Newtonian view of 'absolute reality' was proven incorrect.

Consonant with this notion is the Tao pattern of yin/yang, which deals with the state of motion of corresponding aspects of reality, such as the change of seasons - in other words, "... cycles of change ..." (Beuster 1991:101). Significant is the adoption of the yin/yang sign by (Western) phenomenologists, in order to illustrate the interdependence between phenomenological realities as understood, and as existential/ lived terms (Von Eckartsberg 1998:16).

Taoism provides for a further exquisite exposition of realities as reality-in-motion, by means of the I-Ching - also called the "Book of Changes" (Bullock 2000; Denning 1995). This is concerned with what Tao is said to symbolize (Palmer 1997:28). Significant for this thesis are the correspondences in this regard between Taoism, and the concept of "synchronicity" or "meaningful co-incidence", as developed by Jung. In 1991, Beuster devoted his doctoral thesis at the University of South Africa to the exploration of "The Jungian construct synchronicity, with specific reference to the I-Ching", in which he concluded that the I-Ching operates according to the principle of cyclical change (Beuster 1991:174). The significance of these findings for research in education lies therein that the changes that do occur in the life of every human being, and interpretation thereof should not be done without the concept of cyclical change in mind. These cycles are evident today to every traveller who gets onto a plane, and goes in an eastern or in a western direction: the biorhythm is affected, and the traveller suffers from jet-lag. Furthermore, the notion that each function in the body has its periods of optimum functioning, makes the Five Elements all the more important for the interpretation of so-called peripheral data, as it includes the information on the *biorhythm* of the participants - which reflects on the functioning of certain organs, and could *serve as confirmation for other findings*. This will be illustrated in chapter five.

2.4.2.6 Application: understanding of the life-world of individuals

In this section, I will deal with the idea of both phenomenology and Taoism being appropriate for the understanding of the life-world of the individual. In order to achieve

this aim, I will highlight the following: the term life-world as it is understood in academic circles, as well as the significance of understanding individuals in terms of embodiment.

Firstly, the term life-world is examined. This word is a declaration which intends to refer to all dimensions of the life of the individual (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner, 2000, s.v. "life-world"; Van Rensburg & Landman 1988: 113). This ontological understanding of the term life-world is clearly depicted in educational philosophy, which holds that the term includes all facets of reality for any particular person (Van Rensburg & Landman 1988:392).

Phenomenology proposes to aim at constructing the life-world of the individual participant as it presents itself in everyday life. Logically, this means that the relationships in which the individual finds him / herself, are of cardinal importance. In other words, the life-world of the individual has to be understood in terms of Dasein as Mitdasein to address the non-isolation of human existence (Van Rensburg & Landman 1988: 524-7). This notion of the life-world is, in effect, holistic in nature, as it provides an in-depth view of the life-world of an individual to be studied. It is also in keeping with Husserl's original idea, as he proposed that a person and his / her world co-constitute one another (Van Heerden-Johnston 1993:26; Appendixes C & D).

Even so, the concepts Umwelt, Mitwelt and Eigenwelt presented an attempt to deal with the issue of the life-world (May 1983: 126-9). However, these terms only served to deepen the divide between realities of human life. For example, according to Keen (1978:250), the others of our Umwelt "... are not our family and friends, but others in general." This poses the question: when exactly does an other move from being an other in the Umwelt, to an other in an Eigenwelt? Can one move back and forth between the two aspects of reality, and, if so, what exactly constitutes being in one world rather than being in the other? I propose that this concept, however useful, does not provide a satisfactory projection of the life-world of the individual.

Heidegger, as existentialist (Blitz 2001: 106), devoted much of his life to coming to grips with the essence of being-in-the-world, namely of human existence. As existential phenomenologist, he was well versed in the existential philosophy of Kierkegaard (Van Heerden-Johnston 1993:25). Indeed, his Dasein-analysis (analysis of human existence) provided an extensive account of what it means to be in-the-world (Boss 1979:130), in terms of interpersonal relations (Giorgi et al 1971:73). This Dasein-analysis of Heidegger stated that the life-world of individuals should be seen in terms of core values, such as 'thrownness', 'everydayness', and 'being-among-others' (cf. [Heidegger's Being and Time Knowledge Map 2002](#), accessed 24/07/2002). To explain: while 'thrownness' relates to our being here without choice, the whole work of the Tao te Ching suggests that we are to live in harmony with nature, in order to survive. (This is congruent with the rationale behind the current Western concern for the environment, which underlies the organisation of the World Summits on Sustainable Development.) At the same time, 'everydayness' suggests that we have to live in the present, in order to be fulfilled - a notion likewise expressed in terms of the Chakra system (Myss 1997:286). 'Being-amongst-others' is particularly consonant with the Oriental notion of relatedness, as the need for living in harmony with nature and society lies therein that we are related to our surrounds.

The significance of Heidegger's beliefs for education lies therein that they give a rigorous philosophical explanation of what it means to be a human being - and, therefore, a learner / educator - in this world (Van Rensburg & Landman 1988:527). Indeed, for Heidegger, 'Being' meant 'Being-with' - by implication the existence of Others; understanding oneself presupposes Being-with (Cottingham 1996:115).

Even so, Heidegger's thought has been seen as "culturally decentered, lodged at the crossroads of East and West - and thus at the site of a possible or impending global dialogue" (Dallmayr 1992:37). This notion was largely based on Heidegger's theme of nothingness, which he asserted to be the inner core of reality - with the achievement of non-ego as ultimate goal (Dallmayr 1992:40; Blitz 2002:107). This theme, together with the exposition of his holistic view of human existence as explored in the previous paragraph, has been equated to Oriental philosophical standing (Von Eckartsberg

1998:11; Vadakethala 1970: vii). Therefore, I propose Heidegger's thinking to be particularly congruent with Oriental thinking in general, and Taoism in particular, since both philosophies see the individual in cosmological terms, while they require a notion of 'nothingness in being' for understanding reality (Von Eckartsberg 1998:15; Wawrytko 1991: 415).

Another phenomenologist who played an important role in understanding human existence from a holistic vantage point is Merleau-Ponty. This French phenomenological thinker was concerned with the unity of existence (Bannan 1967:54). It is claimed that he " ... writes from within a tradition of phenomenology which contested the idea of a subjective self reflecting on an objective world exterior to it ..." (Nuttall 2002). In his "Phenomenology of perception" Merleau-Ponty (1962:407) states: *"Inside and outside are inseparable. The world is wholly inside and I am wholly outside myself."* This notion is, of course, congruent with Taoist thought, which stresses that meridians are energy pathways that link all organs and body parts, and also link the body to the universe (see section 1.6.6). In Tables 5.1 - 5.10, the reader will notice in what ways the congestions in the body of each individual participant correlate with the outward circumstances. This notion relates to the post-modern concept of cosmology, which I discuss more fully in section 3.3.7.

To Merleau-Ponty, embodied existence means to see the body within full view of its context, when he contended:

The body in general is an ensemble of paths already traced, of powers already constituted; the body is the acquired dialectical soil upon which a higher formation is accomplished, and the soul is the meaning which is then established.

(Merleau-Ponty (quoted in Bannan 1967:54)).

A number of important aspects arise from this quotation. First, Merleau-Ponty suggests that we in our bodies, are influenced by our past. In this sense he - albeit in philosophical terms - points towards the notion that our past is written in our bodies. This is particularly congruent with what the meridian system says, namely that events of the past

may influence the flow of energy through the body, leading to dis-ease (see Appendixes B & D).

Secondly, Merleau-Ponty sees the body as *being in dialect*. This, of course, corresponds with Heidegger's criteria of 'being-amongst-others'. However, it also significantly corresponds with the Taoist idea of the meridians, which holds that we are connected to everything else that form part of our existence.

The reference of the body being in dialect with 'higher formation' which makes life meaningful to 'the soul', suggests that Merleau-Ponty knew that it is important for the soul to connect with an power, in order to live a meaningful life. Another phenomenologist who shares this notion is Wittgenstein, when he states: "The meaning of life, i.e. the meaning of the world, we can call God." (Wittgenstein quoted in Jordaan & Jordaan 1990:812). This is in keeping with what psychologists call the need for knowing someone worthy of one's admiration and praise, and abiding by all the accompanying conventions (Jordaan & Jordaan 1990:657). The combination of the idea of the need for God and the idea of the body as energy, corresponds with the concept of the body-as-energy in terms of the seventh chakra in particular, as it is this chakra that unites with the Divine, and establishes meaning for the individual. This concept links with several religions that perform circumcision, as the tribal chakra of the general area is linked to the crown chakra of worship, thereby sacralising sex. This idea is also in agreement with that of Carl Jung, who suggested that people should turn to what they consider to be the Divine, in order to lead a life characteristic of wholeness (King 1999, accessed 16/08/2002).

Merleau-Ponty (1962:345) then went further to suggest that human existence can only be understood in terms of our connectedness to the universe as a whole, when he articulated: "I know myself only in so far as I am inherent in time and in the world, that is, I know myself only in my ambiguity." Merleau-Ponty believed that the lives of people should be made known in cosmological terms. These beliefs echo Taoist thinking, which proposes the continuous flow of energy which unites all parts of the body, and, indeed, the body to

the universe (cf. Dougans 2000:22-3). At the same time, he knew that human existence is no absolute; but, rather onto-theological, when he contended: "... *I can never say 'I absolutely'*" (Merleau-Ponty 1962:208). This is in keeping with post-modern Western thought on relativism (see section 3.3.5).

This notion also corresponds significantly with the yin/yang concept of reality which is never in the condition described as the status quo. Merleau-Ponty contended that "... our reflections are carried out in the temporal flux ... which we are trying to seize ..." (1962: xiv), and "... the perpetual reiteration of the sequence of past, present and future ... expressed by saying that it is continuous: the present which it brings to us will not last, we always face a fresh new cycle, and, therefore, a new future ..." (1962:453). This notion corresponds to the flux proposed by the yin/yang theory (see section 2.3.3).

Significantly, Merleau-Ponty postulated that abstract terms could produce bodily reactions. For example, "If a word is shown to a subject for too short a time for him to be able to read it, the word 'warm', for example, induces a kind of experience of warmth ... the word 'hard' produces a sort of stiffening of the back and neck, and only in a secondary way does it project itself into the visual or auditory field and assume the appearance of a sign or a word" (Merleau-Ponty 1962:235). In this sense, Merleau-Ponty's beliefs are consonant with the notions of Taoism, which suggest that experience may be a-logical (cf. Beuster 1991: 95). In reflexological practice - the modality by which the interviews are conducted in this study - for example, it is a-logical that a reflex-point underneath the foot can explain the real or latent existence of a problem elsewhere in the body - let alone in terms of psychological experiences as well. The significance for the researcher in the humanities in general, and in education in particular, lies therein that researchers should develop the ability to understand those aspects of human nature that lie beyond words, in order to develop a more complete understanding of the life-worlds of individuals.

Thus, according to Merleau-Ponty's beliefs, phenomenology has to take an integrated view of human existence - which is congruent with Taoist thought. However, his philosophies remain what they are - namely, philosophical considerations - as they cannot

be expressed in real terms, and have to be applied by other researchers. In this respect, modalities that focus on the links between biography and biology - as is the case with holistic medicine in general, and reflexology in particular - provide for ways of applying Merleau-Ponty's theories.

As already mentioned, yet another scholar who spent his life establishing ways of interpreting the life-worlds of individuals by means of modalities that would provide for a comprehensive understanding of human nature, was Carl Gustav Jung. The relevance of Jung lies in his phenomenological approach to understanding all dimensions of human existence. To this end, Jung aimed at constructing a model of the life-world that would incorporate all aspects of such life. In this way, he would then show the true nature of the psyche. In this sense, Jung's work is consonant with Husserl's "principle of principles", as he provided for a phenomenology of the unconscious (Hopkins 1998:7, accessed 16/08/2002). Indeed, Jung laid great emphasis on the concept of wholeness. Finding Western concepts inadequate, he drew from a particular Oriental notion of the the-body-as-energy - albeit in the form of the chakra model. Jung claimed this is "... an Eastern attempt to understand the psyche as a whole" (Coward 1985:114; Hurwitz 2001:240). In this, he is supported by psychologists, for example, by Pretorius (2002). For the first time, Jung had a consistent way by which to describe emotions and behaviour, which related to the body and the psyche alike. These notions, amongst others beyond the scope of this work, cost him his friendship with Freud (Butz & Chamberlain 1998:43).

At the same time, I wish to propose that the phenomenological researcher in education exploring the life-world of individuals is obliged to take note that behaviours and events that shape the life-world of individuals, should also be seen as linked in terms of an underlying unity (Hopkins 1998:2). For example, behaviour, then, can also be shaped by the nature of the forces such as the archetypes in the collective unconscious that the individual has identified with on the level of the unconscious. This notion is strongly in keeping with Taoism in general, and reflexology in particular, which underwrites the belief that all aspects of reality are related to each other. This calls for an awareness of the underlying, universal pattern, which asks for an explanation of human behaviour in

terms of symbolism, in order to at least enrich psychometric ways of discovering information regarding the life-world of individual persons.

The rationale for this call for an awareness of the role of symbolic forms, lies therein that archetypes present as non-cognitive symbols of the mental aspects of human life. In this sense, an approach that would take note of this, would be able to move beyond the non-discursive aspects of human behaviour (Pietikainen 1998:1, accessed 26/08/2002). This is consonant with Taoism in general, and reflexology in particular, as both these constructs of thought ask for an approach that goes beyond Newtonian interpretation (see section 3.3.3), and which would also take reflective note of the whole of reality.

The collective unconscious as underlying reality, explained the notion of manifestations such as, what Jung termed, synchronicity. In terms of this concept, events may not correlate in terms of explanation, but rather in terms of meaning. Jung defined synchronicity as "... a peculiar interdependence of objective events among themselves, as well as with the subjective (psychic) states of the observer ... " (Jung quoted in Douglas 1998:2, accessed 16/08/2002). This notion is particularly consonant with Taoism, which perceives reality in terms of unity, or the 'unus mundus' (Beuster 1991:95), of the li-concept as the underlying force that controls the ch'i (De Quincey 2002:42-45).

Furthermore, synchronicity serves as an explanation for the holistic nature of reality, as synchronistic events invariably are connected in a way that transcends space and time. This concept is also noted by other phenomenologists, as illustrated by the words of Witte-Townsend (in Van Manen 2002(a):169):

There are occasions when another time in life rushes in uninvited.
Past and present become confused. Mind and body seem to
momentarily forget present-time and present-space.

The I-Ching expresses a similar distinction between time as transcended and clock time:

... by proposing two time orders: the so-called **Ho-tou** represents a realm which is eternal and timeless, while the **Lo Shou** ... refers to a dimension which is time-bound ... the **Ho-tou** order corresponds to the collective unconscious ... **Lo Shou** represents cyclical time, as experienced in consciousness ...
(Beuster 1991:107).

This poses a challenge for educational researchers, because the life-world of individuals should also be interpreted from the unconscious paradigm. This might imply further training, to be sensitive to those realities that lie outside of the realm of cognitive, statistical analysis. Jung could never reduce his theory to a form that he could communicate in terms of a model that could really be applied (Progoff quoted in Coward 1996: 480). Yet, it should be clear that the theories of Jung by which the life-world of individuals could be holistically interpreted, and Taoism coalesce.

The goal of this thesis, is to show that reflexology as an expression of Taoism, provides a distinct way by which such realities can be articulated, to serve the purpose of communicating details concerning reality from both the conscious and unconscious order.

2.4.2.7 The role of observation and description as part of the research process

Both Taoism and phenomenology are aligned towards understanding phenomena to be studied by means of observation, and revealing the outcomes thereof in terms of description.

From a Western perspective, observation is favoured as a research technique, for example in the case of ethnographic studies or participatory research programmes (Mouton 2001: 148-151). As a phenomenologist, Van Manen (1990:29) too tends to be particularly favourable towards employing the research technique of observation, when he contends: "A human science researcher is ... a sensitive observer of the subtleties of everyday life."

Taoism, with its matrix by which a vast range of information ranging from all levels of existence could be incorporated when the life-world of an individual is researched, particularly depends on the skill of the observer. If one reflects on this chapter, one notices that the realities of the life-world of individuals depend on observations on levels as vastly apart as physical manifestations to psychological interpretations to the 'state of affairs' at sub-atomic levels of energy, as revealed through the concepts of the body in terms of energy, namely the meridians. Such observations may be useful to facilitate interviews.

The significance for research in education lies therein that researchers are challenged to use frameworks of interpretation of the lives of individuals that may be relatively new to their traditional frames of reference. However, this is a challenge that the research community could seriously consider taking if only for the reason that " ... [a discipline] ... cannot grow, unless it opens itself up to untried and innovative ideas" (Beuster 1991:173).

At the same time, both Taoism and phenomenology put their ideas into practice by means of description, rather than methods that depend on graphs or statistics. In this regard, Van Manen articulates the activity of description as inherent to phenomenological research in the human sciences when he says that the activity of research should include " ... describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting ..." (Van Manen 1990:31). In this regard, he echoes the thoughts of Heidegger, who held that the existence of mankind is adversely affected by " ... a peculiar excess of raging measuring and calculating" (McWhorter 1992:13).

This notion and practice is particularly consonant with Taoism, as this approach interprets reality poetically, rather than from the so-called 'scientific' point of view (Dougans 2000:188). This is in keeping with Oriental thinking in Taoism which expects a pre-discursive attitude and a readiness for a-subjective experience (Pylkko 1998:266).

The reason lies therein that the Taoist approach is distinctly a-authoritarian, in the sense that it does not proceed by means of the control of data (which makes statistics and application of the scientific method possible), but rather on including observations in order to construct a pattern by which reality is to be understood.

This idea of communicating reality of people's lives by means of description, has been increasingly incorporated in the social sciences, as for example in terms of what is commonly known as thick description. In this way, Western research is also progressively moving towards giving a descriptive view of a particular phenomenon, such as the experiences of individuals regarding a certain aspect of their lives. For example, in the work compiled by Max Van Manen, under the title "Writing in the Dark", he included real-life stories by various individuals. One of these writers vividly recalled what it had been like to be alone as a child (Kirova in Van Manen 2002(a):156-165), as she comments on the sense, sound, and body experience of being lonely.

