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Study of the Potential of Educational Transfer from Grandchild to Grandparent, from the Child's Perspective and Agency, in a School Environment

Ken King

Technological University Dublin

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Study of the Potential of Educational Transfer from Grandchild to Grandparent, from the Child’s Perspective and Agency, in a School Environment

Ken King
BA, MA (French), H. Dip.

Submitted to: Department of Social Sciences, Dublin Institute of Technology in partial fulfilment of the requirements leading to the award of

Masters Degree in Child, Family and Community Studies.

Word count: 16,444

Dublin Institute of Technology September, 2013
Declaration

I hereby declare that this work is my own and has not been previously submitted for degree or any other qualification. Where reference is made to the work of others, due acknowledgement is given.

Signed: _________________________

Date: __________________________
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of my co-researchers for their views and creativity. I appreciate greatly their enthusiasm, good humour and valuable insights. Thanks to the girls, their families, and all the pupils and staff in the three schools who facilitated the research process. Special thanks to Helena and Chantelle.

Thank you to the lecturers and fellow postgraduates at Dublin Institute of Technology, especially my study group colleagues, Alison and Edel, for their support and reassurance throughout the year.

I would particularly like to mention my research supervisor, Dr. Carmel Gallagher, for her invaluable direction, patience and commitment. All the suggestions enriched my work and contributed to a better academic quality. Thank you.

A big thank you to my wonderful wife, Maria, and foster daughter, Nancy, for their constant love and support throughout the year. I couldn’t have done it without them. Thank you to family and friends who offered so much encouragement.

Grandparents contribute so much to their families and communities in Ireland nowadays and they deserve so much respect. I would like to pay special tribute to the grandparents who assisted me in my research this year, especially Maeve.

In memory of my parents, particularly my mother Christina, who instilled in me the importance of education from an early age.
ABSTRACT

This research acknowledges the ability of children to be active in their own learning and could promote opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning by offering school-based Intergenerational Learning Programmes. The main aim of this study was to develop a pilot intergenerational lesson with children, aged 10 to 12 years old, to enable the educational transfer of knowledge and skills from children to their grandparents or other older people in a school setting. Using the Irish Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum as a source, the project-based research was informed, firstly, by the theories of Piaget, Vygotsky and Rogoff, and secondly, by the perspectives of the co-researchers through the use of interpretive methodology. The primary intention was to enable the children to have their voices heard, learn new skills and benefit from the confidence the process could offer them by their active participation in Educational Action Research. A mixed-method approach was employed with qualitative data, obtained from focus groups, and quantitative data collection, facilitated by a web-based questionnaire to allow for transferability.

The researcher posits that this study has contributed to the enhancement of skills and self-esteem of the co-researchers, as evidenced by the information obtained from the assessment of learning and project evaluation, undertaken by the children. The findings of this study indicate that there is support among children, grandparents and other older people for the development of an IG pilot lesson from a child’s perspective and agency. This project-based initiative has developed a process, which unlike many IG projects to date, has significant involvement of children and has focused on active learning in the context of relationships.

The pilot lesson and website are currently a work in progress and will benefit from the on-going process of Educational Action Research. Any suggestions which enhance the skills and self-esteem of children and contribute to opportunities for life-long learning for older people are welcome through the designated pilot website www.handshakeie.weebly.com.
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# Glossary of Terms

For the purpose of this research, the following terms are defined as follows.

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<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>refers to a status of having rights and responsibilities within a particular country or geographical area</td>
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<td>Educational Action Research</td>
<td>originally the design of American, John Dewey, in the 1920s, it is a process of improving practice by on-going evaluation, reflection and action.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intergenerational Learning</td>
<td>involves young and older people learning together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life-long Learning</td>
<td>is regarded as learning at any stage of the lifespan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life-wide Learning</td>
<td>can happen in places like schools, workplaces and clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot Lesson</td>
<td>is a one-off trial of a particular lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot Website</td>
<td>is a temporary website which may develop into a more permanent version over a period of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone of Proximal Development</td>
<td>is a concept devised by Vygotsky to explain the support given by a teacher to enable a child to learn and enhance their skills in an active learning environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evolving Capacities</td>
<td>relates to the UNCRC identification that as children develop they could require and might be afforded more autonomy</td>
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<td>CRA</td>
<td>Children’s Rights Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Central Statistics Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIT</td>
<td>Dublin Institute of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DES</td>
<td>Department of Education and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAR</td>
<td>Educational Action Research</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Community</td>
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<td>EMIL</td>
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<td>ENIL</td>
<td>European Network of Intergenerational Learning</td>
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<td>IG</td>
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<td>ILP</td>
<td>Intergenerational Learning Programme</td>
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<td>IT</td>
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<td>NCCA</td>
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<td>NCAOP</td>
<td>National Council for Ageing and Older People</td>
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<td>NYCI</td>
<td>National Youth Council of Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPHE</td>
<td>Social, Personal and Health Education</td>
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<td>TILDA</td>
<td>The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOY</td>
<td>Together Old and Young</td>
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<tr>
<td>U3A</td>
<td>University of the Third Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCRC</td>
<td>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZPD</td>
<td>Zone of Proximal Development</td>
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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

While it is widely acknowledged that grandparents contribute much in the way of educational, financial and emotional support to their grandchildren, the reciprocal nature of these intergenerational (IG) transfers has not been widely documented (Arber & Timonen, 2012). Recent studies posit that there is now a growing body of community and school-based reciprocal learning opportunities for young and older members of society (Finn & Scharf, 2012). The main focus of this research is on the child’s perspective and agency to enhance their own skills and self-esteem by enabling the “upward” educational transfer of skills and knowledge to their grandparents.

1.2 Objectives of the Research

Education has been to the forefront of the formal transfer of knowledge and skills for many generations. With children’s active participation and their openness and enthusiasm for learning and caring, the researcher aims to design a pilot lesson, with a possible web-based dimension, for a school-based Intergenerational Learning Programme (ILP). Using the writer’s experience as teacher and school principal, this study plans to broaden the scope of the current Irish Primary School Curriculum to extend to grandparents of children in school (Primary School SPHE Curriculum). In the process, the children could enhance their own talents and self-esteem and promote opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning among older people (European Map of Intergenerational Learning (EMIL), 2012). While the researcher intends to explore the possibility that grandchildren can contribute to their grandparents’ education, the input of older people will naturally enhance the

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1 This study is inspired by the words of Nelson Mandela in his observation that: ‘Vision without action is only passing time, action without vision is merely day dreaming, action with vision can change the world’ (Retrieved on 14th September, 2013, from: http://www.my10counts.org/2013/07/nelson-mandela/).
knowledge and skills of the younger generation and the programme mentor through the IG learning initiative.

Research Questions

1. How can the participation of children, aged 10 to 12 years old, in the formation of a pilot lesson for a school-based Intergenerational Learning Programme (ILP), lead to the development of a programme which will not only enhance their own skills and self-esteem, but also serve to enable the “upward” educational transfer of skills and knowledge from these children to their grandparents?

2. How can the Primary School Curriculum and school environment accommodate the development of a pilot lesson, for a school-based ILP, which will enhance the skills and self-esteem of the child and enable the “upward” educational transfer of skills and knowledge from grandchild to grandparent?

1.3 Rationale of the Study

This study is being conducted from the perspective and agency of the child with the purpose to involve children, aged 10 to 12 years old, as active researchers in the design of a pilot lesson for a school-based ILP (Kellett, 2005). The experience gained from their active participation will enable children to have their voices heard, learn new skills and benefit from the confidence the project may offer them (Sinclair & Franklin, 2000; Kellett, 2005). The proposed transfer of knowledge and skills “upwards” could benefit grandparents, who exhibit an appetite for life-long and life-wide learning, and contribute to the emerging body of IG projects bringing young and older people together for reciprocal learning (EMIL, 2012; Arber & Timonen, 2012; Finn & Scharf, 2012).

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

There is a timeframe for completion as the research participants are school-going pupils who have school holidays at the beginning of June. The proposed environment
for this research is a school setting where the children know each other and are comfortable. The study is being facilitated by the researcher, school principal, parents or guardians, class teacher and grandparents. The children are known to the researcher and as this could contribute to the researcher having an influence over the children’s answers, the researcher does not intend to participate in focus group discussion but act merely as a facilitator. This could encourage greater involvement by the children in the process (Kay, Tisdall, Davis & Gallagher, 2009; Levine & Zimmerman, 1996).

1.5 Ethics

As the research involves children, in accordance with the Dublin Institute of Technology’s (DIT) Policy on Ethics, a selection of forms has been completed and presented to DIT’s Programme Supervisor and Department Head for consideration prior to commencement of any research (Appendix I).

1.6 Overview of the Research Design

Due to the dearth in research on “upward” intergenerational educational transfer from child to grandparent or other older people, the current research is investigative in nature and the researcher plans to use the interpretive method (Robert-Holmes, 2011). With a focus on validity, a mixed-method approach, with the use of both qualitative and quantitative research, has been chosen. The primary research method emanates from the qualitative research, at phase three, in the form of school-based focus groups. This qualitative approach is followed by quantitative research, at phase four, by way of a web-based questionnaire, to a larger child cohort in a variety of schools to ascertain the transferability of the initial findings (Denscombe, 2010). The broad methodological approach involves Action Research, which is described as a systematic collection of data and selection of an action based on what the analysed data indicates (Robbins & Judge, 2013). This study employs Educational Action Research (EAR), originally the design of John Dewey in the 1920s, as a process to enable curriculum development, professional education and the application of learning to social contexts (O’ Brien, 2001). The use of the democratic concept of
‘collaborative resource’ empowers participants in the EAR process to be equally important and creative co-researchers (O’Brien, 2001).

As the main purpose of the study is to enhance the skills and self-esteem of children, the researcher plans to invite all members of a school class, aged 10 to 12 years old (Punch, 2006). Due to sensitivity issues around the health of grandparents or for children with no living grandparents or access to grandparents, the general emphasis is on the transfer of knowledge and skills to any older person (Primary School SPHE Curriculum, Sensitive Issues, 2013; Appendix I). With family diversification and possible concerns with regard to grandparent access to their grandchildren, the school environment could be seen to rule out gatekeeper issues (Buchanan, 2008). Where there happens to be close contact between a child and a grandparent, the likelihood of a more positive response to the concept from the grandparent is expected (Piercy, 2007; Clarke & Roberts, 2004).

1.7 Confidentiality

According to Robert-Holmes (2011), it is crucial that the children are made aware that even though what they say is confidential, there is a limit to the level of confidentiality if something arises from the research which is a cause for concern. In such a case, the researcher is obliged to take the necessary steps to protect the child (Children First, 2012). Before carrying out the research, the researcher composed an information sheet and letters of consent for consideration by the school principal, the parents and guardians of the focus group participants and the participants themselves (Robert-Holmes, 2011; Appendix III; Appendix IV).

1.8 Outline of the Report

- Chapter one has introduced the key issues relevant to the area of study and outlined the aims and objectives.
- Chapter two presents a literature review of the relevant material available on the topic.
- Chapter three explores the research design, methodology, data collection and analysis procedures of the study.
• Chapter four describes the findings of both the qualitative and quantitative forms of research.
• Chapter five discusses the findings with reference to the available literature, offers conclusions and makes recommendations for further consideration.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) affords children a selection of rights, one of which is participation rights. This involves children having freedom of expression and the right to have a say in matters which affect them (Children’s Rights Alliance (CRA), 2011). This study, with active participation by children, 10 to 12 years old, seeks to explore the possibility that children can contribute to their grandparents’ knowledge through the formation of a school-based pilot lesson for an Intergenerational Learning Programme (ILP). The research is guided by the interpretive approach, which facilitates the subjective views and perspectives of the co-researchers, and by the researcher’s personal and professional values and experiences (Aikenhead, 1997).

The researcher suggests that Piaget’s child-centred curriculum, Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and Rogoff’s ‘guided participation’ are central to the formation of the proposed school-based IG lesson, through the process of Educational Action Research (EAR) (Vygotsky, 1962; Rogoff, 1990; O’ Brien, 2001). The aim of the research is to use the current Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum as the basis for the design of an IG pilot lesson to include grandparents or older people known to children attending primary school (Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum).

As the Irish Department of Education acknowledges the necessity for more integration between mainstream education and adult education, the researcher posits that it would be useful to connect this desire with the opportunity for children to apply what they know or have learnt, within their school curriculum, to real life situations involving older people (Department of Education and Science (DES), 2000). This would satisfy a recommendation by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) which proposes that the curriculum is closely connected to the lives and perspectives of children (NCCA). The development of an IG pilot
lesson could enhance the skills and talents of children and promote opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning for older people (EMIL, 2012). This IG bond could contribute to improved self-confidence, meaningful activity, through social interaction, and general well-being for both young and old (Jessel, 2009).

This chapter considers the concept of IG learning and reflects on the key areas of the agency and perspective of the child and the theories of active learning. The contribution of the school curriculum and the school environment to the idea of project-based IG learning is discussed. The concepts of life-long and life-wide learning and the grandchild-grandparent connection are explored. Finally, the process of Educational Action Research is outlined.

2.2 Intergenerational Learning

Intergenerational Learning, according to the European Network for Intergenerational Learning (ENIL, 2012, p. 14), is ‘the reciprocal exchange of knowledge between people of all ages so they can learn together and learn from each other’. However, there seems to be very little involvement of children’s agency and perspective in IG learning and ‘the learning processes identified are rarely reciprocal’ (ENIL, 2012, p.29). With a view to contributing to the available material supporting child-led IG initiatives, the current research seeks to enhance the skills of children by focusing on the contribution that children could make to grandparents’ opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning (Arber & Timonen, 2012; Tomlin, 1998; Putney & Bengtson, 2002).

2.3 Perspective and Agency of the Child

In the past, children were ‘seen and not heard’ and child rearing was carried out from physical and emotional distance (Inglis, 2008, p.4). There is now a general consensus that there should be more consultation with children and much focus has centred on the idea of young children’s citizenship (Kellett, 2005; Williams, 2004). This entitlement to citizenship is central to upholding children’s rights, enhancing the
democratic process, improving skills and increasing children’s self-esteem (Sinclair & Franklin, 2000). Children are now afforded a collection of rights, including participation, freedom of expression and the right to have a say in matters which affect them (UNCRC, 1989; CRA, 2011). This study plans to enable children to exercise these rights through their active participation in the design of an IG pilot lesson.

2.4 Piaget, Vygotsky and Rogoff

With regard to this research, child development theories where children are seen as active constructors of their own knowledge are considered (Krause, Bochner & Duchesne, 2003; McDevitt & Ormond, 2002). Piaget introduced a child-centred curriculum where children were encouraged to use their initiative to be self-determined learners, advancing to self-motivated life-long learners (Verenikina, 2008). Piaget’s concept of the child as active learner was further developed by Vygotsky with his emphasis on social interaction in the process of learning (Verenikina, 2008). The dialogical nature of the focus was concentrated on the area of children’s interests which connects well with the aims of this research (Bodrova & Leong, 1996; Fleer, 1992, 1995; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). The central concept of Vygotsky’s pedagogy is the perception of the child, as an active participant and co-constructor in a problem-solving activity, sharing knowledge and responsibility with an adult mentor (Wells, 1999). There are four stages in ZPD which allows the learner to move from other-assistance to self-assistance over a period of time (Dunphy & Dunphy, 2003). The concept of ZPD incorporates the idea of collaborative teaching by teacher and learner, which enables the learner to be active, self-regulated and independent (Diaz, Neal & Amaya-Williams, 1992). The notion of ‘guided participation’, proposed by Rogoff (1990), suggests a more active role played by children so they can collaborate with as well as be guided by others.

Stone (1998) has indicated some reservations with regard to the scaffolding metaphor, associated with the work of Vygotsky, as it doesn’t assist with an understanding of the nature of any guidance. According to the author, in the hands of an insensitive teacher, the interaction may be more adult-driven and one-sided.
Therefore, the programme mentor is required to use respectful communication with a view to accessing the children’s perspective and agency and generating new and innovative ideas (Stone, 1998). As the researcher has been involved in child-led learning for eighteen years, the participants in this study have the opportunity to enhance their skills by their engagement in the overall process (Children Helping Children Project). Studies suggest that the key development of these skills are mediated by the child’s social and cultural interactions with class peers, mentors, family members and friends (Wertsch, 1985).

2.5 Project-based Active Learning

According to the Primary School’s Curriculum, the main focus of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is on active learning and the creation of an environment where children are enabled to ‘take increasing responsibility for their own learning … be able to transfer the learning to different situations’ (Primary School SPHE Curriculum, Teacher Guidelines, 1999, p. 54). This project-based learning initiative is underpinned by the Strand Unit, Self-Identity, which focuses on the development of self-confidence and the enhancement of skills and talents of children (NCCA). The project is additionally supported by the ‘recommended strategies for active learning’, which provide a framework for discussion, and guide the interpretive approach, facilitating the perspectives of the participants in the focus group discussions (Aikenhead, 1997; Shehan, 1999; Primary School SPHE Curriculum, Teacher Guidelines, 1999, p.57).

