The transformative possibilities of formal and non-formal education sector partnership: A case study of the Global Connections program

A thesis submitted as fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
December 2011

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Declaration

I declare:

a) That except where due acknowledgement has been made this thesis is the work of the author alone

b) The work has not been submitted previously, in whole or part, to qualify for any other academic award

c) The work has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program

d) Any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged

e) Ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed

Jeffrey Brian King

December 2011
Acknowledgements

It is with a sense of considerable pleasure that I recall the people who have played an important part in the existence of this thesis. It is with a sense of deep gratitude that I reflect on their actual contributions. It is with a sense of satisfaction and anticipation that I value the ongoing relationships with these people that will survive and thrive beyond the completion of this project.

My supervisors Dr Robbie Guevara and Professor Annette Gough have been the people most closely associated with the work of this thesis and I acknowledge their contributions first. Their availability, responsiveness, wisdom and timely advice have made the work of this thesis more straightforward for me than I could possibly have hoped. Additionally, as if smoothing the pathway of a doctoral journey were not enough, Robbie and Annette made significant contributions to my life beyond this thesis. They both played an invaluable role in my being able to successfully re-establish a professional life after my move to Melbourne.

Robbie, your willingness to include me in other projects from the outset, the doors you opened and opportunities you enabled, your ongoing encouragement and support are all deeply appreciated. Your ability and compassion as an educator, mentor and facilitator are inspirational. Your interpretive thinking about complex research problems is unique. Most importantly, your generous friendship has absolutely been the best outcome from my involvement with this project. Thank you.

Annette, before I ever met you, you were a source of motivation and had claimed my respect. It was perhaps a ‘big ask’ to expect that you would live up to the ten foot tall image I had of you - but somehow it happened! I have been delighted to have had the opportunity to replace the ‘Annette legend’ with a more realistic version and my respect is definitely stronger as a result. I have been the grateful beneficiary of your kindness, professional ability and judgement with regard to this research and with regard to your support as an employer. Thank you.

Also directly involved in this research were the other members of the ARC project team and I acknowledge their considerable contributions: Samantha Ratnam, Ani Wierenga, Johanna Wyn, Sally Beadle, Victoria Kahla, and Lisa Schultz. I relished the collegiality and dynamic thinking that characterised the ARC meetings and am grateful to have shared that space with all of you. I specifically acknowledge that some of the ideas that I have included in this thesis and believe to be my own may well have had their genesis in one of the nuggets of insight and wisdom that each of you offered to that forum. If that is indeed the case I thank you again. If not, I nevertheless have no doubt that the generous ways that you received my contributions, teased them out, critically
interacted with them, added to them, and layered them with your own ideas helped significantly to shape the results of this research. My association with you all, collectively and individually, has greatly aided my academic growth and been an unreserved pleasure. Thank you.

I would like to add a special acknowledgement of Samantha Ratnam with whom I have shared the trials and tribulations of PhD candidature. The journey for me has been easier and more meaningful with you to share it. I look forward to following your future career and believe that whatever path you choose, you will help shape this country’s future. Good luck with your final thesis stages Sam.

I acknowledge also the dedicated professionals who contributed to the empirical phase of this research by generously committing their time in interviews. Although you must necessarily remain anonymous I sincerely appreciate the good will and expertise you brought to this research. This thesis is your story and any contributions it might make to improved partnership practice or changed educational thinking are your contributions. I have merely been the vehicle by which your story has been told. Thank you.

Beyond the work of this research I would like to specially acknowledge Linda Darby (and Linda Hobbs more recently) who has been my professional colleague for four years. Linda was finishing her doctorate as I was starting and understood the journey. It would be hard to overstate how important it was to me to be able to continue with other work as a balance to the demands of this research. I am immensely grateful to Linda for her support, good counsel and good will. Thank you.

My final acknowledgements are for me the most important - my family. My three sons Nigel, Simon and Michael (and now also my wonderful daughters-in-law Jessica and Caroline) have been consistent supporters of this interlude in my life (and at all other times). Their unconditional love and their grounded understanding of me have kept me connected to everything I value. The time has long passed since everything I did was for them but they are still so very much a part of everything I do. Thank you.

Finally, I would like to especially acknowledge my wife Barbara. Barbara started me on this academic journey and it is appropriate that she is my last thought as I complete the writing of this thesis with these acknowledgements. It is also appropriate because this thesis is about partnership and for nearly thirty years we have shared a partnership that for me exemplifies ‘best practice’. Barbara has ‘had my back’ for nearly thirty years. It is so much easier to tackle a project like this when you have someone behind you who lets you know you can never fail them. Although behind me all the way, she has also led by example - Barbara has just submitted her own PhD thesis and I wish her the very best – forever.
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Summary

The research problem that this thesis addresses involved developing understanding of how formal and non-formal education providers can work together effectively to construct educational opportunities in schools. Formal education systems are increasingly challenged to provide innovative educational responses in a context of limited resources and a rapidly changing globalised world characterised by complexity. It would seem that utilising outside organisations which are alternatively resourced and alternatively experienced offers a way of extending schools’ capability. Indeed, this approach is supported by government policies and rhetoric, which encourage partnership between schools and their communities as a way of enhancing educational possibility (MCEETYA, 2008).

However, when the organisations involved have fundamentally different mandates for their activity and different ways of interpreting education, establishing effective partnerships is inherently problematic. Irrespective of the value attached to the educational outcomes that eventuate, partnership activity must necessarily be reconciled with the aims, structures, roles, and processes of fundamentally different organisational systems.

The empirical work that supports this thesis was undertaken as part of an Australian Research Council (ARC) project and involved investigating one set of formal and non-formal education partnerships. State secondary schools in Melbourne, Australia (as representative of formal education) and the child-centred development organisation Plan Australia (as representative of non-formal education) combined to implement an innovative educational intervention called Global Connections.

Qualitative case studies which focussed on the partners’ interactions and their interpretations of Global Connections activity were developed for each of the school sites where the program was implemented in 2008 and 2009. The case studies were primarily based on interviews with key participants but also utilised document analysis and observation methods to create rich descriptions of the partnerships. Throughout the data generation, techniques were used that were informed by participatory principles in order to maximise the input of the research participants. In this way, the research was aligned with a social constructivism epistemology and acknowledges the socially situated nature of the knowledge claims that resulted.

The empirical data generated were characterised by evidence that the existing structures, roles and processes of each partner remained essentially unchanged during the partnership activity and were utilised separately to implement Global Connections. Further to this, the research provided strong evidence that each organisation utilised different interpretive frameworks to understand and
evaluate the educational purpose, content and pedagogies of Global Connections. As a result, the research invoked consideration of fundamental questions related to the purpose of education and the role that schools and teachers play with regard to decisions about what counts as education.

The different educational approaches of the schools and Plan appeared to act in ways consistent with the social theories of Bourdieu (1993). Bourdieu describes society as made up of different social fields that are relatively autonomous. The social fields act to legitimate what counts as knowledge and so limit the range of innovative responses individuals in each field can make when challenges to taken-for-granted ways of acting occur. As such, the research problem of constructing effective partnerships was recognised as being about ways of bridging the different educational sectors (as social fields) as well as being an operational problem of coordinating the work of individuals within separate organisational structures.

A framework for interpreting the data, which recognised the broader research problem of bridging sectoral difference, was developed by adapting and inter-relating three distinct theoretical approaches from the literature. The framework involved firstly considering the degree to which Global Connections was complicated (with many interwoven parts) and complex (with uncertain outcomes) (Rogers, 2008). The partners were then positioned with regard to how they interacted with the program’s complexity and complicatedness, and with each other. To this end, the framework combined an engagement continuum which looked at the extent to which each partner contributed to the processes of implementing Global Connections with qualitative dimensions of partnership related to the commitment each partner brought to partnership and the value that they assigned to working together.

The engagement continuum was adapted from partnership work done by Forrester (cited in Birzea, 2000) and Denise (1999) and characterised the partnerships as cooperative, coordinated, or collaborative with regard to how each partner contributed their structures, roles and processes to various aspects of partnership activity. The qualitative dimensions of partnership were considered using evidence of how trust, mutuality and reciprocity were manifest in the relationships (Kruger et al., 2009).

The empirical data were generated solely within the context of Global Connections. However, the strength of the evidence related to cross-sectoral interaction was such that a number of conclusions could be drawn that might usefully inform thinking about other partnerships with a similar purpose. In particular, specific aspects of sectoral difference must be explicitly identified and negotiated so that each organisation understands the extent of their partner’s commitment. Additionally, each
organisation must have explicit understanding of what the partnership and the activity it enables means to their partner.

A model of partnership is offered which describes a ‘collaborative partnership space’ within which explicit understanding is developed. The space is theorised as acting in a governance-type role and as needing to be actively constructed. The governance role of the space includes actively addressing the critical factors of trust, mutuality and reciprocity so that they are understood and reinforced by both partners. The collaborative partnership space is envisaged as being distinct from the program management space but would give authority to and support that management space. The model that is offered is structured to ensure that program activity, which is the focus of partnership, is jointly evaluated, understood and acknowledged while retaining the possibility of contributing separately and perhaps in different ways to each organisation’s goals.

The final conclusion of the thesis confirms the potential and promise of formal and non-formal partnership provided such partnerships appropriately recognise and incorporate the partners’ differences. The promise of well constructed sustainable partnerships is educational opportunity beyond what either organisation could accomplish individually.
Preamble

The various themes relating to formal education, global citizenship, development practice, and transformative education that are interwoven through the context and content of this research all have strong resonance with my personal history. This thesis is shaped by that history and as such reflects the way that doctoral research can be as much a personal journey as an academic one. I have undertaken this journey with pride and commitment and I acknowledge at the outset of this thesis the inevitable influence, at multiple levels, of my own worldviews and perspectives on the outcomes of this research. Specifically in this regard, I brought to the research my experiences from working in both education and development. I have considerable experience as a classroom teacher and in governance roles in schools. I have also worked with the next generation of teachers on teacher training courses. I have undertaken a variety of research projects related to education other than the work associated with this research. I have worked in several countries including both voluntary and contract education development work in countries in Africa. Finally, but not least significantly, I am a parent and have closely tracked my three sons’ progress through the education systems of four countries. The multiple contexts of my experience in education and specifically my recent years of work as an environmental educator have instilled in me a deep sense of commitment to supporting education that is enabling and equitable, particularly with regard to global education and issues of sustainability.

My background as a secondary school teacher rather than my academic focus underpinned my initial interest in this particular research. As a classroom teacher, I was aware of the limitations that schools faced with regard to providing certain kinds of educational experiences for students – particularly education that was socially-oriented and genuinely participatory. Further to this, some of the education-related work I had undertaken with development organisations in Africa created a belief in the possibilities of partnership. This was particularly evident when working in Zimbabwe and Eritrea. These countries were (and are) very strongly resistant to influence of any kind that appeared to be imposed from outside but were willing to work alongside others in a collaborative way that allowed a range of ideas to be assessed and adjusted to the particular circumstances of their contexts. It seemed that partnerships could enable effective opportunities for transformative education not otherwise possible.

Therefore, I came into this research project with a strong belief in the potential of appropriate cross-sectoral partnerships to enrich educational possibilities in ways that make education deeper and more democratic. Additionally, the theme of global citizenship was particularly interesting to me because my active involvement with ‘Education for Sustainability’ has accentuated the multiple ways that culturally different people co-exist and strive in an increasingly globalised society. I began this
research project with a murky sense of my own global citizenship identity but convinced that such an identity had intrinsic importance to a vision of a sustainable and equitable future. For me, this research project was about supporting people who were working from fundamentally different worldviews to create educational opportunity and the possibility of a more equitable future.

*******************************
PART ONE: Establishing the research

Chapter One: The research study

1.1 Introduction

This thesis is about transformative education. More specifically, it is concerned with partnership between non-formal education providers and the formal education system as an avenue for creating transformative educational environments in schools. The thesis is supported by evidence generated through empirical research that was undertaken as part of an Australian Research Council Linkage (ARC-Linkage) project involving The University of Melbourne and RMIT University, with the child-centred development organisation Plan Australia as an industry partner. The ARC-Linkage project was developed to investigate characteristics of a specific educational intervention called Global Connections which was developed by Plan Australia and implemented, in part, in state secondary schools in Melbourne, Australia.

Global Connections was characterised by innovation. The program’s classroom activity involved innovative educational themes and innovative pedagogical approaches. A parallel process of innovation was required to implement the program through the combined activity of multiple stakeholder groups from two countries. Each group brought different educational motivations, interests and perspectives to the project. As a result, the interactions and activity associated with Global Connections were operationally and sociologically complex as well as breaking new ground educationally.

Within the mix of organisations involved in Global Connections, the interactions between Plan Australia and Australian secondary schools were critical for enabling the Australian part of the program. Implementing the program broke new ground in the particular ways that it constructed those interactions between organisations which respectively represented non-formal and formal education. Consequently, Global Connections involved transformative educational objectives, but it also involved transformative educational practice. As such, the program indirectly invoked questions about the ways that such education connects to both formal and non-formal education, and the ways that these differently mandated sectors might relate to each other. These latter questions are important concerns of this thesis.

The nature of the relationships between Plan Australia and the schools was the focus of the empirical research that accompanied this project. In particular, the research was designed to generate data that would facilitate interpreting the organisational interactions at the school sites of Global Connections through a lens of ‘partnership’. In principle, alternatively resourced and alternatively
experienced partners can broaden and deepen educational experiences by creating opportunities beyond what either partner could achieve independently. However, it is far from straightforward to reconcile the different operational systems, agenda and motivations of formal and non-formal educational interests. State schools are bound by legislation and very much part of formal governmental structures whereas non-government organisations (NGOs) like Plan Australia are non-formal and by definition non-governmental.

Examination of the program interactions invited consideration of issues that went to the heart of both development practice and formal education. Such issues included questioning fundamental assumptions about the aims and methods of both formal education and development activity. In multiple ways, *Global Connections* involved alternative ways of thinking and acting with regard to the customary purposes, processes, roles, and structures of organisations from both the formal and non-formal education sectors.

This thesis describes some of those different ways of thinking and acting and identifies as critical the different organisational structures and interpretive frameworks of formal and non-formal education systems. The organisational structures created logistical challenges and the interpretive frameworks acted to create parallel ways of understanding *Global Connections*. Both aspects of the organisational interactions critically influenced each organisation’s perception of the program and the partnership’s success. The empirical evidence generated about those perceptions is used to inform a model that is offered as a way of thinking about formal and non-formal education sector partnerships for enabling school-based activity.

1.2 The Australian Research Council (ARC) linkage project

This research was part of a wider ARC-linkage project (LP0882156) titled: ‘Local Connections and Global Citizenship: A youth-led approach to learning and partnership’

The ARC grant to the research partnership was in support of a proposal aimed at establishing ‘a systematic evidence base for the design of sustainable, youth-led programs that promote Australian young people’s global learning’ (Wierenga et al, 2008, p.20). As such, the focus of the research grant was on Australian young people and the programs of learning that affect them. The evidence base referred to was to be built around research involving the *Global Connections* program.

The ARC research was organised to address three aims:

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1 The term ARC-Linkage refers to a specific category of the Australian Research Council’s funded research involving contribution from an industry partner organisation outside the university system. In this case Plan Australia is the industry partner. For the purposes of this thesis ‘ARC’ will be used to indicate the ‘ARC-Linkage’ relationship.
1. To investigate with young people the tensions and possibilities between constructing young people’s individual lives, and social participation in their communities and worlds (with a critical focus on concepts of individualisation, civic engagement, active citizenship and global citizenship).

2. To articulate a model of Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) involvement in developing young people’s awareness and skills to effect positive social change.

3. To develop conceptual understandings, resources and practical tools for effective and sustainable learning partnerships (between community, school, NGO, University partnerships which support youth-led innovation and learning). (Wierenga et al, 2008)

These multiple aims of the ARC research relate to building knowledge about the ways in which young people experience, understand and develop their global identities and their sense of global citizenship, as well as building knowledge about models of youth-led citizenship programs, and the ways that multiple stakeholders interact to enable such programs.

This thesis contributes to the third research aim which is related to a theme of creating sustainable learning partnerships for facilitating youth-led learning and connects to the following questions:

- What processes, roles and structures in the partner organisations are associated with effective outcomes?
- What processes, roles and structures in the partner organisations enable young people to play a leadership role? (Wierenga et al, 2008)

The rationale for this particular ARC research aim was derived from evaluations of the pilot versions of Global Connections. Those evaluations recognised that the ‘voices’ of the partners (and the schools in particular) were under-represented. A need for understanding the experiences of the program’s partners was identified alongside developing understanding of the experiences of the learners within the program (Wierenga, 2006; Ratnam, 2007a). This research was therefore specifically directed towards understanding the ways that formal education (as represented by secondary schools in Melbourne) interacted with non-formal education (as represented by the NGO Plan Australia) within the activity of the program. The research intent was formalised by developing specific research questions.

1.3 The Research Questions

This research was designed to address two research questions:
1. What can we learn from the context of the Global Connections program about appropriate and effective partnerships between non-formal education and formal education providers?

2. What might a model of an effective partnership between formal and non-formal education for constructing school-based education look like?

The research focus was deliberately structured in two parts because I recognised that the ability of this research to address the second research question was contingent on the outcomes generated by addressing the first question and so might not be possible. I considered that the first research question on its own was sufficient to support a thesis because there seemed to be considerable interest among various education and development practitioners and academics in the type of cross-sectoral engagement that was represented by Global Connections. However, my hope was always that this research might usefully inform more general thinking about the educational possibility of cross-sectoral collaborations. I was interested in theorising about partnership and therefore my second research aim was to generate a model of partnership that could stimulate discussion rather than simply reporting ‘what happened’.

1.4 Significance of the study: Contribution to knowledge

This research contributes to knowledge about the ways that educational interests from outside the formal education sector might contribute to activity that takes place in the formal environment of school-based education. In particular, it considers such contributions with regard to transformative educational opportunities that extend the normal practice and capability of schools. The research also adds to the discourse on development NGO activity. In particular, it adds to thinking about the ways that development NGOs relate to their constituent communities in developed countries.

The partnerships between Plan Australia and state secondary schools in Melbourne bridged the non-formal and formal education sectors. Such cross-sectoral innovation inevitably challenges taken-for-granted assumptions about the core activity of both sectors. Ontological and epistemological differences inevitably operate to influence each partner’s contribution and this research contributes to thinking about how such differences might be negotiated alongside the resolution of practical issues in order for such partnerships to be sustainable. In doing so, it contributes to knowledge and thinking about the purposes and practices of education within both formal education and non-formal education frameworks.

The importance of this research relates in part to the potential importance of cross-sectoral partnerships within formal education environments. Global Connections is an example of a program that is only possible through the action of such partnerships. Neither of the partners could run the
program independently and so the construction of appropriate partnerships can assume a derived importance from the significance of the educational intervention itself. In this regard, the importance of the study can also be interpreted by reference to the Australian social and political contexts alongside consideration of its educational context.

Politically, the support provided through the ARC grant establishes a certain degree of importance with regard to current government interests. *Global Connections* connects to both Commonwealth and State government policy directions in three significant ways:

1. The orientation of *Global Connections* towards developing skills of active citizenship and understanding of global citizenship identity aligns the program educationally to an area that has been identified as important by the governments of Australia in recent education policy documents (for examples and further discussion see section 2.3.2).

The policy documents all establish the importance of the global citizenship goals that underlie *Global Connections*. However, the rhetoric associated with these education policy statements has not yet been supported with clear guidelines as to what being an active global citizen encompasses. Nor do curriculum documents indicate what specific outcomes should result from educational activity directed towards such an objective. As a result, global citizenship education does not yet have a high profile in Victorian secondary schools. This study contributes to understanding how global citizenship education might be formulated by documenting interpretations of the way that *Global Connections* fits within the ‘normal’ activity of schools.

2. The specific involvement of Indonesia as the partner country in the educational activity aligns with Australian Commonwealth government priorities with regard to foreign policy objectives.

For example, the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) which is the principal agency for managing Australian aid identifies Indonesia as having a special relationship with Australia and lists it as one of their priority partner countries participating in bi-lateral aid programs (AusAID, 2011a)\(^2\). On their website, AusAID indicates that aid is increasingly delivered in partnership and states that ‘Non-government organisations (NGOs).... maximise the impact and reach of Australian aid and are an essential part of the Australian aid program.’ (AusAID, 2011a). This research adds to knowledge about how NGOs might contribute to the aid agenda. It particularly recognises that Plan as a development agency re-conceptualised what they considered to be development aid ‘programs’ through their involvement in *Global Connections*.

\(^2\) The budget for Australian aid to Indonesia in 2011-12 is $558 million which is more than any other individual country (AusAID, 2011a)
The involvement of Plan as a partner from outside of formal education responds to government policy that encourages formation of strategic partnerships with multiple stakeholders in Australian communities to extend formal education in schools (Tomazin & Smith, 2008). In Australia both the Commonwealth and State governments support community participation and outside partnership in school activity including curriculum related activity.

For example, partnership is strongly supported in the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (see section 2.3.4) which states that the governments of Australia all commit to ‘working with all school sectors and the broader community to achieve the educational goals for young Australians.’ (p.11, MCEETYA, 2008). The first of the eight listed actions designed to support this commitment is the developing of stronger partnerships. However, what appropriate partnerships might look like with regard to the range and scope of their involvement with curriculum and classroom teaching as part of the core business of schools is not indicated in any policy documents. This study contributes to understanding the role that such partnerships might play within schools.

Collaborative cross-sectoral partnerships would also seem to be socially important because they allow educational environments that are inherently more democratic than ones constructed within a single sector and so would appear to offer a powerful way of more closely connecting education to the reality of multiple worldviews in an increasingly globalised society. *Global Connections* operates in two countries and involves multiple groups of learners and stakeholders in a complex educational innovation. Consequently, this research also contributes to more general considerations of what counts as education and whose education counts.

### 1.5 The *Global Connections* program

This thesis is explicitly *not* an examination of *Global Connections* as an educational program. However, the program was the site of the empirical data generation and therefore a general understanding of the way that the program operated is important with regard to interpreting the research context. *Global Connections* developed from attempts by Plan Australia to integrate Child-Centred Community Development (CCCD) across the various divisions of the Australian national office. As part of this process, Plan employed Dan Bolotin in 2004 to specifically bring the perspective of a young person to the ways that they were working. Dan, who was 21 at the time, was encouraged to look at the organisation and young people’s issues in development in creative ways and his proposal for *Global Connections* came out of this work (Bolotin, 2005a; 2005b).
The initial proposal emphasised that *Global Connections* should be as youth-led as possible. The program was designed to give young people the opportunity to have voice in the learning processes and decide on the focus of the content so as to situate their learning within their interests and concerns. Much of the design for the pilot program undertaken in 2005 was constructed by Dan and an initial group of young people recruited to facilitate the project in that pilot phase. As a result, the program itself was youth-led in its design and was also structured to run in ways that were youth-led.

The primary objective of the program activity was for the groups in each country to produce three communication pieces that could be exchanged with their partner group. In these communication pieces the groups sequentially:

1. Introduce themselves as a group of young people.
2. Identify an issue of concern to them
3. Relate action that they plan to undertake with regard to the issue

Plan’s commitment to a philosophy that recognised young people’s existing agency and active involvement as the starting point for planning programs meant that very little about these communications was prescribed. The media used for the communications, the actual content of them, the issue chosen and the ways of taking action were all open to negotiation and were decided by the young people in the program (Wierenga et al., 2008).

The connections were envisaged as enabling the groups to mutually develop understanding of each other and of issues that were of concern to them. The groups would attempt to explore and highlight tensions and possibilities that face young people in Australia and in Indonesia, particularly in relation to factors that separate and connect with regard to issues of social diversity and global citizenship. The opportunity to communicate in mutual two-way dialogue was central to the program and was positioned as being important in breaking down many prevailing myths about life in different countries. The outcome of such experiential contact was envisaged as being likely to create more enduring and transformative experiences than if the young people were simply the passive recipients of information (Wierenga et al., 2008).

A significant extension of the youth-led approach was that *Global Connections* was designed so that, in both countries, the production of the communication pieces was facilitated by other young people rather than being directed by professional educators or other adults. In Australia, the facilitators

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3 In the early development of the *Global Connections* program the group of facilitators were known as the Youth Action Group which was shortened to the acronym YAG. The facilitators were known as YAGs. This term was still in use in 2008 and appears in evidence presented in the data chapters.
were all university students studying in a range of disciplines (other than teaching) who had a diverse range of interests and backgrounds. The facilitators’ role was to encourage and enable the communication pieces to develop and subsequently enable action with regard to chosen issues. The facilitators were specifically not directive with regard to the content or the focus of the communications. The facilitators were explicitly not in the classroom to ‘teach’.