2.4.3 Conclusion

As said, this section was devoted to elucidating the congruencies in approach used by both phenomenology and Taoism. It has been argued that there are definite correspondences between Taoism and phenomenology, and that these two theories do concur.

I have endeavoured to show that, even though phenomenology could be widely applied (Shpet 1999), it is also relevant for the study of the life-world of individuals by means of interviews, as this is the requirement for this study in particular, and for qualitative educational research in general (Van Manen 2002(a)). The significance for research in education lies therein that research outcomes concerned with the life-world of individuals can be enriched by incorporating Taoist ideas, as a more comprehensive picture of such phenomena would then be possible.

2.5 SIGNIFICANT DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN PHENOMENOLOGY AND TAOISM

We do not see things as they are.
We see them as we are.
Talmud.

This section presents an extension of the discussion in section 2.1, where I elucidated the reasons for comparing phenomenology and Taoism. Regardless of the significant correspondences between phenomenology and Taoism, there are also important areas of disagreement. I will shortly discuss those areas most pertinent to this study.

The first discrepancy relates to holism. Phenomenology in general, and educational phenomenological studies in particular, do not readily incorporate philosophical findings from over the spectrum of disciplines. Educational phenomenologists tend to adhere to strict dichotomies between disciplines in practice. For example, Vandenberg (1997:5) asserts: "Medical and biological phenomena also occur in schools, but they are not educational phenomena." He further states that education is domain-specific (p.6). Even though Jung bridged the divide between the disciplines in the Western academia that separates the treatment of the body from the treatment of the mind, as well as between the Western and Oriental paradigms dealing with the psyche, his ideas are not widely accepted. Indeed, intellectual bilingualists have suffered outright rejection from traditional academia in this regard (Rao 2002; section 1.9).

What appears prominent, is that phenomenology seems to find it hard to break through the barrier of the cognitive. For example, even though some thinkers, such as Van Manen, propose the significance of non-cognitive understanding (Van Manen 1997: 61), extracts on the life-worlds of individuals are still presented in strictly descriptive form (Van Manen 2002(a)). Furthermore, phenomenology is still seen as a research methodology that primarily deals with the conscious mind-world of the individual, as prominent educational phenomenologist, Vandenberg (1997:8) contends: "Education is concerned with conscious learning". In this sense, educational research is being disabled,

at least to some degree, regarding the life-world of the individual in terms of those aspects of the life-worlds of individuals that are a-causal.

Indeed, it seems that, apart from psychologists like Pretorius (2002) few academics in South Africa have concerned themselves with entertaining the thought of changing to a frame of reference that sees the human body as energy, and operating from this. At present, only about two hundred medical doctors in South Africa belong to S.A.S.I.M. (South African Society for Integrative Medicine), which poses that medical doctors should have the right to treat patients according to this concept - thereby tending to the notions of healing from across the spectrum (Brom 2003:8). Moreover, this malaise in educational phenomenology to see the life-world of individual people in terms of the concepts posed by the human-body-as-energy, is in stark contrast to what is happening at universities in developed countries, who are taking increasing cognisance of various forms of Taoist-based medicine (Toropov & Hansen 2002:196). For example, the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard University under the leadership of Micozzi and Eisenberg respectively have embarked extensively on the promotion of CAM modalities. Various phenomenologists stress the role of societal factors, that is in terms of the experience of stress as a psychological condition with certain bodily manifestations. However, the rigorous analysis of such factors in terms of bodily experiences related to energies, is largely outstanding. Furthermore, while it seems as if most phenomenologists agree on the importance of seeing the individual within context, studies tend to ignore those aspects of gestalt analysis that go beyond the cognitive and the causal. Moreover, painters as artists are recognised as phenomenologists of human life by educationalists of note (Vandenberg, as quoted by Van Manen 1997:41), because they are able to significantly depict various aspects of the lives of their subjects. At the same time, I have not yet encountered the work of a Western phenomenologist who would incorporate the notion of the halo (also known as the aura) as shown in Western art depicting saints. In my view, this is evidence of an adherence to ideas which are inadequate, as even Western science increasingly acknowledges the reality of the-body-as-energy. Even in medical texts, the aura is pictured (Hurwitz 2001: 242). Furthermore, Western medical doctors are increasingly engaging themselves in the study of energy medicine (Ernst 1996). On the

other hand, the shortage of literature indicates that the significance of energy being emitted from the body, and the message that it bears concerning the life-world of the individual, tends to be largely ignored by phenomenologists in education.

In essence, the principle of yin/yang pre-disposes Taoism to being inclusive. By contrast, phenomenology seems to be obsessed with being as exclusive as possible. Considering that real life is played out in a way by which everything influences everything else, I propose that phenomenology - and, by implication, phenomenological interviewing - could be enriched by knowledges outside its traditional frame of reference.

2.6 PROPOSED BENEFITS OF A COMBINED TAOIST-PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH FOR RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

In this section I will briefly refer to the possible advantages of incorporating Taoist-based methodologies in phenomenological research in education. By implication, these advantages would also concern phenomenological interviewing, as phenomenological research serves as the umbrella term for research of this kind, while phenomenological interviewing constitutes a certain mode of carrying out such research.

Such a methodology would serve as a comprehensive way of overcoming vagueness regarding the dualism between body and psyche (Wawrytko 1991: 452; Appendixes A, B & D), as specific aspects of life could be categorised instead of merely mentioned. For example, the Five Elements (Appendix C) provides a means of categorising details that would otherwise either be discarded or mentioned without any reference of the purpose of confirmation that they could serve. In this regard, I am thinking of relatedness of the emotion of anger to the wood-element, that could serve to confirm liver problems (as manifested or real). In other words, such a methodology would provide for a consistent way of recording the link between events, emotions and how the body responds (Kolkey 2002:1, accessed 13/07/2002). By way of expansion on this idea, such a methodology would go further than the perceived notion of organismic unity, in the sense that the unity of the individual and his / her environment would be approached from a viewpoint

that would elucidate reality from spheres that are more than those perceived cognitively (McNamara 1997:1, accessed 13/07/2002). In other words, such an approach will deal with reality from a perspective of holism that goes beyond what can be perceived and understood by means of pure reason. Therefore, on a continuum between positivism/modernism/classical techniques to post-positivism/post-modernism/anti-classical techniques, the employment of methodologies that are underpinned by Taoism present a further move away from the former stance than does phenomenology as it is currently practised in educational research. (See section 4.4.2.6, where I illustrate the different types of data collected by means of phenomenology-cum-reflexology.) Such data gathered from a wider spectrum of perception could present a far more holistic understanding of the life-world of individuals, than does data that depend solely on linguistics in the phenomenological tradition. This is significant for research, as words do not always deal with all aspects of reality (section 1.5).

Furthermore, there is the advantage of integrating all aspects of existence to which the individual can be related, within each case study. In other words, this methodology would stress the influence of factors over the spectrum, when a particular issue is being studied. This should lead to more comprehensive reflections than the usual outcomes of narrowly focussed studies by which multiple variables are either omitted or controlled.

Another important advantage of such an approach would be to see the individual in terms of the potential of energy of the whole cosmos. This is congruent with the post-modern era in terms of the concept of cosmology (see section 3.3.7). This is contrary to Freudian concepts which sees " ... human nature as internally weak and ... controlled by 'objective' external forces ..." (Wawrytko: 1991:451). Taoism, in terms of the yin/yang theory, poses that individual people do have control over their choices (i.e. in terms of "fostering yang while repelling yin" discussed in section 2.3.3).

Lastly, Taoist-based approaches tend to be inclusive (see Appendixes A - D), while phenomenological approaches tend to narrow the elucidation of fewer aspects of the life-world of an individual person. As the reader will notice in Tables 5.1 - 5.10, this thesis

with its phenomenology-cum-Taoist-background focuses in on far more aspects of the life-world of an individual than is done by phenomenology-sans-Taoism (cf. Van Manen 2002 (a)). As the reader will see in chapter three, this all-inclusive approach is congruent with the trends of this era, which increases the relevance thereof.

In summary, I propose that, incorporating Taoist-based methodologies in research should lead to outcomes that bring us closer to understanding human reality in a holistic perspective albeit with its own limitations (see section 1.1).

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter was devoted to the philosophical grounding of employing reflexology in order to complement traditional phenomenological interviewing. The rationale for this lies in the overall intention of this study, namely to anchor reflexology as modality by which to conduct phenomenological interviews in educational research. In order to achieve the aim particular to this chapter, I examined the congruencies between phenomenology as Western philosophical enterprise and the philosophy which frames reflexology, namely Taosim.

The first section considered phenomenology in terms of its history and origin, and, most importantly, in terms of its holistic approach to the analysis of the life-world situation of the individual. It was pointed out that the *aim of phenomenology is to elucidate the life-world of individual people as comprehensively as possible*. It was also articulated that the mind and the body are inextricably linked. Phenomenologists whose ideas featured prominently were Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger and Van Manen.

The second part was devoted to the main aspects of Taoism, as relevant to this study. Firstly, I presented an exposition of the relationship between reflexology and Taoism. Then, I paid attention to those aspects of Taoism that are particularly relevant for this thesis, such as yin/yang, the Five Elements, and the meridians as energy pathways that traverse throughout the body. The links between dis-ease in the body and the symbolic

interpretations of the related emotional experiences were elucidated, as referred to in Appendix D. This appendix provides a clear framework by which dis-ease as manifested in the body can be linked to other aspects of the life of an individual. In sum, the interconnectedness between body and mind was explored in Taoist terms relevant to reflexology.

These two sections mentioned were intended at providing basic background considerations in preparation for the third and fourth sections, which were concerned with similarities and differences between phenomenology and Taoism respectively.

The third part of the chapter was devoted to the similarities between phenomenology and Taoism. The aspects that correlated most significantly were as follows:

- The holistic nature of each of these two philosophies;
- The requirement of a transcendental approach;
- An attitude of non-control of data;
- A focus on the essences of existence;
- An understanding of the life-world of individuals;
- The role of observation and description as part of the research process.

What then followed was a short section devoted to differences between phenomenology and Taoism. While both philosophies postulated that there is really no divide between body and mind, Taoism provides much clearer distinctions regarding detailed functioning of links between various aspects of the life-world of an individual, than does phenomenology (see Tables 5.1 - 5.10).

The last section of the chapter comprised a brief reference to the ways in which Taoism could enrich research in phenomenological studies in education. It was postulated that it would offer a framework by which fine detail regarding the life-world of an individual could be interpreted. This is in keeping with the aim of phenomenology, as phenomenology poses to allow a phenomenon to present itself in all its fullness. In

essence, this means that detail usually disregarded in Western frameworks as irrelevant, can now be incorporated.

To conclude, it was articulated that phenomenology and Taoism have definite, significant correspondences. Therefore, reflexology as modality underpinned by Taoism, does, on a philosophical level, correspond to phenomenology. This means that, employing reflexology in phenomenological research does not present an alien idea, but rather a natural expansion of the horizon of phenomenology in the post-modern era.

The next chapter will examine how educational research could be informed by certain trends emanating from the post-modern era. This will serve to contextualise this thesis, thereby elucidating its relevance for this period in time.

CHAPTER 3

THE FACILITATION OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL INTERVIEWS BY MEANS OF REFLEXOLOGY IN TERMS OF THE TRENDS OF THE POST-MODERN ERA

It may seem at first odd that a Minister of Education has been asked to address a conference on freshwater. My response is that the solutions are all about education. Not only in the formal sense ... but in its widest sense ... *Education does not begin or end at the classroom door*

Kader Asmal (2001:83; my emphasis).

New technologies can help; so can traditional techniques and indigenous knowledge
M Catley Carlson (2001:22).

This constructive, revisionary post-modernism involves a creative synthesis of modern and premodern truths and values

Griffin (1990:3).

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to elucidate how this research corresponds to the broader framework of current reality, as well as to the conceptualisation of such reality. Re-phrased: the readings for this chapter serves the case study work presented in Chapter five, by means of showing in what ways this whole work is informed by the current trends in society and the philosophies thereof. The exposition will be presented in the form of discourse. However, all the major points are drawn together by means of Tables 3.1 and 3.2, in order to elucidate the ways in which the phenomenology-cum-reflexology approach would enrich traditional phenomenology, and, by implication, phenomenological interviewing.

Inherently, the aim of this chapter is congruent with the over-arching aim of the thesis, in its search for meaning in the life-world of individual participants within the broader reality in which they find themselves, by means of reflexology (see Tables 5.1 - 5.10). Furthermore, this chapter serves as an extension of the work done in sections 1.6.8 and

1.9, where I pointed out how this thesis as a whole corresponds to the current trends towards academic bilingualism in education and research, at *some* institutions of higher education.

The rationale for expanding on those first, primary thoughts on the context of the thesis lies in the following:

- Research as a cultural artefact exists within a certain era, and is influenced thereby, since understanding of phenomena is influenced by the epoch in which it finds itself (cf. Bosch 1991:181-2).
- Contextualisation has long been seen as a way to enhance understanding of such phenomenon (cf. Maruyama 1991:ix).
- Contextualisation should, therefore, shed further light on this research, give rise to epistemological issues and point towards implications for research in education in this era.

The procedure that I will follow in order to achieve this aim is as follows: first, I briefly focus on the evolvment of post-modernism from its initial use in print (Hudnot 1949) in the field of architecture to its wider use today. Second, I present the reader with those features pertaining to this era that are most relevant to this thesis. These features serve as the framework by which I will contextualise this thesis. This framework will also serve as the matrix on which I will cast the ways in which this thesis relates to current trends, and the epistemological questions relating to each feature of post-modernism as it emerged from this research. In sum, the framework of the period in which this thesis is carried out in itself will form a part of the act of research reported in this work.

The approach by which particular perspectives on reality and knowledge relating to education is being researched in terms of the features of an era, is not new. For example, in their work "Multicultural education and post-modernism: movement towards a

dialogue", Grant and Sachs (1995:91) point out that they view particular aspects of education *through the lens of post-modernism*. Some authors would not explicitly mention that they view issues related to education through the lens of a particular era, but would, do so anyway. For example, the authors of "*The Black child in crisis. A socio-educational perspective*" edited by Le Roux (1993), portray the life-worlds of black children in South Africa within the context of a certain time frame. By drawing on these examples, I contend that this thesis should be understood within the context of the era in which it is carried out. This means that, when I assert to view this work with reference to those aspects of this era, it would constitute an understanding by means of post-modernism.

Basic concepts of interviewing have been pointed towards in section 1.6.3. However, I will show in what ways the trends of post-modernism impact on the interviewing process used in this research. At the same time, I will present the reader with a way of understanding how reflexology enables the researcher to break through the ceiling of *knowing about* certain issues in phenomenology-sans-reflexology to *knowing how* in phenomenology-cum-reflexology (see Table 3.2). For example, the reader will be shown how reflexology presents a movement from the stance of knowing the importance of the mind/body link, to precise ways of employing those links in order to enhance understanding of the life-world of individuals (see Tables 5.1 - 5.10), by facilitating phenomenological interviews.

3.2 PERSPECTIVES ON THE POST-MODERN ERA

The status of knowledge is altered as ... cultures enter what is known as the post-modern age.

Lyotard 1979:3

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to expand extensively on the theories pertaining to this era. Therefore, I will focus on those aspects most relevant to this study. In this regard, the following fundamental principles assert:

- In general, a theory claiming to convey the realities of an era, should be reasonably capable of portraying such reality. If a theory ignores major trends of such an era, it cannot claim to be adequate, and should not be viewed as capable either. In other words, while some notions thereof may be useful, its inadequacies should not be ignored.

- Given that no theory is ever perfect - as human consciousness is never perfect - theories are revisited, revised and amended all the time. In other words, theories evolve.

- In order to contextualise this thesis in terms of this period in time, it is logical to view it in terms of the version of theory that captures the features of this era most adequately. Therefore, since this thesis is carried out in the post-modern era, it would be logical to contextualise this thesis in terms of contentions that capture the reality of this period in time most adequately. In this regard, post-modernism serves this purpose the best.

- The term "post-modernism" evolved since its first use in print in 1949, in a book on architecture by Joseph Hudnot (1949). This book dealt with some post-war trends, such as eclecticism and open-planning. Since then, the term was employed by a number of philosophers - notably Lyotard (1979) - to elucidate the trends of our time. Their notions were in keeping with the discontent with the modernist, positivistic approach, and correspond to the notions of the father of phenomenology, Husserl (see section 2.2.4). Given the realities - and concepts based thereon - of globalisation, such as multiculturalism, communication across borders and eclecticism, it soon became evident that deconstruction theory in the tradition of Lyotard and others, such as Derrida (Rohmann 2002, s.v. "deconstruction") does not adequately capture current reality as it is lived and experienced. For example, we who are living in this era are faced with increased multiculturalism as a consequence of growth in mobility, such as travel, tourism, immigration and emigration. The trend towards pluralism in society is further compounded by political changes. For example, in South Africa, the

establishment of democracy led to the opening of all schools to children of all races. Cultural diversity in schools was further entrenched by the establishment of an increasing number of embassies, consuls and trade offices of other countries. As a consequence, more and more schools accommodate children from a wider range of cultures than before in our history. Therefore, the whole system of education in its entirety - and, by implication, research in education - should foster academic bilingualism (see section 1.6.8), in order to remain relevant to this multicultural reality. This, of course, is congruent with the spirit of inclusiveness as expressed in the Coat of Arms of the Republic of South Africa, on which the inscription reads: "Different peoples unite".

- Moreover, the significance of interconnectedness, as well as of holism (the term coined by Jan Christiaan Smuts and respected by the New Age Movement (Steyn 1994:123)) became more and more obvious, as it was realised that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. This means that the focus on detail - however important - should not disregard the significance of details in relation to the whole. No matter what the focus on detail is; such detail still exists within an entirety. Today, in certain circles, it is colloquial to assert that, in looking at the tree, one should not miss the forest.
- As in the words of Usher, Bryant and Johnston (1997:3), it is necessary to comprehend that homogeneity and heterogeneity tend to co-exist in post-modern contexts and are not mutually exclusive. This multiple stance initiates the burden of *systems* providing for the "diverse desires of a diverse range of learners" (Usher et al 1997: 24; cf. Hinkson 1995:141).
- Furthermore, science indicates that the whole is also reflected in the individual parts by which it is constituted. For example, while each cell in the human body exists as an entity, the DNA-helix that it contains carries the blue-print for the entire body, making cloning possible. Similarly, the movement of electrons around the nucleus of the atom resembles the movement of the planets around the sun. This means that

scientific discoveries compel us to accommodate both the particular and the whole to which it corresponds.