The co-researchers are encouraged, from the outset, to take ownership of the project and, in collaboration with the researcher, guide the evolving Educational Action Research process forward (O’ Brien, 2001; Robbins & Judge, 2013). This is facilitated by the concept of ‘collaborative resource’ which assigns the children in this study roles as creative co-researchers (O’ Brien, 2001; Bowling, 2002). With this in mind, a Project Notebook is presented to the girls, at phase two, to facilitate the recording of their views and comments at the different stages of the process. The researcher aims to record experiences around key interactions through the use of memos.
Through active learning, children are encouraged to take action by applying health and social information, acquired in class, to real life situations (NCCA). According to Bentley (1998), children need an opportunity to use what they have learnt within their school curriculum to gain an understanding of themselves and their social networks. There is a recommendation that the curriculum should be child-centred and closely connected to the lives, experiences and perspectives of the children (NCCA). Dewey argues that it is the role of educators to link the home and school environments, to develop children’s interests and offer outlets for their perspectives in the context of relationships (1897).

The role of teacher is a guiding presence, facilitator and enabler in the process of active learning (Dewey, 1897). Dewey’s philosophy of education acts on the spontaneity, naturally inquisitive and unique minds of children enabled by the interest and dedication of the teacher (Dewey, 1897). While the desire to enable active learning is evident in many Irish Primary School classrooms, subject overload, class size and time constraints may hinder its use. The researcher argues that the motivation and commitment required to create the right atmosphere to facilitate active learning demands much patience and flexibility and is best facilitated by ‘key individuals’ in schools (Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum, Teacher Guidelines, 1999; TOY, 2013, p.28). The development of the skills of the teacher or mentor is another dimension in the process of Educational Action Research (Appendix XIX).

Project evaluation, a crucial component of any initiative, is conducted, firstly, to obtain the opinions of the co-researchers to the project, and secondly, to elicit the views of the grandparents and older people, channelled through the children in the study. In addition, creative feedback, in the form of poetry or artwork, is presented at phase five, and adds richness to the children’s perspective on IG learning. The researcher posits that an important aspect of any project-based learning programme is a consultation process which not only involves evaluation from the key participants, but also the teachers who may be facilitating ILPs in future (New York Department of Education, 2009).

In this study, the assessment of the acquisition of skills and estimation of improved self-esteem of the participants is guided by the assessment norms in the Primary
Curriculum SPHE subject (SPHE Teacher Guidelines, 1999, p.27). According to the guidelines, assessment criteria tend to be informal, non-intrusive and non-threatening and focus on enabling the child to ‘develop the skills of effective self-assessment’ (SPHE Teacher Guidelines, 1999, p. 27). This supports the idea of the ‘evolving capacities’ of children, as suggested by the UNCRC (1989, p. 3). Observation is a key assessment and evaluation tool in Irish Primary Schools and is primarily undertaken by the researcher with feedback from the class teacher (Primary School SPHE Curriculum, Active Learning, 1999).

2.6 School as a Base for Intergenerational Learning

Intergenerational learning has gathered momentum in Ireland in recent years and has resulted in many community and school-based projects, as evidenced by the mapping research by Finn and Scharf (2012). GRUNDVIG, a European programme promoting life-long learning, is currently sponsoring the Together Old and Young Project (TOY), undertaken at the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) in collaboration with a group of European partners (TOY, 2013). The initiative encourages the concept of active ageing and incorporates ‘learning for skills acquisition and updating, socio-cultural participation, individual well-being, intergenerational solidarity and social inclusion’ (ENIL, 2012, p. 23).

The Irish Department of Education acknowledges the necessity for more integration between mainstream education and adult education with a focus on IG connections (DES, 2000). While the focus of most of the IG learning in the past has been on the downward transfer of skills and support from older persons to younger, many of the current projects have more of a reciprocal nature and involve old and young learning together (EMIL, 2013). With regard to the depth of engagement between the generations, consideration is given to the Kaplan Model, which assigns various levels of commitment to IG learning, starting at Level 1 and continuing through Level 7 (2002; Figure 1; Appendix II). The majority of school-based IG activities tend to operate with desk-based learning, at Level 1, up to annual grandparent day or periodic activities at Level 4 (Figure 1; Appendix II).
In conjunction with Age Action and the Beth Johnson Foundation, a handbook of IG projects has been produced and acknowledges good evidence of Irish IG Practice (Finn & Scharf, 2012). Sligo County Council Arts Service is one such example and provides an opportunity for children, aged 10 to 12 years, and older people, 55 years and older, to participate in a school-based IG Arts Project (Finn & Scharf, 2012).

The researcher posits that schools could provide a focal point for development and evaluation of IG school and community based projects in the future (Finn & Scharf, 2012). With the right commitment, many of the current primary schools’ one-off IG initiatives, could progress to on-going school-based IG programmes, especially at secondary level (Kaplan, 2002; Appendix II). The proposed IG pilot lesson, at the core of this research, aims to raise the commitment to Level 5, initially, with a pilot lesson, leading to a Level 6 or 7 in the following months with on-going IG programmes (Appendix II). While the aim of this study is to enable the design of an IG pilot lesson from the child’s perspective and agency, the researcher suggests that older people, including the mentor, have the potential to enhance their own skills and self-esteem during the process (Appendix XIX). The possibility for further expansion to non-formal and informal settings, such as home, clubs, and other
centres where young and older people interact with their peer groups, could be explored in other studies.

2.7 Life-long and Life-wide Learning

Literature promotes the concept of life-long learning and suggests that citizens should have the opportunity to access learning opportunities at any stage of the lifespan with a view to enhancing knowledge and skills necessary to participate effectively in society (TOY, 2013). Life-wide learning can be undertaken in formal, non-formal and informal environments such as schools, workplaces, during leisure time or in the home by citizens who are unpaid, untrained and not recognised as teachers (TOY, 2013). In fact, the concept of children as teachers, which is signalled in this research, is also reflected in studies such as ‘Linking Generations Northern Ireland’ (TOY, 2013).

Ellis and Rogoff (1982) posit that children ‘may be more proficient teachers on problems in which they are expert, as with academic material they have already mastered or childhood social skills to which adults may no longer have access’ (p.734). This can be assessed following the initiation of the proposed ILP to emanate from this research by the collection of feedback from the children as teachers and the grandparents as learners. Research supports the premise that as there is a strong likelihood that one cohort in any ILP will benefit to a larger extent than the other: the emphasis, for the purpose of this research, is on the young cohort, the co-researchers of this study (Harper & Hamblin, 2010).

The emergence of the University of the Third Age (U3A) has added more potential to the concepts of life-long and life-wide learning. In particular, the period known as the Third Age, between official retirement age and older old age, is when individuals are still physically and mentally able to participate in activities considered beneficial to their health, self-development and well-being (Laslett, 1996; TILDA, 2012). The researcher argues that many people, 85 and older, are still capable and interested in participating in IG learning (Kitamura, Armstrong & Hallam, 2013). However, it is
accepted that people of a lower socio-economic status are less likely to avail of these opportunities (Arber & Evandrou, 1993).

2.8 Grandchild-grandparent Relationship

Studies posit that relationships with grandchildren are reported by the majority of grandparents as among the most important they have (Clarke & Roberts, 2004). It is widely acknowledged that grandparents contribute much in the way of financial, emotional and practical support to their grandchildren (Arber & Timonen, 2012).

Literature supports the idea that children can actually rebalance the grandchild-grandparent relationship and contribute to grandparents’ environmentally friendly behaviours, dietary routines and social activities (Armstrong, 2005; Freeman, 2007). In fact, there is strong evidence to suggest that grandparents already receive assistance both instrumentally (such as shopping) and in the form of emotional support from their grandchildren (Kennedy, 1992; Langer, 1990). It is argued that grandchildren are zealous in trying to persuade grandparents to make changes to their lives that are important to their well-being (Turner, 1991). In his research, Armstrong (2005) found occasions where grandchildren transmitted knowledge to grandparents and assisted them with Information Technology (IT), in addition to leisure and social activities.

Buchanan posits that the closer the parent-grandparent relationship the more positive the resulting connection between grandchild and grandparent (2008). However, with issues around family diversification in modern Ireland, there can be a challenge to this IG bond (Komhaber, 2002; Buchanan, 2008). The development of this school-based ILP, outside the family setting, avoids the middle generation and potential gatekeeper issues (Jessel, 2009). Even though it is acknowledged that not all grandchild-grandparent relationships are regarded as positive, IG learning can still be secured through the concept of the ‘social grandparent’; which is an older person who interacts with a child like a grandparent figure (TOY, 2013, p.25).
2.9 Educational Action Research

Action Research requires a series of methods at different phases in a process, such as Lewin’s three-step model of unfreezing, change and refreezing (1951). Educationalist, Michael Fullan, refers to the phases in Action Research as an on-going process of action, planning and further action (2011). This study employs Educational Action Research (EAR), originally the design of John Dewey in America in the 1920s (O’Brien, 2001). Dewey regards the educational process as a “continual reorganization, reconstruction and transformation of experience” (1916, p.50). The emphasis is on curriculum development, professional education and the application of active learning to social contexts (O’Brien, 2001).

Educational Action Research (EAR) uses the concept of ‘collaborative resource’ which enables participants in the on-going EAR process to be equally important and creative co-researchers (O’Brien, 2001). In this study, the children are encouraged to take ownership of the project from the outset and offer their own perspective. This idea is used with a view to the involvement of children in a holistic problem-solving process, allowing a degree of flexibility, encompassing many research tools like focus groups, observation and questionnaires (O’Brien, 2001).

The proposed IG pilot lesson, to emanate from this current study, seeks to explore the possibility of child-led learning initiatives, where the children, while developing their own skills and improving their self-confidence, could create opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning for older people (EMIL, 2012). The choice of material for discussion in the proposed IG lesson is based on the school curriculum but stems from the co-researchers themselves (Primary School SPHE Curriculum).

2.10 Conclusion

From the literature review, the present study aims to enhance the skills and self-esteem of children through the formation of a school-based IG lesson which will allow the transmission of knowledge and skills from these children, aged 10 to 12 years old, to their grandparents or older persons. The methodology involved in the process is outlined in the next chapter.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

An overview of methodology is presented and discussed in this chapter. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection are considered primarily through the use of focus groups, a web-based questionnaire and on-going observation. In accordance with the principles of Educational Action Research (EAR), data analysis is iterative and relies on on-going observation and regular evaluation (O’ Brien, 2001). This chapter begins with an overview of the methodology, discusses the interpretive approach and the subjective views of the researcher, and considers the areas of setting, sampling procedures, ethical issues, data analysis and confidentiality.

3.2 Overview of Methodology

The methodology employed in this study encompasses five phases. The concept of a web-based dimension to the research is currently a work in progress and could signal another phase in the process of Educational Action Research (O’ Brien, 2001). The first phase involves two introductory meetings at which the researcher explains the various elements of the project, such as the content and time commitment, and distributes consent and information forms to the participants and their parents or guardians. Phase two begins discussion with the co-researchers, firstly, on the choice of topics available from the Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum and secondly, on the fieldwork element of the research. At this point, with a view to affording the participants ownership of the project, a Project Notebook is presented to the co-researchers. The primary research method, at phase three, involves two focus group discussions on themes chosen by the co-researchers, from the Strand Units, Media Education and Personal Safety and Protection (Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum).
Focus groups allow the researcher to hear a number of viewpoints and one participant’s viewpoint may lead to a talking point for the whole group (Hill, Laybourn & Borland, 1996). However, dominant members may have an overbearing influence and prevent others from sharing their views (Lewis, 1992). It can be argued that having a friend in a group can be very supportive, ensuring less pressure on the respondent and allowing the shy child to contribute which is very appropriate for children’s research (Mayall, 2000; Basch, 1987). Given the aim of this research which is ultimately to develop a suitable IG pilot lesson, the use of focus groups provides a degree of flexibility in research with children and can be used with other research methods (Basch, 1987).

As the study has time constraints, a web-based questionnaire is established on the www.surveymonkey.ie website, at phase four, which allows for easy and swift access to a wide range of participants (Denscombe, 2010). The survey content is based on feedback from the focus group discussions, with the purpose of transferring the findings of the qualitative research to a broader sample of children in Catholic, Church of Ireland and Educate Together School settings in the Dublin area (Appendix XII; Denscombe, 2010). The results of both the qualitative and quantitative research methods inform the design of the IG learning pilot lesson.

The use of Educational Action Research (EAR) contributes to a creative approach which facilitates regular evaluation of the programme content and is informed by on-going feedback from the co-researchers, older people and mentors (Lewin, 1946; O’ Brien, 2001). Data gathered from a planned Project Evaluation Form, at phase five, could support the belief that research is a continually changing process adapting to the “evolving capacities” of the co-researchers (Appendix XIII; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; UNCRC, 1989, p.3). In addition, creative feedback, in the form of poetry and artwork, at phase five, adds richness to the children’s perspective on IG learning.

3.3 Interpretive Methodology and Subjective Values of the Researcher.

The researcher believes that adults have to facilitate an environment where children can have their voices heard and maintain their rights to participation through a
democratic process using the interpretive approach and the EAR process (Shehan, 1999; Sandstrom Kjellin, Stier, Einarson, Davies, & Asunta, 2010; Dewey, 1897; O’ Brien, 2001). The researcher’s own personal and professional values and experiences guides the process forward contributing to a research process which ‘when ideally executed, the distinctions between researcher and participants blur, creating a democratic inquiry process’ (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p.6). The interpretive approach is an iterative process of observation and interpretation of data, through the processes of collecting information and making meaning of it by drawing inferences (Aikenhead, 1997). The researcher’s personal interest in the field under consideration, in addition to an empathy with the context and participants of the study, leads to the adoption of this approach (Cutliffe, 2000). The professional perspective of the researcher, as co-ordinator of child-led learning for eighteen years, is influential in the collaborative process (Children Helping Children Project).

### 3.4 Setting

The setting for the research is a private girls’ school in Dublin where the researcher is the principal, currently on sabbatical. This school was chosen due to the accessibility of the researcher to the cohort group, the restricted time frame available and the close proximity of the setting. The researcher has been involved in creative pupil-led education and, as the school is open to such initiatives, it seems like the correct venue for this IG study from the children’s perspective (Children Helping Children Project). The desire to make the research relevant in education and in the workplace is another determining factor in the choice of setting of this study.

The environment is a school setting where the participants know each other and are comfortable. The participants are known to the researcher and this could contribute to the researcher having an influence over the children’s answers (Kay et al., 2009). As the study is being conducted from a child’s perspective and agency, the researcher proposes a greater ownership by children in the research by regarding them as creative co-researchers (Levine & Zimmerman, 1996; Kellett, 2005; O’ Brien, 2001).
3.5 Access to Sample and Ethical Guidelines

In advance of official contact being made with the research site, ethical approval was requested from the Dublin Institute of Technology’s Head of School (Appendix I). A letter requesting permission to undertake the research, in addition to essential information with regard to the research, was communicated to the gate-keeper (Appendix III; Robert-Holmes, 2011). Once gatekeeper permission was granted, the researcher explained the background to the proposed study and the potential involvement of the children as co-researchers at an introductory meeting at phase one of the project. At the same meeting, introductory letters, consent forms and participation information sheets related to the research were distributed to the potential participants, their parents or guardians (Appendix IV; Robert-Holmes, 2011). Although the researcher invited all members of the class group to take part in the research, only sixteen children, accounting for 67% of the class, actually participated which was mainly due to the timing of the research outside school hours.

3.6 Sampling

With a view to the inclusion of all members of a class group, the key informants are regarded as children, between 10 and 12 years of age, who maintain some contact with grandparents, other older family members or older persons known to them (Punch, 2006). Closer geographical contact between children and their grandparents could contribute to more motivated participants in the research study and the emotional attachment could enable a more positive response from the older people (Piercy, 2007; Clarke & Roberts, 2004; Smith & Drew, 2002). However, the involvement of children with less regular contact with grandparents could potentially bring in a wider range of contexts and could ultimately lead to a programme that would be more nuanced in responding to different lifestyles and values (Daly, 2004).

3.7 Phase Three- Focus Groups

On the day of the proposed focus groups, the school was contacted with regard to the confirmation of the availability of a room suitable for focus group discussion and recording. In preparation, through liaison with the class teacher, the focus group
participants had the responsibility to ensure that the chairs were arranged in a circular manner to facilitate natural discussion within the group. Before the focus group discussion began, the researcher welcomed the sixteen focus group participants and made them feel comfortable (Appendix VI). With regard to anonymity, the researcher distributed the stickers, with the agreed assumed names, for the purpose of this research. The participants were reminded that the researcher would not take part in the discussions but merely act as facilitator (Curtis & Redmond, 2007).

An audiotape recorder, functionally tested prior to commencement, was introduced to the group and a verbal account of the whole proceeding occurred. Key areas of discussion, chosen by the participants at phase two of the research, were introduced. The researcher facilitated the two focus groups, through the use of a child-friendly format which included pictorial aids and guiding open-ended questions, to allow for easier access to the opinions and experiences of the children (Appendix VII). The facilitator noted down general themes of discussion and made observations on both individual and group dynamics through the course of the focus group discussion (Greene & Hogan, 2005). In this way, the verbatim accounts of the narrative and the group interaction allowed for more complex data collection.