In Indonesia the facilitators were all young people active in areas of social work either with Plan Indonesia or other organisations. The Indonesian facilitators were paid an extra stipend to facilitate the program but in Australia they were all either volunteers or doing the facilitation as part of course credits towards their degrees. Using facilitators meant that the groups of young people in each country were supported as they participated in the program by other young people who were themselves leading their learning as they engaged for the first time as facilitators. Therefore, there were four groups of young people involved in Global Connections all of whom Plan encouraged to take an active role in leading their learning.

Following the 2005 pilot, Global Connections continued with different participants and at different locations. The empirical work of this research was situated within the 2008 and 2009 versions of the program. Global Connections operated in 2008 and 2009 by pairing groups of students in Australian secondary school classes with groups of young people in Indonesia. The Indonesian young people involved in the program were not school groups and most were not enrolled in formal education. Rather, they were all part of groups in another program Plan Indonesia was implementing called Children in Need of Special Protection. In 2008, Global Connections followed the format of three communication pieces described earlier and these were exchanged by mail. In 2009, the design was adapted to more easily fit with Australian school timetables and also to give more depth to the first communication for all groups. The first two communication pieces of the earlier model were combined and so:

- In the first communication piece the groups introduced themselves and the issues in which they were interested

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4 In the data generation years of this research (2008 and 2009) the secondary school children were all from Years 9 and 10 and were aged from 14-16
5 During 2008 and 2009 the groups in Indonesia included a group in each of a boys and girls detention centre and community-based groups. Children in Need of Special Protection (CNSP) was a Plan Indonesia program that sought to: ‘... strengthen the capacities of local NGOs and partners to facilitate girls’ and boys’ participation, community-based social integration, legal advice, referral systems and STD/AIDS prevention; and ... improve local government’s commitment and support in the programs and to undertake policy reforms to protect girls and boys in need of special protection’ (Plan, 2008).
In the second communication piece the groups narrowed their focus to a single issue and developed an action for social change they were going to take with regard to the issue. Concurrently with the preparing of each communication for exchange and while waiting for the reciprocal communications to arrive, each group of young people developed understanding about the local context of their chosen issue. The aim here was that the young people were working towards taking positive action to support social change in their local area. Once again, the young people decided themselves on the scope and nature of the action they took. The young people were encouraged to think about how their issue connected to the wider global context. Throughout the program, participants were encouraged to understand through their own inquiry how personal issues (such as drugs, young offending, domestic violence and gender inequality) can be related to wider issues, and how global issues (such as conflict, terrorism, poverty, petrol shortages and rising prices) have a personal dimension (Wierenga et al., 2008).

1.6 Defining key concepts

1.6.1 Formal and non-formal education

In this thesis I use the terms ‘formal education’ and ‘non-formal education’ in specific ways. Formal education as a concept is relatively uncontested and I use it to mean the highly institutionalised, hierarchically and chronologically structured state 'education system' (Coombs, 1976). Formal education (in Australia) operates under a mandate from government, is controlled by legislation, and in the case of state schools delivers a common curriculum.
Non-formal education as a term gained currency in the late 1960s when a dichotomy developed in educational discourse (Rogers, 2004). Non-formal education was initially considered to be everything that was not part of the formal education system but was subsequently co-opted to describe a myriad of educational approaches including government funded training programs (Rogers, 2004). The term became particularly important to development organisations and programs labelled non-formal education spread enormously through third world countries. In this thesis I use non-formal education to refer to ‘any organised educational activity outside the established formal system... that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives’ (Coombs, 1976, p.282).

The distinction between the terms is to a large extent administrative. Formal education is linked with governments and includes schools and training institutions; non-formal education is linked with community groups and other organizations. All other education can be classified as informal education or perhaps more accurately informal learning (Rogers, 2004).

Although not prescriptive, one common distinction relevant to this thesis that differentiates formal and non-formal programs is the relationship learners have to the learning content. Non-formal education is typically constructed around a more negotiated curriculum involving the interests of learners than formal education which responds in a ‘top-down’ way to an imposed curriculum. Learners stepping into a pre-existing non-formal learning program have greater agency to mould it to their own circumstances than learners in formal education who typically surrender their autonomy and accept externally imposed discipline (Rogers, 2004).

Interpreted through reference to the discussion above, Global Connections as designed by Plan represents non-formal education. Plan Australia is outside the formal system. Global Connections is organised by, and serves particular purposes determined by, Plan. Additionally, the learners within the program have considerable agency. The relevance to this thesis is the extent to which inserting a non-formal education program into a formal context transforms it into formal education.

1.6.2 Global citizenship education

This thesis describes partnership activity that addresses educational intent beyond the limited theme of ‘global citizenship’ but the research context of Global Connections requires that the term is explicitly acknowledged.

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6 In Bangladesh for example there are over 50,000 ‘non-formal’ primary schools (Rogers, 2004).
Multiple interpretations of global citizenship exist. A sense of global citizenship can have multifarious and hybrid roots including: individual perceptions of identity; membership of ethnic or other dispersed social groups; education; exposure through various media; activity as consumers in a globalised market; concern for global issues like environmental matters, and a range of other connections that transcend national boundaries (Davies et al., 2005).

It is sufficient at this stage to recognise and signal the diversity of interpretations of global citizenship rather than adopt a particular interpretation because what resonates throughout this research is the lack of specificity with regard to what education for global citizenship ought to encompass.

1.6.3 Transformative education

‘Transformative education’ is another term that has been co-opted for multiple purposes. In this thesis, I use it in two specific ways. Firstly, it refers to the way that the education environment is constructed. In this instance, that means the way that enabling Global Connections acts to transform the systems of education as recognised by Plan and the schools. Secondly, it refers to educational impact and means education that is deliberately intended to transform learners. In this latter regard, I choose to utilise the definition that is provided by the Journal of Transformative Education (JTE) on its website:

Transformative education is defined as those educational practices that ….foster deep engagement with, and reflection on, our taken-for-granted ways of viewing the world, resulting in fundamental shifts in how we see and understand ourselves and our relationship with the world.(JTED, 2011).

In both ways that I use the term, I am particularly interested in the way that taken-for-granted ways of interpreting and reacting to the world are challenged.

1.6.4 Development and Development NGOs

‘Development’ is used in this thesis as an adjective to distinguish a category of NGO. This use recognises the way such organisations use it to identify themselves and the work they do. ‘Development’ in this sense is broadly the work done to address disadvantage in ‘developing’ countries by ‘development organisations’.
However, ‘Development’ is not a neutral descriptor. Development NGOs’ use of the term is associated with a particular philosophical orientation which influences their approach to educational activity. Extended discussion of the history and actions of development organisations and the epistemological implications is included in sections 3.3 & 3.4.

1.7 Scope of the research

The empirical work of this research was undertaken in 2008 and 2009 and involved investigating the partnerships formed to implement Global Connections in all the separate Australian school contexts over those two years. The primary data generation was limited to the Australian half of Global Connections. Consequently, this thesis is only supported by empirical evidence that was generated by cross-sectoral partnership activity situated within Melbourne schools. There were no occasions (in Australia) when the program activity occurred outside schools. For this reason, this thesis particularly considers the transformative possibility of partnerships with regard to school-based education.

However, although the primary data generated were limited to the specific context of the school-Plan relationships, secondary data enabled limited inclusion within the scope of the research of other partnerships that were part of Global Connections. Specifically, the ‘partnership’ relationships between Plan Australia and Plan Indonesia, and between Plan Australia and the university students who were the program facilitators, extended the scope of the research.

1.8 Thesis outline

The remaining chapters of this thesis are organised into three parts to sequentially develop: the context and methodology of the research; report the empirical activity; and interpret the research findings.

Part one includes this introductory chapter and the next four chapters. It establishes the background contexts, literature and methodological parameters of this thesis. Chapter Two firstly describes how Global Connections fits within a broad social context and then describes the formal education context in the state of Victoria. It then situates Global Connections within the literature discourse on the purposes, content and methods of formal education.

Chapter Three describes education in a non-formal context by firstly considering Plan as representative of the sector and then considering the literature more generally related to development and education in a development context.
Chapter Four problematises the separateness of the two education sectors introduced in the previous two chapters. The chapter begins by situating the partnerships within the social theories of Bourdieu related to autonomously functioning fields in society and then looks to partnership literature specifically to consider ways of bridging those fields. This chapter sets up the theoretical interpretations of partnership that are used to establish the frameworks for conducting the empirical research and analysing the data generated. The chapter concludes by listing supplementary questions developed from the context chapters that divide the scope of the research questions so that they can more easily be addressed.

Chapter Five explains and justifies the methodological approaches that underpin the research. Included in the chapter are discussions on reflexivity and the ontological and epistemological assumptions related to the approaches used. The chapter introduces the qualitative case study methodology utilised and explains the various parts that contributed to constructing the case studies. Finally, the chapter introduces the analytic frameworks that were used because the analysis was undertaken in conjunction with the data generation in a mutually informing iterative process.

Part two of the thesis includes the data chapters that report and partially analyse the case studies. Chapter Six describes activity that led up to the start of Global Connections in 2008. Chapters Seven and Eight then respectively relate implementation of the program in 2008 and 2009.

Part three interprets the research data by addressing the research questions and draws conclusions. Chapter Nine completes the analysis begun in the previous data reporting chapters by specifically addressing the research questions. It ends by drawing the findings together to propose a model for considering cross-sectoral partnership.

Chapter Ten presents the thesis’ conclusions and also highlights the study’s limitations and offers recommendations for further research attention.
Chapter Two

Situating Global Connections in social and education contexts

2.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the ways that Global Connections links to the formal education half of the partnerships through which it is implemented. Before doing so however, it briefly considers more generally the social environment that formed the context for Global Connections. Although this thesis has been prepared to address an academic purpose, its connection to education, global issues and citizenship means that it also speaks in many ways to people’s casual non-academic understanding of complex issues as they are played out every day in their lives and in the media. The activities of schools and NGOs are inextricably linked to their social contexts. As such, it is highly relevant to consider the ‘everyday’ social context of the research and the way that the context is represented in ‘everyday’ terms before considering the links of the educational context to academic literature.

The formal education section of the chapter then describes the specific school environment in Victoria and identifies critical elements of the program that challenge formal education systems. Those critical elements are then located within the literature discourse related to educational policy and practice with particular reference to educational purposes, content and methods. The conclusion considers how the empirical research process can be constructed to develop understanding of the Global Connections partnerships from a formal education perspective in a way that might usefully inform other situations involving school partnerships.

2.2 Social context

This research is located within the particular social context of Melbourne, Australia. However, the nature of Melbourne and its relationship to the wider global context establishes the possibility of wider implications that might be attached to both the research and the Global Connections program. Melbourne is widely acknowledged to be a multi-ethnic and cosmopolitan city which typifies the way that Australian communities, particularly those in cities, reflect the increasingly globalised nature of human interaction (ABS, 2007). Melbourne exists in a social context that includes constant change, complexity, and increasing cultural diversity. Melbourne’s population reflects over 200 nations, speaks 180 languages and dialects and follows more than 116 religions (DEECD, 2009). As an example of this diversity, one of the schools involved in this research had more than a quarter of the world’s countries represented in its student body.
Individuals and groups within Melbourne’s communities are connected in complex ways to each other and to the wider global environment. Additionally, global corporations transcend national boundaries, and the developing phenomenon of migration creates citizens with multiple loyalties and multiple passports. Globalised markets and communication technologies create globalised consumers and what is almost an imperative for globalised connections (Wyn, 2008).

In recent years there have been numerous global issues that have framed political debates and called to question how Australia and Australians fit within the wider international community. Events like those experienced during the ‘Global Financial Crisis’ showed that the economies of all nations are interdependent. The Copenhagen climate change summit in 2009 ended without any semblance of consensus but drew attention to the reality of different perspectives about how to manage a connected global environment. Similarly, the ‘war on terrorism’ and the ongoing problem of ‘illegal immigrants’ illustrate the ideological and political connectedness of different nations while reinforcing the reality of difference between various groups of people (Grzybowski, 2005; Skelton, 2010). These issues are as complex as they are important with their roots in the ways that people relate to each other and their environment at a global level. Such issues would seem to require collective responses which extend beyond the narrow interests of individual nations. Even the most powerful nation-states are unable to control influences on them from global forces like terrorism and climate change (Edwards & Sen, 2000).

‘Global citizenship’ is emerging within the lexicon of all facets and levels of society as a way of invoking a sense of connection and responsibility beyond traditional links to interpretations of national identity. Internationally, the traditional linking of citizenship to independent nation-states is breaking down with many nations deferring to larger authorities such as the European Union. However, the same globalising forces that seem to create the imperative for considering ‘global citizenship’ make it increasingly difficult to establish descriptors of model citizen attributes and behaviours. Citizenship – both in terms of what it means, and the rights and obligations that accompany citizenship of different kinds, is a contested field (Ratnam, 2007b).

Within the broader considerations relating to the contested nature of citizenship is a discourse specific to young people. A lot of attention in both academic and popular media has been given to the changing role of young people in civic life. Hart (2009) presents research evidence that young people wish to be part of their local communities and incorporated in the development of relationships of mutual trust and respect. However, Hart also describes the modern context for the research as an environment in which young people are positioned as a threat to the healthy functioning of citizenship and democracy. Popular political rhetoric has frequently expressed a fear
that there is a crisis in citizenship and attention has been increasingly directed towards youth. Policies have been implemented to educate young people and control their behaviour, particularly in their local communities, in an attempt to foster them as citizens deemed appropriate to join adult society (Hart, 2009). Some writers suggest that young people are choosing to ‘bowl alone’ rather than participate in community activities (Putnam, 2000) and an Australian study concluded that a civics deficit was developing in relation to young people and social participation (Mellor et al., 2002).

Although there is extensive support across many disciplines for young people as citizens, Australian social policies and social processes involving young people are directed towards strategies that lead to ‘making good citizens’ (Owen, 1996; White & Wyn, 2004). This situation is by no means unique to Australia, and in many western countries policy is enacted which essentially problematises the existence of young people. In England for example, social policy relating to children adopts a ‘deficit’ model that assumes young people are not yet good enough citizens and that they need to be moulded as future citizens (Osler & Starkey, 2003; Smith et al., 2005). Such a view suggests that young people are inherently anti-social and need to be controlled and assimilated into adult society. The ways that government driven systems like formal education act to create ‘future’ citizens is often designed along narrow lines with specific objectives such as employment-oriented models of citizenship which can exclude young people (Checkoway et al., 2003; Smith et al., 2005).

However, there is also a growing body of evidence that young people are concerned about social issues but wish to engage differently and find it difficult to do so (Vromen, 2003; Marsh et al., 2007; Eckersley et al., 2007; Harris et al., 2007). Although this evidence relates primarily to young people engaging in local communities, global issues which are brought back to a local context are of interest to young people and influence their perception of security (Harris et al., 2007). However, when such issues are left to the media to portray, they can lead to an increased sense of separateness based on a fear of difference (Matthews & Sidhu, 2005; Gillborn, 2006).

Global Connections is one specific example of an attempt to use education to encourage a broader understanding in students of how they fit into the world. The program operates at multiple levels which reflect the interconnected and global reality of the social context discussed in this section. It offers young people a way of engaging at a local level with the final action phase while explicitly making connections to a global context. As such, Global Connections is designed to authentically bridge different worldviews and in doing so invites critical consideration of ‘difference’ and ‘belonging’; and ‘rights’ and ‘obligations’ of young people as global citizens. In these ways, the program represents transformative education of the kind described in section 1.6.3.
2.3 Formal Education

2.3.1 Formal education in Victoria, Australia

The schools involved in Global Connections were all government secondary schools in Victoria\(^7\) and as such come under the jurisdiction of the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) works alongside the DEECD and is an independent statutory authority with responsibility for producing the curriculum that schools address. The VCAA also develops standards for measuring and reporting on student performance and maintains records of performance for all students (VCAA, 2011).

In 2005, the VCAA introduced a new curriculum, the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) as part of a regular 5 year cycle of curriculum revision\(^8\). The VELS is the guiding document for what schools teach and as such describes educational intentions and standards up to Year 10. The VELS are organised into three interwoven strands within each of which are a number of domains and dimensions. The three strands are: ‘Discipline-Based\(^9\) Learning’, ‘Interdisciplinary Learning’, and ‘Physical, Personal and Social Learning’. By the time students get to Year 10 the majority of their school week (over 80%) is committed to the ‘Discipline-Based Learning’ curriculum strands. The two complementary strands of the curriculum which are oriented towards skills such as communication and goals such as social participation in a community and maximising individual well-being and potential (VCAA, 2010a) are either included as part of the context for teaching the Disciplines or offered as part of the limited elective choices available to students at this level\(^10\).

Global Connections was implemented in the schools during timetabled Year 9 and/or Year 10 classes. As such, it was very much part of the formal education structure of the schools involved and was subject to the legal and social mandates under which schools operate. However, the program did not conform to the ‘normal’ practice of schools in several ways which made it potentially transformative:

- The program was constructed and administered from outside the formal education network but took place in school classrooms as part of students’ school activity.

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\(^7\) Education in Australia is a state responsibility and as such the schools in this research come under the jurisdiction of the Victorian state government

\(^8\) The VELS replaced the previous curriculum document called the Curriculum Standards Framework (CSF) which was implemented in 1995 and reissued in 2000.

\(^9\) The ‘Disciplines’ included separately within this strand are: Mathematics, Science, English, Humanities, Arts, and Other Languages

\(^10\) The curriculum structure changes in the final two years of secondary school (Years 11 and 12) when students are prepared for Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)\(^10\) examinations or study towards the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL).
• The educational aims and themes of the program involved different emphases compared to related programs developed in secondary schools based on VELS. Although the program connected to themes identified in the VELS (see section 2.3.4), the program was not linked to specific curriculum outcomes and there were no specific learning objectives which could be ‘tested’.

• The pedagogical approach of the program deliberately created a learning environment that was different from the way schools traditionally operate. Of particular importance was the use of young people (who were not teachers or teacher trainees) to facilitate the program.

An extensive literature search did not reveal this combination of *Global Connections*’ characteristics replicated in any education programs. Each characteristic may be unique to Australian schools and the combination is almost certainly unique. The implications of incorporating such transformative programs into school activity extend beyond the learning outcomes of the students involved and raise questions about: the purpose of schooling and the role of schools; what should be taught and what counts as education; the methods and processes of education including pedagogies and the role of teachers.

### 2.3.2 Purpose of education and the role of schools

Education has always served multiple purposes. Kemmis, Cole & Suggett (1983) position educational principles as being fundamentally social principles and they identify three particular orientations to education:

• Vocational/Neo-classical – Education in this orientation primarily prepares students for work (vocational). It performs this task by utilising traditional beliefs about what is worth knowing (skills and disciplinary knowledge) reinterpreted to fit modern contexts. This approach supports education that is essentially regenerative with regard to social systems.

• Liberal/Progressive – Positions education as preparation for life rather than work. This orientation to education is grounded in an individualistic interpretation and aims to develop the ‘whole person’ as an individual rather than developing them towards an instrumental goal. Education liberates students individually and socially (liberal). By developing individuals, education develops future citizens who can contribute to reconstructed future societies (progressive).

• Socially-critical – In this orientation, reconstruction of future societies is more directly the aim of education by means of encouraging collective action capable of confronting unjust
social structures. Such education engages social issues. It aims to give students experiences involving critical reflection, social negotiation and organising of social action. Socially critical education situates current society in a historical context and subjects it to critical scrutiny. Action is an important component of this orientation; it does not value knowledge only and therefore requires active participation in the school and community (Kemmis et al., 1983). This approach supports transformative aims for education with regard to existing social systems.

Kemmis et al. (1983) further suggest that although these approaches are fundamentally different, schools do not adopt one particular orientation but develop their curriculum as a practical compromise between the different positions. However, such compromises often create situations that involve confusion and conflicting aspirations (Kemmis et al., 1983). It would seem to follow that the different orientations cannot be equally balanced and that the prevailing social and political circumstances together with individual school’s inclinations and capabilities would play a large part in setting the position of the compromise reached.

Within this framework of educational purpose, an aim of education for citizenship such as that offered by *Global Connections* fits within both a liberal and a socially-critical orientation. The participatory pedagogies employed in the program are aimed at empowering the students as individuals as well as collectively in social situations and therefore fit closely with the liberal/progressive orientation of education. The issues and action phases of the program speak directly to a socially-critical orientation and a transformative aim for education. This situation would suggest that the program would fit most closely in a school that favoured a compromise balanced in favour of a socially-critical orientation.

*Global Connections* appears to offer a response to the political and social realities of globalisation and a changing global community. Education for citizenship potentially provides a mechanism for transmitting the core shared values on which just and peaceful democratic societies may be built (Osler & Starkey, 2003). However, within a context of multiculturalism and with the attendant ethnic, religious and political perspectives which accompany cultural diversity it is problematic to establish the ‘core shared values’ and to develop appropriate educational responses. The following two sections consider the values that are promoted under two differing but influential discourses related to the purpose of education. These two discourses respectively relate to the vocational and socially critical purposes of education introduced above which adopt opposing positions with regard to societal frameworks. The vocational orientation accepts existing frameworks in a taken-for-granted way whereas the socially-critical view ‘sees society and its frameworks as problematic’ (Kemmis et
(Kemmis et al., 1983, p.15). As a result, these two orientations can act to create conflicting aims and the following discussion illustrates the ‘confusing array of roles and competing aspirations’ (Kemmis et al., 1983, p.8) of these different educational orientations.

2.3.2.1 Neoliberal policy and economic agenda

Governments in western style democracies provide the authority for formal education. Directly or indirectly, they structure the content and processes of education so as to further their agenda for developing the nation. In doing so, formal education serves to reproduce existing hegemonies in society (Bourdieu & Passerson, 1977; Giddens, 1998; Jarvis, 2001). The ideological driving force for western education since the 1980s has been neoliberal which privileges economic growth goals over social welfare aims for government interventions (Marginson, 1999a, 1999b; O’Brien & Down, 2002; Priestley, 2002; Mayo, 2003; Nagda, Gurin & Lopez, 2003; Vongalis-Macrow, 2007; English, 2009).

Neoliberal influenced education aimed at economic growth is strongly oriented towards a vocational/neo-classical purpose for education. Within a neoliberal framework, the ‘knowledge economy’ and ‘lifelong learning’ became catchcries of education policy and were interpreted synonymously with continuous learning for the changing employment driven demands of keeping nations competitive in a globalised economy. Political rhetoric promoted the need to educate students towards full and active participation in the ‘knowledge economy’. The ‘knowledge economy’ as such was intended to feed a systematic social and economic transformation towards globalisation (Wood, Meiksins, & Yates, 1998; Marginson, 1999a; Priestley, 2002; OECD, 2007; Vongalis-Macrow, 2007).

Globalisation in this sense was interpreted in economic and market terms and even the ‘systematic social’ part of the transformation equation was directed towards the changing job markets and work environments rather than towards a more general social interpretation focused on cultural understanding and harmony. Young people were considered assets who could advance economic agenda and carry the practical burden of making the transition to a more globalised economy (Wyn & Woodman, 2006). Further to this, was promotion of the idea that people would need to continue returning to the educational system in a process of ‘lifelong learning’ in order to maintain the high level of specialised expertise necessary to remain effective within labour markets. The corollary to this argument was that groups and individuals who did not use education effectively would be marginalised from participating economically (Wyn, 2009).

Education was positioned as part of an economic development agenda worldwide (World Bank, 2000; Wood, Meiksins, & Yates, 1998; Jarvis, 2001). Young people represented a potentially highly
skilled and competitive workforce which would provide governments with a return on their investment in education. Hanushek (2004) concluded in an analysis of the cost-benefit of improving education quality that 'the benefit picture indicates that improvements in student performance have truly substantial impacts on individual productivity and earnings and on the growth and performance of the aggregate economy. The economic gains (that result) could in fact cover some substantial changes in expenditure on schools’ (Hanushek, 2004, p. 21).

In Australia, education policies from the 1980s emphasising education towards skills for work rather than skills for citizenship have changed little and there remains a tailoring of schooling to service the economy (Seddon, 2008 cited in Wyn, 2009). Expanding on Seddon’s argument, Wyn (2009) suggests that reducing education to being an instrument for economic development sends messages about the kinds of citizen that governments aim to produce. Although the current Commonwealth government does not have as extensive an emphasis on an instrumental, economy-based approach to education, no clear replacement view has emerged of the kinds of citizens that education ought to encourage (Wyn, 2009).