- In order to accommodate this feature of connectedness and wholeness, as it relates to present-day consciousness, Griffen (1990:x) and his following presented the evolved understanding of post-modernism by qualifying the term as *constructive, revisionary post-modernism*. This means that, over a decade ago the de-constructive contentions about post-modernism held by Lyotard (1979) were amended in order to reveal reality more adequately and truthfully, as the original understanding of the term post-modernism evolved to also accommodate the principles of holism as it relates to details, and their relation to the whole. In effect, thinking about this (post-modern) era is only possible if the concept of holism is included in such thinking (Steyn 1994:124).

- Indeed, the need for this amendment to the first rudimentary understanding of this era by philosophers like Lyotard, is obvious. Hinkson (1995:139-140) argues:

... it can still be argued that in terms of process, the individual strains towards unity ... unity of some kind is terribly important... contrary to the popular post-modern view, there is no reason why post-modernity should be seen to contradict *this* process of universalization. Rather, to see post-modernity as profoundly tied to the universal ... generates more insight.

- Furthermore, this approach stimulates the hybridity and eclecticism of this era. In a practical sense in various areas in society, diversity is increasingly being embraced in various educational programmes. For example, the University of London has a division for African and Oriental Studies; Exeter University offers master's degrees in clinical aromatherapy and clinical reflexology, and Harvard Medical School has incorporated CAM in their research programme. We are confronted with globalisation and attention to details: details of groups, languages, cultures. From this, it logically follows that, if we are to comprehend education, we have to move from a mono-approach to a more holistic understanding.

- Employing this universal-cum-individual approach is no longer a matter of preference. Indeed, the urgency of applying this unitary approach in this era was emphasised extensively during the Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, 2002. Indeed, as seen from the first two quotations at the beginning of the chapter, it is imperative that such strategies be employed, in order to arrest the onslaught on nature caused by mono-cognitive, modernist approaches. The commitment of governments towards combining knowledge across paradigms is evident today from programmes such as "African solutions" on TV3 (Sunday evenings, 09h00, during May - August), by which ancient knowledge is combined with modern knowledge in order to provide practical solutions to environmental issues of global concern. For example, it was stated that indigenous building methods could be slightly modernised, to provide more effective solutions to the housing problem, than is the case of employing modern methods only. By implication, *constructive, revisionary post-modern understanding* of reality and knowledge addresses detail as well as the context within which it features. When applied to the field education it involves including pre-modern ideas in strategies. Phenomenology-cum-reflexology is a strategy in keeping with this approach. In other words, this chapter proposes to foster concerns of education beyond the framework of mainstream thinking on phenomenology in education, and, therefore, adds to the knowledge in a way that is consistent with current trends of thought in the post-modern era.

- At the same time, it needs to be emphasised that de-construction and construction theory on post-modernism are not mutually exclusive. As far as de-construction theory is concerned, the following prevails. Lyotard, Derrida and other post-positivists contributed greatly to the understanding of the evolving critique of modernism which characterises this era. Indeed, deconstruction is seen to embody the activity to "... undo a construction with infinite patience ... in order to understand all its mechanisms, to exhibit all its foundations ... " (Biesta & Egea-Kuehne 2001:13). Moreover, deconstruction, according to Rohmann (2002, s.v.

"deconstruction") means "... drawing out all the threads to identify its multitude of meanings ...". These contentions are shared by Young (1995:13), who articulated the significance of Derrida's theories as providing a "... seamless web of semiotic relations ...". Indeed, Derrida's contribution can have even deeper complications, as the process of deconstruction can be unsettling: it is a process that also "exposes inconsistencies and contradictions" (Rohmann 2002, s.v. "deconstruction"). During the course of this chapter and the next, it will be illustrated how de-construction theory serves to reveal the life-worlds of individuals in an integrated way by which details on various levels (from the physical to the symbolic) are intertwined. At the same time, this chapter will reveal inconsistencies and other weaknesses in traditional phenomenology, which would lead to epistemological questioning of the current practice of phenomenological interviewing with the purpose of understanding the life-worlds of individuals.

In conclusion, it became clear that post-modernism in its *constructive, revisionary* form presents a broader understanding of the original understanding of world trends in this era presented in Lyotard's "The post-modern condition" (1979). Constructive, revisionary post-modernism is not a term on its own; it serves to amend the initial theory on our life-world, and serves as an evolved version thereof. Re-phrased, it provides deeper understanding of current day reality than deconstruction theory on its own. In a sense, it serves as an extension of the first, rudimentary concerns about reality in this era. By means of the evolution of the term, a pure de-constructive perspective would be a misnomer if it considers itself a theory on the post-modern era in all its dimensions. Therefore, when using the term post-modernism, I am referring to this revised construct (Griffen 1990:6).

By illustration, this chapter will deal with this thesis in terms of the following constructs of post-modern theory, as these deal most significantly with those aspects of reality most relevant to this thesis. These are depicted in Figure 3.1:

INITIAL CONCEPTS i.e. mistrust of Western philosophies; opposition to classical techniques, reflexivity in the post-modern sense; relativism; pastiche (Abercrombie et al 2000 s.v. "post-modernism").
&
RECONSTRUCTIVE, REVISIONARY POST-MODERNISM, as including cosmology and ecology (Griffen 1990, Hinkson 1995).

Fig.3.1 Key concepts of post-modernism as theory on reality, as relevant for this thesis

In sum, the term that deals with this era is post-modernism in its current form. In terms of contextualising this thesis in order to gain further understanding, I will draw on the rudimentary concepts as well as on the concepts that were incorporated since 1990, in terms of the understanding of Griffen (1990) and his co- authors. At the same time, it has to be noted that post-modernism constitutes the movement from positivism to post-positivism, and would therefore be used interchangeably where appropriate in this thesis. Together, these concepts elucidate the reality of the era in which this thesis is embedded. Moreover, the significance thereof for education will also be pointed out.

3.3 FEATURES OF THE POST-MODERN ERA BY WHICH THE THESIS IS CONTEXTUALISED

3.3.1 An overview of the framework

This section will be devoted to considering this thesis in terms of the theory that deals with this era, namely post-modernism. It has to be reiterated that it will deal with post-modern theory in its current form, as explained in the previous section. I rely to a certain degree on the concise model posed by Abercrombie et al (2000, s.v. "postmodernism"), as well as on the contentions by Griffen (1990), in order to identify those features of post-modernism most relevant to this study. Therefore, it could be claimed that the research itself conforms to the eclectic approach proposed by post-modern theory.

The significance for this research lies therein that these features pose certain epistemological questions. The framework provided by this era - in terms of those features thereof that are most significant to this study - will then also serve to present the reader with epistemological concerns as they logically emerge. Lastly, I will present the

reader with a précis on the ways in which this whole thesis - and, the interviewing process in particular - responds to the trends of the era.

3.3.2 Mistrust of Western philosophies as catalyst to the origin of post-modern theory: implications for this work and for research in education

The roots of post-modernism lie in the mistrust of Western philosophies and its large-scale justifications of actions taken from a Western perspective (Blackburn 1996, s.v. "post-modernism") - no matter how damaging such actions are. For example, while technological advances are made, natural resources are exploited to the point of endangering human life on earth. Indeed, it is the ever-consuming life-styles of Westerners in the modern era that are blamed for the high level of economic and industrial activity, as these activities are playing a determining role in the devastation of natural resources. Concern about this state of affairs necessitated the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro (1992) and in Johannesburg (2002). While a number of issues were discussed, such as global warming, deforestation and solar energy, the overarching idea was that the philosophies underlying Western life-styles need change to make it possible for humankind to survive on the planet. In other words, the insatiable level of consumerism in Western cultures added to the discontent with Western life-styles and, by implication, the philosophies that underpin them.

At institutions of higher education, positivism has been increasingly criticised (Henwood 1996:25). For example, Keller (1990:72), in her sharp critique of positivism equated it (positivism) to "cosmic castration". This critique of modernism is consonant with the notions of Fox (1990:17) who labelled modernism as the "bloated left-brain definitions of schooling," and Dallmayr (1996:135), who contended that "Western culture tends to enjoy a cushion of complacency provided by its hegemonic position."

This critique of positivism is especially relevant for this thesis, as the discontent with positivism provided the impetus for the development of phenomenology (see section 2.2.4). Instead of just criticising, Husserl (Rohmann 2002 s.v. "phenomenology")

proposed the phenomenological method as a means to counterpoint positivism in human science research. Instead of using statistical analysis as employed by many works on educational research (Borg & Gall 1989: 561-565), the researcher in the humanities in general, and in education in particular, can observe and describe experience, without pre-judging it, in terms of Husserl's phenomenology.

Educators at universities have also joined the criticism against modernism. For example, it has been asserted that "the positivistic method or technique is antithetical to the spirit of human science scholarship" (Gadamer quoted in Van Manen 1990:3). This anti-positivistic approach is especially relevant for qualitative research by means of interviewing in education, as Schurink 1998:298) contends:

A recent trend in qualitative interviewing which is increasingly supported by post-modernists ... question the assumption that by merely asking the right questions the reality of other people could become known.

In the same vein, Seidman (1991:xii) remembers his discontent with positivistic methods when he recalls an incident during his teachers' training. He was regarded as out of order when he dared criticise the approach of the natural and physical sciences as applied in psychology. He had maintained that people cannot be approached in the way rats are, because people have language. Eventually, this discomfort with the positivistic approach to research in education, led Seidman (1991:103) to advocate in-depth interviewing as a way to understand and comprehend the nuances of human experiences. Upon reading phenomenological text (i.e. Van Manen 2002 (a)), one becomes appreciative of the way in which these researchers have been able to move away from the positivistic approach.

However, I am concerned about the inconsistencies in the critique launched by phenomenology. This movement tends to condemn positivistic methodologies, yet relies almost exclusively on the highly conscious, cognitive modality of language to capture the life-worlds of individual people (cf Van Manen 2002 (a)). This is, despite the fact that post-modernist Derrida has pointed out that language constitutes "an unreliable vehicle

for the transfer of information" (Rohmann 2002, s.v. "deconstruction"). Thus, phenomenology only presents a shift from positivism *to a certain degree*, as the method by which data is collected, and the medium by which thus information is carried, still strongly relate to the positivistic tradition.

At the same time, one has to appreciate that, unlike positivistic methodologies (Borg & Gall 1989: 451-465), the participant in phenomenological research has more freedom in expressing him/herself (Van Manen 2002 (a)). However, while phenomenological research allows a move from the strict interviewing techniques of positivism, it leans almost totally on the cognitive abilities of the interviewee, to the extent that he / she is able to articulate his / her life-world by means of language. In this sense, one might ask: is phenomenological interviewing that relies almost totally on linguistics *really* anti-positivistic, or is it merely semi-anti-positivistic. It can be asked on a continuum with positivism and anti-positivism as opposite poles, where phenomenology as dependent-on-language could be placed.

Moreover, the following epistemological concerns arise from this use: what does the researcher do if the participant is not particularly fluent? The work compiled and edited by Van Manen (2002 (a)) gives the reader a most precise image on certain aspects of the life-worlds of the participants. In terms of the move from positivism, the value of these essays is indisputable. However, how does this approach deal with the life-worlds of those who cannot articulate their experiences?

As far as interviewing is concerned, this thesis aims to contribute towards a further, more consistent move away from the positivistic stance, as the combination of phenomenology and reflexology does not require the participant to be fluent in the use of any cognitive means, such as language. As the reader will notice in sections 4.4.2.5 and 4.4.2.6, the interview-content is primarily determined by the ways in which experiences have manifested in the body. Indeed, from Tables 5.1 - 5.10, it should be clear that this procedure still probes into the life-world of individual people and serves to unearth sensitive experiences, with little reliance on eloquent speech. Furthermore, as the reader

will also see from the participant studies, phenomenological interviewing-cum-reflexology enables the researcher to facilitate interviewing so that the participant would share sensitive information. Indeed, this approach facilitated interviews with learners from a culture and language background other than mine (Tables 5.1; 5.2; 5.6).

In cases where it is impossible to read the feet, the reflexologist can also read the hands. Where this is not possible, a iridologist could read the eyes, and, given the common understanding between iridology and reflexology that the whole body is mapped in certain areas, the reflexologist can work from there. The same goes for the ear, should the eyes also be inaccessible. This illustrates this kind of research should still be possible, at least to some degree, even when a participant is severely incapacitated.

In sum, the anti-positivistic stance of this era has served to initiate the development of phenomenology (see section 2.2.4). One of the most significant contentions with regard to post-positivistic interviewing, was the notion of Derrida that linguistics only does not really serve to relay information. However, it seems as if prominent phenomenologists are inconsistent in their anti-positivistic approach, as they still tend to lean exclusively on language in order to understand the life-world of individual persons (Van Manen 2002(a)). The marriage between phenomenology and reflexology as laid out in chapter two (see sections 2.4 and 2.6), provides a way to enhance language-only research (see section 4.4.2.5) as *tactile data* form the background to the spoken data. In effect, the non-verbal data facilitate verbal disclosures. In principle and in praxis, then, this thesis aims to enhance phenomenological interviewing as it represents a more consistent stance in its mistrust of modernism, by its provision of a technique that is distinctly anti-classical.

3.3.3 Opposition to classical techniques

As claimed in the previous paragraph, this research uses a technique that depends on the combination of phenomenology and reflexology, to enrich phenomenology (see section

1.1). This section will be devoted to the elucidation of the ways in which this technique presents a further move from the classical techniques posed by positivism.

The fundamental argument of the thesis rests on the reality that we are now living in an era in which people inclined to oppose classical techniques. Indeed, if we had lived in an era when modern techniques were religiously followed, this thesis dealing with a union between phenomenology and reflexology might not have been contemplated, nor might I have been given permission to read for a doctorate on the subject. In other words, the inclusive nature of the post-modern period lends itself to the accommodation of a technique that provides an eclectic mix of methodologies and their underlying philosophies.

This oppositional feature of post-modernism as distinctly mentioned by Abercrombie et al (2000, s.v. "post-modernism"), is congruent with the general notion of discontent with positivism discussed in the previous section. In certain areas these two constructs (elucidated in section 3.3.2 & 3.3.3) overlap in meaning, as discontent with positivism is illustrated by means of methodologies or techniques that are different to positivistic (classical) techniques. As already mentioned, the marriage of reflexology to phenomenology has been posed as a way to conduct interviews that would be more productive than techniques that are almost solely dependent upon linguistics. At the same time, there are properties related to the post-modern feature of "opposition to classical techniques" that require elucidation on their own.

Classicism is described as the artistic style and cultural perspective based on principles of thought associated with ancient Greece and Rome (Rohmann 2002: s.v. classicism). This style resembles the emphasis on reason, objectivity, intellect, and the formal discipline of modernism. Research methods based on classicism were extremely popular and widely practised in all spheres of the academia. For example, the training of researchers in education tends to resemble the training of psychologists as far as assessing the life-worlds of individual people is concerned, especially in terms of various kinds of standardized testing (Borg & Gall 1989: 292-314), and ways of questioning (Leedy

1993:192-5; Abercrombie et al 2000, s.v. "qualitative research"). However, the tests for these differing purposes may not be exactly the same. Another feature of both positivistic and phenomenological interviewing is that the interviewer and interviewee sit apart, and the interviewer takes notes or makes an audio-recording while the interviewee talks. In this way, the life-worlds of individual people are supposedly understood in a way that needs no further enrichment, at least not by Oriental-based philosophies (Van Manen 1990:22-23).

All these techniques which developed in the West - even those that relate to the phenomenological tradition - require a purely cognitive approach in the understanding of the life-world of individuals. At the same time, there seems to be a shortage of literature on conducting interviews based on the understanding of the life-world of an individual in terms of symbolism as the archetypal images arising from the collective unconscious (cf. Odin 1990:194). Also, texts to motivate researchers to interpret the life-worlds of individuals in terms of " ... a universal pattern ... which seems to lie beyond the material dimension of time and space ... also transcends the distinction of mind and matter ..." (Beuster 1991:50), seem to be somewhat marginalised, as such works seem to be outnumbered by works concerned with traditional approaches - at South African university libraries, at least. In essence, this illustrates denying the need for the development and implementation of methodologies that are distinctly anti-classic - a process that, according to Gablik (1990:184) would

... depend on our ability to break the circle of routines and beliefs built up by modern culture and to begin the transition into a different stream of experience ... moves away from the idea that only one model ... - the modern one - explains all of reality. ... The truth is we are only beginning to perceive how our development has been blocked by mechanistic models ... The world as an emanation of spirit, of visionary powers and mythical archetypes, is not congruent with the world of mechanization, which requires matter-of-factness as the prevailing attitude of mind.

In other words, reality is far too complex to be explained by means of the simplistic attitude thereto displayed by means of positivistic theory, as the construct ignores certain

areas of reality - should one move from the pure cognitive. Positivistic techniques can be seen as to resemble a "hemiplegic outlook" (cf. Shayegan 1992: 141; 137), because the partial physical capacity named hemiplegia mirrors the partial capacity of positivistic researchers to deal with reality in all its dimensions.

Moreover, mystics such as Jung recognised that some aspects of human nature transcend Western interpretation, as they are in the realm that manifest " ... in dreams, fantasies, myths, symbols, images and synchronistic events" (Beuster 1991:51). These notions are significant for this thesis, as reflexology draws on the insights recognised as realistic by Jung. The incorporation thereof in research methodology would provide the matrix to interpretations that lie beyond the usual reasoning characteristic of modernism. *Reflexology gives the researcher the freedom to expand his/her interpretation of the life-world of an individual to include dimensions thereof that are consonant with the post-modern era* (see section 2.3.5; Appendix X).

Furthermore, the technique reflexology uses is consonant with the notions of Seidman (1991:5). He postulates that in-depth interviewing should tap subjective experience, in order to constitute an effective method of inquiry in education. In this regard, reflexology provides a valuable modality by which to conduct interviews, as it sheds light on the life-world of an individual in a way that incorporates all levels of experience (see sections 2.2.3.5 & 2.4; Tables 5.1 - 5.10).