The focus group work finished with a short summary of the discussion to verify the accuracy of the facilitator’s notes and observations. The researcher listened to the recordings as soon as possible afterwards to confirm the overall content and group dynamics which informed further data collection (Backman & Kyngas, 1999). This contributed to the enhancement of the dependability and confirmability of the findings (Koch, 2004). As with all group dynamics, some participants were more inclined to contribute than others and the role of the facilitator ensured that every participant had an opportunity to speak (Lewis, 1992). The use of focus groups allowed for general agreement among participants and an enhanced contribution to the overall objective of prioritising areas of interest for further development of the IG pilot lesson (Curtis and Redmond, 2007). Literature supports the idea that the more harmony in the group the greater the possibility of achieving a consensus (Sim, 1998).
3.7 Phase Four- Questionnaire

Following the focus group discussions and the resultant data analysis, the researcher returned to the participants with feedback on the main themes of discussion from the focus group work. Over the course of this session, the co-researchers obtained enough relevant information to be in a position to proceed with the design of the web-based questionnaire. The contribution of the co-researchers to the questionnaire design is underpinned by the ‘recommended strategies for active learning’ in the school curriculum (Primary School SPHE Curriculum, Teacher Guidelines, 1999, p.57). An initial online questionnaire was constructed and tested within the research group for feedback. A second modified version was undertaken, firstly, by a different class in the same school and, secondly by a larger cohort, of a similar age in varied school settings in the Dublin area, through the website www.surveymonkey.ie (Appendix XII).

Access to this larger sample of children, aged 10 to 12 years of age, involved an introductory gatekeeper letter to three school principals representing different types of primary schools in the Dublin area (Appendix X). Once permission had been granted, the researcher provided copies of information and consent forms for distribution to children in the schools in question (Appendix IX; Appendix XI). Following receipt of signed consent forms by the schools, a link to the web-based questionnaire was sent to each school for distribution to the pupils concerned. A deadline of one week was given and follow up calls and reminders were necessary.

The findings produced from this questionnaire allow for a degree of transferability of the research results across a range of domains (Denscombe, 2010). Therefore, the conclusions are more representative than the initial qualitative focus groups, comprised of girls only in a private single sex school, and included the perspective of children attending Church of Ireland, Educate Together and Catholic Primary Schools.
3.9 Data Analysis

There are a variety of ways to analyse focus group data (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996; Krueger, 1994). Studies recognise the influence of the researcher’s personal and professional experiences in the development of the evolving research process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The provision of a methodical and thorough data analysis depends on full transcripts of the discussion with supplementary notes relating to the emotional mood of the group (Greene & Hogan, 2005; Appendix VIII). To ensure good quality data and transferability, the researcher has employed a type of triangulation through the use of both qualitative and quantitative analysis, by comparing the data collected in the focus group discussions with opinions of children of a similar age in a variety of primary schools in the Dublin area (Stanton et al., 1993). As the questionnaire was established on a web-based programme, much of the data collection was structured and categorised (Appendix XII). To enrich the data gathering, the researcher and co-researchers considered some aspects of association and difference within this quantitative data, such as the consolidation of the initial findings of the qualitative data (Denscombe, 2010). The systematic collection of data and data analysis inform the design of an IG pilot lesson (Robbins & Judge, 2013).

3.10 Confidentiality

According to Robert-Holmes (2011), it is crucial that the children are made aware that even though what they say is confidential, there is a limit to the level of confidentiality if something arises from the research which is a cause for concern. In such a case, the researcher is obliged to take the necessary steps to protect the child (Children First, 2012).

3.11 Conclusion

The aim of this study is to design an IG pilot lesson which enhances the skills and self-esteem of children and could promote opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning among older people (EMIL, 2012). The focus of the research is on the
perspectives of the children, aged 10 to 12 years old, as co-researchers in the transfer of knowledge and skills to their grandparents or other older people in a school setting. The researcher has offered his personal and professional perspective and considered the fieldwork preparation segment of the project. A mixed-method approach has been employed with qualitative data, obtained from focus groups, and quantitative data collection, facilitated by a web-based questionnaire to allow for transferability. Feedback from the focus groups, questionnaires and subsequent feedback from the co-researchers and their grandparents inform the development of a template for an IG pilot lesson, with the possibility of a web-based product.
CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter discussed a mixed-method approach, developed in the study, consisting of five phases in the research process (Appendix XVI). The resultant data transmitted the views of this young cohort on the topics chosen from the Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum. The results of the focus group discussions were analysed and the information was used to inform the design of the quantitative survey at phase four. The web-based questionnaire aimed to transfer the findings of the focus group discussions to a larger cohort of pupils in a variety of school settings in Dublin. Phase five focused on project evaluation and assessment of learning.

4.2.1 Phase Three- Focus Group Discussions

The topics chosen for focus group discussion were taken from the Primary School’s SPHE curriculum (Primary School SPHE Curriculum). Eight possible Strand Units were presented to the sixteen co-researchers, at phase two, from the fifth and sixth class SPHE programme and the participants expressed a preference for the Strand Units, Media Education and Personal Safety (Appendix V). However, for the purpose of this study, the researcher considered the Strand Unit, Media Education, and the data relating to Personal Safety was stored for use in future SPHE Curriculum design with an IG focus. As there is a degree of overlap between the two strands, this study does, however, contain elements of the Strand Unit, Personal Safety.

The following data has been obtained from two focus groups comprising of seven children each (Appendix VII). Two pupils, who had originally consented to the focus group discussion, were absent on the day. The role of researcher as facilitator, which involved an element of guidance, enabled the smooth running of proceedings and allowed for the recording of key data and observation of the general mood of the
discussions. The key theme of the Strand Unit, *Media Education*, focused on the power of advertising and the particular influence of a variety of media, including printed, broadcast and electronically transmitted communication, on the impulsive buying habits of the older generation. In addition, other forms of publicising or promoting, like cold calling and street opportunism, emerged from the evolving discussions.

### 4.2.2 Power of Advertising and Impulsive Buying

Sometimes, people, both young and older, are influenced by advertising and persuaded to buy things that they don’t really want or need. For the purpose of this research, the data highlights those instances during the focus group discussions which refer to experiences involving older people. In this first section, the participants discuss the appealing nature of products and the conditions which contribute to the ease of purchase of items or services that older people may not particularly want or need.

### 4.2.3 Appealing Nature of Product and Ease of Purchase

Rebekkah observes that older people tend to have more free time and *would have an opportunity to read more magazines that an average person!* and she continues that newspapers and magazines have *gotten more modern and more ads. have gotten in to newspapers....they(older people) might see something they like and want to buy it*. In some cases, the item in question can give the impression that this particular product can make life easier, as Beth contends that *If an ad. says that something is going to be made easier, they(older people) think, “Oh, I’d better get that”*. Chloe agrees with this comment and refers to her own grandparents’ experience of buying a particular mop which *they say that they can’t use because it marks the floors*.

The focus group participants make the observation that, nowadays, there are a variety of ways to purchase items and the process is often so simple, as Rose suggests: *‘Well
you can just buy things on the internet by just putting in your credit card’. Rebekah adds that ‘you could use the landline’ which she contends may be more popular with older people. However, Beth warns that it is important to be aware that products and services generally come with caveats ‘that usually say “terms and conditions apply” really quickly but some older people don’t hear or see that’.

Eleanor points out that older people don’t often check with peers or family to validate information presented to them in the media, at the door, on the phone or on the street. It is quite common for competitors in the marketplace to attempt to gain an advantage over a rival by making claims, which can’t often be substantiated, like the one presented by Eleanor when she remarks: ‘We’re better than the leading competitors or something’. There can be other dilemmas associated with impulsive buying, as highlighted by Alice, when she observes her granny’s habit of hoarding unwanted items: ‘My granny, she likes to keep a lot of junk around her house…and if she sees something on TV or somewhere, she buys it and then she doesn’t use it but she doesn’t want to throw it away’.

The co-researchers contend that older people are more vulnerable to advertising as they have more opportunities to buy items. In addition, products and services can often seem very appealing as a result of advertising ploys and the process of actually making a purchase has become so simple that the transaction is undertaken without proper reflection. In order to understand the power of advertising and its effect on older people, the discussion ranges from all forms of media influence, such as technology, TV, radio and print to acts of cold calling, on the phone or at the door, and street opportunism.

4.2.4 Different Forms of Media Influence

a. Technology/TV/Radio/Print

The co-researchers maintain that older people are generally more influenced by radio than internet advertising. Rose remarks that ‘generally grandparents and older people, they probably listen to the radio more than go on the internet’. Chloe is in
agreement and goes on to say that ‘in most houses, the radio would be on a lot and very loud because the person is getting deaf or is lonely’. However, Ruby disputes the assertion that older people don’t use the internet by saying: ‘I think that most grandparents, like they wouldn’t all just not use the internet because my grandma, she is on the internet a lot of times’. The practicalities for some older people using technology is highlighted by some of the participants when they refer to the potential difficulty around the manipulation of mobile phone keys, ipads, laptops or computers. Aedín notes that while ‘grandparents would buy them they’d have a lot of trouble touching the key pads’. This opinion is supported by Annabelle’s comment that ‘the keys are small and their hands could be shaky’. As far as Rose is concerned, these factors are immaterial for many older people she knows when she contends that ‘in general they wouldn’t fall for the ads. for technology’.

b. TV Shopping

There is a general sense that daytime television offers older people a good opportunity to buy something from the comfort of their sitting rooms. Some of the participants even confess to being influenced themselves. With older people in mind, Beth comments that: ‘Well that happens a lot…my Nan, she’ll see an ad. for something and she thinks “Oh, that would be great”’. Emma uses role-play to assume the role of an actor on a television shopping channel when she remarks: ‘and they always go, “And this is so good that if you buy this item, we’ll give you all these items free”’ (laughter). Although teleshopping is regarded as attractive, the participants acknowledge the potential risks attached. Michelle confirms the negative aspect of the practice and influence on older people when she comments that ‘older people would watch daytime TV and think that’s an amazing product and then buy it’.

c. Print Media

Many of the co-researchers note the regularity of flyer distribution through people’s letter boxes, as Ruby comments that ‘you can get flyers put through your door that wouldn’t have a number or address…they wouldn’t be real’. This point is supported by Ruby’s observation that ‘there is another way you can get bargains...you could
get adverts through your post...like junk mail’. In addition, the targeting of older people can often be undertaken by the use of a certain age as a starting point, as noted by Rebekkah in her comment that ‘sometimes, OAP’s might get a special discount’.

Occasionally, a flyer can contain a voucher for money off or a cheaper deal when you buy more of a certain item but these are not always a good thing, as expressed by Michelle when she says: ‘flyers announcing cheaper deals...cheaper chocolate bars means people buy more of them...which is more unhealthy and more costly’. In addition to flyers, the concept of catalogues is highlighted by Chloe when she remarks: ‘Well, I often see catalogues for a certain shop...you have a habit of buying things you don’t actually need’.

4.2.5 Cold Calling and Street Opportunism

The issues associated with the prevalence of cold callers to people’s landlines is noted by Adele when she adds that her granny keeps getting calls from abroad which are annoying and upsetting. This doesn’t just happen with products; it can also be the case with subscriptions to television cable providers, as suggested in the following comment by Adele: ‘Well, my nan changes her TV quite a lot...she’s easily persuaded!’ Some of the participants feel that there is an increasing level of cold calling to households by representatives of energy suppliers and this is a huge area of concern for a segment of older people, as expressed by Michelle. In her comment, her grandfather finally succumbs to pressure from a representative of an energy supplier at the fourth attempt: ‘The guy called back another time and my Pop felt so bad, he bought it (laughter)...when my Nan came home, she wasn’t happy!’

While there is a certain degree of levity with the example of the energy supplier above, the consequences of impulsive buying, in general, can have far reaching effects for the older consumer and can lead to extra costs, much stress and annoyance for many people. The idea of people calling unannounced to homes attempting to persuade the inhabitants to part with their money or change their energy or television subscription is highlighted by many of the participants. Rose comments that ‘they
always try to target older people and find a house where an older person lives. They are more vulnerable’. Aedín suggests that there are often tell-tale signs that really old people live in a particular house as ‘they have like holding things…like a rail’. In addition, older people are not only targeted in their own home, there are many opportunities for people to take advantage of the frailty of some older people when they are out and about doing their daily tasks.

**Out and About**

The difficulties facing older people when confronted with a myriad of potential opportunities to spend their money, when out and about, is a topic of discussion by the participants. Chloe points to the example that ‘people would come up to you and say that this is a great deal or there’s a shop around the corner selling really nice ties’. Beth adds a degree of drama to the topic when she assumes the role of a would-be street opportunist in her comment: ‘You know you should go down to that restaurant down the road…oh, what’s it called again? (pretending to forget the name)...Oh, ya...and then they just say the name’.

On a more serious note, there is the general sense that older people are being targeted on the street, as Emma reports: ‘so older people, they might just give away loads of their money, that they can’t afford to give away because their pension isn’t that big’. There is the added issue that older people are often happy to chat to people on the street, who they don’t necessarily know, and while it is a friendly social activity this can add to the potential risk and vulnerability involved. This exposure of older people to the power of advertising, promotions and opportunism has been highlighted by the participants through the focus group discussions. Over the course of the dialogue, the co-researchers offer some helpful suggestions to older people which could contribute to a less stressful environment.

### 4.3 Helpful Suggestions

The co-researchers propose three main suggestions that they deem helpful to assist older people deal with the daily challenges posed by the power of advertising, promotions and opportunism.
a. Consult a family member, friend or trusted neighbour before making any large purchase.

The importance of family and close friends is highlighted by Anna in her suggestion to ‘ask your family or friend or neighbour that you know...someone you can trust’. Lily recommends ‘neighbours...you could look to neighbours for help. A neighbour you know well and can trust’. Aedín emphasises a family or close friend connection when she notes: ‘I think it would be a good idea to like ask a family member or someone you know to see if they can help...to check if they can fix it for free!(laughter)’. Rose advises that older people should reflect before making any impulsive purchases when she comments: ‘maybe check with someone else...think it through before making any rash decisions you might regret later’.

b. Be aware of advertising techniques that may make products or services more appealing.

The co-researchers suggest that older people should always request more information and seek proper validation of a new product or service prior to any big decisions. For instance, when someone calls you on the landline, Rebekkah suggests that you should ‘always ask for more details...and for people knocking on your door...you don’t even know who they are...ask for more details and don’t trust them’.’ Beth believes in seeking other people’s opinions when she suggests that ‘you should see what someone who already has the item thinks of it...like reviews’. However, reviews are not always the answer, according to Emma, when she remarks that ‘sometimes companies do their own reviews!’

The influence of radio or television on impulsive buying habits is emphasised by Emma when she observes that ‘when you hear it on the radio and see it on TV, they normally don’t say any of the prices or all that...you should maybe look at a catalogue before you go and buy it’. However, the risks attached to the use of catalogues is mentioned by Michelle when she says: ‘If you get a catalogue and see
a picture and think something is very nice, it may not look the same in real life...so you should be careful...don’t be trusting’.

c. Don’t trust strangers trying to sell you something at home or on the street.

The issue of trust is a central theme in the list of suggestions offered to older people to address the aspect of cold calling and street opportunism. This point is supported by Ruby when she comments: ‘don’t really trust strangers who come knocking on your door to advertise things and just if you get any advertisements for things like you don’t really need...just don’t go for it’. The issue of security is also central to the discussion as Rose recommends that an older person shouldn’t ‘open the door easily and offer to let someone get in...and always try to have a means of contact or a close contact saved on your phone so that you can call at your availability’. In order to stop people putting junk mail in your letterbox, Alice makes the suggestion that ‘you could put up a sign at your door saying NO JUNK MAIL’. The vulnerability of the older generation to cold calling and street opportunism is highlighted by Rose when she remarks: ‘I’d say older people, they are ideal targets and more vulnerable’.

When out and about, Eleanor suggests that older people should keep moving and refrain from stopping in the street when she remarks: ‘maybe don’t stand on the street....don’t be trusting of everyone’. Beth recommends the use of a plan to be used when necessary as in a case where: ‘like if someone comes up to them and says, “You know I should sell you TV subscription”...they should have a plan so they know what to say or do’.

4.4 Focus Group Atmosphere

The focus group discussions ran very smoothly and although some girls spoke more often than others, everyone did contribute (Appendix VII). There was a lovely relaxed atmosphere and the girls were engaged in nodding agreement at different parts of the discussion. From time to time, there was laughter when someone recalled a story or emphasised a point by assuming a different accent. Overall, the
researcher posits that the girls’ contribution to the topics discussed was impressive and it was obvious that the preparatory discussions, at phases one and two, and within class or home environments contributed to the richness of the content.