The fundamental shift in perspective from a welfare model of education provision which prevailed after the Second World War to a market-based model with an outcomes-based focus changed the way that governments related to schools (Mayo, 2003). A managerialism approach was adopted and a range of steps were taken to deliberately reduce governments’ involvement in the education ‘market’ while simultaneously requiring increased accountability from schools with regard to all aspects of their performance (English, 2009). Education policy framed in economic terms, adapted economic indicators to measure educational effectiveness and outcomes. The language surrounding education decision-making and policy development shifted during the late 1980s and 1990s towards that of economic rationalism – education became interpreted through issues of: accountability, assessment, standards monitoring and benchmarking, performance indicators, cost-benefit analysis, quality assurance, teacher quality, and school and teacher effectiveness (Mayo, 2003; Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2004; Ingvarson & Rowe, 2007). The adoption of these types of measure to evaluate educational effectiveness became widespread among developed countries (OECD, 2006) including Australia (Bishop, 1999; Ingvarson & Rowe, 2007; English, 2009).

The comparison-based criteria for judging schools were aimed at increasing efficiency in the education system. Schools were made to ‘compete’ with each other and parents were expected to pay more for education (Connell, 1998; Press & Woodrow, 2005). In essence, education became a

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11 Managerialism tends to be linked hand-in-hand to neoliberal ideology and refers in this case to the systems of control by which governments seek accountability for their investment in education.

12 The ‘efficiency’ justification led to the closure of more than 300 schools in Victoria between 1992 and 1999 (Caldwell, 1999).
'product' and students were 'clients'. In return, students would come out of their education well positioned to get a return on their investment by taking a productive place in the country’s economy (Young, 1998).

The managerialism thinking that produced cost-benefit interpretations of education effectiveness also required frameworks for assessing and reporting effectiveness in order to provide ‘accountability’ to all stakeholders including parents and governments. Schools not only needed to interpret what they do in terms of student learning experiences but also needed to represent that learning to the wider community. Quantifiable outcomes of education (for example standardised test results such as NAPLAN and VCE) were promoted as allowing a legitimate comparison to be made across the differing contexts of separate schools and their communities. A focus in schools on such benchmark testing epitomises the managerialism influence on education delivery and encourages people to equate education performance to quantifiable and assessable deliverables. This in turn affects all aspects of what schools do including what is taught and the ways that teachers interpret and perform their responsibilities.

The relevance to this thesis is that high levels of accountability mean that all curriculum offerings need to be justified in defined ways. Programs like Global Connections, introduced to schools from outside (irrespective of their provenance), must be justified through a demonstrable ability to contribute to school goals. Programs which are imported are not exempt from processes of accountability and must inevitably be assessed alongside other school activity.

2.3.2.2 Education for democracy, social inclusion and transformative education.

Formal education has always served the role of preparing young people to be members of society as well as preparing them to be active contributors to the workforce of that community. A social purpose of education had a strong presence in the social welfare orientation of pre-1980s governments and a thread of this remained throughout the neoliberal influenced changes to education. That thread, which was grounded in a discourse directing the purpose of education

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13 NAPLAN (National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy) commenced in 2008 and consists of four tests in the domains of Reading, Writing, Language Conventions (Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation) and Numeracy. The NAPLAN framework describes national minimum standards with regard to the skills and understandings which students, who are placed in the minimum standard band at their year level, can generally demonstrate (ACARA, 2010b).

14 For example, as recently as 2010 the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) set up the My School website which publishes data about schools. The site claims that ‘by providing extensive information on Australian schools, the My School website introduces a new level of transparency and accountability to the Australian school system.’ (ACARA, 2010a).

15 Through my role working with pre-service primary school teachers, it is evident to me from the way that time is allocated in Australian schools that from the early stages of primary school there is a strong emphasis on the literacy and numeracy skills tested under NAPLAN. Progress in these areas, often interpreted through NAPLAN type testing dominates judgements about children’s early progress and the development of other skills like empathy, tolerance and cultural understanding are acquired incidentally (if at all) and are rarely specifically addressed or commented on in reports to parents.
towards social participation and the quality of civic life, continued to find a place within education policy even during the time that economic imperatives for education were being consolidated (Wyn, 2009).

The educational paradigm represented by this thread is one that positions education as an inherently social activity for social purposes. However, social purpose is not a neutral concept. Social purposes are situated in social contexts and are influenced by prevailing ideological perspectives and power structures in society (Freire, 1970; 1972; Bourdieu, 1977). As such, it could be legitimately claimed that the economic purpose of education described in the previous section serves a ‘social purpose’ albeit one that has been narrowly interpreted to equate to a limited view of society’s best interests and prime concerns. In this way, ‘education for social purpose’ is ideologically grounded and the term can be co-opted to serve multiple purposes including those that support existing social conditions. However, the socially-critical orientation of education presented earlier accepts none of the existing social structures as ‘given’ and requires that they be critically examined and understood in relation to more general social and moral philosophy (Kemmis et al., 1983). This section is specifically directed towards education informed by a socially-critical perspective and which is therefore intended to engage students in a socially transformative way.

Transformative education is constructed to deliberately challenge taken-for-granted ways of viewing the world with the objective of shifting the way that people understand themselves and their connections to the world (JTED, 2011). The implicit outcome of effective transformative education is social justice and a more equitable society. Global Connections was designed to be transformative education for the young people involved. The social citizenship and social action themes of the program were intended to shift understanding of the students’ relationships with their worlds in ways that encouraged taking social action contributing towards resolving social issues. Additionally, the program could also be considered transformative with regard to its structure. The transformative elements of the program (see section 2.3.2) challenged taken-for-granted ways of viewing educational activity with an implicit intention of shifting the way that educators understand their practice.

Global Connections challenges an education system in which schools operate to reinforce the existing interpretations of what education should include and which deliver those interpretations through traditionally structured formats. Essentially, formal education operates to reproduce rather than change societal structures and processes (Bourdieu, 1993; Holford & Nicholls, 2001; Flores, 2007).

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16 See section 2.3.4 for an example of the way that the Melbourne Declaration as a formal curriculum policy document in Australia identifies social purposes of education with economic goals.
Even when change is supported and mandated by policy change, schools are slow to accommodate innovation (Holford, 2001).

However, advocacy of socially transformative education of the kind offered by *Global Connections* is not new. There is a strong resonance for example, between the program’s intentions and the philosophy espoused by John Dewey nearly a century ago. Dewey (1916/2009) strongly linked education to democracy and believed that education was a social process which was best implemented interactively and experientially. Teachers under Dewey’s model of education were pedagogic guides rather than didactic dispensers of ‘truth’. Teachers were partners in the learning process, selecting experiences that would allow students to actively create their own learning. For Dewey, schools were legitimately sites of social transformation and young people were learning how to live rather than simply acquiring sets of skills and knowledge. Any skills and knowledge that were obtained should help individuals maximise their potential which could then be used for the greater good to enrich their social world (Dewey, 1916/2009; 1938/1997). Although Dewey’s advocacy of teaching grounded in experiential learning is widely endorsed in current approaches to student learning, his view that education should be directed toward a social transformation purpose has had less influence.

The Frankfurt School of critical theory took Dewey’s critique a step further by invoking critical examination, and reconstruction of, views of epistemology and its relationship to education. Critical theory, as applied by the Frankfurt school, aimed to change society as well as understand it. These theorists emphasised the role of epistemology within social oppression. They considered that epistemology was a hegemonic tool because it produced ways of knowing that resonated with dominant power interests (Seidman, 2004; Kincheloe, 2008; Le Ber & Branzei, 2010).

Freire (1970) added to this by arguing that education could be used to counter rather than reinforce inequality. Freire shared Dewey’s aversion to a model of teaching that involved transmission of knowledge which he likened to making ‘deposits in a bank’ (Freire, 1970, p.70). He refocused attention on critically examining the role of education in society, and on what and whose knowledge counts. Freire emphasised the impossibility of neutral education systems but believed that education was a way forward that could allow ‘oppressed’ people to overcome their oppression. For such an outcome to be possible involves recognising and disrupting the automatic way that education acts to support hegemonies by directing knowledge, thinking and action (Freire, 1970).

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17 For example the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) which is the authority that implements education policy in Victoria, Australia specifically acknowledges within their Principles of Learning and Teaching (PoLT) guidelines the significance of student experiences in structuring learning (DEECD, 2011)

18 The ‘Frankfurt School’ was not a school per se but was the informal name given to a group of social theorists associated with the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt during the 1920s and 1930s.
Critical education that emphasises its socially situated nature and acts transformatively to counter inequity enhances the connectedness of individuals, schools and their communities and strengthens social capital in communities. Putnam & Feldstein (2003) argue that connecting people can allow them to reach goals beyond those possible for them as individuals. People also enjoy the intrinsic satisfaction of belonging to a community. These authors argue that there seems to be a current trend towards reduced social capital as a result of lifestyle. Technological, economic and social reasons are portrayed as acting to distance rather than bind people. However, they also argue that society as a whole benefits from the social ties forged when people choose connective strategies in pursuit of their goals (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003).

*Global Connections*, as its name indicates, was designed to connect people. It is intrinsically dependent on the differences inherent to the different contexts of the young people in each country. However, while recognising difference the program aims to collapse the *sense of difference* so that the young people can connect to and celebrate their shared ‘sameness’. In this instance the connections create and strengthen a global sense of community. The program is grounded in values of social inclusion, participation and equity in the way it sets up the connections between groups of young people. In this way, the program does not act to reinforce or reproduce the existing hegemonies that created the difference in the communities but instead acts transformatively to allow young people to generate their own new understanding and new knowledge about how they are connected to their world. As such the program closely aligns to a socially-critical purpose of education and is diametrically opposed to the economically driven economic purposes introduced in the previous section.

### 2.3.3 Content: Global citizenship education and the curriculum

The managerialism approach that underpinned changes throughout the education system in the 1990s with regard to the organisation of school systems, funding, and school management (see section 2.3.2.1), also impacted on the curriculum content that was ‘taught’, and the role of teachers with regard to decisions about content and pedagogies (Barrett, 2006). In a broad sense, the content boundaries of what is possible and permissible in formal education are mandated by formal curriculum documents. The introduction of the VELS in 2005 appeared to strengthen opportunities for incorporating socially-oriented, values-based educational activities, like *Global Connections*, as well as supporting pedagogies that are less didactic and more oriented towards inquiry-based discovery. The VELS specifically identifies global citizenship as a goal of education: ‘citizenship education provides a vehicle for students to engage in higher order thinking, to contest and challenge ideas about society, to formally participate in democratic decision making and activities; to
take on values of their communities and to have awareness of global issues as global citizens’ (VCAA, 2010a).

Similar statements appear in other key documents which frame education policy in Victoria and in Australia more generally. The Ministerial Council for Education, Employment Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA)19, which is made up of Ministerial level representatives from all the governments in Australia (Commonwealth, State and Territorial) with responsibility for education, produced the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* in 2008. This Declaration states:

‘Global integration and international mobility..... have heightened the need to.... nurture an appreciation and respect for social, cultural and religious diversity, and a sense of global citizenship’ (MCEETYA, 2008, p.5).

The *Victorian Blueprint for Early Childhood Development and School Reform* has as its vision: ‘Every young Victorian thrives, learns and grows to enjoy a productive, rewarding and fulfilling life, while contributing to their local and global communities’ (DEECD, 2008, p.11)

Another document, *Education for Global and Multicultural Citizenship: A Strategy for Victorian Government Schools 2009-2013* includes the following aim: ‘Now and into the future, therefore, we must prepare our students for global and multicultural citizenship’ (DEECD, 2009, p.4).

All these documents clearly support global citizenship as a goal of education. It would appear therefore that *Global Connections* has a natural fit under these descriptions of educational intention. However, none of them are clear as to what global citizenship means and how it should be interpreted in classroom contexts.

Although global citizenship is not explicitly defined there are several allusions in the same documents to the significance of education with regard to Australia’s position within a global economy. For example, the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* draws attention to the economic processes of globalisation as being a driver of educational focus (MCEETYA, 2008). In its preamble, it makes the connection between globalisation and the changing job skills that need to be educational outcomes in a way that accentuates an economic rationalisation approach to schooling. A similar linking of global citizens to the global economy is evident in recent English education strategies (Bourn, 2005).

The VELS do contain a general mandate for education aimed at global citizenship. Global education fits within the VELS Domain of ‘Civics and Citizenship’ which is one of the four domains of the

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19 The Ministerial Council (MCEETYA) does not have statutory power, but the signed recommendations they produce are utilised by respective government departments as guidelines for educational direction – including curriculum intentions.
‘Physical, Personal and Social’ Strand of Learning. However, implementing a program like *Global Connections* in schools requires more than a match with broadly indicated aims. It must also be reconciled with the interpretive framework that is used by teachers and schools to implement the curriculum. Curricula are generally broader in scope than what can realistically be covered and not all indicated learning contexts can be covered. As a result schools, departments within schools and individual teachers make judgements about what to include in their programs of study.

Wilson (2000) suggests that ‘Civics and Citizenship’ studies have been introduced in recent years in order to address a perceived need to develop young people’s knowledge and interest in Australian political history and its institutions. As such, ‘Civics and Citizenship’ education has been the dominant policy response to perceptions of young people’s disengagement with Australian politics and their dwindling participation in democratic processes (Collin, 2008). As a result, classroom engagement with ‘citizenship’ tends to focus on issues associated with Australian and local community citizenship. Further to this, students tend to be positioned as ‘citizens in waiting’ or ‘becoming citizens’ and therefore school programs are often limited to learning ‘about’ citizenship (Holdsworth, 2007). Time constraints and the overriding concern for ways of engaging young people in local issues of citizenship mean that the ‘global’ dimension is not generally explored. Additionally, there is no clear consensus on how issues of globalisation should be incorporated within education policy in general and curriculum in particular (Rizvi, 2004; Henderson, 2005).

Additionally, schools’ interpretation of the curriculum is influenced by their approach to delivering its content. Curriculum at secondary level tends to be delivered in pre-ordained and discipline-based fragments of ‘knowledge’ that are packaged to facilitate assessment (Phillips, 2000). Wilson (2000) suggests that typical school responses to the mandatory requirement of ‘citizenship’ inclusion tend to involve discrete units of work related to separate aspects of democratic processes. While acknowledging that there is benefit in such approaches, Wilson says that they are ‘removed from the real life experiences of students, and result in superficial and short-term learning rather than deep and lifelong learning’ (p.26) and suggests that ‘schools need to provide environments which allow experiential learning about democracy and citizenship through student participation in schools’ (Wilson, 2000). In practice, this is often problematic for schools and next to impossible if it is *global* citizenship which is involved.

In the modern world, one of the principal methods of control is accreditation of learning and formal recognition of achievement (Vongalis-Macrow, 2007). Schools typically organise their reporting to parents and caregivers around student’s assessed achievements in specific curriculum areas. The lack of clarity with regard to what global citizenship education means creates difficulties in an education
system aimed at transmitting quantifiable, assessable ‘facts’ or ‘skills’. In Victoria, the extent to which the education system requires assessable ‘knowledge’ to be an outcome is evident in that academic achievement in the students’ final Year 12 Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) examinations is ultimately reduced to a single score\(^\text{20}\). In representing a student’s academic achievement, the construction of that score also ranks the student with regard to other students. The score is designed to represent a student’s ability to engage with continuing education beyond school and is used by Universities to ‘gateway’ access to courses. Consequently, as the educational journey of students gets closer to the defining examinations in Year 12, the educational focus is increasingly on individual achievement in a competitively structured system.

A flow-on effect of the VCE focus of years 11 and 12 is that teachers start to prepare students in Year 10 for the big step up to the challenges of VCE. Although secondary schools offer other programs, opportunities and pathways, the reality of the current system is that as students progress through the system towards VCE the focus on individual achievement increasingly dominates over more cooperative socially-oriented agenda. VCE achievement dominates individual, school and community measures of educational success.

Such an individualised and competitive construction of educational achievement inevitably limits opportunities for programs that are focused on mutual achievement in group situations within which individual achievement is often affective and not assessable in comparison with others. Although social agenda involving open ended aims like cross-cultural understanding and the promotion of a society that is equitable, just and cohesive are part of the guiding principles of all modern education systems, they are difficult to implement in practice. In general, many of the skills that are needed for advancing social cohesion like active listening, participating in group activity and decision making do not translate to skills that enhance achievement in the individualistic and inherently competitive environment of VCE.

As a result, there is an inevitable tension between educational aims directed towards cooperative social content of programs like citizenship and participation in a community, and content that is aimed at maximising an individual’s employability in an economic system. Therefore, although \textit{Global Connections} fits within the broader stated intentions of formal schooling it connects to the actual practice of education in a less straightforward way. Because the program has no explicitly stated outcomes that are assessable in curriculum frameworks of ‘knowledge’ \textit{Global Connections} has only tenuous links to the core curriculum as it is represented by classroom practice.

\(^{20}\) The VCE examinations are common (for each subjected attempted) for all Victorian students and the results of all the examinations are combined to create a single ENTER score (out of 100) which is used to represent to Universities and other institutions of higher education the student’s academic capability. The ENTER score is a percentile score and so makes VCE examinations inherently competitive in that they operate to rank the students.
Introducing new programs that reflect alternative or non-mainstream paradigms of teaching inherently sets up the possibility of conflict/tension between the program and existent school practices. Successful introduction of any new program therefore necessitates negotiation within an existing educational culture and its multiple dimensions including curriculum delivery, assessment and more general values surrounding participation in the school and wider community (Flores, 2007). Despite growing support at a political level, the inherently transformative nature of global citizenship education means that it is difficult to incorporate into school activity which is inherently resistant to transformation (Flores, 2007). In a learning age characterised by social change, organisational flexibility, and technological innovation, schools tend to be relatively slow to adapt (Holford and Nicholls, 2001). It remains difficult for education with a social agenda to be integrated into the core content of school activity despite the transformative education discourse described in section 2.3.2.2 that advocates not only for inclusion of socially oriented programs but for a social focus to play a central role in defining the purpose of schooling.

2.3.3.1 Extracurricular content

The previous section focused on approaches to classroom practice and curriculum delivery. There are also opportunities for students in schools to actively participate outside the classroom in citizenship-related activity including contributing to student activities and governance. However, such opportunities are not universally accessible. Students engaged in these kinds of participatory decision-making processes affecting school life tend to be those involved with Student Representative Councils (SRCs) and only around 4% of young people ever sit on such councils (NSW YRC, 2004, cited in Collin, 2008). Additionally, in most instances SRCs have little transformative power and conform to adult agenda with regard to the scope of their involvement in substantive issues (Collin, 2008). Another forum for students to become involved in participatory ways with citizenship-type issues is through Student Action Teams (SATs). SATs are oriented to local issues in the community in addition to involvement in issues affecting school-life, student well-being, and teaching and learning. Evaluations of SATs indicated that students considered that they gained knowledge, skills, attitudes and connectedness from their involvement, as well as demonstrably effecting changes in their communities (Holdsworth et al., 2003). As with SRCs however, SATs are not routinely part of school life and do not represent education for all (Holdsworth, 2007).

In a similar way, there are numerous programs that are offered in schools as extra-curricular activities that are socially oriented towards achieving aims like those of Global Connections.
example, the Oaktree Foundation\textsuperscript{21} is very active in one of the schools involved in this research and students participate in a facilitated program that connects them to a partner school in a developing country. In contrast to Global Connections, these activities or programs are undertaken outside timetabled periods or they are short programs that involve missing only one or two class sessions. Many schools also accommodate projects such as World Vision’s ‘40 Hour Famine’ which allow students to participate actively in a way that essentially connects to global citizenship ideals but they do not impact in significant ways on the ‘core’ curriculum focussed work of schools.

2.3.4 Methods of education: Pedagogy

The pedagogical approach that is used to create the learning environment has a significant impact on student learning. Global Connections was designed to be learner-centred and to involve participatory, experiential approaches based on students’ interests and concerns. In this way, the young people participating in the program were envisaged as being able to construct their own knowledge about how they fit into the world as global citizens. Philosophically this design is aligned to postmodernism and an ontological position of relativism in that it acknowledges multiple ways of knowing and learning, grounded in social determinations of reality (Jarvis, 2001; Mayer, 2006; Duit et al. 2007). The ways that Global Connections’ pedagogies establish the learning environment and thereby set the conditions of knowledge generation fit within an epistemology of constructivism\textsuperscript{22}.

The wide variety of learning approaches\textsuperscript{23} informed by constructivism all stem from psychological studies and learning theories that Piaget developed in the early 1900s. Piaget’s theories are based on the premise that students construct rather than absorb new ideas. Piaget believed that social interaction was the power behind cognitive development and that interaction between children as peers was a more powerful stimulus to development than interaction between children and adults (Piaget, 1972; 1985). Under the broad umbrella of constructivism is social constructivism which is commonly identified with Vygotsky who was a contemporary of Piaget. Social constructivism positions social processes as the primary mechanism of learning. In Vygotsky’s view, children learn best from interacting with their surrounding culture. As learners work together on a variety of tasks,

\textsuperscript{21} The Oaktree Foundation is a development organisation that describes itself on its website as ‘dedicated to achieving incredible change for the world’s most marginalised, oppressed and disadvantaged...over 50 schools around Australia are currently participating in our innovative Schools 4 Schools program, which sees real relationships being created between Australian schools and schools in the developing world. Every week students passionate about social justice come together in their school, and are met by one of Oaktree’s trained mentors. The mentor facilitates a program of training, education and action...leaving students with everything they need to achieve really significant things for their partner school in either South Africa or Cambodia’ (Oaktree, 2011).

\textsuperscript{22} For a more detailed discussion of constructivism with reference to the way that it informs knowledge generation within the research processes associated with this project see section 5.4

\textsuperscript{23} A number of terms have been used for particular pedagogical strategies based on constructivism principles including Discovery Learning (Anthony, 1973), Inquiry Learning (Rutherford, 1964), Experiential Learning (Kolb & Fry cited in Kirschner et al, 2006) Problem- based Learning (Schmidt, 1998) and Social Constructivist Learning.
they develop strategies and teachers’ work should involve scaffolding the learning that children construct rather than instructing them what to do (Vygotsky, 1978). Social constructivism is the overarching educational approach that most closely represents Global Connections pedagogy, but aspects of the program more specifically align with a critical social constructivism approach (see also 5.4.3 for elaboration of this approach). This refinement of social constructivism as a pedagogical approach fits with the socially critical purpose of education (introduced in section 2.3.2) and reflects the transformative intent of the program – particularly the social action intentions of the second half of the program (see program description in section 1.5).

Constructivists of all kinds shifted the emphasis from ‘knowledge’ as a product to ‘knowing’ as a process (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002). Many writers and educators have developed and added to the extensive literature on constructivism learning since Piaget’s early work (Dewey, 1938/1997; Bruner, 1961; Glaserfeld, 1989; 1995; Steffe & Gale, 1995; Guba & Lincoln, 2005) and the philosophical reasoning and practical applications of constructivist teaching have been widely adopted by educators. Teachers as constructivists in classrooms encourage particular types of interaction with students including:

- Encouraging and accepting student autonomy and initiative.
- Using raw data and primary sources, along with manipulative, interactive, and physical materials.
- Allowing student responses to drive lessons, shift instructional strategies, and alter content.
- Inquiring about students’ understanding of concepts before sharing their own understanding of those concepts.
- Encouraging students to engage in dialogue, both with the teacher and with one another.
- Encouraging student inquiry by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions and encouraging students to ask questions of each other.
- Seeking elaboration of students' initial responses.
- Engaging students in authentic experiences that might engender contradictions to their initial hypotheses and then encourage discussion. (adapted from Brooks & Brooks, 1999)

The strategies represented in the list above support the philosophical intent of Global Connections which: begins with students’ own understanding and interests; engages students in primary sources; builds the learning environment through authentic experiences; utilises collaborative work and social
interaction; provides scaffolding rather than instruction using facilitators rather than teachers. In these regards, *Global Connections* is supported by well established learning theory. This approach to learning is very similar to social inquiry models of learning that have been recognised as being an effective approach to social education\(^{24}\) for a long time in the formal education system in Victoria. The attributes listed above have strong resonance with the current principles\(^{25}\) of learning and teaching (PoLT) that are a major focus of current departmental efforts to strengthen pedagogical practice (DEECD, 2011). Additionally, support for the approach was part of the original design of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VCAA, 2004). On the VELS website inquiry-based (constructivist) approaches are supported in a number of instances including the potential they offer for integrating the different Domains and making connections in a meaningful context across learning areas (VCAA, 2010b).

Although constructivism is widely supported in the literature and in practice, there are critics of the approach and particularly of ‘facilitator’ approaches replacing ‘instructor’ approaches to teaching (see for example Jenkins, 2000; Mayer, 2004; Handelsman et al. 2004; Kirschner et al., 2006). However, while acknowledging that other learning theories and teaching practices compete with constructivism approaches, this section on pedagogy has been specifically developed to identify ways that *Global Connections* is consistent with existing education practice. In this regard, the program is compatible with constructivism/social constructivism pedagogical approaches.