I propose that the opposition to classical techniques in our day-to-day existence may not always be articulated, but it becomes evident when the public avoids or eschews positivistic traditions. While universities, hospitals and clinics may still endorse methodologies that embrace positivistic methods as the best ways by which to generate true understanding of the life-world of individuals, more and more people are turning to reflexologists, aromatherapists and the like for psychological understanding (Shannon 2002). There is a growing awareness that the classical techniques in which mainstream psychology and some forms of qualitative interviewing are steeped, may not be adequate in providing *understanding* of the life-world of individual people. Moreover, many

people appreciate the higher degree of understanding that is provided by CAM-professionals that provide these services, as the industry is booming (Ernst 1996).

At the same time, it appears as if there is a critical shortage of literature on techniques that move beyond cognitive interpretations of the life-world of individuals. In essence, this relates to the lack of room for creativity in terms of designing new research strategies. Van Niekerk contends, "Students scarcely have any room for their own initiative and again the idea of alienation from their own life experience is created" (Van Niekerk 1997:70). While this related to tutorial letters at a specific university, I wish to propose that it could also be linked to the shortage on literature on creating new methodologies, and/or enriching existing ones. Textbooks on research design in general tend to present the reader with a number of existing methodologies, and considerations regarding making a choice from those presented (cf. Borg & Gall 1989; Leedy 1993).

In closing, the significance of this thesis for research with regard to this opposition to classical techniques as feature of post-modernism, lies therein that it illustrates the capability of researchers to move beyond mere contemplation of the need for opposing classical techniques, to providing a methodology by which researchers can meet the criteria implied by such a stance (see section 4.4.2.5). Put simply, the researcher could move from the position of critique to the position of carrying out a positive alternative. While not every researcher may perform reflexology, the research raises awareness of methodologies that can complement and enrich classical techniques.

3.3.4 Reflexivity in the post-modern sense

In this section I will elucidate the term reflexivity and how the significance thereof has been articulated by philosophers. Then, the primary areas of reflection for this thesis will be presented, which will be followed by the unexpected merging of offshoots that sprout from this thesis as an innovative way to do phenomenological interviewing.

Reflexivity is considered to be one of the most significant features of the post-modern era (Abercrombie et al 2000 s.v. "post-modernism"). In general, then, reflexivity is seen as careful consideration (Odhams 1970, s.v. "reflection"; "reflexion"). Consideration is said to be characterised by consciousness (Abercrombie et al 2000 s.v. "post modernism"), while consciousness in turn is seen as "involving ... interaction of perception and contemplation ..." (Rohmann 2002:75). This means that thoughtful contemplation and consideration are part of the process of reflection. At the same time, such consideration sets the stage for re-evaluation of ideas, strategies and actions. In other words, revisiting human constructs and questioning them, becomes possible by means of the interaction of perception and contemplation as consciousness of reality.

While researchers in general engage in reflection, reflection on post-modern constructs is in keeping with the contention of Burbules and Burke (1999:61), who proposed that

... at a still deeper level, the work of Jacques Derrida ... challenges us with a further aspect of criticality: *the ability to question and doubt even our own presuppositions* ... by an aporia; by a doubt that we do not know (yet) how to move beyond; by imagining what it might mean to think without some of the very things that make our (current) thinking meaningful (my own emphasis).

This implies that reflexivity as post-modern construct challenges us to examine even post-modern constituents. Re-evaluation has indeed been done by post-modernists from various quarters. For example, the need for reflexivity on modernism is articulated by Fox (1990:15) when he voices his disgust at modernism by contending:

... the modern years has been devastating. It has tainted our souls to the point that we ... [are] adrift from conscience, morality and wisdom ... it has waged war on mother earth ... with increasing vengeance and success - fulfilling Francis Bacon's command that we 'torture mother earth for her secrets' ... it has legitimated human holocausts and genocides from that of the seventy million native people exterminated in the Americas ...

Educationalists, too, are increasingly reflecting on modern constituents. For example, Prof P Higgs (2002: personal interview) relates to his own journey in this regard, when he contends:

I ... accepted a position in the then Department of Fundamental Pedagogics at the University of South Africa. It was a situation which called out for a response in me. And so I found myself responding with that which was already to a large extent present in me, namely, a distrust of the tyranny of reason paraded in any form of truth. In responding, I was drawn to the corpus of literature identified as that of the works of the post-modernists, and in time began to *re-think the nature of educational theory and practice in my context, in terms of what I refer to as a "post-modern dis-position."* (My own emphasis).

Such reflection in educational quarters could be seen as pivotal for the adoption of phenomenology as research method in education. As Van Manen (1990:4), educator and phenomenologist, contends: "... the preferred method for human science involves description, interpretation, and self-reflective or critical analysis." Van Manen (1990:38) expands on this idea, when he refers to Merleau-Ponty's belief that "... phenomenology is that kind of human science research that must seize this life and give reflective expression on it." This illustrates the requirement for researchers to be reflective. Implicitly, reflexivity ideally becomes a preferred attitude when investigating the life-world of individuals during phenomenological interviewing.

This thesis concerns reflexivity as feature of post-modernism in the following areas:

First, reflection on modernist philosophies and methods of research, as phenomenology was born out of discontent with modernist methodologies (see section 2.2.3). Second, there has been reflection on phenomenology itself in the second chapter that has revealed its strengths and weaknesses - an outcome that is in keeping with post-modernist deconstruction (Biesta & Egea-Kuehne 2001: 13-15). Third, reflection has revealed the possible benefits of reflexivity for phenomenological research in education (section 2.6). Fourth, reflection also concerned itself with the questioning of constructs viewed as post-positivistic, that is, phenomenology, and with the assumptions of phenomenological theorists. Indeed, reflection as re-evaluation of phenomenology provided the possibility

of enrichment of phenomenological methodologies - in this case, of phenomenological interviewing. Lastly, this thesis poses the opportunity to reflect on the life-world of individuals in symbolic terms (Tables 5.1 - 5.10).

In sum, reflexivity supposes thoughtful consideration of the philosophy underlying methodology, the methodology itself, and the phenomenon being studied. The consideration of modernity, together with the dissatisfaction therewith, has initiated the search for approaches that are more appropriate to reality. Reflexivity has made revisiting of even post-modern approaches possible, and opens the door to the inclusion of methodologies that may be alien to Western scientific approaches. Thus, the stage is set for the inclusion of reflexology. On a deeper level, it can be said that reflexivity has served to relativize modernity as a particular approach among many other approaches. The latter may hopefully be less harmful to society and nature alike. This brings us to a concept central to post-modern theory on the trends of our time, namely relativism.

3.3.5 Relativism

According to Clark (1994:38), the principle of relativity as formulated by Einstein, holds that "... every measurement taken in the universe has to be relative to some frame of reference, usually that of the observer." This means that assessments are always executed with reference to the matrix for qualifications unique to the observer (Blackburn 1996 s.v. "relativism"). In this section, I will concentrate on the following two ways in which relativity impacts on this research, namely relativity of meaning and relativity of the consciousness of the researcher.

3.3.5.1 Relativity of meaning as particular to each participant

Relativity of meaning is crucial to this thesis, as there is no generalisation of meanings given by the participants. As the reader will notice in Tables 5.1 - 5.10, each participant has had the opportunity to assign his/her own, unique meaning to a particular congestion identified by means of reflexology. For example, a number of participants would present

with congestions on the gallbladder- area-reflex, but each one of them would interpret the related emotion of anger in terms of a unique set of circumstances. The absence of generalisation is also evident from the fact that, even though two participants may come from the same household (cf. Tables 5.4 & 5.5) this research does not attempt to generalise the meaning that they attribute to a particular kind of congestion.

3.3.5.2 Relativity of the consciousness of the researcher as observer

As already mentioned, relativity implies that assessments are dependent upon the observations by the observer. From this, it follows that the meanings derived at from such observations will have an individual (unique) slant. By implication, meaning arrived at during research procedures will be relative to a particular study carried out by a particular researcher at a particular point in time. This is in keeping with the post-modern perspective that contends that "... all truth is truth from or within a particular perspective ... since there may be many perspectives, there are also different families of truths" (Blackburn 1996, s.v. "perspectivism").

This is particularly relevant in terms of the understanding of *epoche* and of the Taoist idea of "emptiness" (see in section 2.4.2.3), as both these concepts postulate the possibility of surrendering all control over data. However, perception cannot be divorced from consciousness, as perception is dependent on the ability to be conscious. This means that phenomenological research - as dependent on perception - is subject to the consciousness of the researcher. In other words, perceptions rely on consciousness as background to interpretation. Since such background is unique to each individual, it readily follows that the outcomes of research that depend on observation - and, thus, perception - would also carry certain qualities of uniqueness. This is consonant with the contention of Kruger (1982:18) , who articulated that the phenomenologist should rather do as follows:

... declare ... points of departure ... a student ... will inevitably bring along with him a set of background assumptions; the more he is conscious of these, the more he will be able to keep his own preferences from distorting his observation of something.

From this, it can be argued that research outcomes can vary, as interpretation is not absolute. In the words of Van Manen (2002(a):237),

No interpretation is ever complete, no explication of meaning is ever final, no insight is beyond challenge. It behooves us to remain as attentive as possible to the ways that all of us experience the world and to the infinite variety of possible human experiences and possible explications of those experiences.

This, of course, requires the post-modern disposition of humility stressed by Prof P Higgs (2002: personal interview), in terms of :

... a capacity to appreciate the viewpoints of others, and caring enough about others to exert the effort necessary to hear and comprehend what they are saying - this is not a purely rational endeavour but also involves caring and feeling, and a sense of commitment.

This denial of fixed meaning has been considered as beneficial to research. The development of "sensitivity for differences" and the "ability to tolerate the incommensurable" (Dallmayr on Lyotard 1996: 166-167), have been seen as enabling the researcher to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of a particular phenomenon. This is in keeping with the contention of Burbules and Berk (1999:60) in their advocacy towards "multiple, unreconciled interpretation ... might yield ... benefits - those of fecundity and variety ...".

At the same time, the concept regarding the relativity of consciousness posits that the perception of the researcher is relative to the ultimate, full understanding of reality as well. In other words, the degree to which the researcher is able to observe detail, would play a role in his/her understanding of the life-world of an individual.

This is especially relevant for this thesis, as the researcher relies comprehensively on tactile information, and the symbolic meaning thereof (see Tables 5.1 - 5.10). As explained in section 4.4.2.6, the data collected during the interviews appealed to different faculties of consciousness of the researcher, as the senses of touch, looking and listening were all employed in order to reach an understanding of the life-worlds of the individual participants involved. Thus, the receptor framework - and therefore consciousness of the researcher, has been broadened to accommodate information qualitatively different from a purely linguistic framework (see section 4.4.2.4 (iii)) in order to produce the findings presented in tables 5.1 - 5.10.) This means that this thesis not only relates to the post-modern concept of "relativity of consciousness", but also provides a way to address this inadequacy, as the marriage between phenomenology and reflexology speaks to different modes of consciousness of the observer. At the same time, *this thesis does not pose that the research outcome would by any means be complete; what it does, is to emphasise the awareness of shortcomings in human consciousness.*

In conclusion, the post-modern concept of relativity applies to the consciousness of the interviewee and the interviewer alike. In order to address the relativity of the consciousness of the interviewee, he/she had been given the opportunity to assign his/her own meaning to the reflexology-given matrix of congestions. In recognising the relativity of consciousness of the observer, this thesis confirms the need for various fields of knowledge to meet, in order to provide a more comprehensive view of a particular phenomenon. In other words, there is a distinct need for pastiche, a post-modern concept discussed in the following section.

3.3.6 Pastiche

Pastiche as feature of post-modernism describes the "... putting together of elements from radically different contexts and epochs" (Abercrombie et al 2000 s.v. "post-modernism), culminating in a "potpourri of ideas" (Griffen 1990:x). This eclecticism carries with it potential critique by counter-post-modern quarters with accusations of the

"provocative mingling" of ideas (Rohmann 2002, s.v. "post-modernism"). The significance of pastiche for education - and, implicitly for research in education - should be evident from the notions raised in section 1.9, which pose the need for the combination of knowledge from different areas of scholarship. In other words, academia should take cognisance of the need to move from a mono-lingual approach to designing new structures and conceptualising them, to academic bilingual approaches (see section 1.6.8). The rest of this section will be devoted to presenting the ways in which pastiche features in this research, namely in terms of triangulation, increased multiculturalism and the crossing of boundaries.

3.3.6.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is generally seen as the employment of several methods to study the same object, thereby enabling the researcher to "audit" his work (Seidman 1991:19). It enables one to look at the work from more perspective than one. In other words, the eclectic approach to understanding a phenomenon provides for a way of interpreting the subject of study from a collective setting.

Triangulation is inherent to this thesis, as light is shed on the life-world of the individual by means of a combination of the following strategies, as presented in section 4.4.2.5, and illustrated in Tables 5.1 - 5.10. These strategies are:

- reading of the reflex-points on the feet;
- drawing conclusions from manifestations along meridians;
- conducting a series of interviews with each participant; and
- asking the participant to draw naive sketches.

These approaches when combined provide for a comprehensive view of the phenomenon. In other words, according to the research design (section 4.4.2.5), it is clear that the *interviewing procedure* used embodies the implementation of the post-modern construct of triangulation, and, therefore, by implication, the post-modern construct of pastiche.

3.3.6.2 Increased multiculturalism

Pastiche as post-modern feature of plurality, would, by implication, also concern multiculturalism (Rohmann 2002, s.v. "post-modernism"). Multiculturalism, in turn, relates to diversity of cultures in society and to pluralism. Given the mingling of cultures in an increasingly globalised world, post-modernism is seen to relate to the encouragement of dialogue among cultures, and for stimulating cross-cultural fertilization (Dallmayr 1996: xviii). In this sense, the time frame in which this study is taking place is congruent with the trends of today, as this thesis provides the cross-cultural endeavour between phenomenology and Taoism (see Chapter two, specifically sections 2.4 - 2.6).

The implications of pluralism for education - and thus, for research therein - are extensive. As Usher et al (1997:24) articulate:

... in stead of everything being delimited and reduced to the 'same' ... the trend is becoming one where educational forms are seen instead as expressing 'difference' in their diversity and providing spaces for a diversity of voices... it is important not to downplay the significance of the increasing diversity, multiplicity and dedifferentiation which characterises the contemporary landscape of education ...

Usher and his co-authors further express their favour of systems which provide for the "...diverse desires of a diverse range of ... learners." (See also sections 1.9 & 3.2). Section 3.2 has already pointed out that South African educators should consider multiculturalism / pluralism. The implications of this multiple approach for research in education, lie therein that pastiche as post modern concept opens the door to the incorporation of constructs from various cultures and times. Thus, post-modernism sets the stage for the incorporation of reflexology as way of enriching research concerned with the life-world of individuals, as reflexology incorporates values and truths from a variety of cultures (sections 1.6 & 2.4).

This thesis addresses current goals for education. Van Niekerk (1997:99) articulated that in this time frame:

The educated person should be able to appreciate other cultures and traditions, like the great heritage of the Chinese ... understand the various knowledges.

Logically, educational researchers and education systems should take note of this requirement, in order to facilitate such learning. This need for the expansion of scholarly work is evident from the establishment of the chair for African and Oriental studies at the University of London. This move could be seen as the manifestation of the realisation of the need to incorporate other cultures in order to enhance the Western consciousness of reality. This thesis endeavours to meet the challenge of bringing Oriental concepts to the heart of Western academia by means of the reflection on Taoism and on the congruencies between phenomenology and Taoism in chapter two. The theory pertaining to this thesis is congruent with what has already been articulated by philosophers in the humanities and social sciences during the previous decade, such as those who initiated the establishment of the chair at the University of London, mentioned earlier in this paragraph.

At the same time, this thesis poses epistemological questions regarding the stance of educational research. One such question is based on the fact that the medical profession has started to embrace knowledge from ancient China (Ernst 1996; Micozzi 2002; Shannon 2002). Also, it has become evident that CAM does not relate to medicine in the Western sense, but rather to a holistic understanding of wellness (see section 1.6.8). From these notions, the question is raised concerning the lack of attention given to insights derived from the ancient world and the Orient by educationists. Significantly, the critique of modern, positivistic beliefs entrenched and cherished in education has been articulated by Van Niekerk (1997:37).

3.3.6.3 Crossing of boundaries

Per definition, the crossing-of-boundaries requires the aptitude to move beyond the limits of convention. This notion has been elucidated in section 1.9, in terms of the cross-disciplinary work that is taking place at some universities, where, as an outcome, it constitutes the possibility of knowledge from scholarships embedded in different cultures mingling. Should these scholarships stem from different cultures, a situation of multiculturalism arises (see section 3.3.6.2), bringing with it the possibility of these scholarly contributions acting in concert, thereby giving a multi-angular view on a particular aspect of reality (see section 3.3.6.1). In other words, the crossing of boundaries is heavily integrated with the other two forms of pastiche discussed earlier in this section. However, this section will be devoted to the crossing of boundaries in terms of examples from broader reality, the crossing of boundaries between modern and pre-modern truths and wisdom as noted in the quotations at the beginning of this chapter, and the crossing of fictional boundaries between mind and body. During the course of these discussions, I will relate how these feature in this research.

By example, the manifestation of the mental act of the crossing-of-boundaries has been illustrated by various instances, from the political, social, emotional aspects of the demolition of the Berlin wall to the more mundane acts of recycling, where former music records become place-mats (Huis-Huis SABC TV2). Usher et al (1997:4; 16) illustrate this notion of moving beyond the conventional divisions in terms of the use of classical music in advertising as "... the distinction between high and low culture melts and everything becomes available for raiding, appropriation and recycling". However, for the purposes of this thesis, I will consider this crossing of boundaries in intellectual terms.