4.5.1 Phase Four- Web-based Questionnaire

Following the focus group discussions, the co-researchers, in collaboration with the researcher, aimed to transfer the findings of the focus groups by offering a web-based questionnaire on www.surveymonkey.ie to pupils in a variety of schools in the Dublin region. An initial trial questionnaire was piloted by the co-researchers themselves with the aim of finalising the design, reviewing and confirming the content of the focus group discussions and determining any potential technological issues with the web-based programme.

Once the questionnaire was finalised, permission was requested from parents or guardians of pupils from a different class in the same Private Primary School to undertake the web-based questionnaire (Appendix IX). In addition, with the assistance of the researcher, parent or guardian consent was sought and survey requests sent, with both email and internet options, to three schools, in the public system (Appendix X; Appendix XI). Although the initial response was slow, after a period of gentle persuasion by way of reminder emails and phone calls, a total of sixty-six responses were collected out of a possible one hundred and fifteen children, representing a response rate of 57%. The response rate was low due to a lack of feedback from the Catholic Primary School, due to unforeseen circumstances.

4.5.2 General Survey Feedback

The web-based questionnaire comprised of an introductory section explaining the background to the survey and ten questions incorporating open and closed questions (Appendix XII). The first three questions focused on age, gender and school attended. The majority of the respondents, 46, were aged twelve years of age with 16 of them aged eleven and just 4 aged thirteen. Most of the pupils were girls, accounting for 70% of the total. The schools represented, a Private Primary Girls’
School, a Mixed Church of Ireland School, an Educate Together School, contributed a similar number of replies, coming in with 24, 21 and 20 responses respectively.

Question four asked about the pupils’ interest in teaching a grandparent or older person things they know or learn in school and the results can be seen in Table 1.

As can be noted from the bar chart, there was a high level of general interest in IG learning, with the child as teacher, with about 90% of participants expressing an interest in this activity.

Question five offered feedback from the focus group discussions on some helpful suggestions for older people in their daily lives and presented a selection, from which the respondents could choose their preferences, as displayed in Table 2.
The chart shows the extent to which the respondents agreed with the helpful suggestions presented by the participants from the focus group discussions. Option three, which involved asking a trusted neighbour or family member for advice prior to a big purchase, attracted 70% support. Option one, suggesting a lack of trust in cold callers to the door, on the street or on the phone appealed to 64% of the respondents while option two, which alerted people to the risks attached to advertising techniques, drew less backing with 38%.

In addition, there was the possibility with this question to include personal comments and suggestions. Eight respondents took this opportunity to express their support for older people who may be coaxed to buy something and included the following remarks:

- “Ask yourself how much you would really like the item, and if the impulse doesn’t just come from the sly advertisement/advertiser”.
- “Make sure they are things that you need (food, clothes, electricity)”.
- “Don’t feel like you need to buy anything just because you don’t want to upset the person at the door”.

Question six focused on the power of advertising and the idea that people are encouraged to part with their money to buy products or services. The strength of feeling exhibited among the respondents in this regard is shown in Table 3. As can be seen, there is a high level of support for the sentiment with 28% strongly in agreement and another 57% in agreement that older people are persuaded to spend money on advertised products and services. This leaves just 15% of respondents with varying degrees of disagreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3</th>
<th>Question 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question nine asked that if the respondents were given the choice, would they have picked the same topics from the Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum as the focus group participants. The answers can be seen in Table 4.

| Media Education/Personal Safety and Protection | 45% |
| Developing Citizenship/Green Schools | 30% |
| Relating to Others/Discrimination/Racism | 19% |
| Making Decisions | 16% |
| Food and Nutrition/Hygiene and Care | 10% |
| Health and Well-being/Adequate Exercise/Balanced Diet | 5% |

As can be noted from Table 4, the themes chosen by the focus group participants were deemed to be the most popular choices, attracting support of 45%. The next two topics with the greatest backing were Option 3-Relating to Others, Discrimination and Racism with almost 19% and Option 4-Making Decisions, with an approval rating of nearly 16%. The choice of topics presented to those students taking the questionnaire was randomly organised so as not to influence the respondents by the placement of topics preferred by co-researchers at Option 1.

Question ten was an open ended option which requested additional comments on the concept of IG learning and attempted to elicit names for a potential IG pilot lesson or programme (Appendix XII). Nineteen comments were made in total representing the diverse nature of schools and opinions. Generally, the reaction to the concept of IG learning was positive with comments like:

“I think this was a really good idea. Thanks for making this. I am a primary school student in 6th class and I was thinking of my grandfather the whole time, so that kind of helped put every option into perspective”.

Although the researcher noted some divergences of emphasis in response in the case of the Educate Together School and some gender differences throughout the survey, these aspects were not considered within the remit of this current research.
With regard to a possible name for an ILP, some of the notable suggestions included:

- Old School! New School!
- In My Day
- Yearn to Learn
- TIES-Transfer of Intergenerational Educational Stuff

The co-researchers expressed a preference for the title ‘In My Day’.

4.6 Learning Outcomes for Participants

The response obtained from the participants, through the Project Evaluation Form, Project Notebook, the creative poetry and artwork, and informally through their teacher, conveyed a high degree of satisfaction and enjoyment with their participation in the IG research. The co-researchers’ choice of content material for the focus group discussions contributed to very positive and relaxed focus group discussions and involved a myriad of opinions, personal experiences and amusing anecdotes. When asked whether they would be interested in actually getting involved in an IG pilot lesson, all but one of the participants expressed a high interest.

The co-researchers presented assessment of learning and feedback on the Project Evaluation Form (Appendix XIII). The girls felt they had learned much from the project thus far and enjoyed the experience. The following comments are a representative sample of the perspectives of the co-researchers:

- “That I am capable of teaching” (Jasmine)
- “How fun it is” (Aedín) -referring to the time spent on the project so far.
- “I learned the ability to talk to grandparents” (Emma)
- “That we need to share what we know” (Adele)

The Project Notebook produced an insight into the perception of the co-researchers to the process involved in data gathering and can be viewed in the Appendices (Appendix XIV). The co-researchers were thrilled that the general findings obtained from the early stages of the web-based survey concurred with their own views. Finally, each participant created a poem or a piece of artwork, at phase five, which best represented the IG project so far, examples of which can be seen in Alice’s
artwork in Figure 2, *Go Shopping*, and Ella’s artwork in Figure 3, *Children Helping Adults* (Appendix XV). The perception of children advising and teaching older people, coupled with a sense of caring, is well supported by the creative art and poetry.

Figure 2  Go Shopping

![Go Shopping](image)

Figure 3  Children Helping Adults

![Children Helping Adults](image)
4.7 Views of Older People

As the views of older people in relation to this concept of IG learning were communicated through the co-researchers, it is posited that the child-grandparent relationship played a significant role in the feedback. Initial comments obtained from the co-researchers, in this regard, represented a generally positive reaction to the concept of IG learning from the child’s perspective and agency. The following are some of the comments, channelled through the co-researchers, on the Project Evaluation Form (Appendix XIII).

- “They thought it was a good idea and it really helped my nanny” (Brooke/Lily).
- “They thought that it was a great idea and it was very educational” (Eleanor)
- “My parents thought that the project sounded good. My granny didn’t really get it and I had to explain it several times” (Michelle).
- “My granny thought it was a great idea and couldn’t wait to start” (Rebekkah).

4.8 Professional Reaction of Teachers

As a teacher, the position of the researcher is subjective and his personal views and experiences influence the research process. However, both in his role as facilitator within the focus group discussions and in general terms, the key objective of the researcher was to guide the process and facilitate the expression of the views and perspectives of the co-researchers.

The input of the class teacher was extremely helpful and proved very useful in gauging the underlying attitude of the group to the IG concept in the researcher’s absence. Through incidental feedback with work colleagues in the researcher’s own workplace, there was a general positivity around the idea of children leading the initiative to involve grandparents and older people in IG learning.
4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has considered the data gathered, by means of qualitative research in the form of focus groups, at phase three, and subsequent quantitative data collected through a web-based questionnaire, at phase four, to transfer the findings of the focus group discussions. The researcher and co-researchers maintain that the findings of the focus group discussions did transfer to children in a variety of schools in Dublin.

Initial project feedback, at phase five, was obtained through the Project Evaluation Form, the Project Notebook and the creative poetry and artwork, completed by the co-researchers, and included the opinions of the co-researchers and the views of older people channelled through the children. There was support for the concept of IG learning among both cohorts and this is a good indicator of future success with the formation of an actual IG pilot lesson. In addition, the co-researchers expressed their perspectives on the learning outcomes from the research thus far. Further analysis of the learning involved for the participants and the potential for curriculum development, with an IG focus, are conducted in chapter five. The theory and findings are integrated and the challenges and limitations of the study are also discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The main aim of this study is to develop a pilot IG lesson with children, aged 10 to 12 years old, to enable the educational transfer of knowledge and skills from children to their grandparents or other older people in a school setting. Using the Irish Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum as a source, the project-based research is informed, firstly, by the theories of Piaget, Vygotsky and Rogoff, and secondly, by the perspectives of the co-researchers through the use of interpretive methodology (Verenikina, 2008; Aikenhead, 1997). The intention is to enable the children to have their voices heard, enhance their skills and talents and allow them benefit from the confidence the project offers them, through their active participation in a process of Educational Action Research (O’Brien, 2001; Sinclair & Franklin, 2000; Kellett, 2005).

The proposed IG pilot lesson could facilitate the enhancement of the skills and self-esteem of children, might promote opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning among older people and may result in enhanced well-being for both young and old (ENIL, 2012). The projected Intergenerational Learning Programme (ILP), which could be established following the pilot lesson, may satisfy the need for grandparents to be close to their grandchildren and might lead to a more meaningful grandchild-grandparent relationship (Jessel, 2009).

5.2 Methodology

There is significant evidence to support the design of an IG pilot lesson from the child’s perspective and action. The principles of Educational Action Research (EAR) provide the basis for the development of five phases in the process, through qualitative and quantitative data collection combined with observation (O’Brien, 2001; Appendix XVI). A web-based product may signal another development in the
process of EAR. The use of interpretive methodology enables the children to express their views and perspectives, by way of the iterative process of discussion, observation and interpretation of data and makes it more likely that children may adopt new approaches as they have been active in the decision making process (Aikenhead, 1997; Shehan, 1999; Lewin, 1946). The researcher’s own personal and professional values and experiences, from his experience as teacher, school principal and co-ordinator of the Children Helping Children Project for eighteen years, has guided the process forward, in a collaborative manner with the children (Children Helping Children Project).

The involvement of children as co-researchers in this study is central to the concept of active learning, espoused by theorists, Piaget, Vygotsky and Rogoff, and reflected in the Irish curriculum and Educational Action Research (Verenikina, 2008, Primary School SPHE Curriculum, O’ Brien, 2001). The findings, discussed in chapter four, indicate that there is support among children, grandparents and other older people for the design of an IG pilot lesson from a child’s perspective and agency. This chapter integrates the theory, from chapter two, with the findings, from chapter four, and highlights the following key areas.

- Intergenerational Learning
- Perspective and Agency of the Child
- Project-based Active Learning
- School as a Base for IG Learning
- Life-long and Life-wide Learning
- Grandchild-grandparent Relationship

In addition, challenges and limitations of the study are considered and the researcher presents conclusions and makes recommendations for further consideration.

5.3 Intergenerational Learning

The development of an IG pilot lesson as a result of this research is a viable proposition. The researcher has worked in partnership with the children, aged 10 to 12 years old, in a primary school setting, to develop a project-based learning initiative. Although the researcher has primarily assumed the role of facilitator, observer and guide, there is an additional dimension with the concept of the teacher
as learner within this project-based learning initiative (Appendix XIX). The process has indeed involved ‘the reciprocal exchange of knowledge between people of all ages so they can learn together and learn from each other’ (ENIL, 2012, p.14). The researcher posits that the learning process has been reciprocal and that, in addition to the guidance provided to the children in the study, the researcher has also learnt a great deal from the creative ‘evolving capacities’ of the co-researchers (UNCRC, 1989, p.3). Unlike many IG projects, this study has developed a process which has significant involvement of children and has focused on the life-long and life-wide learning aspect of the connection (ENIL, 2012). This highlights the active learning connection, in terms of empathy and teamwork, and notes the potential depth of IG relationships between child, mentor and grandparent or older person in future ILPs.

5.4 Perspective and Agency of the Child

The perception of children has changed and much focus is on children’s rights, freedom of expression and their participation in issues that affect them (UNCRC, 1989; CRA, 2011). The researcher posits that the views of children were facilitated, in this study, through a process of Educational Action Research with the children as co-researchers. The use of the interpretive approach provided an environment where the children could express their opinions on their own terms and from their level and viewpoint with a flexibility to be creative (Aikenhead, 1997; Shehan, 1999; Charmaz, 2006). The enhancement of the democratic process contributed to improved skills and increased self-esteem for children and is central to the maintenance of children’s rights (Sinclair & Franklin, 2000, Williams, 2004).

In line with the theorists, the researcher fostered a child-centred approach to the study by inviting all the children in the class group to participate (Verenikina, 2008). In order to be inclusive, due to sensitivity issues around relationships with grandparents, the researcher broadened the parameters of the research to extend to any older person known to the children (Appendix I). At an introductory meeting, at phase one, the importance of the children’s involvement in the study was highlighted and the children, who were interested in participating, were duly assigned roles as co-researchers.
With a view to children’s perspective and agency, the co-researchers were encouraged to take ownership of the project from the outset. The co-researchers were empowered to choose the topics for discussion from the Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum and conduct much of the fieldwork research, in collaboration with the researcher. In addition, the perspectives of the co-researchers were documented in a Project Notebook and assessment of learning and project evaluation was provided by the children at phase five. The possibility of a web-based product could signal another dimension in the process of EAR. The researcher posits that the children, in this study, were empowered to be creative collaborators, in a process which has the potential for further development at the next stage of the design of the IG pilot lesson (O’ Brien, 2001). An example of this creativity can be seen in artwork produced by Chloe in Figure 4.

**Figure 4** Intergenerational Project

![Intergenerational Project](image)

### 5.5 Project-based Active Learning

The theory of a child-centred curriculum, espoused by Piaget, Vygotsky and Rogoff, in an environment which supports active learning is a key starting point for the design of an IG pilot lesson from the child’s perspective and agency (Verenikina, 2008; Vygotsky, 1962; Rogoff, 1990). This is supported by the child-centred approaches and methodologies of the Irish Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum and
in particular, the Strand Unit, *Self-Identity*, which promotes the enhancement of the skills and self-esteem of the children in a school setting (Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum, Teacher Guidelines, 1999).

The Irish Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum proposes that children should be empowered to transfer their learning to different situations and encouraged to use active learning by applying health and social information, they know or acquire in class, to real life situations (Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum). This aim is in keeping with comments made by respondents in the web-based questionnaire, at phase four of the research, who, when considering the merits of buying a product, suggested that older people should: ‘*make sure they are things that they need…. And ask yourself how much you would really like the item, and if the impulse doesn’t come from the sly advertisement/advertiser*’.

Assessment of learning and evaluation are essential components of any project-based learning initiative. The assessment criteria for SPHE in the Irish Primary School, focuses on informal observation and the development of ‘*skills of effective self-assessment*’ (SPHE Teacher Guidelines, 1999, p.27). The researcher and class teacher did undertake some general observation and noted an improvement in skills and self-esteem of all the participants and good evidence of the enjoyment experienced by the children especially during the qualitative research and project evaluation. However, the primary source of feedback stemmed from the co-researchers who were asked to provide their own evaluation and learning outcomes (Appendix XIII; Primary School Curriculum, Active Learning, 2013).

Initial reaction to the concept of an IG lesson, from their grandparents and parents, was also obtained through the children (Appendix XIII). This feedback contributes to both good practice and a process of on-going evaluation, which are essential for improved programmes and a core element of the concept of EAR. This process facilitates the ‘*evolving capacities of children*’ while promoting their skills to be independent thinkers (UNCRC, 1989, p.3; O’ Brien, 2001; New York City of Education, 2009). An additional component of phase five of the project included creative feedback, in the form of poetry and art, on the concept of IG learning, an example of which can be seen in Rose’s artwork in Figure 5 (Appendix XV).
In addition to this potential to express creativity, the opportunity for the children to present their collaborative IG work to their grandparents or other older people is a recommendation of this research (New York City of Education, 2009).

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) proposes the use of a child-centred curriculum which is closely connected to the lives, experiences and perspectives of the children; a recommendation which is fulfilled by this research (NCCA). The objectives of the NCCA are further accommodated, in this study, through the consideration of the perspective and agency of the child, with a view to the formation of a project-based IG lesson, using EAR, where a closer connection between the child and their grandparent is encouraged. On the Project Evaluation Form, at phase five, one of the co-researchers, Emma, pointed out that “I have learnt the ability to talk to grandparents”, to which Adele added that “we need to share what we know”. These comments reflect very well the overall aim of this study which is to enable children to teach grandparents and older people things they know or learn in school. This is additionally supported by the creative work undertaken by the co-researchers at phase five, an example of which can be seen in Michelle’s poem in Figure 6 (Appendix XV).
According to Ellis and Rogoff (1982), children are very proficient teachers in academic material they have already acquired, or in social skills long forgotten by older adults. In fact, studies suggest that children could even be more effective teachers than adults, a claim which can be properly assessed following evaluation from the proposed ILP with the children as teachers in future research (Ellis & Rogoff, 1982). Jasmine, when asked what she had learnt from the project, commented that “I am capable of teaching”. In fact, the reality of teaching was conveyed by Michelle, when referring to her granny’s reaction to the idea of child-led IG learning, who wrote “my granny didn’t really get it and I had to explain it several times”.