However, there remains a strong tradition in secondary schools of education informed by a behaviourism epistemology and a modernist worldview characterised by didactic transmission of ‘factual’ segments of knowledge (Phillips, 2000). Behaviourism became the dominant theory of education and learning in the 1960s and placed the responsibility for learning squarely on the shoulders of teachers. It was widely considered that if teachers provided the right stimuli, good learning would result (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2000).

Behaviourist methods fit well with neoliberal influenced managerialism and behaviourism has been slow to move out of classrooms as a preferred teaching approach. Behaviourism is particularly evident within the discipline-based subjects that retain a strong emphasis on discrete units of knowledge suitable for marks-based assessment used to rank and order students with regard to future pathways of study (see section 2.3.4). Nevertheless, change processes are occurring and even within disciplines like science, which have a long tradition of dispensing ‘truth’ and ‘facts’,

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\(^{24}\) See for example the social inquiry model of education developed by the Ministry of Education in Victoria in 1987 (Ministry of Education, 1987)

\(^{25}\) Six Principles of Learning are promoted as being foundational to good teaching and as creating conditions that promote student learning. The only principle that does not directly connect to the dot pointed attributes of constructivism above is a focus on assessment as part of learning and even then the elaboration of this principle advocates using assessment ‘constructively’ to construct learning as well as to determine what has been learnt (DEECD, 2011)
constructivism is actively promoted and is considered by some science education writers to represent pedagogical ‘best practice’ (see for example, Duit & Treagust 1998; Skamp, 2008). However, this is not universally the case and Kirschner et al. (2006) present a strong case for instructional approaches to science teaching and suggest that there is empirical evidence to support a conclusion that constructivism approaches are less effective at advancing scientific learning and ‘may even result in negative results with students ending up confused, with misconceptions, or with disorganised knowledge’ (Kirschner et al., 2006, p.84).

Contested or not, the learner-centred pedagogical approaches which underpin Global Connections are relatively common and many secondary schools have at least some programs of study that actively promote facilitated, student-centred, inquiry-based learning of the type informed by a constructivism epistemology. Student-centred learning in these centres does not involve teachers abdicating their role but instead they play a role of facilitator rather than a dispenser of knowledge (Glaserfeld, 1995).

Within the recent discourse on constructivist pedagogy the Global Connections’ emphasis on ‘authentic’ participation that leads to positive social action has particular significance. The program is designed around the premise that authentic participatory activity is essential and also that participation is enhanced by acknowledging the students’ concerns and interests (Wierenga et al., 2008). However, participation can take many forms and the level of engagement in participatory activity fits on a continuum that ranges from ‘bums on seats’ attendance to active political action (Wyn, 2008). Some writers have suggested that the starting point of students’ own concerns and interests rather than adult agenda is critical for moving students towards the more fully engaged end of the participation continuum (Aveling, 2001; Bessant, 2004; Doesburg, 2000; Taylor & Smith, 2000).

However, participatory activity, even when grounded in students’ interests, does not necessarily lead to the deep, reflective engagement and shifts of perspective that characterise transformative educational experiences. In order to encourage a deeper and more enduring impact from socially-oriented learning, some writers suggest that a pedagogical approach enabling action on social issues is necessary. For example, there is a considerable body of literature about transformative pedagogy with regard to environmental education programs. Environmental education is inherently designed to be transformative in that it is predicated on the core principle that changed behaviour at all levels of society is required to appropriately respond to environmental challenges. Some writers and researchers in this field conclude that if changed behaviour is the goal of transformative education

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26 For example, two of the schools involved in this research had Learning Centres that were dedicated to providing student-centred inquiry-based learning

27 See section 1.6.3 for a definition and section 2.3.3.2 for a discussion on transformative education.
programs, then it is necessary to engage students beyond providing them with knowledge or awareness ‘about’ social issues (Boulding, 1990; Hungerford & Volk, 1990; Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Further to this, research indicates that extensive knowledge about issues on its own may work negatively to disempower young people if the feeling that the problem is ‘too big’ is created and becomes overwhelming (Hwang et al., 2000; Nagel, 2005). In a similar way, young people who are actively engaging in civic education programs that leave them feeling that they have little or no control over the process or outcomes can be counter-productive (Collin, 2008).

Global citizenship education, like environmental education represents a transformative rather than regenerative emphasis with regard to the way that students view their relationship with the world. In this regard, attempts over the last thirty years to implement action-oriented environmental education might usefully inform considerations of ways to engage students in action oriented global citizenship education. Some environmental education writers suggest that only when action-oriented education ‘for’ the environment is included can programs be considered to be meeting transformative intentions (Linke, 1980 cited in Gough, 1997; Huckle, 1993; Fien, 1993).

Stemming from the emphasis on action, pedagogical approaches have been developed which have as their primary focus the empowering of students to take positive action towards social change, for example ‘Action Competence’ (Jensen & Schnack, 2006). Action competence has its roots in health education and environmental education in Denmark, but its philosophy and processes are equally applicable to any education interested in critical examination of social issues leading to considered action towards change. Within this framework it is important to give students the opportunity to determine the nature of the desired change. Change that is predetermined does not represent ‘action’ as intended in a transformative approach (Courtenay-Hall and Rogers, 2002; Breiting and Morgensen, 1999).

Global Connections links strongly to this approach in that the action phase develops in parallel with the processes of communication between the young people in each country. The young people are encouraged to communicate about their issues with their peers in the partner country and thereby reciprocally develop understanding about appropriate action. In this way they are ‘Thinking globally and acting locally’, and come to realise that global issues are part of local concerns and local issues are part of global concerns (Wierenga et al., 2008).

2.3.5 Role of teachers

Educational programs are not delivered objectively or value free, but are filtered through the work of teachers (Vongalis-Macrow, 2007). The managerial approach that led to comparison of schools (see
section 2.3.2.1) is also evident in the way teachers are being considered at an individual level. There are particular expectations of teachers and the findings of a Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST)\textsuperscript{28} investigation into teacher pay suggested that there was a ‘desire among all stakeholders in Australia to develop giving incentives for highly accomplished teaching’ (Ingvarson et al., 2007, p. 8).

Consequently, there has been an increasingly sharpened focus on individual teachers rather than departments within schools or whole schools themselves with regard to responsibility and accountability for student performance. However, Ingvarson & Rowe (2007) suggest that measuring teacher effectiveness is practically problematic, and politically and industrially sensitive despite ‘the high level of non-partisan political consensus (in Australia) regarding the macroeconomic and microeconomic importance of teacher quality and quality teaching for equipping students adequately to meet the constantly changing demands of the modern workplace’ (Ingvarson & Rowe, 2007, p. 1, emphasis in original). Once again, the link to economic related rationales for public provision of education is clearly evident.

While economically driven education policies do not exclude a social agenda, they tend to downplay teachers’ and schools’ social relevancy and limit opportunities for transformative practice (Barrett, 2006). Blee et al. (2006) describe how the principles and values of their program to introduce global citizenship education to a university sat uneasily with the concurrent and strenuous drive towards performance management, output measurement and accountability. They suggest that it seemed that their citizenship oriented project which was based on ‘a moral conception of education as an instrument for social justice, equality and shared prosperity’ was ‘marginal to the aspirations of the faculty’ (Blee et al., 2006, p. 36). Essentially, educational institutions are embedded in a context that is characterised by a particular set of values and assumptions with regard to schooling and the purposes of education (Flores, 2007). Interpretations of the role of schools therefore sets limits on who teachers and learners are ‘allowed’ to be and what is possible and permissible in education and therefore teachers only have limited opportunities and limited agency to be transformative in current education systems (Barrett, 2006).

Teachers’ agency is deliberately limited in education systems influenced by neoliberal ideology and teachers are distanced from deciding curriculum, standards and teaching goals (Priestley, 2002). There are very few supportive procedures for original school-based curriculum development with which teachers can respond to community or other special interest areas (Priestley, 2002; Codd, 2005). As a result, teachers are accustomed to working within their areas of discipline expertise in

\textsuperscript{28}DEST was a Commonwealth education department but has been replaced by DEEWR – Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
secondary schools which in turn tend to be organised into discipline-based departments (Phillips, 2000).

At the same time that there is pressure on teachers with respect to the effectiveness of their efforts there is also recognition that the changing education environment and the changing wider social environment adds a layer of uncertainty to teachers’ understanding of what is required of them:

... teachers are faced with unprecedented challenges. Along with many other knowledge intensive professions, teaching has to redefine core values, set new directions and reshape its priorities. While effective student learning remains the dominant, constant criterion of successful teaching, the nature of what is to be learnt, the best ways of learning and the needs of students and families are constantly evolving (Skilbeck & Connell, 2004, p.7).

The shifting nature of the educational context described above would seem to suggest that there is a constant requirement for teachers to redefine the relevance of curriculum and that they would therefore welcome programs like Global Connections which are different and relevant, and do not require the teachers themselves to write or deliver them. However, even when teachers do favour a transformative approach to education and want to incorporate innovative programs they are constrained by the mechanisms of the system.

Mayer (2006) suggests that there are new teachers who are showing increased awareness of social issues and are demanding flexible teaching approaches, and opportunities to learn. This new model of teacher values student participation, action-based learning and less formal methods than earlier generations (Mayer, 2006). What teachers do and how they react to educational changes is critical to determining the outcomes of the changes (Vongalis-Macrow, 2007). This suggests that teachers who relate to innovative pedagogical approaches involving student participation and action-based learning like those utilised in Global Connections are the most likely to find links between the program and their own practice and identity as teachers.

However, a number of issues arise if teachers are required to teach outside of their areas of expertise and Darby (2009) likens teaching out-of-field to a ‘boundary crossing’ event. Such an event involves changing from one system of traditions, knowledge, and practices that is familiar to another that is unfamiliar. Darby further suggests that teachers who manage the transition well utilise ‘boundary objects’, which are ‘bridges’ or ‘anchors’ between ‘intersecting social worlds’ (Darby, 2009). This perspective suggests that teachers have as their default reference the established ways of ‘teaching’ their discipline-based areas of expertise and need support or scaffolding to move to other areas. Global Connections was designed outside the formal education system and so was not specifically
intended to address curriculum objectives. Additionally, the program involved innovative approaches to the way that the program was conducted compared to the normal work of teachers. A possible implication of this situation is that the teachers associated with the program may have difficulty linking the program to their existing practice and knowledge of curriculum implementation in ways that effectively mirror ‘out-of-field’ teaching. As such they would need scaffolding to interpret the program’s activity.

2.3.6 Programs comparable to Global Connections

No programs were found in the literatures that are directly comparable to Global Connections. However, some of the individual elements of Global Connections are replicated in other school-based programs. For example, there are a number of successful programs undertaken in Australia with support from outside organisations which adopt similar student-led pedagogical approaches as Global Connections (see, for example, the Kids Teaching Kids programs promoted by Australia Post (KTK, 2011) and similar programs run by the West Australian NGO Firestarter (Firestarter, 2010)). In programs like these teachers play a crucial support role by scaffolding the learning of students but a major emphasis in the programs is creating an opportunity for the students to take the initiative with regard to their learning.

There are also many programs in schools which have been developed to address global citizenship related ideals. Many of these programs use curriculum resources that have been developed by development NGOs for use in schools (e.g. Amnesty, Oxfam, World Vision cited in AusAID, 2006). However, these programs are designed for teaching ‘about’ global education issues. The resources are typically adult generated and rely on data supplied from developing countries. Such resources are designed for use by classroom teachers in the course of their ‘normal’ practice. As a result, they fall short of the innovative approach of Global Connections, which offers opportunities for students to generate their own learning, to engage directly with their peers in Indonesia, and to engage in ways that are action-oriented. Global Connections is designed to engage students actively in global citizenship and as such is not directly comparable to programs designed to teach ‘about’ similar themes. Students in first world countries who simply study ‘issues’ tend to be disengaged from the reality of third world existence. The critical linkage in creating deep learning that might move learners towards a desire for social change seems to be best achieved through experiential linkages in pedagogy and programs (Boulding, 1990).

Success is judged here by the longevity and the reach of such programs because there have not yet been direct empirical studies published. KTK for example reached over 20,000 kids in 2011. Although empirical studies have not been published they have been initiated and I have attended presentations of interim reports of empirical work in progress.
There are also many programs in schools that create links to children in developing countries (for example programs run by the Oaktree Foundation previously mentioned). These programs allow for the authentic experiential connection with young people that is indicated above as being a prerequisite for deep learning and in many ways are comparable to Global Connections. However, possible comparison between Global Connections and these programs is limited because several key elements of Global Connections are not replicated in these programs and these elements act strongly to differentiate the program.

- Other programs connect school students in developed countries with school students in developed countries. Global Connections connected the school students in Australia with groups of young people outside of the school system in Indonesia. The young people in Indonesia were among the most marginalised in their communities – including for example young people in detention. It would seem likely that an initial focus of the Australian students would be on the difference that is represented by the respective circumstances of the connected groups. It is likely that there would be more perceived commonality if both groups were in school and ‘doing’ school. In a similar way, the people administering the program would be able to understand and negotiate problems more easily if they were all working within schools and communicating directly – rather than for example, working in schools and prisons through an NGO intermediary.

- Other programs most commonly effect connections via online web-based systems whereas an online connection has not been possible with Global Connections. The lack of online connection means that communication is delayed. Timely connections of the kind that young people in Australia with access to ‘instant’ communication possibilities have come to expect are impossible. The delayed communication also potentially provides advantages however, in that the range, extent and creativity of communication pieces exchanged is enhanced and can be more considered.

- The connection is facilitated by young people who are not teachers and are outside of the education system compared to the other programs that utilise existing staff in schools. This situation creates a different learning environment than if the children were working with adults in their accustomed roles (as teachers).

Some of these distinctions are perhaps subtle with regard to their effect, but collectively they are important in distinguishing Global Connections from other programs. Global Connections reaches

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30 Other organisations include for example Global School Partners, School-to-School International,
young people in developing countries who would not be reachable through school connections and creates learning environments that are different to online connections mediated through teachers.

Finally, Global Connections extends the ‘student-led learning’ approach by its use of youth facilitators rather than teachers. The program effectively adopts a ‘youth-led approach’ to ‘student-led learning’. No equivalent situation was found in the literature whereby young people not involved in teacher education programs replaced teachers as facilitators of programs in school classrooms. Perhaps the closest parallels are found in mentoring programs which involve older students (and sometimes young people from outside the school or from other schools) working with younger students. Mentoring programs are common to most schools in some form but they do not replace normal teaching practice in timetabled classes. The scope of mentoring programs is therefore considerably less than the role the facilitators play in Global Connections.

2.4 Conclusion

There are no neutral positions for education activity – educational programs and activities are undertaken in schools to serve particular purposes. In recent years it has been difficult to define the social purpose of school education within the context of an increasingly globalised economy, an increasingly globalised population, and an increasingly globalised framework for evaluating educational attainment. In many ways, the economic processes of globalisation have reinforced a vocational/neo-classical orientation of formal education and being a global citizen is often conflated with being part of a global economy. However, education has always served multiple purposes and although Global Connections was designed initially to fulfil the goals of a development NGO there is scope within the formal documents mandating school activity in Victoria to endorse such a program including its socially-critical orientation.

Nevertheless, although supported at theoretical levels within educational discourse and practical levels by education department rhetoric, Global Connections represents transformative practice with regard to the purpose, content and methods that constitute the customary activity of secondary schools. The discipline-based structure in secondary schools with an attendant focus on particular learning objectives makes a program that operates outside of discipline confines in ways that are not prescriptive with regard to outcomes inherently difficult. Additionally, the innovative pedagogical structure using facilitators that do not ‘teach’ differ from normal school environments. Both of these characteristics inevitably challenge teachers with regard to their interpretation of the learning environment that is created and the learning that takes place.
The discussion in this chapter suggests that to understand the formal education half of the partnership the empirical research phase should focus on the way that \textit{Global Connections} is interpreted with regard to perceptions of its purpose, content and methods so that it can be understood in relation to school practice. The empirical research should also incorporate investigation into the way the program integrates with ‘normal’ school systems and processes. It further suggests that the teachers who would normally inhabit that teaching space should be the primary source of data with regard to the schools’ interpretations of the program.
Chapter Three: Development NGOs, development, and non-formal education

3.1 Introduction

Plan constituted the non-formal education half of the partnership equation in the Australian part of *Global Connections*. As such, Plan needed to justify their part in the program’s activity within a framework informed by the mandate for their operations. NGOs are not insulated from accountability to their stakeholders and to the general public. Indeed, NGOs seek to be held to account for the things they claim to be, and for what they actually do (Grzybowski, 2005). In developing, monitoring, and evaluating programs, NGOs not only address the question ‘How can we do what we do better?’, but must also ask ‘Should we be doing other things instead?’ (Roper & Petit, 2002). Plan, in all their activities connected to *Global Connections* necessarily had to reconcile what they did with their primary mission of reducing child poverty and disadvantage.

This chapter begins by describing Plan as an organisation and the rationales behind establishing *Global Connections* within the scope of their development-oriented activity. In doing so, the chapter also identifies particular characteristics of the program that involved transformation and organisational learning for Plan as a development NGO. The chapter then considers the work of development organisations more generally and particularly the ways that they work with young people in educational contexts. The discussion is generated, as it was with formal education in the previous chapter, with reference to relevant literature as well as to the particular circumstances of this research project. The intention is for this chapter to provide indications of how the empirical research can be constructed so that the research findings might usefully inform other partnership situations involving NGOs.

3.2 Plan Australia

Plan Australia, based in Melbourne, is the largely autonomous Australian National Office (ANO) of Plan, which is one of the oldest and largest child-centred community development non-government organisations (NGOs) in the world. Plan is the parent organisation of a ‘family’ of offices which operate in more than 60 countries. The organisation has its headquarters in the United Kingdom and has a child-centred development mission with a goal of ending child poverty. The separate offices of Plan in the countries it operates have a high degree of autonomy and all have responsibility for ‘fundraising, building relationships, development programs, advocacy, public education and young people’s participation’ (Plan, 2010). However, the balance of time and resources committed to these various responsibilities differs according to the location of the country office. The 18 offices that are located in developed countries are designated as donor countries and carry the major responsibility
for raising funds. The 49 offices in developing countries carry the major responsibility for implementing development programs that benefit children (Plan, 2010).

The Australian National Office is one of the 18 ‘donor’ country offices. On its website, Plan describes itself as an organisation ‘free from political and religious agenda, existing only for the sake of children’ and which works ‘to empower communities to overcome poverty, so that children have the opportunity to reach their full potential’ (Plan, 2010).

Further to this, Plan believes that children must be involved throughout any development activity that involves them if the activity is to be genuinely constructed in their best interests. An implication of this approach is that Plan believes that children should be considered as equal partners in efforts to change their futures. In this view, children are citizens in their own right rather than citizens in the making and as such they are considered to be active agents of change in community development efforts rather than passive recipients of such efforts (Plan, 2010). Alongside this view of children within particular development contexts, Plan believes that in a more general sense it is necessary to be working both locally and globally on the underlying causes of poverty in the developing world in order to make real improvements to children’s lives.

Plan’s philosophy and intent with regard to development are expressed in their mission statement:

Plan strives to achieve lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children in developing countries through a process that unites people across cultures and adds meaning and value to their lives by:

- Enabling deprived children, their families and their communities to meet their basic needs and to increase their ability to participate in and benefit from their societies.
- Fostering relationships to increase understanding and unity among peoples of different cultures and countries.
- Promoting the rights and interests of the world's children. (Plan, 2010)

When Global Connections was developed it was grounded in these core principles and the ways of working such principles engender. From the outset, the young people in each group were to be encouraged to recognise their counterparts as peers. The objectives, as articulated by Plan, of Global Connections with regard to the young people participating in it were stated as follows:

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31 From this point, the use of the name 'Plan' within this thesis can be understood to mean 'Plan Australia'. When there is a need to make reference to offices other than the ANO they will be identified separately for example, Plan Indonesia.

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• Form personal bonds and a sense of global connection with their peers overseas by mutually sharing experiences, stories, pictures, dreams, ideas, films, concerns and priorities with each other

• Increase understanding of issues facing young people in a different community overseas

• Develop invaluable skills, such as leadership, expression and communication (especially visual literacy), project planning and implementation.

• Raise awareness about the lives and experiences and issues of young people from around the world, and in their own community

• Develop common agenda, joint solutions and collaborations for issues of concern with young people overseas (Wierenga et al., 2008)

Irrespective of being grounded in core beliefs about their activity, Global Connections’ design meant that it operated in ways that were transformative with regard to Plan’s normal activity. This was not an incidental outcome. Plan actively intended for the program to be transformative for their organisation, and included themselves within the objectives of the program: ‘Global Connections should enable Plan to learn more about young people’s ideas, visions and needs and integrate them into the processes, operations and philosophy of Plan’s work, and to also build the capacity of Plan to actively engage and listen to young people’ (Wierenga et al., 2008, p.17).

3.2.1 Global Connections within Plan Australia

As well as impacting in planned ways concerning the way Plan related to young people, Global Connections was also transformative with regard to Plan’s normal activity because:

• It involved undertaking a ‘program’ in Australia. As a ‘donor’ country, activity in Australia was traditionally mainly fundraising and marketing. Plan’s involvement with development programs was with the design and management of programs which were implemented overseas in developing countries. This raised fundamental questions about how the organisation engages with the Australian community.

• It involved working collaboratively with Plan Indonesia in ways that went beyond the normal requirements of that relationship. Although Plan Australia developed the program and was the driver behind Global Connections, its implementation required ongoing collaboration with, and the active involvement of Plan Indonesia. Plan Australia did not have direct access to the groups of young people in Indonesia which were connected to the young people in Australian schools. Nor did Plan Australia have the operational capability to implement the program in Indonesia. As a result, Plan Indonesia was a critical partner at both a planning
level and also in a practical capacity because they needed to commit operational resources and time to enable the program to operate.

- Designing and managing an educational program in Australia required development of skills and relationships beyond those required for the normal activity of the Australian office.

- It was themed around global citizenship and global citizenship education and this represented a new emphasis for Plan. This raised practical questions for Plan such as ‘Why and How should Plan be engaged with global citizenship?’, but it also raised the philosophical question of ‘What do we mean by global citizenship?’

- It involved working as a non-government organisation within the government structures and systems of schools.

- It connected groups of young people in two countries and Plan needed to monitor and balance the outcomes of those groups of young people who were very differently motivated within each individual version of the program. This raised questions about ‘How does the program incorporate the various aims and intents of the different groups of young people?’ In their rhetoric, Plan considered all the groups of young people to be equally important – but ‘How could ‘equality’ be realised in practice?’

*Global Connections* was not a mature product of an experienced education division of Plan. It was very much a work in progress. Albeit grounded very strongly in Plan’s core principles of child-centred development, the program was open ended as to its day to day running and eventual outcomes. The program operated from the outset in a way that was similar to a program that was run in a developing country. However, it was not recognised as such within the organisation and did not initially have the formal status of being a ‘program’. Plan did not run ‘programs’ in Australia. The transformative effect of the situation described with regard to Plan’s usual practice meant that the managing and funding of *Global Connections* required internal adjustment within Plan. In effect, *Global Connections* provided a ‘meta lens’ through which Plan Australia could view their core activity.

Concurrent, with the beginning phase of *Global Connections*, Plan was attempting to integrate Child-Centred Community Development (CCCD) across their various divisions. As part of this process, a

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32 In every implementation of the program there was a group of young people in each country facilitating the program and a group of young(er) people engaged in the program – four groups in all. The motivations of the facilitators were very different to the participants in the program and in the context of each country. Plan considered all four groups of young people and their outcomes to be equally important.

33 At the time of writing, new funding initiatives from the Commonwealth government aimed at community engagement seem to offer NGOs like Plan additional possibilities for running this type of program in Australia and Plan has responded by restructuring and repositioning the program.
Youth Participation Coordinator was appointed in 2004 and was made responsible for *Global Connections*. The program was the primary function of the role of Youth Participation Coordinator although it was envisaged that, because youth participation was a cross-cutting issue, the Coordinator could potentially advise across all other programs. *Global Connections* and youth participation generally came within the Global Learning Unit which was situated in the International Programs Department. However, *Global Connections* was not an international program in the usual sense which referred to development programs overseas. As a result, *Global Connections* struggled to get recognition within the Plan as a genuine program (Plan Coordinator, 2008).