In academia, the manifestation of this transcending of boundaries can be seen in the tendency for the strict divisions between disciplines to become permeable and vague. For example, synthesis is sought between sociology, psychology, philosophy and a number of other disciplines (Rohmann 2002: "Post-modernism"; section 1.9). This often results in compound terms designating the combination of various fields of study, such as psycho-

neuro-immunology. Thus, institutions of higher education are compelled to meet across disciplines. This is illustrated by, for example, the seminar series at the University of Pretoria, called "Intellectual crossroads", hosted by the Department of Political Studies. For example, during May 2003, one of the topics addressed focussed on the rights of animals. In accordance, Held (2000:vii) articulates the unrealistic notion of divisions between disciplines by contending:

Social change is no respecter of the boundaries of disciplines and the tidy boxes that social scientists have often tried to squeeze it into.

Interdisciplinary work is indeed encouraged - which had led to the establishment of research institutions such as WISER (Wits Institute of Sociology and Economic Research). Moreover, at a conference on "The Self" held in August 2002, Dr Rao (Doctoral Fellow, Yale University) spoke in favour of intellectual bilingualism. Scholars are therefore increasingly allowed to ignore the originally strict dichotomies between disciplines, and to read in areas overlapping between disciplines.

As far as this thesis is concerned, the post-modern movement of crossing boundaries has made me aware of the possibility of moving the boundaries of disciplines and marrying phenomenology to reflexology. This constitutes the crossing of boundaries between philosophies. The post-modern era has made me aware of the possibility of the strict outlines of research procedures being made permeable. This would increase the likelihood of ideas from outside such procedures diffusing through the barriers and being incorporated as part of the proceedings. This means that the structures are formulated so that the incorporation of another modality - in this case, reflexology - becomes feasible. Moreover, the act of moving outside the usual spheres of familiar knowledge-systems also presents the prospect of moving beyond the defining lines of the usual orbits of research methodologies. This situation sanctions the exploration of methodologies outside the entrenched academic framework in order to establish the potential of such methodologies to enhance conventional research procedures. In this case, this thesis explores the possibility of reflexology enhancing phenomenological interviewing in education. By implication, a researcher will have to train in order to be able to employ an

increasing variety of research methods. This is in keeping with the post-Fordist notion, which contends that workers should be multi-skilled (cf. Abercrombie et al 2000, s.v. "post-fordist"; Usher et al 1997:16-17). Although this notion may only have applied to low-skilled workers at first, I conclude that this has become a general requirement in the workplace.

As far as the borders between body and mind are concerned, I propose that this dichotomy presents a fictitious idea prevailing in educational thought in the West. For example, in wildlife and conservation circles it is commonly held that the consistency of the dung of animals relates to the levels of stress, as the presence of corticoids will show. Furthermore, post-modernists propose the need of "... overcoming Western split between science and mysticism" (Fox 1990:23). Griffen (1990:9) too advocates moving beyond the cognitive, when he articulates the need of incorporating "... methods for inducing an experiential realization of sacred interconnections." As the reader will notice, this is in keeping with what Jung postulated when he articulated the need to turn to the Divine for fulfilment, and for sex to be sacred (see section 2.4.2.6). What is seldom mentioned in texts on understanding of the life-world of individuals is that honoured scientists, such as Sir Isaac Newton, Pythagoras, Archimedes and Einstein were mystics who recognised the link between natural reality and spiritual reality (Freke & Gandy 1997: 127-130). Drawing from these scientists, I propose that the human body is inextricably linked with functions of the highest order.

It has been postulated that phenomenologists like Heidegger have already met this requirement of post-modernism by incorporating the spiritual notions of Zen in his philosophy on phenomenology (section 2.3.5). I have also pointed out how the ideas of Jung have built bridges between modern and ancient constructs (section 2.4.2.1). What is of particular significance to this study, is the way in which phenomenology-cum-reflexology constitutes a way of combining modern and pre-modern thought, and, therefore, of crossing the boundaries between them. In this regard, I refer briefly to the qualification that a reflexologist needs for registration in South Africa. Such a qualification incorporates the anatomy and physiology that is usually studied by nursing

students in the West, while the ancient ideas regarding reflex-points and meridians (and even sometimes chakras depending on the particular course) are incorporated to enhance understanding (section 2.3.5). By drawing on such a vast pool of interpretations, phenomenology-cum-reflexology can provide a number of perspectives on the interpretation of the life-world of an individual. This would provide for a more comprehensive understanding of such a life-world as each perspective would provide information relative to a particular frame of reference.

This is in keeping with Griffen's (1990:xi) postulation that post-modernism values:

... recovery of truths and values from various forms of pre-modern thought ... that had been dogmatically rejected by modernity ... revisionary post-modernism involves a *creative synthesis* of modern and premodern truths and values.

Yet another concept of particular significance that links up with the theme of crossing boundaries in this study, is the *disintegration of the distinction between body and mind*. While this has been explored extensively in the ideas of Merleau-Ponty (2.4.2.6), it deserves to be mentioned here, as this whole study pivots on the assumption that there is no distinction between mind and body, that biology and biography are inextricably linked (Myss 1997:40). This implies that the Kantian division that is said to have "separated the laws of the 'starry heavens without' from the 'moral laws within', thereby introducing a dualism into the ... consciousness of the West ..." (Fox 1990:17) is being overruled in post-modern terms.

In sum, the post-modern framework of pastiche has been employed in this research by means of triangulation, the combination of notions from cultures from both the West and the Orient, as well as by crossing boundaries, because reflexology *per se* links congestions in the physical body to experiences (see sections 2.3.5 & 4.4.2.6). This thesis also poses a further mode of the crossing of boundaries: it is required of the researcher and the reader alike to venture across the modernist concept of the territories of education, psychology and sociology (see section 1.1). Furthermore, this study calls

for the willingness to move beyond the paradigm of Western, linguistic only understanding of the life-world of individuals (see section 3.3.2), in order to incorporate other aspects of such life-worlds.

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3.3.6 Cosmology

Cosmology relates to the study of the microcosm in relation to the macrocosm. This means that the phenomenon is studied at atomic as well as galactic levels, as it is contended in terms of the principle of correspondence that the microcosm is mirrored in the macrocosm and vice versa. This notion finds resonance in the works of premier scientists, such as Brian Swimme, Ehrich Jantsch, Alfred North Whitehead and Niels Bohr (Fox 1990:19). In terms of natural science, it is posed that the structure and function of atoms resemble the way in which the rest of the cosmos functions. Indeed, the *cosmological principle* "implies that astronomical theories should apply to the universe as a whole" (Clark 1994:23). In simple terms, this means that broad themes are mirrored in individual instances.

Cosmology is not a post-modern construct of thought, because it had been understood for hundreds if not thousands of years (Fox 1990:15-34; Odin 1990:193). For example, it is said that the notion 'as above, so below' stems from ancient cultures (Sherwood 2002:19). What makes cosmology post-modern, is its incorporation in contemporary Western philosophical consideration. A cosmological approach suggests examining a phenomenon in terms of its functioning at both micro and macro levels, with an expectancy to see correspondences in functioning at both levels.

While cosmology is a complex term, its significance for this study lies therein that the phenomenon is to be studied in its detail, and in terms of its interrelations to the broader milieu. (This concept will be further explored in section 3.4.2.7, which deals with the post-modern concept of "ecology".) This means that the local / vernacular / individual should be seen within the broader context of the spread of life.

To the phenomenologist and educator this means that, although there may be broad themes, the experience of the individual is of cardinal importance, as each experience relates to an emotion, which would contribute to the whole of life. We see this clearly in the work "Writing in the Dark" (Van Manen 2002(a)), which addresses a number of themes, such as "ritualized experiences"; "aesthetic experiences"; "novel experiences"; "remembered experiences". However, when Van Manen (2002 (a): 167-178) actually does address these experiences, it is by means of unique processes of the consciousness of individuals. For example, while the childhood loss of a parent is a very common experience, which is often looked at from a statistical point of view - such as in terms of the Aids orphans in South Africa - Van Manen approaches it from the effects that it has on the life of a single individual. In other words, from the broad theme of a particular phenomenon, the phenomenologist zooms in on the life-world experience of a single person. By implication, we can contend that broad themes are reflected in individual lives.

For education, the significance of the principle of cosmology is evident in various spheres. For example, the application of the cosmological principle also manifests in curricula the world over. Where broad goals have to be taken into consideration, the aim is still to develop the potential of each individual. By implication, the broad goals have to manifest in a unique way as each learner assimilates skills and knowledge, and applies it in his / her life in a way that makes his / her life totally different from that of anybody else. This is in keeping with the notion of Usher et al (1997:3), by which they contend that homogeneity and heterogeneity tend to co-exist in post-modern contexts.

The principle of cosmology is particularly relevant for this study, as reflexology also depends on general themes such as the constructs that deal with reflex-points on the feet, and the meridians. At the same time, while the life-world of each individual is interpreted in terms of these constructs, the biographical and biological structure of each person remains distinctly unique (see Tables 5.1 - 5.10).

To conclude, it is important to see the correspondences between the broader spectrum and individual manifestations. At the same time, it is necessary to develop an understanding of the interconnections between constructs. This means that there is a need for the development of an ecological approach in human science research.

3.3.8 The ecological approach

The dictionary defines ecology as "... the study of [phenomena] in relation to their surroundings" (Odhams 1970, s.v. "ecology"). The need for developing an ecological understanding of a phenomenon, lies therein that it is considered imperative to the forming of a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. Thus, it is necessary to develop an understanding of such a phenomenon in terms of its relation to the milieu in which it finds itself.

This notion has been articulated by various post-modernists. Griffen (1990:2) points this out when he reflects on the philosophies of several post-modern philosophers:

Gablik advocates an 'aesthetics of interconnectedness' based on a paradigm shift 'from objects to relationships'. Matthew Fox speaks of 'an interdependent universe', and Joe Holland of 'ecological communion'. Richard Falk points out that post-modern religion is richly relational, Frederick Turner says that matter's only existence was and is in its relations, internal and external. The universe is made up of the different sensitivities of its components to each other.

This ecological view has several implications. It relates to the transcendence of separateness, as the "... ecological sense of selfhood combines the mystical and the pragmatic. Transcending separateness and fragmentation ... it generates an experience of profound interconnectedness with all life" (Macy 1990:37). This notion of an underlying unity has also been expressed by the physicists whose theories tend to shape current thinking of reality, as Capra (1975:133-147) articulates in his chapter titled: "The unity of all things."

In a day-to-day sense, the ecological attitude proposes to shed light on the broader spectrum of customs and conventions (Lee in Griffen 1990:59). In this sense, the ecological approach and the notion of crossing boundaries discussed earlier are distinctly interdependent.

Moreover, the ecological approach is particularly relevant for education in general, and for research in education, because it is consonant with the concepts of "holism" and "context sensitivity" (Best & Kahn 1993: 185; Tuckman 1999:396). These concepts also mirror the nature of reflexology, which is, by its very nature, a holistic approach that bears in mind the milieu of the subject / participant.

As far as this thesis is concerned, the ecology principle is applied. Dis-ease is brought into context with life experiences as each participant will link it thereto (see Tables 5.1 - 5.10). Furthermore, non-verbal and information will be linked to other manifestations in terms of the Five Elements. While the naïve sketches and tree-drawings will serve to confirm earlier notions, it has to be noted that those do not generally form part of reflexology treatments.

In sum, the ecological approach supposes that research in the humanities in general, and in education in particular, should take cognisance of the life-world of an individual. In other words, such research should be undertaken from a paradigm that allows study of interrelations. It has been noted in what ways this thesis relates to the ecological principle, and the reader has also been referred to the empirical work presented in Tables 5.1 - 5.10, where such interrelations are illustrated.

3.3.9 Concluding thoughts on the trends of the post-modern era, with reference to the implications for phenomenological interviewing

The trends of the post-modern era are, as shown, reflected in post-modern theory in its current form. This means that the revised theory that deals with de-construction in the

tradition of Lyotard (1979), and the constructive holism of Griffen (1990), serves to address the trends of this era. While the term post-modernism was first used in print in the field of architecture, it was soon adopted by various philosophers concerned with the trends of the post-positivistic era.

Based on the rudimentary and revised philosophical concerns of this era which encompasses the concepts relating to mistrust of Western philosophies, opposition to classical techniques, reflexivity in the post-modern sense, relativism, pastiche, cosmology and ecology, this thesis presents the reader with the necessary background to understand the relevance of the union between phenomenology and Taoism in this era.

The construct 'phenomenological interviewing by means of reflexology' in itself depends on the *mistrust in Western philosophies*, as this research by its very nature challenges modern beliefs about the knowledge derived by means of positivistic interviewing. Whereas positivistic styles - and, even phenomenology in the Van Manen tradition - rely on linguistics only, the interviewing style proposed by this research is complemented by interpretations related to touch, amongst others. The empirical inquiry does not only depend on linguistics, and, therefore provides a methodology that is in keeping with the anti-positivistic stance of this researcher. On a positivist - anti-positivist continuum, the phenomenology-cum-reflexology approach presents a move further away from positivism than does phenomenology-sans-reflexology.

Opposition to classical techniques is manifested in a technique that moves beyond the use of linguistics only (cf. Van Manen 2002) and beyond the positivistic styles of quantitative interviewing or questionnaires (cf. Borg & Gall 1989: 423-426). Indeed, this research presents a way to investigate someone's life-world by including the understanding yielded by touch, and interpreting data obtained by the skills of listening and seeing by means of the comprehensive matrix of the Five Elements (Appendix C).

Reflexivity in terms of this research has moved beyond the usual reflection on various aspects of the research itself, to reflection on the lack of literature on the design of new

research methodologies. In keeping with the post-modern concept of reflexivity, it has been argued that reflexology could be included in phenomenological research in education in a way that would complement phenomenology. This brings with it the epistemological burden of trying to understand reality from a different point of view. Consequently, it poses the possibility to experiment with techniques and to possibly integrate those techniques that do provide a more comprehensive understanding of a particular phenomenon.

Relativism, as particular to the frame of reference of post-modernism, dealt with relativity of meaning and the consciousness of the researcher. The empirical study for this thesis was shaped with the relativity of meaning as of uppermost importance, because each participant had been given the opportunity to ascribe his/her own meaning to a reflexological interpretation (Tables 5.1 - 5.10). With regard to the consciousness of the researcher, this thesis poses that relativity could be dealt with once the researcher is fully aware of his / her own assumptions of knowledge, because then, and only then, can they be consciously by-passed in the quest for a true understanding of reality.

Pastiche presents with the constructs of triangulation, increased multiculturalism, and the crossing of boundaries. In terms of triangulation, this thesis provides the reader with information that comes from different aspects of the lives of the individual. Reflexology provides for a way of interpreting reality by means of an eclectic approach, such as the concepts of the reflex-points and the meridians (Appendixes A & B respectively). These findings are further confirmed by means of vocal exchange during the verbal phase of the interviews, and the production of naïve sketches and drawing of trees (Appendix E). In other words, a multiple approach is employed in order to cultivate a multi-perspectival understanding.

This multiple approach is also congruent with the multicultural, pluralistic nature of this thesis. In section 1.1 I pointed out that this work is interparadigmatic as it rests on the interface between phenomenology within a Western paradigm and reflexology, which is, in its current form, underpinned by the oriental paradigm of Taoism. This means that this

research is in keeping with the post-modern trend which incorporates insights from various cultures. In order to incorporate understandings from more than a single culture, boundaries are crossed on various planes. First, the boundaries between Western phenomenology and a particular Oriental philosophy are crossed when the former is married to reflexology and, by implication, to Taoism (chapter two). This is evident from the design of the research which poses that the phenomenon of a life-world can be understood as it presents itself, by means of the researcher performing a reflexology treatment. This construct poses the crossing of the boundaries between mind and body, as the interpretations based on the massaging of the feet is then linked to emotions experienced by the participant (Tables 5.1 - 5.10). The participant can then link those emotions to those events and/or sets of circumstances that he/she finds most significant. This poses a complete break from positivistic questioning and the linguistic as impetus to interviewing, since the bodily manifestations act as impetus to the participant's sharing of information with the researcher. Therefore, it can be concluded that reflexology facilitates interviewing, as aspects of non-verbal territory is communicated to the researcher in verbal and non-verbal ways (cf. Jordaan & Jordaan 1990:432).

The information that constitutes the data on the life-world of the individual is, then, derived from the researcher comprehending what the body is telling her through the feet of the participant, and the interpretation thereof by such participant. Therefore, it can be concluded that the notion of the body being mapped on the feet, plays a pivotal part in this research. In other words, the *cosmological principle* of the microcosm (the feet) which mirrors the macrocosm (the body and the outer life-world of the individual) is essential to the interviewing process in this research. For example, as can be seen in Tables 5.1 - 5.10, the identification of a congestion would lead to the participant sharing information about his/her life-world.

This sharing of information that relates to the life-world of the individual in its totality, mirrors the *ecological concept* as it is realised in this research. Indeed, it is in keeping with the holistic principle congruent with this post-modern era, which poses that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. In effect, a congestion on a reflex-point or an

orchestra of congestions along a meridian constitutes more than its relation to a certain organ, as it points toward the emotional experience of the participant.

In sum, the hybrid nature of this thesis originates in the consciousness concerning the inadequacies of Western science, and the constitution of a methodology that would address the stance of mistrust in an applicable way. By way of summary, the influence of post-modernism to this research is presented in table form on the next two pages:

FEATURES OF POST-MODERNISM	ITS RELATION TO THIS THESIS
Mistrust in Western philosophies (section 3.3.2)	This mistrust paved the way for this thesis, as it made a challenge to existing methodologies presentable.
Opposition to classical techniques (section 3.3.3)	Presents a way of moving beyond linguistics in interviewing, to include touch and a matrix by which to consistently classify other realities (the Five Elements).
Reflexivity in the post-modern sense (section 3.3.4)	Presents a move beyond reflecting on the particular thesis, to challenging the philosophies underlying the positivistic and even the traditional phenomenological canon.
Relativism (section 3.3.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Of the consciousness of the participant</u> is fully embraced by allowing each one to relate his / her own interpretation of reflexological findings. A particular congestion is assigned an individual meaning, relative to the experience of the individual. - <u>Of the consciousness of the researcher</u>: the idea of epoche is challenged, while reflexology broadens the perceptive framework of the researcher, as more senses are employed (4.4.2.4 (iii)).
Pastiche (section 3.3.6)	
Triangulation	Data from various perspectives allowed, that is, readings on the feet, along the meridian, by means of naïve sketches (4.4.2.5).
Increased multiculturalism	The marriage between the Western concept of phenomenology and the Oriental philosophy underpinning current-day reflexology, namely Taoism, is allowed.
Crossing of boundaries	Boundaries between Western and Oriental philosophies; disciplines; paradigms, between mind and body.
Cosmology	The image of the whole as mirrored in the feet employed as impetus to the interviewing.
Ecological approach	The holistic approach employed, as the congestions identified by the reflexologist are seen within the broader context of the life-world of the individual (Tables 5.1 - 5.10).