The researcher posits that the use of a Project Notebook throughout the study made a significant contribution to the research and facilitated an environment where active learning could occur. The role of facilitator was more of a guiding presence in the process and afforded children the opportunity to use what they had learnt in school to gain an understanding of themselves and their social networks (Bentley, 1998). Studies suggest that the key development of these skills are mediated by the child’s social and cultural interactions with class peers, mentors and family members and this combination of factors contribute hugely to the creation of a successful pilot lesson for an ILP (Wertsch, 1985).
5.6 School as a Base for IG Learning

While the majority of Irish primary schools engage in ‘annual or periodic intergenerational activities’, equating to a Level 4 on Kaplan’s Model of Commitment (2002, p. 314), the level of engagement proposed by the IG pilot lesson to emanate from this study, is initially a Level 5 on the Kaplan Model (Appendix II). This corresponds to a ‘demonstration project or a pilot lesson’ proceeding to a Level 6 or 7 where ‘on-going intergenerational programmes’ can be maintained for longer periods of time with the correct ‘sharing, support and communication’ (Kaplan, 2002, p.314; Appendix II).

The Department of Education and Skills acknowledges the need for more integration between mainstream education and adult education with a focus on IG connections (DES, 2000). This proposed IG lesson could satisfy this desire and promote opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning which could be regarded as broader and more inclusive than the term ‘adult education’ implies (GRUNDVIG). The potential for this IG learning programme to extend to younger and older people in the community, including people from lower socio-economic and diverse backgrounds, could be considered in future studies.

5.7 Life-long and Life-wide Learning

Piaget encouraged children to use their initiative to be self-determined learners advancing to self-motivated life-long learners (Verenikina, 2008). The notion of life-long learning is supported very well in this research with the proposal for the development of the IG pilot lesson to encourage children and grandparents or other older people to access learning opportunities at any stage of the lifespan. The concept of active ageing incorporates ‘learning for skills acquisition and updating, socio-cultural participation, individual well-being, intergenerational solidarity and social inclusion’ (ENIL, 2012, p.23). The proposed IG lesson and projected IG Programme ‘In My Day’, to emanate from this study will have the purpose of empowering older people by enhancing their knowledge and skills, allowing them participate effectively in society and contribute to their general well-being (TOY, 2013). In addition, the concept of life-wide learning, which will primarily be undertaken in a formal school
setting, can be located in this study with the suggestion that the children will lead the learning although they will be unpaid, untrained and not recognised as teachers (TOY, 2013).

5.8 Grandchild-grandparent Relationship

With regard to this study, the work of Armstrong (2005) is particularly relevant with the assertion that children can have a beneficial effect on grandparents’ environmentally friendly behaviours, dietary routines and social activities. The themes chosen by the co-researchers, at phase two, concentrate on useful suggestions to enable older people cope with the daily challenges of advertising, promotions and cold calling (Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum). Studies support the idea that children are motivated to encourage grandparents to alter their habits, thereby fostering healthy behaviours, promoting self-development and leading to enhanced general well-being, evidence of which can be found in chapter four of this study (Turner, 1991). The consequences of poor decision making for older people can be serious, especially with regard to their income, and there are potential long-term effects of impulsive buying from home as companies and advertising agents use this information to target their vulnerability. The obvious love and care, coupled with learning, as expressed by children for their grandparents, is very well represented by the creativity shown in phase five of this study, evidence of which can be seen in Emma’s poem in Figure 7-Grandparents (Appendix XV).

Figure 7 Grandparents

We need to keep our Grandparents safe
And help them not to make a mistake
The time we live in now is new
And very few Grandparents know what to do
We need to teach them about tricks online
So in the future they can be fine
To help our Grandparents in every way
To teach them how to live in this day
Our Grandparents are special to all of us
So keeping them safe is a MUST.
The researcher accepts that not all grandchild-grandparent relationships are regarded as positive but posits that children who do not have good or any relationship with a grandparent can still take on board IG perspectives. The concept of a child-led ILG can be secured through the notion of a ‘social grandparent’, an older person who interacts with a child like a grandparent figure (TOY, 2013, p. 25).

5.9 Challenges and Limitations

The main challenge to the study revolved around the short time frame. While the researcher would ideally have involved the children more in developing the research questions and the methods of research, this was not possible due to the time constraints. Although some feedback was gathered from the co-researchers and their families at phase five, on-going evaluation will be required to ensure an improved ILP. Even though the aim was to enable the formation of a proposed IG lesson by the end of the school term, this proved impossible due to the early finishing time of the private school at the centre of the research. This will now be attempted in October and could indicate another phase in the process of EAR (O’ Brien, 2001).

Although the researcher invited all members of a class group to take part in the research, only 67% actually participated which was mainly due to the timing of the research outside school hours. Feedback from children, outside the research site, was weaker than anticipated with a questionnaire response rate of 57%. This was mainly due to the non-participation of one of the intended schools, at late notice, due to unforeseen circumstances. The researcher posits that the research sample size was small and confined to a certain geographical area which didn’t allow for generalizability of the findings of the study. The views of children from more diverse socio-economic backgrounds and from rural areas of the country would add another dimension to the overall capability of the child-led IG learning initiative but this was not within the scope of the current research. The researcher suggests that people of a higher socio-economic status are more likely to avail of life-long and life-wide learning opportunities (Arber & Evandrou, 1993).

The researcher in this study is a teacher by profession and while the initial reaction received from work colleagues has been positive, there is a need for further teacher
feedback prior to the launch of the proposed IG pilot lesson. This would contribute to improving the validity of the project and serve to indicate the future viability of such child-led IG initiatives. The presence of a ‘key individual’ in schools to lead these initiatives would contribute substantially to such pupil-led projects (TOY, 2013, p28). For the purpose of this research, the topics chosen for discussion were taken from the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) subject in the Primary School Curriculum. Consideration, in future studies, could be given to many other areas of potential interest to both children and adults.

5.10 Conclusions

The key elements of this study involved children, aged 10 to 12 years, as co-researchers in the design of a school-based intergenerational pilot lesson to enable ‘upward’ educational transfer from children to grandparents or older people. A mixed-method approach, guided by interpretive methodology, enabled the children to participate as co-researchers in a collaborative process of Educational Action Research with the researcher. The theories of Piaget, Vygotsky and Rogoff and the Irish Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum formed the basis for the research design from the perspective and agency of the child. The school environment facilitated the project-based intergenerational learning initiative and is a key factor in the realisation of the intergenerational pilot lesson to emanate from this research. The actual design of a template for the lesson has begun and will evolve from the on-going process of Educational Action Research (O’ Brien, 2001).

The primary intention of this study was to enable the children to have their voices heard, learn new skills and benefit from the confidence the process could offer them, as can be seen in the ‘Key Elements of the Design of the IG Pilot Lesson’ in Figure 8 (Sinclair & Franklin, 2000; Kellett, 2005). The potential transfer of knowledge and skills “upwards” has the ability to satisfy a secondary goal which could lead to the promotion of active ageing and the potential for life-long and life-wide learning opportunities for older people. In addition, it could contribute to general well-being and a meaningful grandchild-grandparent relationship with possible benefits for family and community.
The researcher and co-researchers are confident that this study has contributed to the enhancement of skills and self-esteem of the co-researchers, as evidenced by the information obtained from the assessment of learning and project evaluation, undertaken by the children (UNCRC, 1989; NCCA). Observation, carried out by the class teacher and researcher, indicated a similar positive outcome. The sense of fun and enjoyment experienced by the children as a result of their participation in the research was evident throughout the study, but was particularly obvious during the focus group discussions and in feedback obtained from the Project Evaluation Form. The extension of this enjoyable experience is one of the recommendations of the study.

The facilitation of the democratic process, which is central to the maintenance of children’s rights and children’s citizenship, allowed the children to be active participants in the research by the use of the interpretive approach (Sinclair & Franklin, 2000; Aikenhead, 1997; Williams, 2004; UNCRC, 1989). The collaboration between children and mentor, with guidance from the class teacher, the school and home environments, empowered the co-researchers to be actively involved in a process of Educational Action Research (O’Brien, 2001). The scaffolding metaphor, connected to the work of Vygotsky, reflects this support.
system very well and acknowledges the many contributory factors to the input of the co-researchers in the study, where the emphasis is on active learning in the context of relationships (Verenikina, 2008; O’ Brien, 2001).

The aspect of active learning connected to relationships and caring links the theories and findings of this research. The proposal from the primary school curriculum that children should be enabled to transfer their learning to different situations and encouraged to use active learning by applying health and social information they acquire in class to real life situations is central to the objectives of this research (Primary School SPHE Curriculum). The NCCA proposes the use of a child-centred curriculum which is closely connected to the lives, experiences and perspectives of the children; a recommendation which is fulfilled by the curriculum and the grandchild-grandparent connection in this research (NCCA). Studies which support the idea that children are motivated to encourage grandparents to alter their habits, thereby fostering healthy behaviours, promoting self-development and leading to enhanced general well-being, is well located in chapter four of this study (Turner, 1991).

The desire of the Irish Department of Education and Skills for more integration between mainstream education and adult education with a focus on IG connections could be satisfied by the proposed IG pilot lesson to emanate from this study (DES, 2000). While the majority of Irish primary schools engage in annual IG activities, the level of engagement proposed by this IG pilot lesson, is potentially a Level 6 or 7 on the Kaplan Model (Appendix II). This development could promote ‘learning for skills acquisition and updating’ and lead to opportunities for life-long and life wide learning for older people (ENIL, 2012, p.23).

The school environment has the potential to facilitate the ‘upward’ educational transfer from child to grandparent or other older person although the presence of ‘key individuals’ in schools is central to the implementation of future IG programmes (Primary School SPHE Curriculum; TOY, 2013, p.25). This project-based initiative is currently a work in progress and will benefit from the on-going process of Educational Action Research which could facilitate the design of a template for an IG pilot lesson (Verenikina, 2008; Appendix XVIII). The potential Intergenerational Learning Programme (ILP) ‘In My Day’, to develop from the pilot lesson, may, in
time, contribute to the available IG learning material from the child’s perspective and agency (Arber & Timonen, 2012).

The children, the co-researchers in this study, have been empowered to offer their perspective and become agents of their own process of change (Lincoln, 1993, in Ebbs, 1996). This could be further facilitated by their oral presentation of the concept of the IG pilot lesson to their grandparents and other older people in school during Positive Ageing Week in October. This development may contribute to the on-going improvement of skills and self-esteem of the co-researchers, and enable the extension of these skills to include grandparents and other older people, including the programme mentor, on commencement of the projected IG programme, ‘In My Day’, in the Autumn (Appendix XIX). While 67% of the class group took part in the research element of this study, all class members are once again invited to participate in the next stage of the development of this process.

The findings, discussed in chapter four, indicate that there is support among children, grandparents and other older people for the development of an IG pilot lesson from a child’s perspective and agency. This study has developed a process, which unlike many IG projects to date, has significant involvement of children and has focused on the learning more than the social aspect of the connection (ENIL, 2012). However, the social aspect is also evident in the research from the love and care expressed by the children for their grandparents and other older people. The proposed IG lesson has the potential to lead to an activity which encompasses a three dimensional approach where the child, grandparent/older person and mentor are involved in an IG learning partnership (EMIL, 2012).

The co-researchers and researcher, inspired by the words of Nelson Mandela that ‘vision with action can change the world’ and influenced by Dewey’s Educational Action Research, propose a child-friendly pilot website to facilitate the further development of this project (www.handshakeie.weebly.com). Based on the idea of a ‘handshake’ symbol to signify trust, care, co-operation and fun, this pilot web-based product could gradually progress to a more permanent option. The aim of this web-based component is to empower the co-researchers to continue the development of the IG pilot lesson, from their own perspective and agency, which could further enhance their skills and self-esteem and develop their ‘evolving capacities’ (UNCRC,
1989, p.3). The initiative could promote opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning for older people by allowing for a more welcome reception of the concept of IT as an enabling tool. It could facilitate a fun environment for active learning in the context of relationships and contribute to general well-being and a “generational synergy” outside the family setting (Jessel, 2009, p.6). This web-based element of the study has the potential to assist with the dissemination of information related to the research and could offer a possible repository for other intergenerational school and community based projects in the future (Finn & Scharf, 2012).

5.10 Recommendations

With a view to the future, the researcher and co-researchers ask that you would consider some of the recommendations of this study. Any suggestions which contribute to the enhancement of the skills and self-esteem of children and promote life-long learning opportunities for older people are welcome through the pilot website www.handshakeie.weebly.com.

1. Continued use of the interpretive approach to research is recommended which would allow children the opportunity to present their own perspective.

2. It would be worthwhile to allow children more creative involvement in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of IG learning in their schools.

3. It is suggested that the co-researchers present their IG research and invite their grandparents to participate in the pilot lesson in school during Positive Ageing Week. It is recommended that feedback from this meeting and a child-friendly version of the research are posted on the pilot website in the coming months.

4. Children who do not have good or any relationship with a grandparent can still take on board IG perspectives through the concept of a ‘social grandparent’.

5. The design of a template for the development of the lesson will be undertaken in collaboration with the co-researchers. Additional feedback will be required from teachers and older people in advance of the actual pilot lesson.

6. Future IG studies could consider younger and older children in school, college and community settings, include families from more diverse socio-economic
backgrounds and propose IG learning programmes from the perspective and agency of the older person.

7. A higher level of IG commitment on the Kaplan Model is recommended, resulting in longer term school-based IG programmes, particularly at secondary school level in future.

8. The continued presence of key individuals in schools with the interest, commitment and perspective to accommodate IG programmes is essential for future success.

9. Following the completion of the proposed IG programme, ‘In My Day’, and on-going evaluation, it is hoped to expand this concept of child-led IG lessons to other schools by way of the Irish Primary Principal’s Network (IPPN) and the Irish National Teacher’s Organisation (INTO). Dissemination of the findings of this research to the NCCA and the DES is proposed.

10. There is potential to extend the focus of this current research, beyond the scope of the SPHE Curriculum to include other curricular and extra-curricular interests.

11. As mentioned, the researcher and co-researchers, propose a child-friendly pilot website www.handshakeie.weebly.com. Based on the idea of a “handshake” to signify trust, co-operation, care and fun, this web-based dimension could:

- allow for a more welcome reception of the concept of Information Technology, as an enabling tool, by the older generation and promote their increased use of the internet, for both practical purposes and in relation to opportunities for life-long and life-wide learning
- assist with the dissemination of information related to the research and provide up to date progress on the IG Programme itself
- offer a potential repository for other IG school and community based projects through a more permanent website in the future, and
- enable the co-researchers to continue the enjoyable experience of child-led collaborative research.
Bibliography


CARDI. Available online. [http://www.cardi.ie/](http://www.cardi.ie/)


59


Department of Health and Children. (1998). *Adding years to life and life to years-health promotion strategy for older people.*


Appendix 1-Ethical Approval

SUBJECTS AND/OR RESEARCHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher’s Name:</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ken King</td>
<td>Mr.</td>
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<td>Working Title.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study of the potential of educational transfer from grandchild to grandparent from the grandchild’s perspective and agency in a school environment.</td>
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2.1 Please specify the types of subjects involved in this study, e.g. healthy subjects, in-patients, clinic attendees, minors, and indicate the number of each type.

24 Primary school pupils aged 10 to 12 years old.

2.2. How will you be recruiting subjects for the study?

If controls are to be included please state how they are to be selected and attach a copy of the advertisement if used.

I will invite all class members to be assistant researchers. As the participative research will take place during a lunchtime, before or after school, it may reduce the total number interested in taking part.

2.3. Specify the number of subjects to be used in this project, the selection criteria and the exclusion criteria.

Potentially 24 pupils. By way of discussion with the pupils, the children can opt in or out but I would expect a division into three groups of 8 approx; two focus groups with pupils who have living grandparents and one group to assist with the questionnaire. The reason for the choice of the children with the grandparents will be put down to the topic of the study and the time constraints. This study would be presented to the pupils as a pilot study to assess the potential of the extension of this proposed intergenerational learning programme to include unrelated young and older members of society. In so doing, all children would feel a purpose and a motivation to be involved and any sensitivity issues around grandparent issues would be avoided.

2.4. Specify whether any of the following procedures are involved:

- Any invasive procedure: NO
- Physical contact: NO
- Any procedure that may cause mental distress: NO

(Delete yes or no as necessary)
Outline the procedures involved in your study.

(If samples are to be taken state type, frequency and amount and whether this is part of their normal treatment. If Radiological Investigations are part of the procedure please indicate the number and frequency of exposures and total calculated dosage.)