Despite not immediately gaining recognition as a ‘legitimate’ program, *Global Connections* was supported beyond the 2005 pilot phase. The program ran again (without being scaled up) in 2006 and 2007 while still struggling to find a place within the organisation’s normal operations. That there were five different Directors of the CCCD Department from its inception in 2005 until 2008, added to the difficulty of establishing stability for the program. There were also several different Youth Participation Coordinators directly responsible for administering *Global Connections*. Only one person involved in the pilot phase in 2005 was still actively connected to running the program in 2009.

In 2007, Plan committed to the ARC project and also identified that Youth Participation was an area that Plan could consider as a ‘thought leadership’ issue. This meant that Plan’s identity as an organisation would be more strongly aligned with Youth Participation and that Plan would actively seek to take a leading role on the issue. The outcome of the changes at this time resulted in a shift in the way *Global Connections* was seen within the organisation. By the end of 2008, the program was seen as a ‘real’ program and deserving of systems and programmatic support in the same way as other projects.

Involvement with *Global Connections* had implications for Plan that extended beyond the program outcomes. Fundamental questions were raised for Plan relating to the purposes, roles and methods of their development activity. Firstly, were ways of thinking about the role that children themselves play in development activity associated with the programs that Plan sponsors. Secondly, were ways of thinking about their relationship with their Australian constituency and their role within the Australian community. The next sections of this chapter consider how each of these dimensions is reflected in the literature related to development activity. Together these sections frame the philosophical and practical perspectives that Plan as a non-formal education provider brought to the partnerships with the schools.

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34 Funding of the project for example required finding specific corporate sponsors because it lacked the status of a program and could not access funds raised for development activity.
3.3 The role of NGOs and development education

Non-government organisations (NGOs) have proliferated over the last sixty years and are now highly visible and widely acknowledged for the work they do in relation to a diverse range of causes. They are a highly dynamic component of many aspects of most modern societies (Salamon et al., 1999; Van Rooy, 2000). NGOs with a particular commitment to social change and societal reform and working specifically towards development agenda have largely arisen since World War II when a western consciousness about international responsibility was strengthened. The period immediately after the war saw more than 4000 inter-governmental bodies established for enabling cross-border action, including the United Nations, and a parallel growth in the non-governmental sector35 (Van Rooy, 2000).

During this period, ‘Development’ was first used in an international context (together with ‘underdevelopment’) by President Truman in his inaugural address in 1949 (Halle, 1964 cited in Rist, 2007). At that time, the intention was to remove the divide created by confrontational language like ‘colonisers’ and ‘colonised’ and position everyone as members of the same family of nations who were all to some extent developed. Money and political will were all that were seen as needed to match the levels of development (Rist, 2007).

In the early years of ‘development’ there was very little attempt to define its scope beyond an assumption that ‘development’ would lead to an improvement in the condition of the world’s poor (Hayter, 2005). There was an assumption about ‘quality’ outcomes associated with the use of the term that equated development to improvement of some kind. That assumption continues to underlie the word’s current use in multiple contexts (Cornwall, 2007).

The language of ‘development’ alluded to worlds of the future and justified intervention in the current world with promises of the possible. After 60 years of use, ‘development’ remains a contested concept and is not clearly defined. Despite being part of the lexicon of a wide variety of theoretical and practical perspectives, its meaning depends on who is using it and where it is being used (Rist, 2007). The uncertainty that has always been associated with the term ‘development’ in an international context translated into contrasting interpretations of ‘development’ activity.

One of the more significant contrasts arose through the ‘alternative’ development approach of a distinct sub-set of organisations which became identified as ‘Development NGOs36’. These

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35 Plan as one of the oldest development organisations is one of the few NGOs that predates this period. Plan was founded in 1937 as “Foster Parents Plan for Children in Spain” to help children whose lives were disrupted by the Spanish Civil War (Plan, 2010)

36 In this thesis, Plan is often referred to as a ‘development NGO’ and it is intended that this term be interpreted as referring to an organisation of the type described here.
organisations started to gain real prominence in the 1970s and were distinguishable from other organisations working in developing countries by their orientation to local level development rather than being tied to national development agenda which was the predominant approach at the time (Tandon, 2000). Associated with the local focus was an emphasis on small scale projects that were integrated to provide benefit for individuals, families and their communities. Additionally, development under this ‘alternative’ development paradigm was participatory, based on the belief that development could not be ‘delivered’ and that enduring benefit could only occur if people developed themselves. The participatory nature of development in this form was diametrically opposed to development that was organised at a national level of intervention and which considered individual involvement to be irrelevant and inappropriate in the context of national agenda focused primarily on ‘nation building’ and GNP growth (Tandon, 2000).

By the mid-1990s, the ‘alternative’ development approaches advocated by ‘development NGOs’ had been incorporated in mainstream development discourse and in the activity of the major development providers and funders. Participation, integrated interventions, local-level development, and mobilisation of the poor, became standard inclusions in discourse related to development philosophy and policy formulated at all levels (Tandon, 2000). The United Nations’ World Summit for Social Development in 1995 ended in an agreement that recognised the interlinked nature of social justice, social development, economic development and environmental protection as elements of sustainable development. The agreement also acknowledged the importance of enabling the participation of people in local communities in local developments that affected them (UN, 1995).

The growing focus on socio-economic equality and justice for marginalised people began to shift the post-World War II domain of social theory for development from a social welfare model, which utilised technocratic approaches that emphasised modernisation and managerial efficiency for economic growth, to one that was human rights based (Alldred, 2007; Uvin, 2007). This latter view recognised a fragmentation of worldviews and provided the possibility of multiple involvements of diverse people in global issues/problems including the role of aid (Tandon, 2000; Palmer & Birch, 2003).

However, the change in the way that aid was targeted and delivered did not change the fact that it was still aid. Since the early days of NGO activity there had been concern expressed in development discourse that aid alone could produce dependency and did not address the underlying causes of inequity which lead to poverty. Associated with this discourse was an approach that was increasingly informed by socially critical perspectives which questioned major development projects that had resulted in negative consequences for poor people. Questions were directed towards why the
projects were being undertaken, who was benefitting from them and who was bearing the cost (Van Rooy, 2000).

The gap between state-level intentions and the reality represented by an inability to change the conditions of the most disadvantaged led to a significant discourse critiquing the function of the state. In many parts of the world large-scale development projects were increasing inequity by displacing already marginalised people from their livelihoods and communities (Paling, 2000). Development NGOs were recasting the purpose of development activity in a human rights framework and were increasingly politically active alongside their social activity (Tandon, 2000; Grzybowski, 2005; McGillicuddy, 2011).

NGOs recognised that they also benefitted from the processes of globalisation - particularly with the significant increase in funding and the increase in access to development areas previously considered off-limits (Tandon, 2000). However, their prime concern was with the processes of marginalisation that inevitably accompanied growth and development that was part of an economic globalisation rationalisation. Plan specifically states ‘Globalisation...... can marginalise further those who are poorest and most excluded. ‘ (Plan, 2009). Creating just, democratic and sustainable communities required creation of a common sense of humanity and critical consideration of equity issues rather than simple provision of ‘aid’ (Van Rooy, 2000; Henderson & O’Neill, 2011).

Critical consideration of issues and the shift to more participatory approaches and people-centred development changed the nature of engagement between development organisations and developing communities. There was an increasing recognition that ‘participatory’ development rather than ‘delivered’ development required deeper understanding of the recipient communities. Such understanding realistically required local knowledge and to this end partnerships between NGOs based in each community became increasingly common. The concept of partnership was something that NGOs were philosophically drawn to as representing a commitment that went beyond giving financial assistance. The enacting of partnership activity added an extra and complex relational dimension to the processes of development that was not present in classic project-based interventions (Brehm, 2001).

Additionally, partnerships appeared to offer comparative advantage based on each organisation’s proximity to their respective constituencies. Anchoring their activity in their own constituency potentially increased each organisation’s legitimacy and claims of expert contribution. Northern37 NGOs were positioned to engage with donors and undertake advocacy roles to influence policy,

37 The terms ‘North’ and ‘South’ are commonly used to refer to ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ countries irrespective of the countries, actual geographic location.
while Southern NGOs were positioned to benefit from local knowledge and presence. Partnership potentially enabled each organisation’s respective strengths to be combined in ways that could more effectively link the constituencies (Brehm, 2001). The dimensions and contributions of partnerships are developed further in the next chapter. However, it is worth noting at this point that although partnership approaches did deepen the ways that NGOs related to developing communities the relationships often fell short of aspirations and partnership approaches are the subject of heated debate (Brehm, 2001).

Nevertheless, debates about particular approaches notwithstanding, there has been a trend over the last half century away from developed countries giving aid to developing countries towards a more holistic interpretation of how both types of community fit within the world and are related to each other. Development NGOs have been to the fore with regard to the changing development paradigm. Over the last decades, NGOs have multiplied and diversified, and acted with greater significance and impact. Although not welcome at major political deliberations they often make their presence felt in parallel processes and play an important role of calling governments to account for what they say in international declarations (Van Rooy, 2000; Grzybowski, 2005). Grzybowski (2005) suggests that contemporary development NGOs are at the forefront of creating a new international civil society and are closely associated with emerging struggles in a world that has been globalised by neoliberalism. Van Rooy (2000) depicts NGOs as bricks in the civil society building processes and positions them as a counterbalance between the excesses of the state and markets systems.

3.4 Education in development

Education has always been an important component of development NGO activity (McCloskey, 2011). Education has traditionally been undertaken as part of development organisations’ activity in two distinct ways that reflect the different respective foci of their work in developing communities, and domestically in their host donor country. Firstly, ‘education for/as development’ was an important part of development programs in developing countries. Secondly, ‘development education’ was undertaken in donor countries as part of awareness and advocacy roles aimed at engaging people in developed countries with development issues. These two approaches are considered in the next two sections.

Grzybowski gives examples of meetings involving GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), WTO (World Trade Organisation) and IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the closed door sessions of G-7 (Group of seven industrialised countries: France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States and Canada). Van Rooy (2000) states that around 50,000 people and 700 NGOs gathered to demonstrate in a major ‘rattling of sabres’ at the WTO meeting in Seattle in 1999. Van Rooy suggests that the growing presence of NGOs at such meetings was catalysed by the Stockholm Environment Conference of 1972, and the Women’s Conference in 1975, and really gained momentum at The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.
3.4.1 Education for development: education in developing countries

‘Education for development’ and a learning agenda had for a long time been a cornerstone of progressive development practice and community development efforts. However, the approach to education changed as development became more participatory and there was an accompanying recognition that education needed to be wider and deeper with more support. Training programs were replaced by capacity building and programs that encouraged lifelong learning (Vincent & Byrne, 2006). A learning focus fit well with the values of development NGOs particularly with respect to recognising multiple realities and addressing power inequalities. Such values imply people-centred processes and non-hierarchical approaches to education that might link meaningful participation and shared decision-making (Brehm, 2001; Vincent & Byrne, 2006). NGOs recognised their potential for shaping learning towards a more transformative promise (Roper & Pettit, 2002).

To this end, educational efforts in developing countries were often aimed at conscientization and the collective mobilisation of marginalised people (Tandon, 2005; Vincent & Byrne, 2006). Conscientization was a concept popularised by Freire (1970) and involved raising critical consciousness so as to expose social and political contradictions in order to enable the socially dispossessed to overcome their negative images of themselves. Such negative images were considered to be propagated by the hegemony of the state and act in ways that were inhibiting and restrictive with regard to breaking the poverty cycle (Freire, 1970). Bourdieu (1980) coined the term ‘symbolic violence’ to explain how those who wield power impose a particular world view in such a way that it is considered to be ‘natural’ by people. As a result, people match their behaviour to that view and thereby reinforce it (Bourdieu, 1980 cited in Rist, 2007).

The processes of engaging in education in developing countries were considered to be as important as the content of the educational programs that were being conducted (Vincent & Byrne, 2006). In some cases, the process of engaging in education was the program because it represented the real development challenge. A major challenge in developing countries was enabling equitable access to education and this goal was often at the forefront of education programs irrespective of other intended outcomes. What was taught and what was learnt became secondary to providing people with opportunities to take part, and to assisting education providers to provide appropriate and inclusive learner-centred environments (Tandon, 2000).

3.4.2 Development Education: Education in developed countries
Non-formal development education\(^{39}\) has tended to be undertaken in ‘donor’ constituencies in ways that exhibit distinct contrasts to education programs that are run as part of development programs. The role of NGOs with regard to ‘development education’ in donor constituencies is primarily advocacy and to ensure that the ‘voices’ of the marginalised are heard (Bourn, 2005). This type of development education is usually aligned to fund-raising and marketing efforts by NGOs. In this way, education efforts are linked to change but only indirectly in as much as the results of fundraising activity are then directed towards projects in developing countries.

The difference in educational focus domestically and internationally resulted in different educational approaches. In developing countries, NGOs educational activity reflected their philosophical approach to working in development contexts. This usually meant that there were multiple stakeholders involved in participatory ways. However, in the developed ‘donor’ countries education undertaken was primarily about awareness raising and advocacy directed towards supporting marketing efforts and policy change goals. Such ‘development education’ was constructed to inform people in developed countries about the conditions and issues in developing countries. It was therefore more about transmission of information than participatory engagement in educational activity. Some writers suggest that, while proving effective at raising funds these educational efforts did not change donor communities’ passivity about issues of global justice (Van Rooy, 2000; McCloskey, 2011).

However, this view is somewhat countered by recent research evidence presented by the Development Education Association\(^{40}\) which indicates that global education in developed countries makes a compelling difference with regard to engaging people in policy priorities directed towards building responsible societies characterised by community cohesion (DEA, 2010). The research evidence identified the following ways that global education impacted on people. Global education helped people to:

- Understand their own situation in a wider context.
- Make connections between local and global events.
- Develop skills and knowledge to interpret events affecting their lives.
- Understand causes of global inequality, justice and solidarity.
- Learn from experiences elsewhere in the world.

\(^{39}\) ‘Development education’ and related terms ‘global learning’ and ‘global education’ all tend to be used to refer to education in donor countries aimed at building understanding of international development issues (Bourn, 2007).

\(^{40}\) The Development Education Association is an NGO based in Britain.
• Identify common interests and develop solidarity with diverse communities.
• Combat racism and xenophobia.
• Widen horizons and personal development.
• Make a difference to their world by participating in society.  (DEA 2010)

The DEA study did not however investigate the depth to which people engaged in these ways and a recent analysis of survey results indicated that development support in Britain is a ‘mile wide’ but only an ‘inch deep’ (Hudson & van Heerde, 2010).

The intentions of *Global Connections* with regard to the participants in both countries closely match the outcomes described by DEA above and the program was constructed to create deep engagement. The program bridged the separate educational spheres in which NGOs operate by linking the communities and combining the educational purposes. There was essentially no difference in the intended outcomes for young people participating in the program in the ‘developed’ or the ‘developing’ country. In this way, the program was intended to collapse the developed-developing dualism and become educational development that was accessible to and impacted on both groups of participants. In effect, *Global Connections* was operating as a development program in both Indonesia and Australia and as such followed principles of education used in developing countries.

However, development NGOs do not typically run development-style education programs in donor countries. At least, they do not run such programs within the donor communities of donor countries. Australia is a donor country but has poverty that is as significant as that in developing countries. This is particularly the case in indigenous communities where life expectancy is nearly twenty years lower than in the rest of Australia (Oxfam, 2011). Oxfam and other NGOs\(^41\) work with disadvantaged communities in Australia but the main education activity of development NGOs in Melbourne is raising awareness of issues that affect people in the developing countries where they run programs. To this end, part of NGOs’ global education activity involves material that was developed for use in schools. However, the material is typically adult generated and is intended for use by teachers in the normal course of their practice (AusAID, 2006) rather than as a form of transformative engagement based on participatory principles.

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\(^41\) Plan does not identify Australia as one of the countries they do development work on their website. In Australia, Plan’s work has primarily been oriented towards supporting the child-centred work they do in developing countries.
However, recently some writers have suggested that NGOs have an increased responsibility to play a role in using global education to bridge communities (Smith, 2004; Tandon 2005), and development NGOs have increasingly recognised that the changing nature of global social systems indicates a need to work more closely and in different ways with their donor communities (Smith, 2004). Alldred (2007) highlights as an imperative the need to address fundamental issues of perspective related to development education efforts. Alldred suggests that it should be made explicit whether the main outcome of a development education process is a clearer understanding of what happens in poor countries or whether the aim is a values-based engagement in order to effect change. In other words, is the focus on clearer understanding of international realities or an improvement in the real-life circumstances of poor people in poor countries? (Alldred, 2007). Gyoh (2011) supports the need to redefine development education and questions whether currently it is merely responding to global initiatives like the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)\textsuperscript{42} rather than helping to shape them (Gyoh, 2011).

A transformative aim of NGO development education activity has been increasingly evident since the mid-1990s in parallel with a growing politically active role of NGOs in their host countries. A consequent educative focus on the conditions of marginalisation has resulted in a growing critique of the institutionalised ‘delivery’ of development which was failing to deliver meaningful change. This critique inevitably positioned development NGOs as advocates of change to existing systems and dominant paradigms of government intervention. The global system was portrayed as unjust and adding to rather than mitigating inequity (Tandon, 2005).

Constituency building in donor countries which shifts efforts from raising money to conscientization was proposed as early as the 1970s to address the causes of disadvantage and support global justice. In the last decade there has been a renewed emphasis in development literature suggesting that such constituency building should be part of development NGOs new roles and responsibilities (Smith, 2004). To accomplish such goals, Bourn (2005) suggests that development educators need to be innovative and creative rather than just challenging dominant paradigms. The role of development educationalists should be to empower people to develop the skills, knowledge and value base so that they can make connections between their own lives and those of people elsewhere in the world (Bourn, 2005).


\textsuperscript{42} The Millennium Development Goals are a United Nations initiative aimed at setting an international agenda for development
Transformationalism is intricately connected to people and issues in ways that cross national boundaries (McGrew, 2000). NGOs working within the transformationalism paradigm actively require that cultural, social, environmental, political and economic aspects are considered in their deliberate attempts at creating new patterns of inclusion that erode the traditional developed-developing dualism.

The focus on inclusiveness of transformationalism is not just about recognising diversity but requires critical examination of that diversity. The dimensions of the diversity (cultural, social, environmental, political and economic) are all considered with regard to the way that they contribute to creating the Developed-Developing divide. There are strong parallels with this view of the role of NGOs and particular ways of thinking about global environmental issues and environmental education that date back to the 1970s. In 1977, an intergovernmental conference in Tbilisi produced an agreement that included within its three goals for environmental education that ‘economic, social, political and ecological inter-dependence’ were all part of what must be considered to create ‘new patterns of behaviour of individuals, groups and society as a whole towards the environment.’ (UNESCO, 1977, p.3).

It is no coincidence that this interpretation of environmental education is similar to the role of NGOs within the processes of globalisation using a transformationalism lens. Environmental issues have become recognised as having global impacts and environmental education is inherently designed to be transformative. ‘Environmental problems’ are in fact ‘societal problems’ with their roots in the behaviours of people in diverse communities. Many of the most significant environmental problems (for example, climate change) span national boundaries and have become global issues. Resolution of major ‘problems’, or at least the management of such problems, requires global responses and as such necessitates thinking about ideas of global citizenship. Given that international NGOs like Plan are, by their nature, one of the mechanisms by which contemporary globalisation is organised and reproduced (McGrew, 2000), global citizenship is an increasingly important concept and should perhaps anchor the ways that NGOs work across national boundaries. Extrapolating the framework of this argument it is also possible to justify global citizenship as a cornerstone to the ways that NGOs should work within the constituencies of their host countries.

McGrew’s (2000) description of transformationalism education as connecting people and issues in ways that cross national boundaries and which create a common sense of humanity rather than

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43 McGrew also discusses ‘Neoliberal’ views of globalisation which consider that removing market barriers and creating a global market is a benign influence that will lead to global prosperity - and also ‘Radical’ views of globalisation that effectively offer the opposite view to neo-liberalism and suggest that globalisation is the new imperialism and the means by which western economic powers assert their ‘colonial’ dominance.
emphasising difference would seem to call for a convergence of the participatory approach to education in developing countries with the awareness-raising emphasis in developed countries.

The way that *Global Connections* ran in Australia has strong connection to this line of thinking about the changing roles of development NGOs in donor countries and perhaps takes it a step further. The program goes beyond the constituency building activity normally undertaken. *Global Connections* is effectively a development ‘program’ which runs in Australia (a donor country) as well as in Indonesia (a developing country).

### 3.5 Working with young people

Early development work aimed at benefitting children was largely undertaken indirectly by working with the adult members of a community. The 1989 United Nations’ *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) led to a fundamental change in the way children were positioned in development work (UNICEF, 2011). The convention was more rapidly and more widely adopted44 than any previous human rights related agreement and promised to be a turning point in addressing the plight of impoverished children (Bartlett, 2001). The convention was a legally binding international instrument based on four core principles: non-discrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child (OHCHR, 2011).

In 1990, seventy one heads of state and 159 countries convened at the World Summit for Children. The delegates pledged themselves to a plan of action aimed at radically improving the situation for the world’s children by the new millennium. However, despite the rhetoric, the commitments were largely empty promises. Poverty continued to grow and children were disproportionately affected (Bartlett, 2001). Nevertheless, some NGOs (Plan was among them) did start to take on projects more usually associated with broader community development and recast them with a child-centred focus (Bartlett, 2001).

An important dimension of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was its emphasis on respect for the views of the child. Article 12 of the convention specifically acknowledges and protects children’s right to participation and consultation in matters that affect them (OHCHR, 2011). An approach like this, which positions children as active participants in development activity, aligns with the view that children are citizens already and not merely ‘future citizens’ as they have often been described historically by politicians, educators and others tasked with guiding young peoples’ education and development (Osler & Starkey, 2003; Smith et al., 2005; Holdsworth et al., 2007; Collin, 2008).

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44 Only the United States and Somalia failed to ratify the convention
While the legal status of citizenship and the rights attached to it (for example the right to vote) is limited to adults, a broader view of citizenship involving participation in community activity and contribution to the social life of a community would undoubtedly include children. This broader view of citizenship questions traditional perspectives that viewed children as marginal rather than integral to community development with a limited role as passive recipients of knowledge and care. It promotes instead ‘studies and programs that incorporate children as community agents in their own right’ (Golombek, 2006, p.15). In this view, children who are recipients of development attention are able to effectively participate in all democratic processes with ‘appropriate’ support (Ibrahim, 2005; Lolichen, 2006; 2006a; Collin, 2008). This ‘child rights’ approach is integral to Plan’s development approach which considers children as partners in changing the future rather than passive recipients of compassion (Ratnam, 2007a).

A change of approach in donor countries to the way that children were positioned within development activity is perhaps most readily visible in the changed emphasis of educational material produced by NGOs. There was a general shift from a somewhat paternalistic focus on individual children and their need, towards helping children by helping communities (Smith, 2004; Whaites, 2000). Presenting pictures of starving children accompanied by a request for cash donations was common in previous decades but became widely seen as inappropriate. Similar fundraising requests now tend to involve promotional material that focuses on positive images of empowered children as part of community contexts (Alam, 2007).

In contrast to using deficit models which position young people as civically disconnected and disinterested, working from a perspective that young people are fully engaged citizens means that young people need education that offers alternative ways to engage and thereby supports their existing political and social identity as citizens of communities (Lolichen, 2006). This approach is in evidence throughout the design of Global Connections. The children in Australia were considered in the same ways as the children in Indonesia and both groups were encouraged to develop communications based on their own interests and concerns. The program recognised the existing agency of the young people and aimed to create transformative opportunities for that could empower them further as global citizens. That the program took place in schools in Australia and other contexts (including detention centres) in Indonesia was relevant only from a logistical perspective and not philosophically with regard to the different groups as learners.

3.6 Conclusion

Throughout Plan’s long history as a child-centred development organisation they have adapted and evolved in response to changing concepts of ‘best’ practice while keeping their primary mission of
achieving lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children in developing countries. *Global Connections* was designed to conform to their vision of educational ideals as framed by this primary goal. As a result, the program was designed according to development principles of engaging children and without specific regard for formal education practice. Children were considered as existing global citizens and the program was structured in participatory ways to give them maximum control over the way that they engaged with issues of concern.