Table 3.1 This thesis in terms of the most relevant features of the post-modern era

In order to consolidate the ways in which reflexology enriches traditional phenomenological interviewing, the following tables illustrate this contribution.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL INTERVIEWING - SANS - REFLEXOLOGY	PHENOMENOLOGICAL INTERVIEWING - CUM - REFLEXOLOGY
Mistrust in Western philosophies voiced, and attempts to overcome them, but approach is still highly cognitive, and therefore presents a semi-break from Western philosophies.	Reflexology and its grounding philosophy (Taoism) existed long before phenomenology; does not have to critique modern philosophies to exist. Implementation presents implicit critique as it is increasingly employed by Westerners.
Semi-detachment from classical techniques, as there is a vital reliance on linguistics, the participant and the researcher have to be particularly fluent in language.	Linguistics do play a role, but non-verbal information is crucial to understanding. The role-players do not have to be particularly fluent. Requires additional training for Western interviewers.
Reflection rarely goes beyond reflection on Western ideas.	Reflection spans across paradigms.
Pastiche Triangulation incorporates other methodologies that are also dependent on purely cognitive activities, such as linguistics. Multiculturalism appears to relate mainly to comparative studies and/or combinations studies with Western methodologies is in dominant, determinant position. Crossing of boundaries means that the body/mind link is recognised, but no real attempt is made to explicitly relate the one to the other.	Pastiche Triangulation incorporates methodologies from the Orient, and various matrixes by which to incorporate non-verbal information. Multiculturalism means moving from a mono-cultural approach to a multi-cultural one, by incorporating the knowledge from two different cultures, namely Western phenomenology and Taoism Crossing of boundaries means that biography and biology become inseparable.
Cosmology: broad themes versus individual experiences well-articulated (Van Manen 2002 (a)).	Cosmology: the microcosm reflects the macrocosm, i.e. the reflex-points on the feet represents a map of the whole body (macrocosm), and, in a sense, of the whole life-world of the individual.
The ecological approach appears to manifest in the following ways: (i) a particular phenomenon related to as many other incidents or factors as the participant could remember and / or articulate; or, in medical settings, it could relate to the combined perspectives of psychologists, nurses, doctors and occupational therapists.	The ecological approach refers to the combination of input from various planes, i.e. the reflex-points on the feet, the congestions along meridians, organ problems and the data shared verbally and by means of naïve sketches. The holistic approach reveals underlying issues related to the symbolic meaning of physical manifestations.

Table 3.2 Phenomenological interviewing-sans-reflexology versus phenomenological interviewing-cum-reflexology from a post-modern perspective

In sum, phenomenological interviewing by means of reflexology proposes to present yet another way by which the West could benefit from Oriental concepts. In a way, this thesis represents a Diaz-like venture to integrate specifics from the Orient with Western culture, in order to enrich Western realities. At the same time, this thesis in itself presents a process that is in keeping with contemporary thinking, as it dovetails with the notions on the post-modern era.

Furthermore, it paves the way to epistemological questions in the sphere of education, educational theory, and educational research, as "... deconstruction moves the whole cluster of questions about education, about teaching ... from the plane of techniques and methods to a level which is deeply concerned with the ethical, the political, and, ultimately, with the destination of life, history, and humanity ... " (Biesta & Egea-Kuehne 2001:5). By implication, the researcher who applies the deconstruction theory not only has to look at a phenomenon the way it presents itself when intact, but also has to study the underlying concepts which determine the manifestation of the phenomenon in the first place. This further means that the researcher has to be conscious of the underlying forces that determine the manifestation of the phenomenon. This is especially relevant for phenomenological research. Van Manen (2002(a):237) contends that the surface message is not the only message that should be dealt with. Deconstruction is particularly relevant for this study, as reflexology provides for ways of understanding the life-world of an individual in terms of the details of his/her life-world, as can be seen in Tables 5.1 - 5.10. The empirical work in Chapter five reported will aim to show that reflexology provides a matrix by which details of participants' life-worlds can be recorded.

At the same time, the canon of modernism has been further challenged, as this thesis draws on the more explicit interconnections posed by Griffen (1990) that exist between realities. The most significant aspects addressed here related to the cosmology and the ecological approach, as these two constructs show that reality should be understood in terms of holistic relationships between constructs. This poses the need for an academic

bilingual approach that could appreciate multiple realities (see section 1.6.8), while, at the same time, appreciate the holistic whole which is, according to Smuts, more than the details (Steyn 1994:123).

In sum, post-modern constructs provide the platform for the incorporation of reflexology in phenomenological research procedures. This, in turn, strengthens the role of pastiche as feature of post-modernism in research of the life-world of the individual. Pastiche functions to create hybrid models of reality and such eclectic models are post-modern by their very nature (Abercrombie et al 2000 s.v. "hybridity"). Eclecticism, supposes unity between elements which might not otherwise be united. Such unity as feature of post-modernism has been discussed by Weber, who examined mysticism for its emphasis on unity and universal brotherhood (Wexler 1995:62). Consequently, pastiche can only be performed meaningfully if the interconnections between constructs are really understood.

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I situated this thesis within the period of post-modernism, by illustrating that this research is embedded within the dominating trends of today. The rationale for doing so lies therein that contextualisation is said to enhance understanding, and gave rise to the emergence of certain epistemological issues consonant with this age. In this regard, this thesis aims to contribute to research in education, as it not only re-visits beliefs about knowing the life-world of individual persons, but also provides at least one example (the modality of reflexology) as a particular way in which some of these epistemological concerns could be addressed.

Each section (section 3.3.1 - 3.3.7) dealt with a different feature of post-modernism. These sections were related to the ways in which this research addresses them, as well as the ways in which phenomenological interviewing-sans-reflexology compares to phenomenological interviewing-cum-reflexology.

In sum, I have argued that, by incorporating reflexivity in phenomenological interviewing research in education, the research can be enriched and, most importantly, that this strategy would be in keeping with post-modern concerns. This means that it is appropriate to include reflexivity as part of phenomenological research by means of interviewing, as such accommodation is in keeping with the nature of the post-modern age.

In the next chapter, the research design will be described.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN

Intuition is a sacred gift.
Rationality its faithful servant
Albert Einstein (Hassed 2000:1).

If my heart could do my thinking
And my head begin to feel,
I would look upon the world anew
And know what's truly real
Van Morrison (quotation on unmarked page in Valle & King 1978).

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Seeing that design relates to the structure and procedures of an entity, the aim of this chapter is to explain these two features of the research work as a whole, in order to serve the empirical study with ways in which its phenomenological interviewing could be enriched. In this chapter I will consider the nature of the research design, as this determines the choice and use of the components which are to constitute the structures and procedures. The research design will be positioned in terms of the overall aim of this work as stated in section 1.3, namely to determine whether reflexivity can legitimately facilitate phenomenological interviewing in education. I will show in what sense the *nature* of this research proposes to be both instrumental and intrinsic. This goal is to be accomplished in the following ways: first, the overall design is to be illuminated in terms of relevant design structures in the classification system of research designs as developed by Mouton (2001). In the light of the relevant research designs of this schema, I will then proceed to give an explanation of the nature of the design of this thesis.

Following the background to the research design, I will pay attention to the *procedure* to be followed during the empirical work. Consequently, I will deal with aspects such as ethical measures, the principles and procedure of data-collection, record keeping, the

final presentation in terms of the expected layout and trustworthiness. The conclusion to the chapter will provide a summary of the topics addressed.

Throughout this exposition of the path to be followed during the research, I will provide substantiation for some atypical features thereof. This will be done by means of referring back to the novel, academic eclectic method proposed on which the whole study is based. In this way, the non-traditional features will be grounded within traditional practices in research in the West. At the same time, it has to be kept in mind that, given the fact that this thesis rests on the interface between Western and Oriental methodologies, the methodology usually employed for phenomenological interviewing will need to be amended in order to suit the approach for this thesis.

At the same time, the reader has to keep in mind that reflexology provides for a privileged way of conducting interviews, as the information found by the reflexological touch is the pivot to this whole study. While this chapter will strive to elucidate the elements and the procedure to be followed, any researcher in education and/or educational psychology who wishes to obtain the same kind of results would have to train as a qualified reflexologist, prior to attempting to engage in the same kind of research. Otherwise, he/she will have to engage the services of an aptly qualified one, as the reflexological findings serve as the impetus to the rest of the interview on the life-world of the individuals concerned. This means that the research design includes the reflexological expertise of this researcher - otherwise, logically, phenomenological interviews would not be enriched thereby.

In sum, this research design may indicate how this particular research was carried out, but it will not necessarily equip the reader to carry out the same research, unless he/she decides to either become a reflexologist him/herself, or employs the services of an aptly qualified reflexologist. Putting unfamiliar requisites forward is not unfamiliar to interparadigmatic studies, as Beuster (1991) was also required to move beyond Western understanding of the life-world of individuals, in order to gain understanding in terms of the I-Ching in a Western psychological context.

4.2 THE NATURE OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

4.2.1 Rationale for the nature of the research design

As mentioned earlier, this section deals with the nature of the research design. The rationale for considering the nature of the study lies therein that this aspect is inextricably linked to the way in which the work is to be conducted. To explain: the nature of the research plan determines the choice of research procedures, the way in which data are to be collected, and the way in which the outcomes are to be interpreted and reported. For example, both phenomenology and reflexology demand the consideration of all detail pertaining to the phenomenon studied, and to the non-generalisation of outcomes. This means that such outcomes are to be presented without the use of statistics, and rather by means of constructs that would accommodate extensive details of the life-worlds of each individual participant (see section 1.6.3). Seeing that this thesis proposes to show how interviews in educational research could be facilitated by means of reflexology (see section 1.1), it follows logically that the use of statistics is not useful for this aim.

4.2.2 The qualitative nature of the research design

The first part of the title of this thesis reads: "Facilitating phenomenological interviews ...". This means that the interviews are inherently phenomenological by nature. From this notion it flows logically that the nature of the research design would be qualitative, as phenomenology, by definition, is qualitative (Husserl 1925).

The qualitative nature can be seen in terms of factors such as the collection and interpretation of data in a non-numerical way; the depth of idiographic explanations (Babbie 2001:34;74), and the envisioned individualised presentation of the findings in Chapter 5, with specific reference to Tables 5.1 - 5.10. Furthermore, the data is not being distilled, and variables are not identified and isolated; rather, all aspects of the life-world of each individual are to be taken into account (Appendixes A - D). Therefore, I wish to propose that the research design for this thesis is inherently qualitative by nature.

The following section will further elucidate the research design in terms of the classification system posed by Mouton (2001:148-180).

4.2.3 The Mouton classification system of research designs: features of relevance to this study

This system of classifying research designs provides for a way of distinguishing between various designs for graduate research, and can be utilised for work across the spectrum of disciplines. Pivotal aspects of postgraduate work - such as the key research questions and applications particular to each design - are explained, giving the reader a good idea of the nature of essential components of a wide variety (22, in all) of research designs.

Significant for this study, Mouton (2001:174) has recognised that some designs are usually employed in conjunction with other designs, which means that dichotomies between individual designs are not always adhered to. This notion is in keeping with the post-modern spirit, which holds that boundaries of various kinds are being crossed in this era (see section 3.3.6.3).

From Mouton's classification system the designs most relevant for this thesis are presented in table 4.1. In the section that follows, I explain how each of these features applies to this particular work. (Please note that, for practical reasons, the table in its entirety is presented on the next page.)

TYPE OF RESEARCH DESIGN	MOST SIGNIFICANT ATTRIBUTES
Methodological studies (Mouton 2001:173-5)	Aimed at developing new methods of data collection.
Life history methodology (Mouton 2001:172-3); also known as clinical methodology (Baily 1994:194))	Analysis of small numbers of cases (usually of individuals) to reconstruct the life story of each individual as articulated by that person.
Ethnographic research: participant observation studies (Mouton 2001:148-9)	Phenomenological description of a few individuals who interact with the research programme.
Philosophical analysis (Mouton 2001:179-9)	Aimed at analysing arguments; value-laden; about the meaning of life (metaphysics).

Table 4.1 Most relevant concepts from Mouton's research design classification

From the variety of research designs, it should be clear that the nature of this particular thesis is inherently eclectic and hybrid. This means that the design is consistent with the post-modern nature of the study, as the approach is not restricted to a single design structure. These features of research design will each now be explored in terms of its unique and inclusive contribution to this thesis.

4.2.3.1 The methodological design

Method deals with the way in which things are usually done. According to Mouton (2001:173), the methodological design deals with the development of new methods or instruments for research. This thesis considers the feasibility of introducing a relatively unknown technique for phenomenological research in education. To explain: the aim of this study is, in the first place, to establish whether a new technique could enrich phenomenological research. Specifically, the overriding aim of this thesis is to see whether phenomenological interviews could be enriched by means of integrating reflexology. Seeing that phenomenological interviewing presents a way or method of interviewing, it follows logically that the incorporation of reflexology as part of the interviewing, presents an augmented way of phenomenological interviewing.

Therefore, I wish to conclude that the research design to this thesis is distinctly *methodological*. Furthermore, true to Mouton's perception of the nature of the methodological design (Mouton 2001:174), it does not function on its own, but in conjunction with other designs, as identified in table 4.1.

In sum, this means that the research design is supportive of these aims, as the structure of the research procedure allows for the possibility of a novel method complementary to traditional phenomenological interviewing to be explored.

4.2.3.2 Life history design

The life-world of an individual is closely related to his/her life history, as the life history presents the course of development of whatever has or had been present in some-one's life. In terms of the principle of holism, the present cannot be divorced from the past. *Therefore, capturing the life histories of individuals is consistent with reaching the goal of understanding the life-worlds of each one of them.* Particular to this study is the quest to elucidate present manifestations in terms of past experiences (see section 1.1).

These life histories are being captured by means of case study work. I wish to propose that this collective case study is *instrumental* as well as *intrinsic* by nature, because it is carried out in order to illustrate the potential value of reflexology in phenomenological interviews, while also dealing with the detail of the life-world of each individual participant. This is in keeping with the contentions of Stake (1995:3), on instrumental case studies serving to illustrate the possible value of an innovative method, and intrinsic case studies serving to illustrate the life-worlds of individuals (Stake 1995:3). Therefore, there are no forms of generalisation, each case is seen in terms of its individuality - which is in keeping with Baily's (1994:194) postulation, that life history interviews produce information that is both unique and non-comparable.

A significant implication of the past being present, lies therein that it asks of the researcher to be fully aware of the childhood dynamics of the participant. This notion

also makes the wide use of adults as participants in educational research justifiable, because it is based on the premise that childhood influences last a lifetime - just like Freud and Jung argue (Rohmann_2002, s.v. "Freud":148; s.v. "Jung": 213). In practical terms, the life history feature of the research design allows for relations being drawn between current manifestations of congestions found during the reflexological reading of the feet, and emotions experienced in the past. Subsequently, this sets the stage for the exploration of the origin of such emotions in terms of experiences.

To conclude, the life history (also called clinical) feature of the research design contributes towards the collection of information by which the potential value of this proposed method could be established.

4.2.3.3 Participant observation

Observation deals with the act of watching a phenomenon intently and systematically, with the objective to gather information and base comments and critique on the perception of that phenomenon by the observer (Odhams 1970, s.v. "observation").

Employing observation in this study is congruent with the sentiments of phenomenology and reflexology alike. With regard to phenomenology, a description of a phenomenon depends on how such a phenomenon presents itself to the researcher for observation. Indeed, Mouton (2001:148) proposes that phenomenological description of individuals depend on observation. Reflexology, too, depends on the observations of the reflexologist (cf. Dougans 2000). This means that, in order to be true to phenomenology and reflexology, this thesis has to include the observations that the researcher is about to make of the life-world of each individual participant, as it relates to the congestions found during the reflexology session.

At the same time, it has to be pointed out that one of the characteristics of the observational activity particular to this thesis lies therein that the observations are not done from a distance, but during the physical touch and one-to-one discussions particular

to the reflexology treatment. Furthermore, the observations are to be carried out in a systematic way, that is according to the procedure to be presented in section 4.4.2.5. These observations are then to constitute the body of findings to a significant degree, as the information they carry will be interpreted in terms of the constructs provided in Appendixes A, B, C, D and E will provide the guiding structure for the verbal communication that will then follow.

Significantly, the feature of observation serves as complement to the life history design, as it extends the exploration from looking into the past, to the present situation. This incorporation of life history design and participant observation is in keeping with the phenomenological nature of the research, as phenomenologists need to " ... 'make sense' out of their informants' perceptions of the world..." (Babbie 2001:282), while life historians too have to come to an understanding of participants' experiences. It is also congruent with the clinical approach used in psychotherapy, which proposes to deal extensively with participants' past and present in all its fullness (Babbie 2001:50; 247).

To conclude, seeing that the observations are to provide information regarding the life-world of each individual participant, it follows that the act of observing during the empirical phase of the research, can be seen as to contend with the general understanding of the basic functions and purpose of phenomenological observation.

4.2.3.4 Philosophical analysis as research design

Philosophy relates to the "...search for knowledge and understanding of the nature and meaning of the universe and of human life" (Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary 1990, s.v, "philosophy"). The design for this thesis has had to allow for extensive philosophising, as two widely apart paradigms - that of Western academia, and that of the Taoism as the Oriental philosophy to which contemporary reflexology corresponds - had to be united in terms of the transition in which world views find themselves. The philosophical work pertaining to this study has accomplished this in the following ways:

In chapter two, I aimed looking at particular aspects of the universe and of human life, and of the ways in which they are interconnected. I sought to explain phenomenology; reflexology; Taoism; the functioning of the human mind and its inextricable linkages to the human body; as well as the connections between biography and biology (cf. Myss 1997:40). I also sought an understanding of the basic principles of a particular human endeavour that is often undertaken by phenomenological researchers in education, namely the activity of interviewing individuals, in order to develop an understanding of their life-worlds. In this sense, thus, this work can be seen as a piece of philosophical analysis. I wish to propose that these notions are in keeping with the strivings of phenomenologists in the tradition of Husserl and Heidegger, who proposed phenomenology as the method par excellence to understand reality (Mouton 2001:178).