1. General discussion with the class about the overarching concept of young children teaching older persons topics that they learn in school which could benefit the older person.
2. Bring up the suggestion of class division into three groups (of willing participants); two focus groups including children with grandparents/older relatives and one group to assist in the formation of a questionnaire at a later date.
3. Organise a timeframe with the class, class teacher and principal.
4. Meet and chat with the focus groups about the themes at the centre of the research- SPHE topics from their curriculum. i.e. healthy eating, health and safety etc.
5. Conduct the focus groups on agreed dates.
6. Follow up with feedback from the focus groups to the class. Plan a questionnaire session with the final group.
7. Use surveymonkey.ie to assess the generalizability of the focus group feedback.
8. Compile the results of the questionnaire, feed back to the class and make recommendations with the assistance of the whole class.
9. Using the findings, with pupil assistance plan a pilot programme of maybe three lessons to put the findings into practice.
10. Assess the proposed programme through informal feedback from class members who have grandparents or who know older persons. Make some adjustments.

2.5. State the procedures which may cause discomfort or distress and the degree of discomfort or distress likely to be endured by the subjects.

By the inclusive nature of the project, and the researcher’s knowledge of the children as school principal and expertise as a teacher, there is not likely to be any distress. If an issue does arise, it will be dealt with sensitively as would be the case with any sensitive issue that crops up in the course of a school day.

2.6. State the potential risks, if any (to both the investigator, subjects, the environment and/or participants), and the precautions being taken to meet them.

Include information on hazardous substances that will be used or produced, and the steps being taken to reduce risks.
For any projects using Ionizing Radiation see SECTION 7.

It is a requirement that a formal signed Risk Assessment Form be provided-see SECTION 10 (i) to (v)

No known risks.

2.7 Is written consent to be obtained?  

YES  

(Delete yes or no as necessary)

If so, please use the CONSENT FORM (section 3)

If a form other than the Research Ethical Committee consent form is to be used, please attach a copy. Copy attached with previous submission.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.8. Are subjects to be included under the age of 18?</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>If yes, please fill in the CONSENT FORM (section 4) for Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involving ‘less powerful subjects’ and those under 18 years of age.</td>
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<td>Attached with previous submission.</td>
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<td>2.9. Is neonatal material to be used in this study?</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>If yes, please fill in SECTION 8 for Research Involving Neonatal</td>
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<td>Material</td>
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<td>2.10. Will any payments be made to subjects?</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>(Delete yes or no as necessary)</td>
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<td>If YES give details:</td>
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<td>2.11. Is any proportion of this payment being paid by a commercially</td>
<td>Organisation: N/A.</td>
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<td>sponsored organisation and if so by whom?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.12 Signature details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Researcher’s Signature: Ken King</td>
<td>Title: ________________</td>
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<td>Date 29th March, 2013.</td>
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Appendix I- CONSENT FORM

FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING ‘LESS POWERFUL’ SUBJECTS OR THOSE UNDER 18 YRS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher’s Name:</th>
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<tr>
<td>KEN KING</td>
<td>MR.</td>
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4.1 In what way, if any does the proposed study benefit the individual subject?

The proposed study aims to enhance the skills and self-esteem of children.

4.2 Has parent’s/guardian’s consent to be obtained? YES

If Yes, in what form - verbal, written, witnessed, etc. – will consent be obtained. Please attach a copy of the relevant forms.

Please see written consent in Appendix IV.

4.3 Will the child’s or young person’s assent be sought? YES

4.4 Are the risks of the investigation judged to be minimal or nil? YES

Researcher’s Signature: Ken King
Title: Mr.
Date: 4th March, 2013.
Appendix I- Clarification of Ethical Issues- 29th March, 2013.

1. The proposal does not provide any detail on the nature of questions that will be asked of children in focus groups / questionnaires. I appreciate the questionnaire will be designed with participants later, but you need to include an indication of the nature of the questions.

The nature of the questions connected to the focus groups/questionnaire will be based on aspects of the Primary School’s SPHE class programme for children aged 10 to 12 years old.

Strand Units for inclusion are:
2. Taking Care of my Body.
5. Relating to others.
6. Developing Citizenship.
7. Media Education. ([www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)).

2. How will children be selected? How will you avoid approaching children who may have had recent grandparent bereavement?

Answer in the ethics form Appendix 1.

3. The letter to the gatekeeper contains no detail as to what questions children will be asked. The reference to the Information Sheet is not sufficient because it too is not very clear as to the exact nature of discussions.

Please see attached updated Information Sheet.

In addition, the nature of discussion will revolve around a choice of topics from the fifth/sixth class SPHE Curriculum that could be adapted for the purpose of this research. The following information will also be attached to the gatekeeper letter.
Focus Groups Discussion Topics

1. In the Strand Unit **Self-identity**, under the area of *developing self-confidence-enhance skills to improve learning*, the topic for discussion could be the initial undertaking by the students to embark on a project resulting in an intergenerational learning programme. It could also be used as part of the proposed IL programme itself with areas of discussion to include making complaints and seeking redress, developing his/her interests and trusting his/her judgements, knowing and asserting his/her rights/consumer rights.

2. In the Strand Unit **Taking Care of My Body**, under the theme of *health and well-being*, the topic for discussion could be around the importance of the following areas for older persons (being usefully occupied, taking adequate exercise, having friends, having a balanced diet, correct posture) and the realisation that there is a personal and communal responsibility for the health and well-being of himself/herself and others.

3. In the Strand Unit, **Taking Care of My Body** , under the theme of *taking care of my body*, the topic of discussion will be on food and nutrition, food choices & issues that affect food choices, food pyramid, nutrients, special health conditions, hygiene and care in food preparation.

4. In the Strand Unit, **Safety and Protection**, some areas for discussion could be personal safety in the home and when out walking/travelling, the use of medicines, some potential risks to health and safety in the environment like traffic, pollution, chemicals, ultraviolet light.

5. In the Strand Unit, **Making Decisions**, areas for discussion could be strategies for decision making, critically evaluating factors and levels of thought that affect decision making, identifying sources of help when making decisions.

6. In the Strand Unit, **Relating to Others**, areas for discussion could be the examination of the various ways in which language and manner can be used to discriminate against others, valuing others cultures and views, how to communicate effectively without the use of aggression.

7. In the Strand Unit, **Developing Citizenship**, under the theme of *living in the local community*, some areas for discussion would include developing a sense of working together as part of a group/community, exploring the rights and responsibilities of members of society, ethnicity, prejudice & discrimination, looking at inequality issues like poverty/homelessness, local issues causing concern and some positive initiatives in the community.

8. In the same Strand Unit, **Developing Citizenship**, under the theme of environmental care, discussion in the area of the responsibility around care for the environment starting with each individual. Practical issues like using the correct bin at home/recycling which would nicely expand to the Primary School’s Green School’s Programme linking with other subjects like Geography and Science.
9. In the Strand Unit, **Media Education**, areas for discussion would include the different forms of media, being critical of certain advertising methods and ploys to get people to buy items, the exploration of some simple forms of media-camera/communication/technology.
Appendix 1 - Additional Ethical Clarification-9th April, 2013

In the case where a child who has been very recently bereaved, the chances are that the child would not be in school. In that event, with the help of the class teacher, I would chat with her classmates to explain that the topic would be very sensitive for that particular child and that the research would have to be postponed. If the child had returned to school, I would contact the class teacher to postpone my visit.

I would postpone the focus group work until a later date when it would be deemed appropriate to make contact with the parents of the child to offer my condolences and raise the sensitive issue of my research. With the assistance of the class teacher, I would respectively suggest that the child would not be in a position to partake in the research but would be guided by the parents and the child.

When the research is finally conducted at the agreed later date, as the focus group and questionnaire work will be undertaken at a lunchtime or after school, and the girls concerned are reminded about the sensitivity of the research, any possible fallout would be contained.

Due to the time constraints, with the school finishing for summer in early June, and following consultation with the class teacher and classmates (other than the bereaved child), I may need to consider choosing a different class group in the school within the age parameters of the research.
Appendix II- Kaplan Model of Intergenerational Connection (2002)

Level 7- On-going, natural intergenerational sharing, support and communication.
Level 6- On-going intergenerational programmes.
Level 5- Demonstration projects on a pilot or trial basis
Level 4- Annual or periodic activities
Level 3- Meeting each other
Level 2- Seeing the other age group but at a distance
Level 1- Learning about the other age group, but with no direct contact
Dear Ms.

My name is Ken King and I am seeking your assistance regarding research I am undertaking as part of my postgraduate degree at Dublin Institute of Technology. My subject is to study **the potential intergenerational educational transfer from grandchildren to their grandparents in a school setting.** The study will be undertaken from a child’s perspective and agency.

The methodological section of my study will primarily involve two short visits to your school to conduct small focus groups for discussion, to involve children of 10 to 12 years old. My aim is to involve the girls, as much as possible, in the process and assign them roles as associate researchers. This will ensure the girls take more ownership of their input and the subsequent findings of the study. There may be a one of two short visits later in the academic year to confirm content given during focus group discussions or to bring feedback to the girls on the initial findings of the study. I will keep you informed as to how the research is going throughout the project and give you a copy of my findings upon completion of the project. I would hope the project will be of benefit to your school in the future.

My study will be read by college lecturers and an external examiner. All discussion or comment will be treated in strictest confidence and no individual will be identified as all recordings will be anonymised. I have composed an information sheet and a participant and parent/guardian consent form, for your attention (please see attachments). With your permission, I propose to distribute them to the participants on my first visit.

If you have any queries about the project, please contact me on xxxxxxx or my college supervisor, Dr. Carmel Gallagher on xxxxxxx.

Yours sincerely,
Appendix III- Focus Group Areas for Discussion

1. In the Strand Unit **Self-identity**, under the area of *developing self-confidence-enhance skills to improve learning*, the topic for discussion could be the initial undertaking by the students to embark on a project resulting in an intergenerational learning programme.

2. In the Strand Unit **Taking Care of My Body**, under the theme of *health and well-being*, the topic for discussion could be around the importance of the following areas for older persons (being usefully occupied, taking adequate exercise, having friends, having a balanced diet, correct posture) The realisation that there is a personal and communal responsibility for the health and well-being of himself/herself and others.

3. In the same Strand Unit, **Taking Care of My Body**, under the theme of *taking care of my body*, the topic of discussion would be on food and nutrition, food choices & issues that affect food choices, food pyramid, nutrients, special health conditions, hygiene and care in food preparation.

4. In the Strand Unit, **Safety and Protection**, some areas for discussion could be personal safety in the home and when out walking/travelling, the use of medicines, some potential risks to health and safety in the environment like traffic, pollution, chemicals, ultraviolet light.

5. In the Strand Unit, **Making Decisions**, areas for discussion could be strategies for decision making, critically evaluating factors and levels of thought that affect decision making, identifying sources of help etc.

6. In the Strand Unit, **Relating to Others**, areas for discussion could be the examination of the various ways in which language can be used to discriminate against others, valuing others cultures and views, how to communicate effectively without the use of aggression.

7. In the Strand Unit, **Developing Citizenship**, under the theme of *living in the local community*, some areas for discussion would include developing a sense of working together as part of a group/community, exploring the rights and responsibilities of members of society, ethnicity, prejudice & discrimination, looking at inequality issues like poverty/homelessness, local issues causing concern and some positive initiatives in the community.

8. In the same Strand Unit, **Developing Citizenship**, under the theme of environmental care, discussion around the responsibility around care for the environment starting with each individual. Practical issues like using the correct bin at home/recycling which would nicely expand to the Primary School’s Green School’s Programme linking with other subjects like Geography and Science.

9. In the Strand Unit, **Media Education**, areas for discussion would include the different forms of media, being critical of certain advertising methods and ploys to get people to buy items, the exploration of some simple forms of media-camera/communication/technology.
Appendix IV-Parent/Guardian Introductory Letter

16\textsuperscript{th} April, 2013.

Dear Parents, Guardians and Potential Co-Researchers,

I am seeking your assistance regarding research I am undertaking as part of my postgraduate degree at Dublin Institute of Technology. My subject is to study the potential intergenerational educational transfer from children to their grandparents or older persons in a school setting. The study will be undertaken from a child’s perspective and activity/agency.

The methodological section of my study will primarily involve three short visits to the school; two to conduct small recorded focus groups for discussion and one visit to plan a follow up questionnaire. There may be a one of two short visits later in the academic year to confirm content given during focus group discussions, to analyse questionnaire responses or to bring feedback to the girls on the initial findings of the study.

The project can potentially involve all members of the class but the decision to participate is up to you and your daughter. My aim is to involve the girls, as much as possible, in the process and assign them roles as assistant researchers.

The project will be read by college lecturers and an external examiner. All discussion or comment will be treated in the strictest confidence and no individual will be identified as all focus group recordings will be anonymised. I have attached an information sheet, a participant and parent/guardian consent form and a sheet listing possible discussion topics taken from the 5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} class SPHE programme. The girls who agree to participate will decide on the areas that will subsequently be discussed in the recorded focus groups. That conversation will begin during an initial introductory meeting this Friday morning, 19\textsuperscript{th} April, from 8.40am approx. in the P5 classroom. In addition, I plan to organise subsequent school visits at times just before school or at lunchtime to minimise disruption to normal class.

If interested, I would appreciate if you and your daughter could complete and return the attached consent form, no later than this Friday morning, for the introductory meeting. I apologise for the short notice but I have just got permission from the college’s ethics committee to proceed with the project and there is a limited time frame to the end of the school term. If you have any queries about the project, please contact me on xxxxxxx or my college supervisor, Dr. Carmel Gallagher on xxxxxxx.

Yours sincerely,
Appendix IV - Intergenerational Research Participation and Consent Form

Study of the potential of school-based educational transfer from grandchild to grandparent or older person, from the child’s perspective and agency/activity.

Please tick to agree and sign.

1. I agree to be part of a focus discussion group. ☐

2. I agree to be interviewed and recorded by the researcher. ☐

3. I understand that the information that I will give will be treated with complete confidentiality and anonymity. For my part, I agree to keep group discussions within the group setting. ☐

4. I have been given a copy of the information sheet and any questions I have had have been answered to my satisfaction. ☐

5. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the focus group at any time, without giving a reason. ☐

6. I understand that any details recorded will be treated in complete confidence and stored in a secure place and may be used in further research of this kind. ☐

Name of Participant: ___________________________________ Date _______________

Participant’s signature: ________________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian’s signature: __________________________________________________

Name of Researcher: ___________________________ Date ___________________

Signature: ______________________________________________________________________
Appendix IV - Intergenerational Research
Participation Information Sheet

I invite you to take part in a project that will hopefully be interesting and fun. In addition to your consent, I also must get your mum or dad’s permission for you to participate.

With your assistance, a ground-breaking piece of research will be conducted, by way of small discussion groups, on the topic of educational transfer from grandchildren to their grandparents in a school setting. The purpose of the research is to see if children, 10 to 12 years old, can come up with ideas which lead to learning opportunities for their grandparents or older persons in school. The topics for discussion will involve aspects of the Primary School’s SPHE class programme for children aged 10 to 12 years old: 1. Self-identity. 2. Taking Care of my Body. 3. Safety and Protection. 4. Making Decisions. 5. Relating to others. 6. Developing Citizenship. 7. Media Education. ([www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)).

If you are happy to accept, I plan to assign you a role as associate researcher on the project. It’s a unique opportunity for you to be part of new Irish research. Your role will be very important and could contribute to new developments in Irish education and society. Therefore, you will need to take the position very seriously and be willing to participate in a positive way in the discussion, allow everyone a chance to speak and encourage anyone who is shy to talk.

My expectation is that this research will benefit greatly from your opinions and ideas. You will have your say, learn new skills, come up with many creative suggestions and have lots of fun in the process. In addition, you have the potential to enhance your grandparent or any older person’s quality of life and well-being. What an exciting opportunity.

Are you ready for the challenge?
Appendix V- Focus Group Introduction & Discussion

Thank you for giving up some of your free time to attend this focus group introductory session today. The purpose of this group is to involve you, as assistant researchers, on the topic of educational transfer from children to older people/grandparents, by the formation of an intergenerational learning programme in a school setting.

The aim of the research is to see if children, 10 to 12 years old, can come up with ideas which lead to a programme of learning opportunities for grandparents or older persons in school.


As a result of today’s meeting and after some reflection, because we have limited time, you will need to decide on priority areas of discussion from the Strand Units & Themes below. Please place a number in the box beside the Strand Unit & Theme you feel most likely to be adaptable for use with older persons in an informal classroom setting.

Start with 1 in a box for the most appropriate/best and 8 for the least appropriate/worst topics that could be adapted and transferred by you and your classmates to older persons. Think carefully before you choose and have a chat with an older person/grandparent to help you. It’s not only important that you are interested in the topic and know a bit about it (you will learn as you go), the topic also should be interesting to the older person/grandparent.

**Things to Consider**

1. Am I interested in the topic?
2. Would my grandparent or an older person be interested in the content?
3. Do I know a bit about the subject?
4. Would I be comfortable teaching the content (with some guidance) to my grandparent or an older person?