*Global Connections’* design and Plan’s approach to implementing it is strongly supported by development literature. However, some of the supporting literature is based on theoretical rather than proven examples of ‘best’ practice. This is particularly the case with regard to the changing ways that development NGOs are envisaged as relating to their home constituency but also related to emerging conceptual frameworks for considering the global citizenship themes of the program. Additionally, other aspects of the program were linked to existing practice in the development field but were outside Plan’s traditional activity. Plan needed to develop new ways of working with their partner organisation in Indonesia and new ways of evaluating, monitoring and balancing the outcomes of very different groups of young people in two countries. As a result, *Global Connections* was transformative with regard to Plan’s ‘normal’ practice and involved negotiating organisational as well as educational dimensions that had significant implications up to the highest strategic and governance levels. Addressing the research questions relating to partnership requires that the empirical research specifically acknowledges the separate nature of Plan’s interaction with *Global Connections* compared to that of the schools.
Chapter 4 Partnership

4.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters have situated Global Connections within the context of existing practice and the literature discourse related to formal education, as represented in secondary schools, and non-formal education as represented by Plan as a development NGO. In doing so the chapters have established that the program has the potential to contribute educationally within the separate interpretations of both sector’s activity. The program was designed and constructed entirely within Plan’s domain of interest and was formulated to address child-centred development goals. Nevertheless, there was clear evidence that those goals were compatible with documented intentions for state sponsored formal education.

However, this research is about partnership and is therefore concerned with combining the sectoral interpretations rather than addressing them separately. In this respect, there was also evidence within the literature that the practice and theorising of formal education and development activity are substantially self-contained and functionally independent. Finding theoretical and philosophically compatible niches that have resonance within the separate literature discourses is not the same as bringing those understandings to bear on the same program at the same time in the situated reality of educational practice.

Partnerships concurrently involve the aims and purposes of all the partner organisations. Palmer & Birch (2003) comment that the ‘non-governmental’ part of NGOs describes them by what they are not and that this distinction is particularly relevant in the context of partnerships with schools, which are very much governmental. NGOs as agents of social learning can operate outside the remit of government but schools cannot (Palmer and Birch, 2003). A school-NGO partnership necessarily involves practice that is outside the ‘normal’ activities of one, or both partners and so requires a ‘space’ for transformative practice to develop.

This chapter sets the context for considering Global Connections’ activity through a lens of partnership by considering partnership as an ontological and epistemological challenge in its own right. In doing so, it grounds the decisions about the methodologies that were utilised to undertake the empirical phase of the research and the subsequent analysis of the findings that were generated.

The chapter begins by considering social theory. In particular, it utilises the social frameworks of Bourdieu to position the separate domains of formal and non-formal education as fields which co-exist but are relatively autonomous within social systems. The discussion that is developed
establishes the partnership challenge as partly being one that bridges the separate fields rather than one that connects individual organisations in an isolated instance of a particular engagement.

The chapter then considers the literature on partnership approaches and ways that partnership activity is conducted. Included within this section are descriptions of partnership approaches within the specific context of schools and development NGOs. The chapter concludes by identifying the key considerations that will be carried forward to the empirical phase of the research and operationalises them as sub-questions that divide and focus the scope of the research question.

4.2 Social Theory: Bourdieu, social fields and habitus

The primary focus of this research is partnership between fundamentally different sectors with regard to enabling jointly sanctioned educational programs. Although there is not the scope here to extensively review social theory, it is important to consider the way that the different organisations are positioned within a broader social context in order to understand what is being asked of the partnership relationship. To this end, the social theories of Bourdieu provide a useful way of considering the separate worlds of formal education and NGOs and the challenges that might result from situating a program within both spheres of activity.

I have chosen to work with Bourdieu’s theories for two reasons. Firstly, the theories link structure and agency in social systems in a way that seems particularly useful to this research. Secondly, the theories were formulated empirically from studies of social contexts including extensive analysis of schools. Bourdieu considered that schools are the major institutional mechanism for reproducing cultural and class distinctions in society and in doing so they multiply rather than counter social inequality (Seidman, 2004). If such is the case, there would inevitably be implications for programs that are introduced to schools with socially transformative intent.

Bourdieu identified that the dualism of structure-centred and agent-centred approaches was the main cause for conflict in social theory and was interested in reducing the theoretical separation. Bourdieu insisted that social theory should consider the influence of structural dynamics such as markets, organisations, and social classes, but should also include individual actions and intersubjective meanings (Seidman, 2004).

Bourdieu (1993) describes society as being made up of social ‘fields’ which are structured social spaces within which there are particular rules of practice and different taken-for-granted logics. The largely autonomous fields are ordered by hierarchies that contain their own systems of power relationships which act to legitimate particular ways of knowing. The separate ‘fields’ involve a changing interplay of rules and practices which are inextricably linked to the institutions within them.
and the interactions of those institutions in society. The institutional rules and practices effectively provide authority for particular activities and discourse (Bourdieu, 1993). Additionally, the separate fields are not reducible into each other or into other broader systems of logic in society like for example capitalism (Seidman, 2004).

Bourdieu includes education among the major fields in society (Bourdieu, 1993). The discussion in the previous chapter suggests that NGOs and particularly development NGOs could also be considered a major field in contemporary society. The role that such organisations play with regard to questioning government policy (Tandon, 2000; Grzybowski, 2005) and calling governments to account for the way they enact commitments to international agreements (Van Rooy, 2000; Grzybowski, 2005) certainly establishes them in a field that is outside the systems of government. Development NGOs deliberately challenge existing ways of thinking and acting. They are non-governmental and therefore do not carry the imperative that government funded school education does to reinforce the existing status quo (Palmer & Birch, 2003).

Within Bourdieu’s descriptive framework of social fields, individuals interpret how the world works, and how to act by using interpretive schemas which work largely at a subconscious level. The schemas are influenced by and absorb the objective social structures in ways that become embodied as a system of dispositions he calls ‘habitus’. Habitus does not rigidly drive behaviour in a deterministic way, but instead acts as a system of guidelines that individuals apply strategically in routine ways but also at times in innovative ways.

Bourdieu suggests that the habitus of an individual in a particular social field is the core regulator of behaviour so that ‘membership’ within the field is maintained. Individuals who share a similar position within a particular social field also share similar and repetitive experiences that produce a ‘common habitus’ that leads to consistent patterns of behaviour. As a result, habitus leads to social field regeneration because the objective social structures are transposed into the subjective dispositions and actions of individuals which in turn reconstitute the field and provide it with meaning (Bourdieu, 1974, 1980).

Habitus is therefore embodied history internalised as ‘second nature’ and so is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product. Habitus involves ‘schemes of perception, thought and action that tend to ‘guarantee the correctness of practices and their constancy over time more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms’ (Bourdieu, 1974, 1980, p.438). As such, ‘it gives practices their relative autonomy with respect to external determinations of the immediate present ’ (p.439).
In essence, habitus which is constituted through individual history incorporates certain adjusted
dispositions that enable individuals to inhabit institutions and partake of the history objectified in
those institutions. Bourdieu further suggests that social treatments tend to transform instituted
difference into natural distinction which produces quite real effects durably inscribed in body and
belief. Although the habitus of a person is uniquely constructed to make an individual agent a world
within a world, ‘practice’ activates dialectic between habitus and institutions as two modes of
objectification of past history. This in turn creates ‘durably installed generative principles of
regulated improvisations’ (p.440) which limit the diversity of responses to situations and act to
reinforce existing logics (Bourdieu, 1974, 1980).

Therefore, it is the capacity for incorporation in habitus that allows institutions to be realised and
continuously reactivated. Bourdieu extends the significance of this thinking by suggesting that ‘an
institution...is complete and viable only if it is durably objectified....in the logic transcending
individual agents of a particular field, but also in bodies, in durable dispositions to recognise and
comply with demands immanent in the field’ (Bourdieu, 1974, 1980, p. 440). This in turn implies that
the socially situated conditions of habitus production set limits on its ability to generate perceptions
and actions. Those limits do not prescribe mechanical reproduction of the original conditioning but
are not flexible enough to create unpredictable novelty in practice without the incitement of an
event that creates a confrontation with the habitus. Bourdieu suggests that without ‘violence, art or
argument the habitus tends to exclude all extravagances...that is, the behaviours... that are
incompatible with the objective conditions’ (Bourdieu, 1974,1980, p. 439).

The relevance in the context of this research of the above discussion is that the separate fields of
formal education and NGOs not only have their own durable systems of logic and practice which
transcend the individuals within them but they act on those individuals to produce certain taken-for-
granted ways of acting that comply with the demands of the field. As a result, the characteristics of
each field which act to create their identity as distinct fields also act to preserve the differences
between fields. In fact, Bourdieu states that the autonomy of major ‘fields’ is dependent on the
extent to which they can divert interference from other major fields – particularly political and
economic interests (Bourdieu, 1977).

A corollary to this argument is that individuals within each field have limited capacity to change the
fundamental nature of the field’s mode of practice. Lingard et al. (2005) interpret relationships
within fields using Bourdieu’s framework and suggest that all fields are overlayed with power
relationships and that within any field various actors struggle to transform or preserve the field
according to their habitus. It seems logical that the most powerful agents within both fields would
tend to be those whose habitus most closely aligns with the existing objective structure of the field. Edwards (1997) suggests that NGOs tend to be populated by people with strong beliefs which can endure irrespective of outcomes that suggest change. This perspective aligns with Bourdieu’s interpretation of the way education systems contain people who have a habitus that is durable and disposed towards a particular set of practices.

*Global Connections* would appear to offer the possibility of providing the ‘argument’ that Bourdieu suggests is necessary to incite a confrontation with the habitus of actors within each field but it is by no means certain that such a confrontation would lead to transformative responses. To the contrary, Bourdieu suggests that the power of habitus is such that it regulates improvised responses and limits the diversity of responses that are possible with regard to (transformative) events. The responses that do eventuate tend to reinforce existing logics. This situation mirrors that described by Darby (2009) with regard to the tendency of teachers who are teaching out of field to utilise their existing logics (see section 2.3.6).

Bourdieu’s framework of fields and habitus seems to be a potentially useful way of characterising the ‘normal’ practices of an NGO and schools. As an overarching social theory it draws attention to the reality of the schools and Plan as occupying different fields within society. Their different fields are accompanied by different formal structures and different mandates for their operations but just as significantly the fields are accompanied by different institutional practices and taken-for-granted systems of logic which result in durable dispositions to act in particular ways that reconstitute the field. Bourdieu attributes considerable significance to the power of institutionalised conditions of practice and belief with regard to constructing individual responses. It seems likely that the separate fields of NGOs and schools, and the agents within them, will need to be consciously addressed in some way to overcome their ‘natural’ tendency to resist ‘interference’ with regard to the ‘correctness of practices’ and the ‘legitimacy of particular ways of knowing’. The challenge of partnership under this social perspective is more than a question of logistics and cooperative interaction but relates to linking the respective worldviews and validation of ways of knowing situated within different organisational frameworks that create inherently different dispositions towards introduced programs.

### 4.3 Partnerships in schools

The role of outside organisations within the school system was highly topical preceding the empirical phase of this research project. Reforms were being proposed at both national and state levels which sought to actively involve corporate and business sponsorship of an increasingly wide range of school-based activities. The government in Victoria announced at the start of September 2008 that
private business and community organisations would be asked to play a greater part in Victorian education, including classroom programs (Tomazin & Smith, 2008). Critics of such policy were concerned that it amounted to an abdication of responsibility and would open the way for ‘capture’ of educational purpose. Additionally, the construction of programs for use in schools by organisations outside the formal school system with particular vested interests and particular perspectives has been questioned by people concerned about the relationship between advocacy and education (Jickling, 2003; 2005). A major role of development NGOs (see sections 3.3 & 3.4) is in fact advocacy with the focussed intention of presenting a very specific worldview and encouraging formulated responses (Ronalda, 2010).

Objections notwithstanding, support for partnerships between schools and outside organisations or groups is formalised as part of the Victorian Department of Education’s policy. For example, the Strategic Partnership Program has a budget to provide over five million dollars annually (2009 – 2011) to 83 different community, cultural, and professional development organisations so that they can deliver learning programs for students and professional development for teachers. The activity represented by the different partner groups covers a diverse range including discipline-linked science, arts and history programs, cultural programs, and teacher and student support programs45 (DEECD, 2010).

This strategic partnership program is the most recent manifestation of what has been a long term presence of various types of partnership as part of school activity. Such partnerships are often short term and project related but can include more transformative aims like those of Global Connections. The ‘Achieving Together’ program, for example, was initiated in 1995 by the Department of Education with other governmental and community partners to enhance the health, well-being and education of students and their families in the Grampians region of Victoria (DEECD, 2010).

Examples from an environmental education context are also useful when considering partnerships in schools with socially transformative intentions. There are strong parallels between the socially transformative aims of environmental education and the socially transformative aims implicit in global education and global citizenship-type programs like Global Connections (for further discussion see sections 2.3.3.2 and 2.3.5). Environmental education has been endorsed at international levels for over thirty years46 and has been explicitly addressed at all levels of political involvement in

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45 As at the time of writing this section in September 2011 there were not strategic partnerships that had been formed to address global citizenship issues
46 A succession of international agreements committing to environmental education at a professional level date to 1975 and the Belgrade Charter (UNESCO, 1976), and at an inter-governmental level to the Tbilisi Declaration (UNESCO, 1977). Also in 1975 the International Environmental Education Program (IEEP) was set up by UNESCO/UNEP with a goal of developing an ‘overall framework and direction for a cooperative international programme to further environmental education’ (Gough, 1997, p.18).
education. In recent years political support has translated into limited practical support for programs targeted at sustainability initiatives. Part of the approach supported by policy statements related to sustainability involves partnership and alternative ways of working with groups outside of schools (Tomazin & Smith, 2008). For example, the commonwealth government’s action plan for education for sustainability includes the statement ‘Education for sustainability focuses on the use of genuine partnerships to build networks and relationships and improve communication between different sectors of society’ (DEWHA, 2009, p.9).

Many schools have developed ways to engage their students and their community. School-community partnerships are increasingly common and their importance is recognised through NAB Schools First which is a national awards program that rewards and recognises outstanding school-community partnerships (FYA, 2011).

Informed by various school-community partnership initiatives, a number of different models have been developed for maximising the relationships between partners (Uzzell, 1999; Sanders, 2001; Kilpatrick et al., 2003; Tilbury & Cooke, 2005; Guevara, 2006). These models do not directly replicate the Global Connections model because they are all primarily concerned with connecting schools to their immediate communities rather than to global communities. Additionally, they are not directly concerned with addressing educational programs for delivery in classrooms as part of core school activity. Nevertheless, they provide a useful basis for grounding thinking about education beyond school boundaries and for thinking about the nature of relationships that schools form with their communities. Guevara (2006) identifies a gap in the literature as to what constitutes an effective partnership and suggests that the majority of school-community partnerships are focused on outcomes for the school and its students. He argues for the development of reciprocal relationships in creating community-school partnerships to address sustainability issues. Global Connections is unusual in that it has been generated from outside the school and has the interests of non-school participants alongside the interests of the school’s students at its heart. In this way it is effectively operating differently to the partnerships that schools usually form.

Several writers discuss barriers and obstacles which inhibit schools’ constructing of effective partnerships. Barriers to forming partnerships include: schools’ fear of outside scrutiny, staff burnout, and staff and administration attitudes (Sanders, 2001). Obstacles to partnerships operating effectively include: lack of participation, time, funding, leadership, communication and focus (Sanders, 2011; Wierenga, 2003). These same factors tend to stifle to some extent any innovative activity in schools not just partnership formation. Schools are resistant to change (Holford & Nichols,

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47 For example, the Australian Commonwealth government funds the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI) which has been implemented in schools in different ways in the various states and territories of Australia.
To mitigate the effect of barriers to innovation, Blee et al. (2006) suggest in their work on introducing global citizenship education to a University environment that even when there is a catalyst for change from outside, drivers of change must emerge from within educational institutions. Their work suggests that it is not enough to open the door to transformation but that change needs to be actively supported and driven. Further to this, they suggest that innovation requires ‘informed participation, negotiation and the affirmation of the institution’s existing attainments, expertise and capacities’ (Blee et al., 2006). This discussion on barriers and circumventing them suggests that it is not enough to introduce Global Connections as a program from outside, but that a parallel process introducing it from inside and linking it actively to the school’s identity is probably necessary.

### 4.4 Partnership and NGOs

Partnership has acquired considerable traction within strategic and operational directives governing development NGO practice and has increasingly featured in the discourse of development NGOs (see also section 3.3). Partnership is considered an important concept by development practitioners because it relates to the nature and quality of relationships and ‘development’ is ultimately about relationships (Taylor, 2002). However, there has not been much research into what development NGOs mean by partnership, how they practise it, and the challenges that they face in doing so (Vincent & Byrne, 2006). There has been considerable variety in the way that NGO ‘partnership’ relationships have been constructed, the ways that organisations have implemented partnership activity in practice, and the ways they have met the challenge of managing and monitoring it effectively. However, principles of partnership practice tend to remain implicit or assumed. Definitive statements describing good partnership practices are uncommon and NGOs are not experienced at converting partnership concepts into strategic interventions (Brehm, 2001).

Judgements about ‘good’ practice notwithstanding, the variety of partnership approaches has been described by Brehm (2000) who reported on the way that ten European NGOs worked with Southern partners. Brehm described three different continuums related to characteristics that were used for recognising different levels of partnership:

- **Funding** – A funding continuum ranged from funding only (with no input into the application of the funds) through to a dialogue and consultative input only approach with no funding.

- **Capacity** – A continuum from the Southern partner needing significant support from the North through to Southern partners which were strongly autonomous with significant contributions to make based on their existing experience.
• Trust – Effective control of the Southern partner at one end ranged through a continuum to unconditional trust at the other end (adapted from Brehm, 2000, p.3)

The influence each of these factors exerted on the nature of partnerships formed was considerable and their combination created a complex array of different partnership structures. The spectrum of relationships grouped under descriptions of ‘partnership’ led to a growing criticism of the vagueness of ‘partnership’ as a term and calls were made for greater clarity in the way partnership concepts are articulated so that the diversity of organisational relationships and differentials of power could be addressed (Vincent & Byrne, 2006).

Power within partnerships has been the subject of a heated debate focussed on the ‘failure’ of development partnerships to live up to the ideals of mutuality and solidarity they espoused (Brehm, 2001). There appears to have been a persistent gap between the rhetoric of respect, equality and mutual learning and the reality of partnership practice (Fowler, 2000). Partnership often accentuated significant differences in capacity, experience, engagement and commitment and many NGOs in developed countries struggled to genuinely share decision-making with their partners in developing countries (Vincent & Byrne, 2006). The result has often been a partnership power imbalance that effectively meant the critical decisions related to the positioning of the partnerships on the continuums described above resided with the Northern NGO partner.

As a result, some NGOs in developing countries considered ‘partnership’ to be an idea that was imposed on them by their ‘partners’ in developed countries in a way that pressurised them to adopt others’ agenda with which they were not entirely comfortable. In this way, partnership was considered to be inextricably tied to the need for aid agencies and funders in the North to establish a sense of legitimacy with regard to their operations in developing countries (Lister 2002, cited in Vincent & Byrne, 2006). The implication of the situation described was that partnership practice appeared in some instances to contradict the essence of key development principles involving engagement with, and challenging of, power dynamics and inequity (Vincent & Byrne, 2006). The issue of partnership as a development concept remains complex and contested.

A logical extension of this discussion is that meaningful, mutual learning from partnership interactions would inevitably be compromised if the fundamental understanding of, and the basis for, the partnership are questioned. This in turn suggests that the basis for partnership relationships needs to be negotiated and established through open dialogue and honest recognition of power relationships. The partnership contracting process needs then to result in unambiguous agreement on mutual rights and obligations (Fowler, 2000; Taylor, 2002; Vincent & Byrne, 2006).
BOND which is the membership body for a network of more than 280 NGOs based in the United Kingdom and working in international development and development education has put these principles into a more structured form. BOND suggests that the purposes and principles of 'partnership':

- Need to be explicit and negotiated.
- Include clearly defined expectations, rights and responsibilities.
- Are clear about the range of accountability demands and how they will be met.

Additionally, NGOS embarking on partnership commitments should:

- Commit to a long-term engagement with partners, so that trust can be built and learning nourished.
- Look beyond partnerships to networks and communities of practice

(adapted from BOND, 2004, p.8)

The current ‘developed country’ environment of Northern development NGOs affects the freedom with which they can negotiate their positions within partnerships. Development NGOs are accountable for their activity and have been caught by the processes of neoliberalism and managerialism (Tandon, 2000; Roper & Petit, 2002; Vincent & Byrne, 2006). Development NGOs are working in a wider context ‘that reinforces the culture of bureaucratic control, measurement of concepts and change, proving effectiveness to auditors, managers and potential critics’. The result has been that partnership concepts based on two-way negotiation, listening, and downward accountability have been undermined (Wallace and Chapman, 2003, p.10).

The discussion in this section has focussed on North-South NGO partnerships. There is a gap in the literature related to Northern development NGOs forming partnerships with non-development organisations in the North. However, it is reasonable to infer that the fundamental values of equity and respect that underpin development NGOs activity should extend to the wider context of non-Southern partners (Vincent & Byrne, 2006).

As a consequence, the principles of partnership involving development NGOs should apply in a developed country context and the partnerships between Plan and secondary schools should be informed by this discussion. In this latter instance however, there is also the question of whether such partnerships should be initiated at all. In a similar way to the concern described at the end of the last section that NGOs operating in schools could turn education to advocacy, some writers have expressed concerns that the ability of NGOs to define the parameters of their operations is
compromised by working too closely with governments (or government controlled organisations). NGOs are by definition non-governmental. Finger (1994) argues that NGOs should work outside of government and corporate interests and also outside the realm of traditional politics (Finger, 1994).

4.5 Partnership: Beyond the contexts of schools and NGOs

The scarcity of research evidence on ‘best practice’ of partnerships in the context of either schools (Guevara, 2006) or development NGOs (Vincent & Byrne, 2006) means that this thesis also draws on a more widely situated partnership discourse. This next section draws from discourse about partnerships across several disciplines to frame understanding of how and why cross-sectoral partnerships might be formed, and what factors are of key importance to their operating effectively. The review presented here is necessarily restricted by the confines of the thesis and has been limited to include only the particular ideas that were selected from within the wider literature for their potential contribution to this research project. Taken together with the other sections of this chapter the concepts described below establish the broad framework for thinking about school-NGO partnerships that was used to undertake the empirical research.

4.5.1 Partnership Construction and Continuums of Engagement

Constructing effective partnerships is the subject of research within different discourses, but all address common elements with respect to the details that need to be addressed to enable the partnership activity to be undertaken. Argyris and Schon (1996) working within a business-oriented organisational learning framework describe the following factors as important in a generic sense to partnerships:

- **Having a shared vision**: The ‘vision’ in this instance specifically relates to what is anticipated will eventuate from the partnership activity.

- **Use of resources**: Use of resources refers to the existing resources of the separate organisations and how they will be made available to the partnership. Also included here are financial resources that might be needed to enable partnership operations and purchase specialist physical resources, and human resources.

- **Decision-making including resolution of issues**: This refers to the processes of the partnership and the ways that different elements of the activity surrounding the partnership’s operations are negotiated, decided and resolved when there is a difference of preferred approach.

- **Matching levels of power and leadership**: Particularly, ‘Who has managerial control – over what and whom?’ (adapted from Argyris & Schon, 1996).
The reason for forming a partnership and its aims are encapsulated in Argyris & Schon’s ‘shared vision’ point. Bourdieu’s framework of fields and habitus indicated that taken-for-granted logics shape practice but are particular to different fields. This would suggest that although such logics undoubtedly operate within schools and NGOs they may not be shared. Subtleties of difference about the ‘commonly accepted’ aims and values of the program may impact on the extent to which the vision is shared. As a result, the differences may work to unsettles the operation and outcomes of the program. In a similar way, different expectations with regard to the roles and processes of each partner’s contribution to the partnership may also affect the enabling environment of the program if they are not explicitly subject to a decision-making/issue-resolution process.

Argyris & Schon’s point relating to the way power and leadership are played out within the partnership decides in essence the control of the partnership. In this regard, partnerships that are formed between different organisations can be considered using a continuum that describes the extent that each organisation contributes to inter-organisational interaction. Several writers have used a continuum of partnership engagement that uses the terms Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration (for example; Forrester, 1998 cited in Birzea, 2000; Himmelman, 2002; Denise, 1998). These writers use the terms in slightly different ways but essentially they all describe a similar progression in the levels of contribution from each partner. The progression ranges from both partners separately conducting business as usual and exchanging information and resources as needed through to jointly contributing to the construction of a new operational structure for conducting the partnership activity. At the less engaged end of the continuum there is no jointly agreed partnership mission and the organisations each retain their separate authority and processes for evaluating the partnership activity. At the other end, the new partnership activity has its own authority and establishes a mutually agreed mission for the partnership activity which is then jointly conducted and the outcomes shared.