Chapter three was devoted to developing a philosophical appreciation of the whole thesis in terms of post-modernism. The outcomes of the application of these theories have been recorded and analysed in chapter five. These acts of searching to explain the nature and meaning of particular aspects of the universe, therefore satisfy the demand for philosophical analysis inherent to philosophical designs.

Therefore, I wish to conclude by saying that the philosophical paradigm created by the design served as foil for the philosophy on which the methodological design (see 4.2.3.1) could be based.

4.2.4 Conclusion

In sum, the qualitative nature of the research design is echoed in the various designs to which the study relates. The overall feature of the design is, however, methodological, since the stage is set for the development of a new way of conducting phenomenological interviews. A collective case study is to be conducted in order to illustrate the possibility of the research questions being actualised. This means that the life history and participant methodologies employed here are instrumental to the overall investigation regarding the potential value of reflexology for phenomenological interviewing. This

framework designates to the cases a double role, as they act as *intrinsic cases* (serving as a vehicle to explore the life-world of each individual), and also as *instrumental cases*, as they are employed in order to establish the value of reflexology as augment to phenomenological interviewing. Referring back to the eclectic nature of the research design, it needs mention that the interrelation of methods of this enquiry allows for the holistic portrayal of the subjects, since their whole being is being drawn into the study: body, mind, history, emotions, motivations - and all other aspects of their existence identifiable by means of reflexology.

4.3 ETHICAL MEASURES

4.3.1 Introduction

In terms of research, ethics refer to "... what is wrong and what is right in the conduct of research" (Mouton 2001:238). As far as this thesis is concerned, ethical measures from two spheres of knowledge apply. First, the ethical standards related to qualitative research involving participants, and, second, the ethical norms related to me as practitioner-researcher (cf. De Vos, Schurink & Strydom 1998:11), as I am acting from my position as interviewer and reflexologist. At the same time, seeing that reflexology could also be seen as a caring profession (cf. De Vos & Schulze 2002:25), it stands to reason the ethical measures applying to other caring professions would also be relevant in this case. From this background, the following discussion will revolve around the ethical measures generally related to qualitative research, while specific reference to the application in terms of the research for this thesis, is to be made.

4.3.2 Ethical measures related to qualitative research involving participants

Several codes of ethics have been formulated regarding participant research (Strydom 2002:73). For the purposes of this thesis, I will concentrate on the following guidelines:

4.3.2.1 Consideration of possible consequences for the participant

According to Strydom (2002: 65; 74), researchers need to consider possible consequences for the participants - which could include negative consequences in terms of emotional and/or physical discomfort. This is congruent with practical guidelines given at universities in South Africa. For example, the following advice is given to graduate students at a tertiary institution of note: "There is an obligation on the researcher to reflect on the foreseeable repercussions on those studied for research and publication" (WITS 2001:93). For this investigation, it is difficult to find factors of possible detriment to the participants, because reflexology in itself is a treatment, and holds no real dangers if practised according the regulations of the Allied Health Professions Council of South Africa.

4.3.2.2 Debriefing

Even though reflexology cannot be seen to hold any threat, the ethical concern regarding debriefing - as providing emotional support should the research situation have led to stress - is of significance, in order to ensure that no psychological harm is suffered. Indeed, Warren (2002:89) asserts qualitative interviewing has the potential to be emotionally unsettling. Reflexology, however, provides for a way of total relaxation, which serves to have a calming, de-stressing effect on those who receive it (Dougans 2000: 30; 133-8). Therefore, I wish to propose that debriefing is an inherent part of research done by means of reflexology.

4.3.2.3 Informed consent

This aspect implies that the participants are to be fully informed about the goals, function and experiences involved in the research, in order to take a reasoned decision on taking part (Strydom 2002:65-66). This notion echoes throughout the academic community, as in the work of Mouton (2001:243), when he contends that one of the most basic rights of participants is "the right to full disclosure about the research (informed consent)". This

means that I have to inform volunteers that I am set to record sensitive information if this information is shared with me during the reflexology sessions. As a consequence, some of them - however eager to take part in research that involves having a reflexology session for which no money is charged - may rather wish to withdraw.

4.3.2.4 Privacy and dignity

Strydom (2002:74) addresses the ethical aspect of the regard for participants' privacy and dignity. This is stated even more strongly in another document, which refers to this aspect by means of calling researchers to "honour" the dignity and privacy of participants (WITS 2001:93). This shows the high concern the academic community has for this aspect, as "regard" could be seen in terms of "paying attention to" or "respect", while the term "honour" designates almost a *religiously* high regard (Bloomsbury Thesaurus of the English Language 1993: s.v, "respect"; "honour"). Concerning the research for this thesis, the aspects of privacy and dignity will be adhered to strictly, as the treatments are to be carried out in circumstances approved by the Allied Health Professions Council, and by the South African Reflexology Society. To illustrate: the participants are to be treated in total privacy and do not have to disrobe.

At the same time, the researcher has also allowed the participants privacy of thought, as they could themselves choose what to disclose, and what they would consider too private to give a tangible record of. This is in keeping with the notions of Sherman (1995:257), who contended that the act of writing bears the following advantages:

... a person has the opportunity to ... determine what will and will not be shared ... this protects the individual's right to monitor the developmental exchange and not to share what he or she feels is too personal or painful.

In sum, privacy in terms of this study extends beyond privacy of the physical body, to include psychological retreat as well.

4.3.2.5 Anonymity and confidentiality

The principle of privacy is extended to include the right of participants to anonymity and confidentiality (cf. Mouton 2001:243; Odendahl & Shaw 2002: 313; WITS 2001:93). In this thesis, I ensure anonymity by referring to each participant in terms of a pseudonym. Branching from this issue is the ethical demand that findings should only be discussed amongst professionals, for research purposes (Strydom 2002:74). In this regard, WITS (2001:93) also makes it clear that professional ethics concerns the use of particularly revealing devices such as tape recorders and cameras, by stating directly: "The use of monitoring devices such as tape recorders and cameras should be open, and fully understood by the people concerned. They should be free to reject them if they wish." The research carried out for thesis is consonant with this requirement, as information will be collected in a number of ways other than using a tape recorder. This would also enable me to move beyond mere words, which addresses the situation captured by Kaptchuck (1983:252), when he asserted the ineffectiveness of language to capture experiences in full. As mentioned in section 1.5, he said: "With a gritty stubbornness, real human disorders (sic: experiences) persistently fall into the tiny space between ... words." People do not always say what they think. Articulating a memory is dependent on the verbal frame of reference of the individual. Denial is, of course, another well-known factor. This means that this thesis - by means of employing reflexology as tactile modality - goes beyond words uttered by participants - which is in keeping with the goal of employing reflexology to facilitate phenomenological interviews.

4.3.2.6 Professional status of researcher

It has been postulated that researchers should have the competence to carry out the research in a professional way (Strydom 2002:69). In terms of this thesis, this means that the person carrying out the reflexology treatments should be adequately qualified in order to be registered with the Allied Health Professions Council, as that would ensure adequate training in terms of theory and practical work. As pointed out earlier (see

section 1.1), I am adequately versed in the practice of reflexology to comply with any requirement regarding the practice thereof.

4.3.3 Conclusion

In sum, the ethical concerns will be adhered to during the empirical work, of which the findings are to be recorded in Chapter 5, because the background in terms of these concerns have been contemplated and reflected on. Therefore, I wish to conclude that this work will be done in keeping with the widely accepted code of ethics for research in the caring professions such as psychology (Goodwin 1995:340; McBurney 1998:320), and, subsequently, in the field of education.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION

4.4.1 Introduction

While informal data collection starts even before there is commitment to do the study (Stake 1995:49), the aspect of data collection addressed here applies to the formal effort related to the aims and research questions which serve as guidelines to the overall project. The formal collection of data for this thesis takes place in two different ways, namely by means of a literature search, and by means of phenomenological interviewing-cum-reflexology. While the literature search has been dealt with in section 1.7.3.1, this section will concentrate on the collection of data by means of the phenomenological interviews, that is the empirical work.

4.4.2 Phenomenological interviews

4.4.2.1 Introduction

In this thesis, the primary method of data-collection is the interviews. This section

wishes to give an overview of the following aspects of the interviewing feature of this thesis, namely

- an understanding of the particular form of interviewing employed in this thesis, and the way in which it is complemented by other methods of data collection;
- the sampling process for the interviews as particular to this thesis;
- the role of the researcher;
- the procedure of the actual interviewing session;
- the types of data to be collected,
- the ways in which trustworthiness will be established, and
- the ways in which the analysis of the data are to be carried out.

4.4.2.2 Interviewing as method of data collection particular to this thesis

From the title of the thesis and the exposition so far, it should be assumable that the nature of the interviews is phenomenological. This assumption rests on the fact that the aim of this work is to employ interviews to gather information by which to elucidate the life-world of each participant.

The strategies employed during the interviewing include the following:

- the *reflexological touch* (see Appendixes A, B, C and D);
- *listening* (characteristic of phenomenology and reflexology);
- *observation* (also characteristic of both constructs, but put in significant strategic use by means of the *Five Elements* matrix in Appendix C, as adherent to reflexology);
- *projection*, in terms of the Tree Test devised by Charles Koch (1952) as a way of obtaining confirmation of some empirical observations in psychology and education,

and to be used in conjunction with other forms of testing - in this case, phenomenology and reflexology (see Appendix E);

- suggesting to the participants that they are free to write *naïve sketches* by which to further illustrate a particular issue. Participants B and J each included a poem of one A4-sheet of paper in length, but, while the poem by participant B was of a personal nature, the one produced by participant J presented further projection of her own pain, as she wrote about the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. Excerpts from the naïve sketches produced by participants C, D, F, G, H, I and J were included as deemed appropriate. However, the reader should notice that - in keeping with the semi-linguistic approach - this portraying of the life-worlds of individuals does not depend as heavily on verbal exchange as does traditional interviewing (see Table 3.1 and 3.2, third row). Therefore, while the naïve sketches serve as an audit to the tactile findings obtained by means of reflexology, it only does so to some degree. Therefore, the naïve sketches were kept to a minimum.

The interviewing schedule is loosely structured and informal. The structure lies in the flexible procedure to be followed as laid out in section 4.4.2.5. The informal component lies in the spontaneous sharing during the reflexology work, and during the subsequent informal, face-to-face stage of the interview.

4.4.2.2 Sampling

This study depends on the participation of volunteers. Therefore, volunteer sampling has been employed.

(i) *Formal recruitment from the high school*

I felt that I required participants whom I did not know at all. Therefore, I wrote a letter to the principal of the local high school. I had to write a subsequent letter, in order to confirm my professional research position. Then, I had to write a letter to the parents of

those whom the school saw fit to attend the participant studies. (These letters are all contained in Appendix F). In the end, participants A and B were referred to me by the school.

(ii) *Convenience recruitment by means of parental reference*

A few participants (C, D, E and F) participated because their parents knew what I was doing, and asked if I could accommodate their children. They articulated that they thought the children would "enjoy it".

(ii) *Convenience sampling from a larger group of acquaintances*

Participants G, H, I and J volunteered to take part, when they heard about my study (Participants G, H, I and J). Moreover, I perceived that they did so with eagerness.

The number of participants finally included depended on how rich the information gathered by means of phenomenological interviewing augmented by reflexology turned out to be. Since the aim is not to generalise findings, participants need not be representative of any particular population. What is important is how extensive the portraying of the life-world of each individual is, as that would illustrate the potential value - or lack thereof - of the proposed methodology. However, sampling continued until the data were considered to be saturated.

4.4.2.4 The role of the researcher as instrument

It has been articulated in the literature that the role of the researcher is of particular significance in qualitative research, as he/she becomes so much part of the research procedure that he/she can influence the research process, and, by implication, the outcome thereof. Indeed, Marshall and Rossman (1995:59) contend that the qualitative researcher enters into a brief, but personal relationship with the participant. This means

that the researcher has a significant influence on the study as a whole. According to Stake (1995:91-105) the following general roles of being a researcher apply, namely:

(i) *The researcher as evaluator*

Evaluation requires the ability to form an idea of the value of something. In this case, I, as evaluator, have chosen criteria by which to make interpretations of the strength and weaknesses of the participant. For example, when I read someone's feet, I have to be able to assess in which areas (physically) there might be dis-ease or a tendency towards such a state. The necessity for being able to identify such weakness lies therein that it forms the basis of the discussion, as to be explained in section 4.5. However, I strive to be non-judgmental, in the sense that I would not qualify any function or dysfunction in terms of it being 'right' or 'wrong'.

(ii) *The researcher as biographer*

During the cases studied, I have to construct biographical data in such a way that it could be understood in terms of bodily manifestations. Consequently, I have to take on the role of someone who can describe the life-world of another individual in as much depth as he/she would allow me to (cf. Stake 1995:96). This role is particularly congruent with the notions expressed in section 1.1, whereby I stipulated that, in reflexological terms, there is a strong link between biography and biology.

(iii) *The researcher as interpreter*

From the outset, I have to interpret information gathered from the reading of the feet in terms of the function of organs, and the meta-physical explanation (see section 2.3.5). This means that I had to acquaint myself with techniques, philosophies and interpretations particular to reflexology, in order to be able to interpret visual, tactile and audio-information at the same time. Furthermore, given the fact that I intended employing the Tree Test (devised by Koch in 1952, explained in Appendix E) as way of

triangulation, implied that I would have to be able to interpret visual data in terms of the experiences of the participants. The condition of information available in forms other than the audio, is illustrated extensively by Stake (1995:98) when he discusses the way in which visual works of art convey aspects of reality which cannot really be constituted in words (Stake 1995: 97-8). Significant here is that this eclecticism is consonant with the practice in which contemporary reflexology finds its roots, because the Chinese background prescribes that investigations should include the following qualities: *looking and listening (lucid quality); feeling (intelligent quality), and questioning (workmanlike quality)* (Chow 1984:121).

This means that I have to act as interpreter of data beyond the audio and superficial visual, in order to incorporate tactile and visual data from the rigorous framework of the Five Elements.

(iv) *The researcher as theorist*

The theoretical exposition of this thesis demands that the anti-positivistic stance be explored for its appropriateness. I first had to examine the essences of phenomenology and reflexology. Following that, I had to link the correspondences and congruencies between phenomenology and Taoist thinking theoretically. All of this has been addressed in chapter two. This means that the philosophical basis for the research has been established. What then followed was a theoretical understanding of the position of this thesis, in order to allow it to be seen within the context of contemporary thought (cf. Stake 1995:105).

(iv) *The researcher as involved author*

The collection of data, and the subsequent writing of this thesis, implies my finding myself in the role of involved author. This means that, apart from documenting the data gathered, I had to produce a manuscript that shows my empathy with participants' lives: *verstehen*, in Weberian terms. This also asks of me as researcher to develop my writing

skills to the point as to interpret and then clearly reveal information shared on a special level of confidence by each participant.

(v) The researcher as reflexologist

Clearly a researcher who wishes to incorporate reflexology in the phenomenological interviewing process, would have to be trained as a reflexologist - or, at least have enough background to employ an aptly qualified reflexologist (see section 1.6.6) in order to carry out that part of the research, before proceeding with the verbal phase of the interview.

In sum, I wish to propose that the role of researcher for this particular thesis is multi-dimensional, and requires the mastery of a number of research skills. In other words, the role of the researcher corresponds with the requirement of competence in terms of ethical concerns discussed in section 4.3.2.6 under the heading "professional status of researcher".

4.4.2.5 The procedure of the interviews

The focus of this section is on the way in which the interviews take place. This section outlines the proposed sequence of the activities which occurred during the meetings that constituted the interviewing sessions.

Most importantly, it has to be understood that each interview comprises two phases. First, a phase during which the interviewee would lie on a couch, while the researcher-reflexologist would perform reflexology, and during which information may or may not be shared, according to the wishes of the interviewee. This forms largely the non-verbal phase of the interview, as the researcher would rely almost totally on tactile and other non-verbal information (see Appendixes A - E). The second phase is based on the first, but does not involve any reflexology work *per se*. This second phase would comprise of the interviewer and the interviewee sitting on chairs, and entering into discourse

regarding what the interviewer has found. This part of the interview, then, resembles traditional interviewing in the West (see section 1.6.3).