**Our Project**

This research will benefit greatly from your opinions and ideas. You will have your say, learn new skills, come up with many creative suggestions and have lots of fun in the process. In addition, you have the potential to enhance your grandparent or any older person’s quality of life and well-being.

**Strand Unit- Self-identity**

Under the theme of developing self-confidence and enhancing skills to improve learning, the topic for discussion will be the initial undertaking by the students to embark on a project resulting in an intergenerational learning programme.

**Any questions?**
Proposed Strand Units & Themes for Discussion

10. In the Strand Unit **Taking Care of My Body**, under the theme of *health and well-being*, the topic for discussion could be around the importance of the following areas for older persons (being **usefully occupied**, **taking adequate exercise**, **having friends**, **having a balanced diet**, **correct posture**) The realisation that there is a personal and communal responsibility for the health and well-being of himself/herself and others.

11. In the same Strand Unit, **Taking Care of My Body**, under the theme of **taking care of my body**, the topic of discussion would be on **food and nutrition**, **food choices & issues that affect food choices**, **food pyramid**, **nutrients**, **special health conditions**, **hygiene and care in food preparation**.

12. In the Strand Unit, **Safety and Protection**, some areas for discussion could be **personal safety in the home and when out walking/travelling**, the correct use of **medicines**, some potential **risks to health and safety** in the environment like traffic, pollution, chemicals, ultraviolet light.

13. In the Strand Unit, **Making Decisions**, areas for discussion could be strategies for **decision making**, critically evaluating factors and levels of thought that affect decision making, identifying sources of help etc.

14. In the Strand Unit, **Relating to Others**, areas for discussion could be the examination of the various ways in which language can be used to **discriminate against others**, **valuing others cultures and views**, how to communicate effectively without the use of aggression.

15. In the Strand Unit, **Developing Citizenship**, under the theme of **living in the local community**, some areas for discussion would include developing a sense of working together as part of a group/community, exploring the **rights and responsibilities of members of society**, ethnicity, prejudice & discrimination, looking at **inequality issues like poverty/homelessness**, local issues causing concern and some positive initiatives in the community.

16. In the same Strand Unit, **Developing Citizenship**, under the theme of environmental care, discussion around the responsibility around **care for the environment starting with each individual**. Practical issues like using the **correct bin at home/recycling** which would nicely expand to the Primary School’s **Green School’s Programme** linking with other subjects like Geography and Science.
17. In the Strand Unit, Media Education, areas for discussion would include the different forms of media, being critical of certain advertising methods and ploys to get people to buy items, the exploration of some simple forms of media-camera/communication/technology.
Appendix VI- Focus Group Schedule

Date:

Time allowed: 45 minutes.

1. Introduction
2. Remind participants of topic discussion and role of facilitator.
3. Ensure consent has been received and that participants have read the information sheet.
4. Give outline of study: methodology, data collection, potential findings, ethics. Instruct the participants that the recording will be transcribed and kept in a password protected file to allow access only by the researcher. The recordings will be kept for the duration of the research and a further two years thereafter.
5. To enable anonymity, the children will refer to each other by a fictitious christian name, of their own choice, which will be printed on a label for each participant to ease the fluidity of discussion.
6. Remind participants that it is their discussion; they are having their say and they are free to talk openly and honestly but they can withdraw at any stage. As confidentiality is of utmost concern, the participants will be reminded that the content of the discussions should be kept within the focus group and should not be discussed with other class members etc.
7. Check the recording equipment to ensure it is working.
8. Begin recording and offer a question to begin proceedings.
9. At the end, summarise the key points of the discussion to allow for clarification.
10. Give information about access to the transcripts.
11. Refreshments & thanks.
Appendix VII - Focus Group Discussion

POWER OF THE MEDIA

Discussion on how you can provide advice to an older person who might be approached by people/companies to buy an item or a service they may not really want or need?

1. Advertising: Do you think that advertising on the Internet/TV is more effective than in a newspaper/magazine/on the radio?? Does it depend on who it is? Younger or older person?
   How are you influenced and how might an older person be influenced?

2. Do you think very young and much older people are more likely to be influenced? Children and older people tend to spend more time watching TV during the day??= Disney for kids and UTV/Channel 4/RTE/BBC for older people. TV shopping/home delivery. Very easy and attractive.
   Have you ever bought something you didn't really want or need??

3. Other than say TV advertising, how might older people, in particular, be targeted by companies/individuals?
   Phone/newspaper/radio/street signs, posters, flyers??

4. Would you have any advice for older people with regard to possible fraud/deception/ a hoax caller/attractive images-at the house door/on house phone/on TV/ on the street-signs, posters, flyers?
Appendix VII- Focus Group Discussion

Safety and Protection- Personal Safety for Older People

Discussion on ways to keep safe, both inside and outside the home.

1. Could that person calling to the door or on the phone be a safety risk? Would he/she want to trick an older person out of money or possessions?

2. Has something similar happened to you or have you heard of anything like this happening to someone you know? Maybe you heard/saw it on some form of media-TV/paper etc.? Is this a good side of media coverage?

3. Would you have advice for older people at home?

4. Would you have advice for older people outside the home?
Appendix VII- Excerpt from Focus Group Two

3rd May, 2013.

All the student names are fictitious and have been chosen in advance by the participants.

Ella, Emma, Alice, Eleanor, Adele, Chloe, Michelle, Beth.

Facilitator (F)

Tape 1 (after brief pause, continued from Focus Group 1).

Emma. ….. (laughter).

F-So girls today we’re going to discuss two topics, the first is about the power of the media to influence people sometimes to do things or buy things they don’t really want. Any thoughts?

Beth-...

Alice-...

Chloe-..

F-Good point.

Alice-...

Chloe-..Noise on corridor.

Emma-
…Noise on corridor.

F- Are older people more trusting than younger people?

Adele-

Beth-

Alice-

Emma-

Michelle-

F- Can you think of ways in which older people in particular might be influenced?

Chloe-

F- What about someone calling to the door? Noise on the corridor and someone coming in to the room by accident.
…Noise on the corridor.

Adele-

Emma-

Michelle-

Chloe-

F- Older people often like to chat so they might start chatting to someone holding a sign and that person wants you to go to their restaurant or hairdresser (laughter).

Beth-

Emma-
Noise on the corridor.

F- Are there other ways in which people can target you if you don’t watch TV, listen to the radio, go on the internet, don’t open the door…..

Chloe-

F- Are you attracted by what it says or could you see older people being attracted by it?

Adele-

Eleanor-

Chloe-

F- Has anyone watched Daytime TV- shopping channels?

Emma-..Noise in the background.

F- You could almost do the ad. (laughter).

F- Who do those ads. try to target or influence?

Michelle-

Emma-
F- You must be very observant to realise but many people wouldn’t be as clever to notice.

Adele- 

Emma- 

F- If you didn’t have internet, are there other ways to target people?

Emma- Noise on corridor.

Chloe- 

F- Ok girls, would you have any advice, just knowing all those risks out there for older people who could be affected by the media or advertising?

Emma- 

Beth- 

F- Very good idea.

Michelle-
Appendix VIII-Focus Group Analysis

a. The researcher transcribed the data, acquired through the audio taped focus groups, verbatim and key themes were identified (Krueger, 1994). The body language, emotional state and tone of voice were all observed as the researcher acknowledges that non-verbal communication can be just as important as the spoken language (Fade, 2003).

b. According to Vaughn et al, (1996), the next stage of the process is the method of “unitizing the data” which facilitates the division of information in to categories with a coding system which will permit the units to be connected to particular participants in the focus groups.

c. The grouping of units in to common features can be undertaken by the use of a qualitative data analysis computer programme such as Nvivo (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). However, as the contribution of children to focus group discussions tend to be short, the researcher plans to use a number code to identify emerging categories (Bertrand et al, 1992). For the purpose of a thorough analysis, the researcher intends to regularly review the categories for similarities to allow for a more complete evaluation (Vaughn et al 1996).

d. The ultimate phase of the evaluation involves the comparison of these categories with the themes initially recognised in the research (Vaughn et al., 1996). According to the authors, there should be a correlation between the categories and the themes to determine corroboration (Vaughn et al., 1996).
Hello! Would you like to be involved in university research? Well, we are inviting you to take part in a project that will hopefully be interesting and fun. In addition to your consent, we also must get your parent or guardian’s permission for you to participate.

With your help, a new piece of university research will be conducted, by way of a web-based questionnaire through www.surveymonkey.ie. The purpose of the study is to see if children, 10 to 12 years old, can come up with ideas which lead to learning opportunities for their grandparents or older people in school.

The questionnaire will include simple questions on the following topics connected to the Primary School’s SPHE class programme for children your age.

1. Media Education. 2. Safety and Protection.

If you are happy to accept, we plan to send your class a link to a web-based questionnaire which we would ask you to complete by this Friday, 17th May. It’s a unique chance for you to be part of new Irish university research, just like us!. Are you ready for the opportunity?

If so, please complete and return the consent form to P5 tomorrow or the day after.

We appreciate your help and support. Thank you from the P5 researchers and Mr. King.

Intergenerational Research Consent Form

Name of Participant: ___________________________________________

Participant’s signature: __________________________________________

Parent/Guardian’s signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________
Appendix X-Gatekeeper Letter for Survey

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Ken King and I am seeking your assistance regarding research I am undertaking as part of my postgraduate degree at Dublin Institute of Technology. My subject is to study the potential intergenerational educational transfer from children to their grandparents or other older people in their lives. The study involves children of 10 to 12 years old and is being undertaken from a child’s perspective.

The methodological section of my study is being conducted at another school where I am currently undertaking small focus group discussion on topics associated with the Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum for fifth and sixth class. The topics chosen by the children for discussion involve the Strand Units, Media Education, Safety and Protection and associated themes deemed appropriate to the discussion. The initial findings of the focus group discussion will be tested for transferability by means of a web-based questionnaire, through Survey Monkey, presented to children of a similar age in other parts of Dublin.

With your permission, I would appreciate the assistance of your fifth and sixth class pupils in an online questionnaire, through www.surveymonkey.ie. The survey is expected to be ready towards the end of May and pupils will have up to a week to respond. The survey will be anonymous. I have attached an information and consent form for your pupils and their parents.

I will keep you informed as to how the research is going throughout the project and give you a copy of my findings upon completion. I would hope the project will be of some benefit to your school in the future.

If you have any queries about the project, please contact me on xxxxxxx or my supervisor, Dr. Carmel Gallagher, on xxxxxx.

Yours sincerely,
Hello! Would you like to be involved in university research? Well, I'm inviting you to take part in a project that will hopefully be interesting and fun. In addition to your consent, I also must get your parent or guardian's permission for you to participate.

With your help, a new piece of university research will be conducted, by way of a web-based questionnaire through www.surveymonkey.ie. The purpose of the study is to see if children, 11 to 13 years old, can come up with ideas which lead to learning opportunities for their grandparents or older people in school.

The questionnaire will include simple questions on the following topics connected to the Primary School's SPHE class programme for children your age.

1. Media Education. 2. Safety and Protection.

If you are happy to accept, I plan to send your school a link to a web-based questionnaire which I would ask you to complete by Monday, 27th May, 2013. It's a unique chance for you to be part of new Irish university research. Are you ready for the opportunity?

If so, please complete and return the consent form to your school in the next day or so.

I appreciate your help. Thank you from, Ken King (Postgraduate student, D.I.T.)

---------------------------------------------------------------

Intergenerational Research Consent Form

Name of Participant: ___________________________________________

Participant's signature: __________________________________________

Parent/Guardian's signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

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Appendix XII-Web-based Questionnaire

Background Information

The purpose of this questionnaire is to see if young people, 10 to 13 years old, are interested in teaching their grandparents or other older people, something they learn in school.

Using the SPHE school subject, and with guidance from a mentor, the idea is to see if this current project, can develop an intergenerational lesson, with the expertise and involvement of young people.

Stage one of the project has involved discussions with young people on the topics mentioned below. As a result of these discussions, and with the assistance of the young people, this questionnaire has been prepared. You are being invited now to take part in Stage 2 of the project-the questionnaire.

From both the discussions and the findings of the questionnaire, an intergenerational lesson could be formed, which aims to enhance the skills and knowledge of the young people and benefit their grandparents or older people by keeping their minds active and giving them helpful advice on how to keep safe, eat healthy and have a good life. Both young and older will benefit from a meaningful relationship which helps everyone.

You can help the project now by giving up some of your valuable time to complete this questionnaire as well as possible. Please don’t forget to fill in the comment space in question 10 if you have any more advice, suggestions or even a name for the intergenerational lesson.

Thanks very much.
1. How old are you?

☐ 10
☐ 11
☐ 12
☐ 13

2. What is your gender?

☐ Female
☐ Male

3. Please tick the type of school you attend.

☐ Educate Together School
☐ Private Junior School
☐ Primary School for Girls
☐ Mixed Primary School

4. How interested would you be in teaching your grandparent or an older person things you know or learn in school?

☐ Very interested
☐ Interested
☐ Fairly interested
☐ Not interested
5. In general, older people’s buying habits are more influenced by TV, radio, phone, flyer, caller to the door, street poster or sign than the internet (According to our Focus Group Discussions).

What advice would you offer an older person to protect them from impulsive buying? Please tick appropriate boxes.

☐ Ask a trusted neighbour or family member before making a big purchase or changing cable TV/energy supplier.

☐ Be aware of advertising offering products or services at low prices or deals too good to be true.

☐ Don’t trust strangers trying to sell you something at the door, on the phone or on the street.

Other (please specify) __________

6. To what extent would you agree that some people who call to the door or make contact by phone/internet might try to trick an older person out of money or possessions?

☐ Strongly Disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Agree

7. What advice would you offer an older person to keep them safe at home? Please tick appropriate boxes.

☐ Always turn on the alarm.

☐ Don’t answer the door to strangers.

☐ Lodge any spare cash in the bank/post office.

☐ Stay connected with family, friends and trusted neighbours.

☐ Have a plan in case of an emergency.
8. What suggestions would you offer older people to keep them safe outside the home, on the street or on any form of transport? Please tick appropriate boxes.

☐ Don’t carry too much shopping when walking.

☐ Travel paths/roads you know and cross at the lights.

☐ Watch out for cars, trucks and buses.

☐ Bring a walking stick even if you don’t need it.

☐ Try to bring a friend or companion when out walking.

Other (please specify) ____________________________

9. The topics A. Media Education & B. Personal Safety and Protection have been chosen for discussion by children of your age.

If it were your decision to choose, would you have picked any of the other choices below ahead of these topics?

Please tick one of the options below.

☐ Developing citizenship/Green Schools.

☐ I’m happy with Media Education and Personal Safety and Protection.

☐ Making decisions.

☐ Food and nutrition/hygiene and care.

☐ Relating to others/discrimination/racism.

☐ Health and well-being/adequate exercise/balanced diet.

Other (please specify) ____________________________
10. Please write any comments here on the idea of young people teaching a grandparent or older person something they know or learn about in school?

Why not suggest a name for the Intergenerational lesson?
Appendix XII- Comments from Question 10 on Survey

Please write any comments here on the idea of young people teaching a grandparent or older person something they know or learn about in school? Why not suggest a name for the Intergenerational lesson?

1. I like intergenerational as it means all generations
2. History
3. I think this was a really good idea thanks for making this, I am a primary school student in 6th Class, and I was thinking of my grandfather the whole time, so that kind of helped put every option into perspective :)
4. I think its a good idea but i don't really want to do it myself
5. I think it is a good idea because we have more experience in buying technology
6. I think it would be really cool!!!
7. I think that, although racism is widely understood to be wrong and unjust, some elders may have been brought up to think otherwise, and may not fully understand the implications of wrongness of it, and teachings would be a good way to set them back on track. Also, the awareness of the environment has not yet been fully taken into account and although pollution may not effect them in their life-time, it is crucial to act now. A name instead of the 'Integrational' lesson that more people would understand could be the Yearn to Learn.
8. OLD SCHOOL! NEW SCHOOL!
9. learn together to live together
10. elderly advice
11. In my day
12. In my day
13. In my day
14. General OAP safety
15. O.A.P. Safety
16. Teaching grandparents
17. TIES(Transfer of Intergenerational Educational Stuff)
Appendix XIII- Project Evaluation Form

Name: (Please write focus group name here)

1. Did you enjoy taking part in the research?
   Yes  No

2. What was the reaction of your parents/grandparents or other older people to the idea?
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________

3. How interested would you be in actually teaching an older person?
   Very                Fairly                Not at all

4. What did you learn from the project?
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________

5. Do you have any more advice or comments to add about the topics discussed at the focus groups? Personal Safety and Media Education.
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________

6. Would you be available in June to take part in a Pilot Lesson involving your grandparent or an older person?
   Yes  No

   Thanks for all your help and advice. Have a lovely summer.
Appendix XIV-Project Notebook

At the initial introductory meeting, the project was described by Rebekkah to be “about young children teaching grannys, granddads and anyone who is over 60 about SPHE”. At a subsequent meeting, Ruby “noticed that 2/3 of the class are doing the project”. This was followed by the process of choosing the topics for discussion as explained by Chloe: "we discussed what topics we were going to look into….We also discussed what we would use to record the focus group….and our names which we will use for our focus groups as we become anonymous….and refreshments and snacks we would like”. When the focus groups began at phase three, Alice remarked that “today, we used for the first time our artificial names” to which Lily added that “we discussed about the power of media and safety and protection”. Alice continued that: “we discussed about how elderly can be easily influenced when watching ads. on the television or seeing things that look good but aren’t good”.