The engagement continuum does not in itself contain a qualitative element which might suggest an optimum level of engagement. Indeed, the barriers implicit in organisations of different foundational basis may well prevent progression to the most engaged level of the continuum. Further to this, given the different mandates for their existence that each organisation must respect, a fully engaged level of interaction that devolves authority from the partners may not be desirable. The evidence from the previous sections seemed to indicate that this was the common scenario for both schools and NGOs.

\[48\text{The particular frameworks described by these writers are adapted to inform a framework that is used during the analysis of the research findings and are described in more detail at that point (see section 9.3.2.1)}\]
However, the nature of certain partnership activity does seem to indicate that high levels of partnership interaction are implicated. In particular, partnership activity that is designed to be transformative and create something new or something that is uncertain and beyond the partners’ normal experience should utilise a collaborative structure that allows for the highest level of interaction (Birzea, 2000; Denise, 1998). Additionally, Rogers (2008) describes development interventions using the terms the ‘complicated’ and ‘complex’ to describe dimensions of programs. A program in this framework is ‘complicated’ if it has many interacting parts and it is ‘complex’ if it is uncertain as to its outcomes (Rogers, 2008). In either case, the presence of complicatedness or complexity in a program that is the subject of partnership activity would seem to require a higher level of engagement and commitment by both partners than a ‘simple’ program with straightforward objectives. In this sense, Global Connections is both complicated with its multiple groups in two countries and complex with its transformative global citizenship aims and the lack of defined learning outcomes.

4.5.2 Partnership Qualities: Trust, Mutuality and Reciprocity

The way that the partners approach shared activity wherever it fits on a cooperative-collaborative continuum is also of importance to the outcomes generated. Kruger et al, (2009) concluded from their empirical investigation into effective school-university partnerships that three factors underpin successful learning partnerships; Trust, Mutuality and Reciprocity. They describe these factors as having particular interpretations with regard to the influence they exert on the partnerships:

- **Trust**: the commitment and expertise that each of the main stakeholders brings to the partnership in the expectation that it will provide them with the benefits each seeks.

- **Mutuality**: the extent to which the stakeholders recognise that working together does lead to the benefits each esteems.

- **Reciprocity**: each stakeholder recognises and values what the others bring to the partnership.

(Kruger et al, 2009)

All three of these factors work together to create the working relationship of partnerships but they are established independently and may be set at different levels. It is possible for example for a partnership to exhibit higher levels of trust than reciprocity. It is also possible that each partner is differently positioned with regard to these factors. In essence, these factors describe an affective dimension of partnership activity and relate strongly to the perceived value that each partner assigns.
the partnership irrespective of quantifiable outcomes generated by partnership action. It seems probable that high levels of these factors would strengthen partnership effectiveness and sustainability.

Taken together the Cooperation/Coordination/Collaboration continuum and the Trust/Mutuality/Reciprocity framework describe the extent that each partner has a role in constructing the partnership activity and also the extent to which each partner understands and values the other partner’s role and the aims of the partnership itself. A collaborative partnership with high levels of trust, mutuality and reciprocity would seem to represent the highest level of interactive relationship and should maximise shared ownership of the program’s outcomes by the individual partner organisations.

4.6 Conclusion

Schools have difficulty providing meaningful opportunities for students to act as global citizens which adequately respond to the globalised nature of the world. NGOs have difficulty running ‘programs’ in developed countries and have no mandate to operate as formal educators. It would seem probable that forming partnerships between organisations from each sector would extend the ability of each organisation to respond to educational challenges. In principle, creating partnerships between Plan and secondary schools in Melbourne to implement Global Connections would seem straightforward with both organisations being able to contribute different expertise that would extend what either could accomplish separately. However, each organisation operates under different mandates and with different systems of interpreting and accounting for their activity. Despite widespread support for Global Connections within both the education and development sectors, the pilot versions of the program that led to this research were unable to find a formula for creating sustainable cross-sectoral partnerships. The discussion in the context chapters and this review of partnership suggests that the empirical design of this research should explicitly acknowledge and accommodate Plan and the schools as contributing to the ‘partnerships’ from within different social fields. In this regard, the design should also provide opportunities to identify how the fields act on the agency of the individuals with regard to their ability to implement Global Connections.

4.7 Research sub-questions developed from conclusions about the research contexts

A number of sub-questions were developed from the conclusions about the education and development contexts described in chapters two and three and the thinking about partnership
introduced in chapter four. The sub-questions divide the scope of the first research question which was:

*What can we learn from the context of the Global Connections program about appropriate and effective partnerships between non-formal education and formal education providers?*

The sub-questions are:

1(a) What happens in *Global Connections* and how do the schools and Plan respond to the significant events that occur?

1(b) How important is the specific ‘global citizenship’ theme of *Global Connections* in enabling schools to form partnerships and share their responsibility as education providers with outside organisations?

1(c) How do the schools’ and Plan’s processes, structures and roles respectively contribute to the operations and educational activity of *Global Connections* and its evaluation?

1(d) How can the other partnerships that exist within the wider *Global Connections* program (for example; Plan Australia-Youth facilitators, Plan Australia-Plan Indonesia) inform understanding of the school-Plan partnerships?

1(e) How do the schools and Plan interpret the educational activity of *Global Connections*?

The requirements of addressing these sub-questions informed my construction of the methodological approach. The analysis of the data generated in response to the first research question and its sub-questions were envisaged as providing the research evidence with which to address the second research question which was:

*What might a model of an effective partnership between formal and non-formal education for constructing school-based education look like?*
Chapter Five: Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This research was designed to generate data about the partnerships that were formed between Plan Australia and Melbourne secondary schools in order to implement *Global Connections*. The empirical work undertaken was based on a qualitative case study research strategy involving a multiple-case design with an exploratory research emphasis (Yin, 2003). Each ‘case’ within the multiple-case design was constructed around the implementation of the program in a discrete school setting. Collectively the separate cases covered all the Melbourne school sites in which *Global Connections* was implemented in 2008 and 2009.

This chapter explains the selection of a case study approach to investigate the research questions and details the logic of the research design used to construct the individual case studies. In doing so, the specific data generation methods and the approaches to data analysis are outlined and justified with reference to social research theory. Particular attention is given to my central role as the researcher within the overall research process. In this regard, reflexivity within social research is specifically addressed and the epistemological assumptions that I made during the planning, conducting and reporting of this research are explained.

The chapter begins by locating the research within the broader framework of the ARC project to which it contributes. The next section establishes the ontological and epistemological frameworks which were used to inform the research process and the consequent epistemological assumptions that underpinned the research design. Social research methods are closely related to different views of social reality and how it should be studied (Bryman, 2004). The following section gives a detailed description of the techniques, participants and timelines used in the study. The chapter finishes with a discussion on validity and reliability with regard to social research and this particular project.

5.2 The ARC project approach

This research was conducted as part of an ARC project and therefore the ARC methodological focus was the starting point for developing my empirical approach and the techniques I utilised. The broader ARC methodology was primarily informed by an Action Research approach utilising participatory research techniques. Central to the participatory focus of the data generation methods was the Most Significant Change technique developed by Dart & Davies (2003) which was to be supported by traditional survey and interview processes (Wierenga et al., 2008).
The methodology I employed was informed by the ARC project approach and so is compatible with the principles of Action Research but this research is not shaped as an Action Research study. Similarly, my primary data generation techniques involved participants identifying significance and change associated with engaging with *Global Connections* but did not follow the structure of the Most Significant Change technique. The reasons for deviating from the ARC project methodologies relate to my perception as the researcher of the data generation environment and are discussed in a later section of this chapter. My particular approach to establishing the research methodology reflects a particular set of values, epistemological assumptions and bias which need to be explicitly acknowledged.

5.3 Positioning the researcher within the research

Social research of all kinds is influenced by a variety of factors including both practical and theoretical considerations. Research methods can never be entirely neutral instruments and researchers are never purely objective and value free. Consequently, the methods used in social research are linked to the way that the researcher envisions the connection between the research to be undertaken, the nature of social reality and the ways that ‘reality’ should be examined (Bryman, 2004). From the outset of this research (and continuing through the current reporting of it) I have been explicitly aware of the central influence of my role, as the researcher, on the research process.

The research focus and research questions, the methods chosen to investigate those questions, the data generation process, and the subsequent analysis and interpretation of the data all reflect my background experience and values with regard to both the formal education and development NGO sectors and therefore impact on the conclusions drawn from this study and the tentative knowledge statements that are offered as a result. Further to this, the theoretical foundations chosen to support this description of the methodology employed, and indeed the thesis more generally are indicative of the values and bias that are intrinsic to my particular ontological and epistemological positions. The theoretical justification of the methodology notwithstanding, the outcomes of this project link strongly to the contextual empathy with which I inevitably overlayed my application of the research methods.

5.3.1 Reflexivity

Reflexivity in social research refers to the awareness and critical consideration by researchers of their role in the research process and how that role impacts on subsequent statements about knowledge. Research of any kind is about the active constructing of ‘knowledge’. A reflexive researcher imbues the active processes of ‘doing research’ with ongoing critical interrogation and reflection on data in a
way that specifically includes the researcher and the research participants (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Reflexivity is therefore an iterative process of reviewing the kind of knowledge produced and also the ways that it is being generated. A reflexive researcher continually takes stock of their actions and role in the research process and subjects them to the same close scrutiny that they subject their data (Mason, 1996 cited in Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Harrison et al., 2001; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Such scrutiny necessarily entails a conscious sensitivity by the researcher to their own cultural and social contexts. Knowledge constructed from a reflexive position always reflects the researcher’s situatedness (Bryman, 2004).

Guillemin & Gillam (2004) suggest that reflexivity has a role in adding rigour to the research process by recognising the limitations of the knowledge produced. They also suggest that reflexivity provides a bridge to the ethical dimensions of research. Reflexive researchers are likely to be more aware of the effect of the research process on participants. In this respect, it is in the nature of the actual interactions with participants that genuinely informed consent actually occurs (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

Throughout the implementation of the data generation phase of this research and now with the analysis and reporting I have consciously endeavoured to demonstrate reflexivity with regard to the degree that my values and bias impact on the outcomes of the research. I have also actively considered the research participants and reviewed what was communicated to me in interviews through what I hope was an empathetic lens. As a consequence, the interview analysis involved editing to reflect what I believed was consistent with the ‘informed consent’ of the participants with regard to conveying their conversations to a wider audience. Although I was integrally a part of the processes that generated the outcomes of this study, I have tried throughout to avoid unfettered layering of my values on the research process. As Bourdieu (1974,1980) states – ‘although it is necessary for the researcher to situate themselves within the real activity of the world, it is important to not fall back into subjectivity, which is incapable of giving an account...of the social world’ (p.436).

To this end, I directed the reflexivity process by utilising an evaluative framework developed by Guba & Lincoln (1994). The framework uses the two primary criteria of ‘trustworthiness’ and ‘authenticity’ to parallel the ‘reliability’ and ‘validity’ criteria which are widely used to evaluate quantitative empirical studies (Guba & Lincoln, 1994 cited in Bryman, 2004). I have described this framework more fully in the last section of this chapter.

In the following sections of this chapter I endeavour to make my reasoning clear with regard to my methodology choices but I acknowledge that different choices, or the same choices implemented by
a different researcher, may well have produced different outcomes. As a result, the representation that I present here of the research participants’ ‘voices’ and their blending with other empirical data to describe the *Global Connections* partnerships is a specific version of reality and is not definitive. However, I believe this version of the research outcomes is well grounded theoretically and offers plausible interpretations that potentially have a wider applicability for interpreting similar types of partnership relationships to those investigated in this study.

### 5.3 Ontological and Epistemological foundations informing this methodology

Multiple and often competing philosophies have arisen in educational discourse with regard to the nature of the world, the nature of knowledge, and appropriate methods of educational research. Denzin (2010) writes of a proliferation of ‘isms’ that featured in educational discourse during the 1990’s and led to what he calls ‘paradigm wars’. Special interest groups dedicated to different paradigms developed and tried to establish that their version of education was more empowering, or otherwise more appropriate in some way (Denzin, 2010). Although this thesis is not the forum to engage in the paradigm debate, it seems important to broadly signal the relevant positions from which this research was constructed. The importance seems particularly evident given that this research problem has its roots in the different paradigms that NGOs and schools use to interpret educational purpose and activity. The reflexivity discussion in the previous section argued that social researchers do not occupy a neutral position with regard to their positioning within the research and need to subject their involvement to close scrutiny. Therefore, although this research study is concerned with both the formal and non-formal education sector’s interpretation of education and knowledge construction it also represents a third interpretive framework for understanding the nature and purpose of educational activity – mine.

#### 5.4.1 Constructivism

I have broadly situated this project within the constructivism educational paradigm that was introduced in section 2.3.5. Constructivism as an approach has both ontological and epistemological implications with regard to the study and practice of social research. Constructivism ontologically aligns with relativism which considers that the world is only available subjectively. Social ‘reality’ in this worldview consists of multiple, locally-constructed, social realities which co-exist ungoverned by natural laws. The epistemological consequence of a relativism/constructivism ontology is that knowledge is subjective, experiential and generated in participatory transactions (Guba & Lincoln, 49 Denzin (2010) listed for example constructivism, naturalism, interpretivism, multiple versions of critical theory, critical pedagogy, queer, critical race theory, Lat-Crit, poststructuralism, feminism, postcolonial and decolonising theories, - he also writes of conflict and tension between rival pedagogies including but not limited to: feminist, antiracist, radical, Freirean, liberation theology, postmodernists, poststructuralists, cultural studies. 81
The epistemological challenge for social researchers is therefore the negotiation of subjective interpretations of the world.

The research challenge described implies that an interpretive/hermeneutic methodological approach is required. Guba & Lincoln (2005) suggest that adopting a constructivism epistemology as a framework for social research requires an interpretive methodology with an emphasis on a dialectic approach. A dialectic approach concentrates on dialogue among different views and so knowledge generated involves both individual and collective constructions (or reconstructions) which sometimes coalesce around consensus understandings. They further suggest that a case study design informed by principles of collaborative inquiry like those of Action Research is appropriate within such a framework. Research in a constructivism paradigm positions the researcher as a passionate participant who facilitates the multi-voice reconstruction of understanding. The empirical research itself should include qualitative data with rich contextual descriptions and with a focus on understanding (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

5.4.2 Social Constructivism

Constructivism (as only one of the ‘isms’ described by Denzin (2010)) is not in itself a single approach but has developed in parallel in many different disciplines and exists in many different forms (Geelan, 1997; Flick, 2004). However, in all forms of constructivism learning involves constructs and ‘knowledge’ is a representation and a way of organising an experiential world not a description of an objective reality. The different interpretations of the nature of the constructs used to create knowledge were the genesis of many different forms of constructivism (see for example: Glaserfeld, 1989; O’Loughlin, 1992; Gergan, 1995; Denzin, 2004; Flick, 2004).

In particular, this project is informed by social constructivism which is a form of constructivism that emphasises the socially situated nature of learning constructs and therefore the socially-constructed nature of knowledge. Social reality within a social constructivism paradigm (and its variants50) is inherently embedded in social conditions. Complex processes involving all aspects of social worlds and human interaction are implicated in shaping the meaning that people ascribe to their individual realities. As a result, social phenomena and their meaning are created by social actors and are constantly revised within social contexts (Kvale, 1995; Palinscar, 1998; Gergan, 1999; Bryman, 2004).

50 Social constructivism has its origins in psychology-based learning theories but is effectively the same as sociology-based theories including social constructionism (Gergan, 1995, 1999; Steier, 1992), contextual constructivism (Cobern, 1993 in Geelan, 1997) and sociocultural constructivism (O’Loughlin, 1992). There are differences of emphasis between these theories but they all prioritise social conditions as foundational elements of knowledge construction and knowledge validation.
Guba & Lincoln (2005) indicate that knowledge in this framework is a collaborative activity and arises from a social community of ‘knowledgeable’ people. New knowledge needs to be ‘understood’ and agreed by others if it is to become part of the culturally shared frameworks that are used to recreate social environments. Truth in this view of knowledge is interpreted according to a consensus of the most powerful explanations of the available information (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). However, although this description of knowledge generation is intuitively reasonable, the access to and use of ‘available’ information is often mediated and ‘truth’ becomes the explanations of the most powerful.

5.4.3 Critical Social Constructivism

A critical lens placed on a social constructivism epistemology involves considering the way that knowledge constructs are linked to the political, economic, and cultural (including ethnic and gender) components of society. These aspects of society involve structures and systems of power and influence which are crystallised over time and which therefore embed background social influences in history (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). This is an epistemological position that supports the social theories of Bourdieu that were introduced in section 4.2 to frame the context of partnership between organisations with different worldviews. Bourdieu (1974, 1980) suggests that people are socialized into the values, norms, and cultures of society through a system of personal structures which he called ‘habitus’ that serve to structure social patterns according to their historical grounding in particular social conditions and practices, ideology and state apparatuses (Bourdieu, 1974, 1980; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977).

Critical constructivism applied to formal education research emphasises the culture of schools and schooling and the hidden impacts on learning of the systemic practices and assumptions about education that characterise school structures (Geelan, 1997). In a similar way, NGOs can be characterised as representing a different set of structures with their own systemic practices and assumptions. Critical constructivists link learning environments to social reconstruction and emancipatory interests and consider that the politics of knowledge and the politics of education are inseparable (Geelan, 1997; Kincheloe, 2008).

With regard to effecting change in schools, critical constructivism may be seen as a ‘social epistemology’ (Taylor, 1994, p. 11) which emphasises that since the cultures of schooling are socially constructed by communities of teachers, students and administrators, desirable changes to such cultures will have to be negotiated by empowered groups of teachers and practitioners, rather than by isolated individuals.
5.4.4 Summarising my position as the researcher

Although it would be a ‘bridge too far’ to describe my educational philosophy as exclusively directed towards social reconstruction and emancipatory interests, these elements are never far from my conscious practice and feature particularly strongly in my environmental education activity. Additionally, my contrasting prior experiences as a teacher in western secondary schools, and also working with development education in Africa reinforced my recognition of critical social constructivism as an epistemological position from which to examine educational activity. The locally-constructed and relative nature of educational and social ‘reality’ was starkly evident in these very different contexts. As a result, I am particularly sensitised to the socially situated nature of knowledge and the historical, social and ideological basis of determining what/whose knowledge counts. Therefore, I brought to this project a particular qualitative perspective on how learning opportunities should be developed. Social constructivists accept bias as inevitable and try to factor into their explanations any such biases as can be identified (Geelan, 1997).

Although accepting in principle the legitimate role that democratically elected governments have in setting formal educational agenda, I also believe that such agenda ought to explicitly incorporate dimensions focused beyond state self-interest. I strongly support flexibility within formal education to allow for representation of alternative agenda and worldviews as valid options rather than curiosities. In a similar way, I strongly support the independence of NGOs to develop and act on worldviews that diverge from those of the governments that host them. However, I believe that when working in partnership with their domestic governments NGOs should make the same adjustments and accommodations that they strive to do when working internationally with developing countries.

As a result, I was highly supportive rather than merely objectively interested in the way that Global Connections brought together an international development NGO and secondary schools. Therefore, I was specifically biased towards looking for ways to strengthen the partnership relationships both through my own research and through my involvement with the wider activity of the ARC project. It remains my belief that such partnership inherently makes education more democratic and therefore more socially appropriate.

5.5 Grounding this methodology in a critical social constructivism epistemology

This project began with a document analysis of planning papers, operational working papers, and
evaluations of *Global Connections* from the pilot years preceding this research\(^{51}\). The initial reading of the program documents seemed to indicate the appropriateness of a critical social constructivism framework for grounding this research. In particular, the evaluation and program documents pointed to a distinct contrast between the educational environment that was being encouraged by the program and my understanding of traditional classroom environments in secondary schools. The *Global Connections* learning environment for the students appeared to be closely aligned to the characteristics of social constructivism educational practice involving:

a) The diffusion of authority.

b) Privileging of multiple ‘voices’.

c) Emphasis on dialogue and relationships.

d) Generating meaning within educational practice. (adapted from Gergan, 1995).

These attributes explicitly acknowledge and encourage the social role of knowledge generation and are reflected in the *Global Connections* design in the following ways:

a) A student-led approach throughout the program design evidenced a commitment to diffusing authority in the classroom.

b) There was an emphasis on privileging the multiple voices of the diverse participants through dialogue (both at a distance with the Indonesian young people and more immediately in the classroom).

c) The core theme of the program was integrally associated with relationships and making connections.

d) The fact that the program was designed without assessable learning objectives strongly represented a confidence that learning and meaning would generated through the educational practice itself.

\(^{51}\) The key documents included in the document analysis were:
Plan Australia. (2005) *Program Outline on Group to Group Connection*. Melbourne: Plan Australia
This description of *Global Connections* stands in contrast to ‘traditional’ classroom environments which typically:

a) Are authoritarian and hierarchial.

b) Silence rather than promote discordant voices.

c) Control dialogue and relationships within strict parameters.

d) Import meaning into educational practice.

*Global Connections* was oriented towards social reconstruction and emancipatory ideals. By inference, this orientation was suggestive of the program’s needing a supportive partnership structure with a belief in the same principles. These principles were clearly endorsed by Plan who designed the program’s intent. The program was invited into the schools which participated and so the ideals were nominally endorsed in schools as well. However, the pilot evaluations appeared to indicate a significantly different level of interaction and way of valuing the program by Plan and the schools involved.

The perception of difference between the constructs that Plan and the schools used to develop meaning with regard to *Global Connections* was the genesis of framing the initial research problem. The problem became about ways of effectively acknowledging and bringing together fundamentally different approaches to education. It seemed apparent at this early stage that effectively bridging the approaches would require new ‘knowledge’ constructed by means of participatory transactions between the organisations involved. Such new knowledge would inevitably need to be embedded in the structures of the respective organisations and therefore a critical appreciation of these structures seemed to be indicated.

In this sense, the subjectivity of knowledge generation which characterises constructivism philosophy was visualised as organisational subjectivity rather than purely individual reflecting Bourdieu’s depiction of social fields (see section 4.2). Although the research data would be generated with individuals it was anticipated that the individuals involved would also be representing an organisational epistemology. Finally, the diversity of participants involved with *Global Connections* all of whom had different objectives with regard to their involvement in the program also strongly suggested a critical social constructivism approach.

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52 The document analysis highlighted a lack of significant input by the schools to the program evaluations which seemed indicative of their level of involvement. Additionally, the lack of continued involvement from year to year of the schools seemed indicative of the way they valued the program.

53 Groups of young people as participants and facilitators in Indonesia and Australia, Plan Australia and Plan Indonesia, various schools in Australia, institutions in Indonesia and researchers from two universities.
Table 5.5: Critical Social Constructivism and this research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Theoretical Explanation</th>
<th>Global Connections Partnership Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontology - nature of reality</td>
<td>Social Reality is relative and embedded in social contexts. Multiple, locally-constructed realities anchored in historical social, political, cultural and economic realities</td>
<td>Plan and the schools have different worldviews and different educational ‘realities’ which need to be recognised and negotiated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistemology - nature of knowledge</td>
<td>Individual knowledge is experiential and subjectively constructed in social transactions. Influenced by social structures and culturally shared frameworks. Organisational knowledge is constructed in a localised organisational reality.</td>
<td>Research participants have individual knowledge frameworks and organisational knowledge frameworks which shape their interactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Validity</td>
<td>Individual, cultural and organisational systems for establishing validity</td>
<td>All participants have valid perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Values mediate knowledge construction processes</td>
<td>Individual values Organisational values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher position</td>
<td>Central and involved in facilitating multiple perspectives and co-construction of outcomes</td>
<td>Reflexivity as part of the research process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Hermeneutic/Interpretive – favouring dialectic methods. Participatory collaborative inquiry</td>
<td>Qualitative interpretive case study emphasising dialogue between different views and understandings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5: Critical Social Constructivism and this research

5.6 A Qualitative Case Study Approach

A major empirical challenge of research grounded in a social constructivism epistemology is how to appropriately acknowledge and incorporate the various subjective interpretations of the research environment. Guba & Lincoln (2005) suggest that a hermeneutic/interpretive methodology is required which encourages dialogue between different views. They further suggest that a case study which is co-constructed between the researcher and research participants in an iterative cycle is
particularly appropriate. Such a case study would be qualitative with rich contextual descriptions and a focus on understanding (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

A case study approach is a complete research strategy and as such needs to incorporate the overall logic of the design, data generation methods and specific approaches to data analysis (Denscombe, 2003; Yin, 2003). In a discussion of whether or not case study should be selected as the preferred strategy for a social research project Yin (2003) lists three criteria:

1. Type of research question is a ‘How?’ or ‘Why?’ question
2. The investigator has limited control over actual behavioural events
3. The focus is on contemporary as opposed to historical events (adapted from Yin, 2003).