It has to be understood that the sequence of activities is not a strict given. This means that, although each session will comprise of certain components, the order in which these activities takes place varies from participant to participant, and from session to session. For example, the reflexology treatment and the discussion may come in varying order. Generally speaking, the sequence in which the components are followed is presented on the next page:

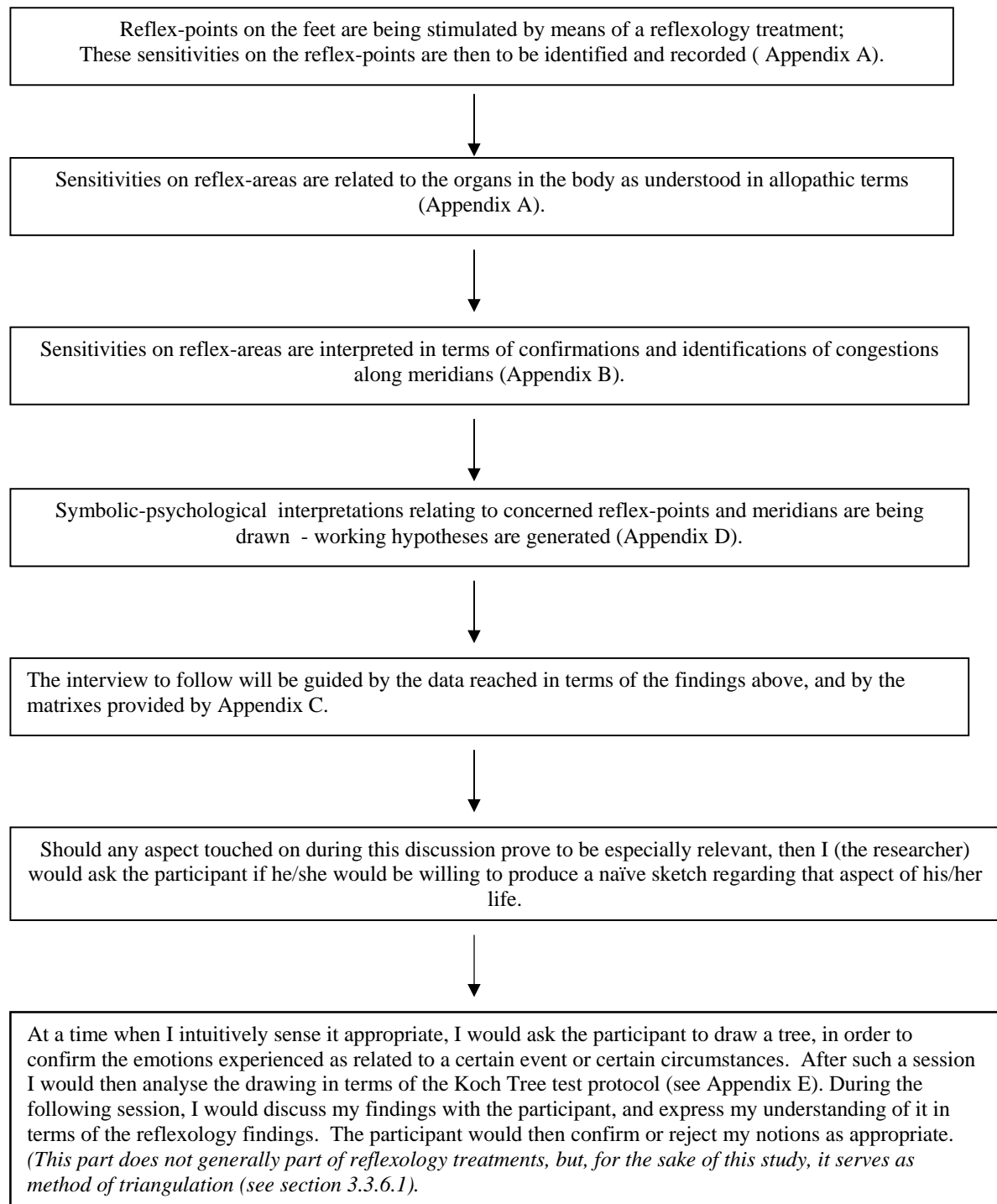


Fig. 4.1 Sequence of activities during interview sessions with participants (see section 1.6.3)

Clearly, this procedure involves a highly sophisticated way of mining non-verbal data, and combining this with verbal data, in order to reach a comprehensive understanding of the life-world of the individual participant.

This procedure was followed five times with each participant. Each session was between two and two-and-a-half hours long, as the reflexology component alone took at least forty-five minutes. Sometimes the participants would ask for a few more minutes to relax, and put on their shoes. This was then followed by a refreshment break of about fifteen minutes, before we proceeded with the actual interviewing comprising verbal exchange, the drawing of trees and other non-verbal observations.

In terms of logistics, the interviews took place in a consulting-room-cum-study, where each participant lay down on an examination couch similar to those found in medical rooms. While some of the interviews invariably took place as the participant underwent treatment in this position, the naïve sketches and the rest of the interviewing session took place while the participant and researcher were seated.

The procedure of the reflexology-treatment *per se* started off with relaxation techniques, by which the Achilles tendon is being stretched, and the ankles and toes rotated. From then onwards, the sequence in which the reflexes are stimulated roughly constitutes following a path from the toes to the ankle - mostly underneath, but, at times, on top of the foot - using the variety of techniques taught in reflexology courses accredited by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and accepted by the Allied Health Professions Council. It is during the exertion of pressure on reflex-points that hypotheses are formulated on a continuing basis. These interpretations (hypotheses) cannot exist outside of the reflexology treatment.

As pointed out earlier, complementary to the reflex-point interpretation(s), the researcher-reflexologist also has to interpret sensitivities in terms of corresponding meridians. This means that dual interpretations are being made, because at times when an observation does not make sense in terms of a particular reflex-point on its own, it would then

become comprehensible in terms of the meridians. For example, the fourth and fifth toes might be sensitive, and yet the participant may not suffer from any kind of hearing / balancing / motion sickness problems. However, in terms of the meridians, it may denote a gallbladder problem (4th toe), or urinary bladder problem (5th toe). These problems will then further be confirmed in terms of problems along the particular meridian, as shown in Appendix B, the bladder meridian.

The mode of questioning would probably fit somewhere between the "informal conversational interview" and the "interview guide approach" as types of interview postulated by Tuckman (1999:405). This assumption rests thereon that the reflexology findings would guide the revelations, while the participants would share as they wish. In other words, there is no way to predict exactly which route the interviews would follow.

To conclude, it has to be understood that the verbal exchange phase of the interviews were directed by the presence of congestions detected by means of reflexology. Such congestions usually manifest as pain and/or structures such as calluses. As said earlier, these congestions will form the guidelines from which the interviews are to proceed in the direction of emotions, and then to the corresponding events or circumstances.

4.4.2.6 Types of data collected during the interviews

From my background in research and in reflexology, I believe that it is reasonable to expect that this thesis lends itself thereto that different types of data would be collected. This is in keeping with the hybrid nature of the research design, by which phenomenology is to be supplemented by means of reflexology. The types of data identified are:

- *Tactile data*, gathered from the reading of the feet in terms of congestions on reflex-points and along meridians. The nature of this data also proposes to be cosmological (see section 3.3.7; Appendix A) and ecological (see section 3.3.8; Appendix B).

- *Symbolic data*, regarding the life-world of each individual, as manifestations reflexologically determined are further interpreted in terms of the matrix laid out in Appendix D.
- *Linguistic data*, in terms of information shared with the researcher during the *verbal* exchanges of the interviews, and during the production of the naïve sketches.
- *Visual data*, in terms of tree-drawings (Appendix E) - as a way of triangulation in order to confirm earlier information shared, both directly and indirectly.
- *Other forms of non-verbal data*, such as preference in colour, smell, taste, weather conditions and the like (Appendix C).

It should be clear now that the data gathered during the interviews do not belong to a single category of information. This hybridity is congruent with the following qualities of the research design, namely the life history design, the methodological design, and the philosophical design (Mouton 2001:172; 173; 178; see section 4.2.3). The fact that the observations also provide primary data, is congruent with the participant observation feature of the design (Mouton 2001:148). This means that the data to be collected is in keeping with the nature of the research design explored in section 4.2.

Furthermore, the interdependence between the hybrid data by which the life-world of individuals are to be portrayed, will be clear from the outcomes of the interviews (Tables 5.1 - 5.10). Employing data of various kinds also serves the purpose of phenomenology, as it allows the life-world of each participant to be understood in a number of dimensions, and the links between those dimensions. Significantly, *language will serve as the tool by which to convey the information to the reader* (Tables 5.1 - 5.10). In other words, the embodied experiences of the participants are elucidated and revealed by means of language. While language plays a significant role, it does not play a singular role. This approach is in keeping with the concerns voiced by some academics. De Bono (1991:184) stated:

A description in language is not a model and can only breed other descriptions. A true model should embody other processes ...

This inclusion of unorthodox material gathered during unorthodox procedures (see section 4.4.2.5), presents a move away from the traditional, almost absolute focus on verbal material - which often forms the basis for lengthy transcriptions. Since much of scientific research is visual and concrete, by relying heavily on words, educational research might be impoverished (see table 3.2 where phenomenological interviewing-sans-reflexology is contrasted with phenomenological interviewing-cum- reflexology).

Therefore, I propose that the variations in data serves the purpose of enriching the understanding of the life-worlds of the individual participants.

4.4.3 Conclusion: the collection of data in terms of the overall aim of this thesis

As stated in section 1.3, the aim of this work is to determine whether reflexology could facilitate phenomenological interviewing. Therefore, the focus will be on the participants' life-stories, as these would constitute the findings. The findings, in turn, will illustrate to what extent reflexology could enrich phenomenological interviewing.

In this section I argued that the empirical data for this study are to be collected during qualitative interviews of a clinical nature, in order to meet the requirements of phenomenology and reflexology at the same time. The procedures of the interviews are not fixed, but the pivotal components presented in section 4.4.2.5 are all present during the interviewing. The role of the researcher has also been discussed, as well as the hybridity in data. Throughout this section, I pointed out the logic of the collection of data in terms of the overall aim and nature of the research.

4.5 RECORD KEEPING

Record keeping is done as a safeguard against loss of data. Basically, this aspect refers to

the recording of data during the case study, and the filing thereof in order to ensure later availability. Therefore, the record keeping of this thesis will take place on a regular basis by means of diarising activities such as the interview sessions with the participants. This will enable me to keep up with appointments with participants, and to schedule appointments in such a way as to allow for sufficient breaks between sessions during which I will be able to document the preceding session. Furthermore, the strict filing procedure will ensure confidentiality and prevent data of a particular participant from being intermingled with that of another participant. This is particularly relevant for this thesis, as the portraying of life-worlds of individuals does not aim at the generalisation of findings.

Seeing that reflexology is new to the phenomenological approach, I am in the situation identified as "new" by Stake (1995:72), when he contends, "Occasionally we encounter something really new, something that relates little to previous experience". Hence, this situation requires creating a way of record keeping that would facilitate - and not hinder - the particular dimensions of this thesis.

In order, then, to satisfy the demands of this thesis, I need to go beyond the usual requirements of taking field notes, which deals with what is being said and heard. For example, Strydom (2002:285) postulates that notes taken during the practical phase "... should consist of everything the researcher sees and hears". For this thesis, I also have to record everything I sense through the tactile abilities developed while studying for my qualification in reflexology.

During the sessions I am to make brief notes of what I have heard, seen and felt. Directly after each session, I will immediately proceed to make detailed notes. This corresponds to the notions of Stake (1995:66), when he contends:

For many researchers, the tape recorder is of little value unless ultimately an audio presentation is intended. Getting the exact words of the respondent is usually not very important, it is what is said that is important ... interviewees often are dismayed with transcripts not

only because of the inelegance of their own sentences but because they did not convey what they intended. And the transcript arrives long after context and innuendo have slipped away. Rather than tape record or write furiously, it is better to listen, to take a few notes, to ask for clarification.

In this way, the recording of data captures the spirit of phenomenology, as phenomenology is represented by approaches that focus on essences and meaning.

In this regard, I wish to propose that the record keeping will be purposeful in terms of all the implied resources. For example, while the notes taken may be concise, the data thus gathered will serve to give an extensive picture of the life-world of each participant.

4.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

4.6.1 Introduction

Trustworthiness refers to the quality of truthfulness. In the instance of a qualitative research project, it serves as an indication regarding the confidence the reader can have in the outcomes of such a project. In this section I will address the strategies employed in this thesis to ensure trustworthiness, and provide an exposition of each by means of the tactics adopted specific to this thesis.

4.6.2 Strategies and tactics

The strategies which are to be followed in order to safeguard trustworthiness, are discussed in the ensuing sections.

4.6.2.1 Credibility (truth value)

Credibility in general refers to the quality of being believable and corresponding to the concept of truth. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to render an epistemological

evaluation of truth itself, I will focus on credibility as relevant to this study. Seeing that the credibility of the literature study can easily be established by means of consulting the sources referred to, the focus of this section will be on how credibility for the empirical phase is to be established.

Credibility is generally seen as referring to the way in which research is conducted in order to ensure accurate description of the phenomenon. In terms of this research, the phenomenon constitutes the life-worlds of the participants; therefore, credibility would refer to the *accuracy* with which these life-worlds are depicted.

In order to describe the phenomenon as accurately as possible, it is necessary to perceive it as accurately and comprehensively as possible. Since it is reasonable to assume that perception is never perfect, it is imperative to accommodate multiple perceptions, each contributing towards a holistic perspective of the phenomenon. Here I will argue that the methodology of this thesis provides for sensory triangulation, as the methods by which methodological triangulation is to be established, require the involvement of a number of the senses of the researcher. In terms of the exposition regarding the combination of looking, listening, feeling and questioning, the triangulation in this thesis allows for different insights regarding the same phenomenon (cf. De Vos 2002:341; see section 4.4.2.3).

For this study, I complement the sense of hearing as employed in many phenomenological studies which tend to rely heavily on the listening powers of the researcher, by means of including my senses of touch and sight in carrying out the reflexology work. As mentioned before, the reflexology work consists of reflex-point reading (Appendix A) and meridian reading (Appendix B). Furthermore, other details picked up visually are incorporated by means of the system of the Five Elements (Appendix C), interpreted in terms of the symbolic meaning of experience (Appendix D) and The Tree Test (Appendix E). If appropriate, naïve sketches will also be produced by the participants. While I will only have them produce those as I read the situation during each session, I wish to propose that these sketches will produce information which

could serve the purpose of direct quotations - thereby further illuminating the phenomena studied. This means that perception of the life-worlds of individuals will be enhanced by enriching my own sensory perception, as dependent on the inclusion of multiple strategies to collect and interpret data. Thus, credibility is to be established by means of triangulation as dependent on multiple methodologies (cf. Williams 2001:134).

Furthermore, the implication of moving away from the strict traditional reliance on verbal data lies therein that an enriched phenomenological method of interviewing is being created. This is in keeping with the notions of some researchers of today, as it has been contended that

- Words cannot convey the wisdom of profound insights; and
- If you are sincere, you will perceive that the secret of life cannot be captured in words

Blok (2002:7; 57).

In this sense, De Bono (156; 275) identifies further potential problems with relying totally on linguistics in order to understand reality:

- One difficulty is that we confuse fluency with substance. Something that is well said seems to have a right to be true. So fluency of style masquerades as integrity of thought.
- The ability of language to describe something adequately in hindsight by means of an assembly of words may actually prevent us from developing a richer code of language with which to perceive things in the first place...

I wish to propose that this assertion tends to strike the chord of logic, as relying solely on words could be likened to trying to explain to a blind person what a tropical island looks like. Even if the wording of such an explanation is exquisite and extensive, the blind will never quite know what such a scene looks like (Rautenbach & Van der Merwe 2003:74).

To conclude, in terms of the wide range of perspectives from which the life-world of each participant is to be illuminated, I wish to propose that this thesis aspires to create a way of

providing an accurate picture of the life-worlds of individuals as interpreted by means of reflexology.

4.6.2.2 Transferability

Transferability, as the applicability and the possibility of extending the findings to other studies, also serves as recognised strategy by which to ensure trustworthiness. While the life-worlds of the individual participants cannot in any way be generalised, some of the constructs used in order to guide me as researcher towards understanding are indeed generally applicable. For example, the reflex-points on the feet, the meridians, the Five Elements, and the positions and functions of organs in the body are seen to constitute universal knowledge. This is evident from the fact that, although a particular presentation of the reflex-points or the meridians may be copyrighted, the concepts themselves cannot be preserved in terms of a monopoly. Thus, any author may, just by drawing his / her own figures, incorporate that knowledge in such newly-produced graphics. Moreover, it is because this knowledge is universal, that it can be applied to any human being.

Therefore, I wish to conclude that the theoretical parameters and matrixes by which the interpretations are to be made, are indeed transferable to a study of the life-world of any individual (De Vos 2002:352).

4.6.2.3 Dependability

Dependability is to be seen as the feature of qualitative research, which refers to consistency, should the enquiry be repeated. It has been proposed in sections 1.1 and 2.3.5 that reflexology provides for consistent ways of interpreting phenomena, and generating working hypotheses as it is based on notions dating back to ancient times. Moreover, considering the exponential surge in interest in holistic modalities in general, and in reflexology in particular, I wish to propose that it is unlikely that the findings could lack dependability.

At the same time, outcomes of enquiry with participants would not necessarily be consistent with previous studies, as people change, and reflexology itself usually also brings about change in people - which includes changes in their perception of life. For example, traumatic situations may no longer be perceived as that traumatic following a number of treatments over a few months. Therefore, the case study work with each participant is to be conducted over a period of five weeks - with one session of two-and-a-half hours each - in order to avoid the intensity of experience from changing significantly.

4.6.2.4 Neutrality

Neutrality refers to the setting aside of biases of researchers. However, total neutrality has been pointed out as an ideal that cannot really be reached, thereby necessitating identification and acknowledgement of prejudices (Kruger 1982:18; Marovic 2000:246).

Given my academic background (see section 1.1), I am positively biased towards the merits of reflexology for phenomenological research. At the same time, it has been contended that bias could serve as qualities necessary to the facilitation of enquiry and the construction of meaning (Marovic 2000:50). Furthermore, I wish to propose that this same background would provide me with the knowledge needed to weigh the data as objectively as possible in an academically responsible manner.

In order to increase the degree of neutrality, I intend conversing with the participants themselves, to confirm or reject my own interpretations. This will be possible, as the sessions with each participant are to take place over a period of a number of weeks. I will also continue incorporating the act of member checking by means of which I would postulate my contentions at meetings and seminars, and then evaluate the feedback from others. Seeing that both these groups would have nothing to gain or lose, I am hoping to obtain honest responses. Lastly, I wish to propose that, since no sponsorships have been

made available for this study, responsibilities towards such bodies are non-existent - thereby increasing the possibility of neutrality.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the nature of the research design. As such, it has been postulated that the research design resembles the post-modern nature of the work as a whole. The academic bilingual nature of the study has also been reflected by the incorporation of a method that is alien to Western academia. For example, I argued that triangulation would incorporate models that would widen the sensory input of the researcher, and would allow for different modalities of understanding reality (see section 4.4.2.4 (iii)).

As far as logistics and planning of the research are concerned, this chapter has been devoted to outline the strategy by which to carry out the research program. This is an attempt to align the purpose of the work with the tasks involved. Certain aspects of the schedule have been fixed at least to some degree, for example in relation to the areas of expertise to be consulted during the literature study. On the other hand, the way in which the enquiry would be carried out, has been subjected to the fluidity of human behaviour. In this case, the way in which the subjects themselves might respond during the sessions. This approach favours spontaneity during the interviews, by which to facilitate the disclosure of information by the subjects.

In the next chapter, I will present the findings arrived at during the phenomenological interviews particular to this research.