Two weeks after the focus group discussions, initial feedback was communicated to the co-researchers about the key themes and work commenced on the format of the web-based questionnaire at phase four of the research. The collaborative decision was made to design a pilot version of the questionnaire to be completed by the co-constructors themselves. This would allow for confirmation of the content of the focus group discussions and make changes necessary to test for generalisation with children of both sexes from different schools. The feedback to the pilot questionnaire is described by Ella when she notes the proposed changes to the initial design: “put in question about choice of topics............shorten intro.......delete first part of Q7-focus on security issues not shopping....”

A plan was agreed whereby two of the co-researchers, Adele and Emma, would “give out consent forms to another class in the school” (Ella). Another two co-researchers, Aedín and Rose would then “collect consent forms and send link for questionnaire to that class”. The next stage involved a consent form and a link to be sent “to boys’ and girls’ schools in Dublin” (Ella). From their own experience of
conducting the pilot questionnaire, the co-constructors anticipated some challenges to the completion of the web-based questionnaire as “internet problems and survey access problems” could prove troublesome.

At the final meeting in early June, Jasmine commented that “today is our last meeting….we had pizza….we went over what other schools thought of the project”.
Appendix XV- “Before IG Learning” by Adele

Appendix XV- “After IG Learning” By Adele
Appendix XV- “Thank You” by Aedín

Appendix XV- “Helping” by Ella
Intergenerational Program

Stay safe
Everyone needs to be careful on the internet.
Caution is a good thing to have.
Unlucky people get into big problems.
Right minded people don't get involved.
I myself would be safe on the internet.
Try to protect yourself against cyberbullying.
You should be careful with social media.
Appendix XV- “Be Suspicious” by Ruby

Appendix XV- “Bright & Colourful Way” by Rebekkah
Appendix XVI- Five Phases of Research

The first phase comprised of two introductory meetings at which the researcher explained the various elements of the project, such as the content and time commitment, and distributed consent and information forms to the participants and their parents. Phase two began discussion with the co-researchers, firstly, on the choice of topics available from the Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum and secondly, on the fieldwork concerning issues such as research format, type of recording equipment, number and timing of the focus groups, allocation of group members, choice of fictitious names and preferred refreshments. Phase three involved two focus group discussions on themes chosen by the co-researchers, at phase two, from the Strand Units, *Media Education and Personal Safety and Protection*, within the Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum (Primary School’s SPHE Curriculum).

A web-based questionnaire was conducted, at phase four, based on focus group feedback relayed to the co-researchers, with the purpose of generalising the findings of the qualitative research to a broader sample of children, including boys, in Catholic, Church of Ireland and Educate Together School settings in the South Dublin area. The fifth phase of the research involved project evaluation and feedback was gathered from the co-researchers, their parents and grandparents. In addition, the researcher plans to elicit the views of grandparents and older people following their participation in the proposed IG lesson or programme.
Appendix XVII- Email from Generations@school

Ken

From: Generations at School [generationsatschool@paueducation.com]
Sent: 05 March 2013 09:27
To: kenking66@gmail.com
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Contact

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your email.

Your suggestion is absolutely in the frame of the project, therefore we would be glad if you and your class participates with such an activity.

Should you have more questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,

Kristina
generations@school Team

Operated by P.A.U. Education
On behalf of the European Commission
C/Muntaner 262, 3
08021 Barcelona
Phone: +34 933 670 448
Fax: +34 934 146 238
Email: Krisztina.szabo@paueducation.com

-----Mensaje original-----
De: generationsatschool@paueducation.com [mailto:generationsatschool@paueducation.com]
Enviado el: sábado, 02 de marzo de 2013 13:56
Para: generationsatschool@paueducation.com
Asunto: Form submission from: Contact

Submitted on Sat, 03/02/2013 - 13:55
Submitted by user: youngandold
Submitted values are:

gen_name: youngandold
gen_email: kenking66@gmail.com
gen_subject: Intergenerational Project
gen_message: Hi there, I am wondering if I could include a project that, while acknowledging the contribution of the older persons to intergenerational learning, focuses more on the upward educational transfer of knowledge from grandchild to grandparent in a school environment? I am currently researching this potential as part of a thesis for my Masters Degree.

The results of this submission may be viewed at:
http://www.generationsatschool.eu/en/node/212/submission/4
Appendix XVIII- Guidelines for Pilot Lesson Template

SOME WAYS TO STAY SAFE

Artwork by Beth

1. Focus on how older people learn.....maybe paper/photo/TV/radio for most but could we use the internet or the interactive whiteboard to carry out a portion of the lesson??
2. Photo/poster/sign/film/paper etc. on topic to start discussion on the topic- Media Education or Personal Safety. How the effects of these topics change over time.
3. Drama-role play to show potential risks of impulsive buying or dangers or threats in the home or in the community for young and older person.
5. What advice or safeguards can we put in place? Chat and make notes..
6. Make a sign/poster/slogan to alert people or warn people of the risks attached to impulsive buying/safety issues.
7. Do an intergenerational drama or a short movie to push your message
8. Use Media to your advantage.....
9. Take control of your Personal Safety by sticking to some basic principles.
Appendix XIX- John Dewey
A Pioneer in Educational Philosophy

by

Steven Devendorf
TED502
State University College at Oswego

Introduction
John Dewey (1859 - 1952) has made, arguably, the most significant contribution to the
development of educational thinking in the twentieth century. He was an American
psychologist, philosopher, educator, social critic and political activist. Dewey's philosophical
pragmatism, concern with interaction, reflection and experience, and interest in community
and democracy, were brought together to form a highly suggestive educative form. John
Dewey is often misrepresented - and wrongly associated with child-centered education. In
many respects his work cannot be easily slotted into any one of the curriculum traditions that
have dominated north American and UK schooling traditions over the last century.
John Dewey's significance for informal educators lays in a number of areas. First, his belief
that education must engage with and enlarge experience has continued to be a significant
strand in informal education practice. Second, and linked to this, Dewey's exploration of
thinking and reflection - and the associated role of educators - has continued to be an
inspiration. Third, his concern with interaction and environments for learning provide a
continuing framework for practice. And finally, his passion for democracy, for educating so
that all may share in a common life, provides a strong rationale for practice in the
collaborative settings in which educators work.

In this paper, it is the writers intention to provide the reader with the pinnacle experiences
and works of John Dewey that influence the theories and practices of the modern educational
community today. This account of John Dewey's life has been researched and composed as a
snapshot of the magnitude of his work which began in the 1890s, and became a lifetime of
intellectual accomplishments (40 books and over 700 articles, in addition to countless letters,
lectures, and other published works) which continue to play an influential role in the many
fields of knowledge today.
Dewey’s Early Years
John Dewey was born October 20, 1859, in Burlington, Vermont. His father, Archibald, decided to give up on the third generation of family farming to pursue a career in the grocery business, which was opened in the small city of Burlington. Dewey's mother, Lucina, was also raised in the farming business. With the onset of the Civil War, Archibald sold the grocery business when he volunteered to join the Union Army, but after the war he soon became the owner of a cigar and tobacco shop (Field, 2001).

John and his two brothers were raised in a middle class environment in a community consisting of natural born Americans and newly settled immigrants from Ireland and French Quebec. Dewey completed grade-school at the age of 12 in Burlington's public schools. He entered high school in 1872 and selected the college-preparatory track (this option became available only a few years previously). Dewey completed his high school courses in three years. He began his college studies at the University of Vermont, in Burlington, in 1875, when he was 16 years old. The curriculum in college was traditional in the sense that it was similar to Dewey's high school courses, which emphasized studies in Greek and Latin, English literature, math, and rhetoric. The faculty did, however, encourage their students to be themselves and to think their own thoughts. This was the first exposure that Dewey had to his future beliefs and theories. By his senior year, Dewey was immersed in studies of political, social, and moral philosophy (Field, 2001).

Dewey graduated from the University of Vermont in 1879. Through a relative, he obtained a high school teaching position in Oil City, Pennsylvania, where he was part of a three-member faculty for two years. Dewey returned to Vermont in 1881, where he combined high school teaching with continuing study of philosophy, under the tutoring of Dewey's former undergraduate professor, Henry A. P. Torrey.

Dewey Peruses his Doctorate
In September 1882, Dewey enrolled at Johns Hopkins University to begin graduate studies in philosophy. Johns Hopkins was one of the first American universities to offer graduate instruction that was considered comparable to the European universities, emphasizing original scholarly research as an expectation for graduate students and faculty members. Dewey's professors included Charles Sanders Peirce (logic), G. Stanley Hall (psychology), and George Sylvester Morris, whose interest in the work of Hegel and Kant greatly influenced Dewey. Dewey's dissertation, "The Psychology of Kant," was completed in 1884. The manuscript was never published and has never been found; however, an article by Dewey titled "Kant and Philosophic Method," published in The Journal of Speculative Philosophy in April 1884 is believed to cover some of the same material as the dissertation.

The Road to Chicago
Upon completion of his Ph.D., Dewey was recommended, by one of his advisers, for a position as a junior professor at the University at Michigan, where he inevitably became the department chair of the philosophy department. Dewey taught at Michigan from 1884 to 1888, and also from 1889 to 1894. During the first four years at Michigan, Dewey's reputation as a scholar and teacher was recognized by the University of Minnesota, and they in turn offered Dewey a position as Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy. He did take the position, but only remained in Minnesota for one year, returning to Michigan for the department head position.

In 1894, Dewey joined the staff at the four year old University of Chicago. Like John Hopkins, He was expected to perform scholarly work including publishing, as well as
excellence in teaching. It was here that Dewey began his extensive research, publications, and dialogue on philosophy, psychology, and the study of pedagogy. Dewey felt that the pedagogical studies should stand alone from the studies of philosophy and psychology, and upon agreement form the college president, the Department of Pedagogy was developed. Chicago’s program (now called the Department of Education) became the most respected in the country by the early 1900s.

Dewey’s Pedagogic Creed

By the end of the 1800s, Dewey began to focus much of his attention to the newly developed Department of Pedagogy at Chicago. In 1896, through the direct efforts of Dewey, the first experimental school, called the University Elementary school was established. It was in this laboratory school, and many to follow, that the philosophical beliefs of Dewey, later to be called Pragmatism, were engaging students in the classroom. Less than a year later, one of John Dewey’s many famous writings, called My Pedagogic Creed appeared in The School Journal, Volume LIV, Number3, on January 16, 1897. This was an extremely powerful essay in which Dewey outlined several aspects of his views on education and school. Ultimately, Dewey believed that school and education should be rooted in the experiences of the child. School should connect to the values of the home, to the child's everyday life and interests, as well as developing new interests and experiences. Dewey stated “I believe that the teacher's place and work in the school is to be interpreted from this same basis.” “The teacher is not in the school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child, but is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child and to assist him in properly responding to these influences” (1897). This was one of many quotations that the educational community faulted, in that it was felt that the teacher would lose control of the students in a child-centered environment.

Dewey also states his belief in authentic education by writing “I believe that the only way to make the child conscious of his social heritage is to enable him to perform those fundamental types of activity which make civilization what it is.” “I believe, therefore, in the so-called expressive or constructive activities as the center of correlation.” “I believe that this gives the standard for the place of cooking, sewing, manual training, etc., in the school” (1897).

Progressive education

During this timeframe of the late-19th century, many educational programs began to emerge out of the American reform effort called the progressive movement with its philosophies rooted in the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau, Johann Pestalozzi, and Friedrich Froebel. Considered a pluralistic phenomenon, it embraced industrial training, agricultural and social education, and educational theorists' new instructional techniques. The progressives insisted that education be a continuous reconstruction of living experience, with the child the center of concern. (Rugg, 1960) Firmly committed to a democratic outlook, he considered the school a laboratory to test his notion that education could integrate learning with experience. Dewey cited in Edmen’s book, Makers of the American Tradition, “the advance of psychology, of industrial methods, and of the experimental method in science makes another conception of experience explicitly desirable and possible” (pp. 195-196).

John Dewey’s Laboratory School in Chicago (1896-1904), the public schools of Gary, Ind., and Winnetka, Ill., and such independent schools as the Dalton School and the Lincoln School of Teachers College, Columbia, were notable progressive institutions. The University Elementary School or Laboratory School, established by Dewey, grew quickly. Parents were drawn to a curriculum that focused on the child along with the subject matter. The learning process was just as important as what was learned, and where curiosity was encouraged (Brubacher, 1960). Unlike earlier models of teaching, which relied on authoritarianism and
rote learning, progressive education contented that students must have an investment in what they were being taught.

School and Society
John Dewey maintained that schools should reflect society. He believed that there was a strong connection between education and social action in a democracy. Trained as a philosopher at Johns Hopkins, Dewey was intrigued by the relationship between the individual and society. In a book written by Dewey in 1899, entitled School and Society, he wrote “democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife.” He felt that schools should not simply be places where lessons are disseminated that could, or could not, one day play a role in a student’s life. School should be full of activities that are vital and important to the learner now. It should “be a miniature community, an embryonic society” (p. 15). Dewey felt that in the new industrial society children were not realizing the basic foundational skills that had led to the development of their current society. School should provide children with that foundation so they could in turn make meaningful contributions to, and play important roles in, society. They would be able to use their mind as a powerful tool to help both themselves and the society in which they live.

From Dewey’s viewpoint, traditional education set up the child to play a passive, receptive role in the educational process. The schoolrooms and curriculum that were being utilized during this time were that of a one size fits all mentality. However, children are unique, full of spontaneity and imagination. Their minds are active and naturally inquisitive. Hence, when information is merely disseminated and expected to be regurgitated, it is no wonder that children lose interest and it becomes hard work just to gain their attention. Dewey’s philosophy of education embraced the natural urges of the child. He encouraged questioning and testing to discover truth. “A thought is not a thought, unless it is one’s own” (p. 50). However, according to Dewey, children’s interest are not simply to be freely explored without direction. The interests are to be controlled and fostered by the educator with a specific purpose and enduring goal in mind.

Democracy and Education
In 1916 John Dewey wrote another powerful book which was written within the framework of how education was to fulfill the needs of society. The book entitled Democracy and Education defined democracy as a way of defining culture. Dewey viewed democracy as a way of government that allows for the members of society to enjoy freedom in a well organized civilization. He refers to the countries that do not use technology and mass elections to govern themselves as "savage".

According to Michael Boucher’s research in the Capstone Project, this book was written in a time that World War I was underway and was promised to end all wars. Child labor laws were creating unprecedented need for schools in urban areas where there previously had been no need, and these children were in school to learn the new skills for a new non-agrarian society (1998). The events of the world at the time certainly influenced Dewey’s work and helped to fuel his philosophies. Dewey theorized that societies that are more “complex” needed more complex systems to transmit the culture to the young. This transmission takes place through "communication" which comes through the social interaction between children and adults. Education was defined by these social interactions; this transmission of culture. Dewey again associates the existence of society as a living and growing entity in his statement:
“Society exists through a process of transmission quite as much as biological life. The transmission occurs by means of ideals, hopes, expectations, standards, and opinions from
those members of society who are passing out of the group to those who are coming into it. Without this, social life could not survive” (p. 3).

In his analysis, Boucher feels that *Democracy and Education* was above all a treatise on the purpose of teaching and it challenged teachers to work on specific areas of knowledge and become scholars in those fields. Dewey felt that teaching critical thinking skills was a far better utilization of education versus memorization of rote knowledge. “He challenged teachers to think and reflect on why they do things and to look at math, science, geography, and art as ways of learning to learn” (1998). Dewey’s commitment to democratic education practices at the Dewey School was evidence of these philosophical beliefs. This school was a community of learners. Dewey was not only concerned with developing the minds of students, but also that of teacher’s.

**Conclusion**

In Dewey’s extensive works throughout his life, he outlined his views on how education could improve society. The founder of what became known as the progressive education movement, Dewey argued that it was the job of education to encourage individuals to develop their full potential as human beings. He was especially critical of the rote learning of facts in schools and argued that children should learn by experience. In this way students would not just gain knowledge but would also develop skills, habits and attitudes necessary for them to solve a wide variety of problems.

Dewey attempted to show the important links between education and politics. Dewey believed that active learning would help people develop the ability and motivation to think critically about the world around them. Progressive education was therefore a vital part of a successful democracy as it was necessary for people to be able to think for themselves. Dewey also argued that the development of critical thought would also help protect society from the dangers of dictatorship. Students must be engaged in meaningful and relevant activities which allow them to apply the concepts they are endeavoring to learn. Hands-on projects are the key to creating authentic learning experiences.