Using these criteria this research can be considered to favour a case study approach. Specifically,

1. The type of research question: The first research question is:

   **What can we learn from the context of the Global Connections program about appropriate and effective partnerships between non-formal education and formal education providers?**

   Although this is not directly phrased as a ‘How’ or ‘Why’ question, Yin (2003) suggests that exploratory investigation involving research questions of the type ‘What can be learned from....?’ are adaptable to any research strategy. Additionally, Yin also points out that the research question only indicates what you are interested in answering and does not suggest what should be studied. To do that, specific study propositions need to be developed that outline what will be examined in order to address the question (Yin, 2003). To this end, I developed sub-questions in order to direct what should be studied (see section 4.7) and those sub-questions were mainly ‘How’ questions.

2. The second indicator pointing to a case study strategy is the extent to which the investigator has control over behavioural events.

In this regard, I had no control over the significant behavioural events that constituted the *Global Connections* partnership interactions. As has been discussed earlier, I was actively involved in the research process and had an inevitable degree of influence on the research participants but that influence never approximated control over behavioural events. The factor of control was what led me to replace the action research model of the wider ARC project. Action research is predicated on democratic ideals in the sense that it is fair to all participants with regard to both the research process and its outcomes. In particular, knowledge produced should support all individual participants to increase their ability to control their own situation (Greenwood & Levin, 2007).
The structure of *Global Connections* in the data generation years did not position the teachers in the schools as active drivers of the program. This arrangement ruled out an action research approach with regard to the teachers in two significant ways. Firstly, their involvement was not through their professional *practice* as teachers but through their professional positions as teachers. The difference is significant in that action research as a process is problem-based and involves a conscious attempt to solve problems related to practice (Greenwood & Levin, 2007). Although the teachers were in the program classrooms they were distanced rather than integrally involved in solving problems and iteratively feeding back into the program design. Secondly, they had very little control over their situation. As a result, they were able to engage in the research process and co-construct the case story, but not as action researchers.

3. The third indicator pointing to a case study strategy is a contemporary focus.

This research was developed from the historical context of the pilot programs but the empirical investigations of the partnerships were conducted in a contemporary timeframe.

In addition to the factors identified by Yin (2003) and discussed above there were a number of other theoretical and practical reasons for adopting a case study approach. From a practical perspective, this research was supported through an ARC project which was specifically set up to investigate the dimensions of *Global Connections* in-depth. Consequently it was logical that this research should be an in-depth examination of the *Global Connections* partnerships rather than a comparative study which positioned the program partnerships alongside other cross-sectoral partnerships at a more superficial level. Given an inclination towards in-depth study of a particular phenomenon, a case study is often the preferred strategy (Denscombe, 2003). Denscombe (2003) suggests that case studies also characteristically emphasise:

- Relationships and processes rather than outcomes and end-products. A case study approach offers the possibility of delving more deeply into the complexity of a situation to understand how the various parts are linked.

- Natural settings in real-life contexts rather than artificial settings created for the purpose of the research.

- Holistic understanding rather than dealing with isolated factors.

- Multiple methods and multiple sources.

Finally, from both a practical and a theoretical perspective, *Global Connections* was operating in distinct self-contained locations (the separate schools) which appeared to present cases with clear
boundaries that would allow a multiple case study. Yin (2003) suggests that multiple-case designs offer substantial analytic advantages. In particular, he suggests that there is the possibility of direct replication and so any analysis which arises from multiple cases will be more powerful than that coming from a single case (Yin, 2003).

5.6.1 Traditional Objections to Case Study Methodology

The most common objection to case study strategies is that case studies lack generalisability. Although this is true with regard to generalising the ‘case’ to other cases or to the wider population, case study outcomes can be used to generalise to theoretical propositions (Yin, 2003). Guba & Lincoln (2004) suggest that the thick description of case studies gives others a database for making their own judgements about the transferability to their situations of interest. This was exactly the intention with this research study. *Global Connections* was unusual enough with respect to its cross-sectoral interactions that an in-depth inquiry could be justified. As such this case study was primarily an exploratory research project. Although tentative statements about a cross-sectoral partnership model have been developed, the study makes no claims of being generalisable. It is for others to assess its more general applicability to their empirical situations.

The second main objection to case studies revolves around a perceived lack of rigour in the strategy. Yin (2003) claims however that it is possible to follow systematic procedures that allow case study researchers to maintain rigour. Nevertheless, it remains a common concern with regard to the strategy. As far as this research was concerned, rigour was enhanced by strictly following particular research protocols outlined in a framework (see section 5.11) developed for evaluating the quality of qualitative research advocated by Guba & Lincoln (1994, cited in Bryman, 2004).

The third frequent objection to case study approaches is that they are long and result in massive documents. However, once again this is not an intrinsic characteristic of case studies and reflects specific methods used to construct the case studies. Depending on the topic and context case studies can be constructed very differently because they are not prescriptive as to methods (Yin, 2003).

In all three instances the objections were considered and mitigating measures were able to be adopted such that the objections did not appear to detract from the value of adopting a case study approach to this project.

5.6.2 Designing the *Global Connections* Case Study

5.6.2.1 The Case structure
The initial concept for the case study structure was that the separate schools which were engaged in the program would be considered as separate ‘cases of partnership’. The schools were envisaged as operating independently and therefore could be framed as separate cases with clear boundaries. Together the schools would constitute a multiple-case design that could be analysed using replication logic (Yin, 2003).

This initial concept was extended when the opportunity developed within the timeframe of the ARC project to generate empirical evidence about the partnerships over two iterations of the program (2008 & 2009). The six month gap between the finishing of Global Connections in 2008 and the starting phases of 2009 meant that there would be a clearly bounded division of the empirical data into two distinct periods. This represented a possibility that the data generated could be analysed within years and between years. Additionally, it was anticipated that findings from the data generation process in 2008 could inform the program implementation in 2009. This situation would create an opportunity to partially ‘test’ emerging theories about effective partnership developed from the 2008 data.

All of the schools in both years were to be included as cases to represent the complete set of Global Connections partnerships and avoid the complexities associated with determining a representative sample. Additionally, it was initially envisaged that the majority of the schools from 2008 would again feature in the 2009 program with maybe one or two additional schools involved. This would present the possibility of comparing the case of a particular school with the case of the same school in the subsequent year.

Therefore, the overall project was conceptualised as a case study of the Global Connections partnerships made up of the multiple cases of the 2008 and 2009 versions of the program. The 2008 and 2009 cases would in turn be made up of the multiple cases of the separate schools engaged in each year. Additionally there was the possibility of an extra layer of analysis should any of the schools be involved in both years. In this case a mini multiple case study could be constructed from the cases of the school in each year. This project structure is summarised in figure 5.1.
The structure shown above is both complex and simple. The analytic possibilities are complex but the common basic unit of analysis is the ‘case’ of a single school in a single year. As a result, I envisaged that the data generation process would be relatively straightforward in that a separate case would be developed in the same way for each of the schools that participated in each of the two years.

### 5.6.2.2 Changes to the Case Structure

As the project developed the structure was necessarily modified. In 2008 the research followed the design above. However, three of the four school sites of the program in 2008 did not continue their involvement in 2009. The single school that did continue was in fact the only school involved in 2009. The result was that there was insufficient data to meaningfully compare the years as separate sets of cases. Nevertheless, the case which was developed for the school involved in 2009 was partly
informed by the data generated in 2008 and as such added depth to the emerging interpretation of partnership which was begun in 2008. The changed case structure is shown in figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Modified design of the Case Study structure

5.7 Designing the empirical methods of constructing the cases

A complex intersection between epistemology, methodology, and specific inquiry techniques contributes to the character of a research project (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). A case study methodology is not prescriptive with regards to the inquiry techniques it should employ. Indeed it is the flexibility of research methods that can be applied to case studies which is one of the strategy’s strengths and ‘best’ practice in case study design uses multiple methods and multiple sources (Yin, 2003; Denscombe, 2003). The school case studies were designed to be developed primarily through interviews with key participants but supported with the Most Significant Change technique, a collaborative forum, observations and document analysis. Denzin (2010) suggests that the current educational research climate is experiencing a ‘pragmatism and compatibility’ approach to combining methodological paradigms and focusing on ‘what works’, He adds that all methods are hybrids,
emergent, interactive productions (Denzin, 2010). In keeping with this view, I used a variety of modified research techniques to create the interview conditions of this research and the subsequent analysis of the data.

5.7.1 Interviews

Interviews are often an integral part of building a case study particularly if the case study is interested in determining how and why things happen (Yin, 2003). In this research, interviews were designed to be the core of the case studies. Although this project was not developed as action research, the wider ARC project design involved action research and I used the underlying principles to inform my design of the interview process.

5.7.1.1 Action Research

Action research is a set of collaborative ways of conducting social research and generating social learning (see for example: Heron, 1997; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Delgado, 2006; Percy-Smith, 2006; Wadsworth, 2006; Greenwood & Levin, 2007). It was the collaborative philosophy of action research which was of particular interest to the ARC project and which informed the empirical planning of this research. Action research is underpinned by participatory inquiry and collaborative learning theory. An assumption underlying participatory practice is that all stakeholders should be involved in identifying the issues, developing understanding of them, exploring possibilities for action, acting, and evaluating the action (Percy-Smith, 2006).

My interview design was constructed to be situated within principles of collaborative inquiry and involved the following parameters:

- Participation of all stakeholders in identifying important issues, components, problems, and solutions.
- Acknowledging different forms of knowledge and ways of knowing and communicating.
- Grounded in practice and the messiness of everyday life.
- Collaborative interpretation to develop understanding from multiple perspectives.
- Working systematically to include the whole system to identify disjunctions between practice and reality with regard to intentions.
- Openness with regard to my intentions, the research process and the outcomes.
In essence, these principles outline a philosophical approach which aligns with the social constructivism epistemology described earlier. They locate the generation of socially-based research knowledge in the context of the participants, their different ways of knowing and the reality of their experienced world. In turn this strongly implies that an interview method employed in the data generation phase of research should be structured to allow interview participants to fully contribute to the content of the interview and thereby co-construct the research outcomes. For this reason, the interview process was structured to follow an Active Interviewing technique.

5.7.1.2 Active Interviewing

Holstein & Gubrium (1995) describe interviewing as the common denominator of qualitative research, but suggest that it is difficult to adequately describe or accomplish. When interviews are configured in their most common form of seeking responses to a series of structured or semi-structured questions, natural flowing narratives are often inhibited or truncated (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Qualitative researchers generally try to keep the structure of interviews to a minimum in order to maximise the chance of genuinely revealing the perspectives of the participants (Bryman, 2004). Participants should be empowered to become informants rather than respondents (Yin, 2003).

Social constructivism as a way of understanding knowledge and ways of knowing positions an interview as an active social interaction that results in a context situated outcome (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). It is as necessary to acknowledge who the interviewee is talking to from their perspective as it is to identify who is being interviewed. The interviewer needs to emerge from the background of the research picture and increase the reflexivity by making the inquiry relationship sensitive (Steier, 1992).

Active interviewing as an approach develops this thinking further. It is more than seeking answers to even skilfully posed open-ended questions, it positions interviewing as constructivist so that the interviewer works with the interviewee to actively construct a story and its meaning. Interviews developed in this way are social interactions and as such fundamentally, rather than incidentally, shape the ‘knowledge’ that is generated. The ‘active’ interviewer is deeply embedded in the process and therefore an active interview approach abandons any claim to objectively capturing the researched event from the interviewee’s perspective (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995).

As was indicated in the discussion on reflexivity (section 5.3.1), the impact of my role was evident throughout the research process. In the situation of the teacher interviews, my background as a teacher and my associated understanding of schools allowed for a particular empathy with the
teachers which enhanced the richness of the interviews. Although this lengthened the interviews considerably and involved ranging over additional topics unrelated to the immediate goals of the research the result was relationships which were developed and strengthened over the research period. I consider that the strength of the relationships formed was an important contributor towards enabling the interviews to capture the ‘How’ and ‘Why’ of affective responses to the partnership activity rather than simply document ‘What happened’.

Active interviewing does not mean that the interviewer cannot guide the process and the interviews always returned to the focus of the research aims. The ‘guiding’ however was kept to a minimum and was organised as themes rather than questions. As part of the guiding approach the interview process was also informed by the principles of Appreciative Inquiry.

5.7.1.3 Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is an approach developed through organisational evaluation that focuses on positive interactions and ‘What works well’ (Whitney & Cooperrider, 2000). The principle behind the approach is that even when a situation is effectively dysfunctional there will be elements that work better than others. By focusing organisationally on what works best, the organisation builds on its strengths and overall performance improves.

Although the organisational context that framed the development of Appreciative Inquiry is not directly analogous to the Global Connections situation, the approach resonated with early thinking about the partnerships. Throughout this research project there was an underlying assumption that Global Connections was a positive innovation and its transformative attributes would benefit all stakeholders. It was further assumed that the developing of a model of effective cross-sectoral learning partnerships would grow out of building on what ‘worked’ in the Global Connections context. Therefore, interview participants were actively encouraged to identify and elaborate on what they considered were positive aspects of the program interactions. Appreciative Inquiry has been reported as being decidedly effective as a means of establishing provocative innovations in ways that will sustain progress (McClintock, 2003).

However it needs to be made clear at this stage that Active Interviewing was the dominant principle behind the interview process rather than Appreciative Inquiry. The Appreciative Inquiry approach informed a background attitude that I consciously took to the interviews but which was not used to drive the interview structure. As a result this element of the interview process was left until the end of the interview – almost as a wrap up. I usually introduced it with a question like ‘Reflecting back what do you think has worked really well?’ In the first interview before the program had begun, I
asked the teachers ‘What does your school do really well?’. This final part of the interview was the only part with a pre-structured aim. However, I was always alert for positive statements and encouraged elaboration when they eventuated.

In keeping with active interviewing as the primary philosophy there were some interviews and aspects of others that were driven by the frustrations and dissatisfaction of the interview participants. These interviews were not conducive to following the ‘appreciative’ format. Nevertheless, even in these instances the participants were generally able to contribute positive ideas about how the elements of frustration might be transformed into elements that work.

5.7.1.4 Interview Participants

Interview data was generated from interviews with key participant groups including; the teachers in whose classrooms the program was being implemented, school management, Plan staff members involved in planning and implementing the program, and the young people who were facilitating Global Connections:

The Teachers

The teachers connected the program to the school in its formal role. They were critical to this research because they were the only educational professionals closely connected with the program. As such, they were in a unique position to interpret the program with regard to the ‘normal’ activity of school-based educational activity. Flores (2007) suggests that teachers associated with an innovative program are the people that have the positional power to effect integration of the program with routine school activities so as to reinforce the program’s legitimacy in student eyes rather than positioning it as an extra-curriculum ‘add-on’. Teachers themselves are members of a community of practice whose skills, knowledge and identity are developed through day-to-day activities and interactions with others in the school context. As such they are also in a position to influence the ways that an innovative program is received in a school outside of the classroom context (Flores, 2007). The teachers negotiated and mediated the schools’ participation in the partnership.

School Management

Teachers could not tell the whole story of their school’s engagement with Global Connections. The program represented a new educational paradigm in its structure and approach. The discussion in chapter 2 suggested that transformative practice in schools cannot effectively rest with individuals and therefore institutional support for a transformative program is important if it is to be embedded
in the school’s activity. For this reason interviews with senior school management (principals and assistant principals) were added to give depth to the way Global Connections might be considered with regard to the school’s culture and purpose. These interviews were also considered an opportunity to assess the extent to which the wider school had been included in the program activity.

**Plan Staff**

The Plan staff members responsible for implementing Global Connections were the NGO professionals representing Plan’s involvement with all aspects of the program. They were not routinely involved in the classroom activity of the program but were familiar with the school contexts and communicated with the classroom teachers. They negotiated and mediated Plan’s participation in the partnership.

**The Facilitators**

The young people facilitating Global Connections in the classrooms were not part of the partnership level interactions but were involved with both the teachers and the Plan staff. The facilitators were significantly more closely involved with the Plan staff and the teachers than those groups were with each other. The facilitators were therefore in a unique position of being able to comment on the activity of both partners with respect to the program. In this way, the facilitators were able to present an extra perspective on aspects of interest pertaining to the way that the partnership was enacted in practice.

**5.7.1.5 Interview Participants as Co-researchers**

In order to facilitate the active interview process and empower the participants, all of the participants in the interview phase of this project were invited from the outset to position themselves as co-researchers in keeping with an action research approach. The Plan staff already considered themselves in this way because they were a part of the ARC team. A workshop on Action Research was conducted for the facilitators to introduce them to the concept and to strengthen their ability to participate actively in the research processes of the wider project. The teachers with one exception were all enthusiastic about the research and expressed a considerable degree of interest in education research and developing new initiatives. One of the teachers was keen to undertake PhD research involving education management and actively pursued and extended the ideas coming out of the interviews. Although the teachers were not a part of actively running or designing Global

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54 On some occasions the Plan staff members needed to deputise for the young people facilitating the program. They also co-facilitated on a very few occasions when issues arose and attended other sessions as observers.
Connections and so were not able to fully act as action researchers they were sufficiently empowered by the process that they considered they were contributing through their interviews to the future development of the program.

5.7.1.6 Number and Timing of Interviews

The teachers were each interviewed three times.

- Before Global Connections began in the schools.
- Mid-program
- End of the program.

In total there were 15 interviews with the five teachers who participated - four teachers in 2008 and one in 2009.

School Management:

- A single interview at each school was planned but not scheduled to occur at any particular time. The intention was to enlist the teacher’s assistance in determining an appropriate time and in facilitating the meeting. The school management were not directly involved in the program and the interview was designed to build the context of the school environment.

Three of the four school management teams were interviewed.

Plan Staff:

- Two formal interviews were scheduled each year at the middle and end of the program. Additionally, numerous other informal conversations occurred as part of either the regular meetings of the ARC team or in response to a particular event.

Two Plan staff members were interviewed although others made informal contributions.

The facilitators:

- One interview at the end of the program. The facilitators were involved in a number of the research program activities and interviews with them were constructed to feed into several projects. The alternative was a series of separate interviews which in the context of the facilitators’ status as full-time university students and volunteers on this program seemed an

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55 In total over both years (2008 and 2009) there were four schools involved. Although one school was involved in both years and there was a change of teacher associated with the program, the school management structure was not changed
unreasonable demand. For this reason these interviews were not designed to follow an active interviewing method but were semi-structured with specific questions relating to the various research agenda.

In 2008 the facilitator interviews were co-conducted by two of the other members of the ARC team. As a result, I was able to input into the questions included in the interview but not develop points of interest in the interview process. The input to this project from those interviews came from listening to the tapes and analysing the transcripts. In 2009, I was part of the interviewing team and was able to contribute actively to the process. The interviews were still semi-structured with questions but were also open to an interactive approach. Six of the eight facilitators in 2008 and all seven facilitators from 2009 were interviewed.

All of the interviews with all participants were recorded\textsuperscript{56}. In total 35 interviews contributed to the project.

5.7.2 Data generation beyond the interviews

In addition to the interviews as the primary data source for this project four other research methods were planned; the Most Significant Change technique, a collaborative forum, observation, and document analysis. The Most Significant Change technique (Dart & Davies, 2003) was included in the ARC research methods and I undertook to carry out the Most Significant Change process with the teachers during their final interview. The nature of the teachers’ engagement at the end of the program and the overriding active interviewing approach meant that the Most Significant Change technique was not strictly implemented but stories of change were a critical component of the interviews (see chapters 7 and 8). I planned a forum which would bring together all the teachers from the different schools at the end of the program to share their stories and collaboratively interpret Global Connections. The use of stories in this way can be important for allowing people to construct and reconstruct their interests and meaning and overlapping stories allow for a collective agenda that can be powerful (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003). Although the teachers all agreed at the outset to participate in a forum, by the end of the program interest had waned and the forum did not eventuate.

5.7.2.1 Observation

Yin (2003) includes observation as one of the methods which can be added to the variety of sources used in a well designed multi-method case study. Observations take place in real time and so have\textsuperscript{56} All of the interviews were transcribed and analysed using the qualitative research software program NVivo 8 and the coded interviews have been made available to the ARC project database.
particular advantages with regard to the development of the case study context. The disadvantage of observational data is that it is necessarily subjective and selective (Yin, 2003). Observation as a research tool can consist of a number of different methods which can be used to provide different types of case study evidence (Bryman, 2004).

In this project, I was involved in a wide variety of activity as part of the ARC team. As a result, there were many opportunities to observe Global Connections in operation and the working environments of both Plan and the schools. There were also multiple opportunities to observe the interactions of the facilitators and the teachers and on a few occasions one-on-one interactions between the Plan coordinators and teachers. Yin (2003) suggests that the reliability of observational evidence can be enhanced if there are multiple observers. The majority of ARC activity was conducted with other research team members and I participated in a collective debriefing after each such event. I wrote up field notes after each event recording the team observations and my notes form part of the research evidence.

Yin (2003) also indicates that informally structured observation is a useful way of supplementing evidence generated during interviews. To this end, I also took notes after each interview that detailed observations of the interview context including such things as; where the interview took place (staffroom, shared office, empty classroom, busy classroom), the distractions and other activity that was taking place, and also impressions formed as to the extent and manner in which the participant was engaged in the process.

Also included among the field notes which I classified as ‘observational data’ were several de facto ‘micro-interviews’ that I considered important. These arose when I had occasion to phone one of the research participants to ask them a particular question. The phone call was not recorded and was not treated like an interview but I did note down the relevant responses. Most commonly it involved calling the Plan program coordinator about something that was said in an interview with a teacher. On one occasion it was to relate and discuss what I thought from an interview was a major misunderstanding that threatened to derail the whole program in the school (see section 8.2).

5.7.2.2 Document Analysis

Documents are relevant to virtually all case studies. They have the advantage of being able to be reviewed repeatedly and are generally exact (Yin, 2003). Additionally, the documents used were not prepared for this project or prepared by me and so were independent of my influence and bias that permeated both the interview and observational data. However, it is possible that some of the

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57 Bryman (2004, p.167) lists and describes; Structural, Systematic, Participant, Non-participant, Unstructured, Simple, and Contrived observational methods. The data generated ranges from formal to casual using these different methods.
documents carried a selective bias from the people that prepared them. This element is particularly problematic in that such bias cannot be identified and acknowledged.

Nevertheless, with regard to this project the majority of documents were uncontroversial and therefore bias was considered inconsequential. The variety of documents that were used as background and as direct evidence in the case studies and their analysis included:

- Program documents related to the running of *Global Connections*, and the training of facilitators.
- Contract documents relating to the facilitators roles.
- Organisational documents that detailed Plan’s organisational structure.
- School mission statements and school newsletters.
- A large variety of ARC project documents including data transcripts and artefacts accumulated by other researchers in the ARC team.
- Email communications.

In most instances the documents were used to build understanding of the context of both the schools and Plan but in some instances they were used to extend the primary interview data – for example on one occasion when a teacher and the Plan coordinator had different recollections with regard to some of the pre-program activity the email trail sent between the two participants was used to categorically establish the sequence and timing of events.

Figure 5.3 on the following page summarises the data generation methods and the theory used to inform their specific design:
Informal analysis was undertaken throughout the research process. Even before the first interview signalled the start of the active data generation, documents relating to the program operations were being considered in terms of ‘What is this program structure likely to mean for the schools?’ Similarly, immediately after the first interview was conducted reflection on the process included such questions as ‘What did I just hear?’, ‘What did it mean?’, ‘What did we miss?’, ‘What does it mean for the next interview?’ The inductive theory process that characterises qualitative work and case
studies in particular was initiated. It is the initial development of theory prior to data generation which differentiates a case study approach from other strategies like ‘ethnography’ and ‘grounded theory’ (Yin, 2003).

Analysis and theory building was an ongoing process that iteratively fed back into the data generation phases of the project. The embedded nature of analysis as part of the research process once again draws attention to reflexivity. There is no ‘outside’ from which to interpret the activities of social research (Geelan, 1997). The fact that tentative theory development began before the first data were generated suggested that the data analysis phase of the project should continue and augment this process. To this end, the data analysis began with an approach adapted from the coding principles of Grounded Theory.

5.8.1 Borrowing from Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is linked to the work of Glaser & Strauss (1967) and has been widely used in small scale exploratory qualitative research projects (Denscombe, 2003). There have been a wide number of adaptations and variations to the approach since 1967 but the basic focus on generating theory out of empirical data has remained consistent. In its purest form, Grounded Theory is a research strategy that involves ongoing data generation, data analysis, theory generation and then revised data generation in an iterative cycle until no data is generated that requires further modification of the theory (Bryman, 2004). In particular, it is the iterative cycle of data generation and theory generation informing each other that I borrowed from Grounded Theory. I used analysis of what the participants were saying in each data cycle to develop theories about the partnership interactions which then influenced subsequent data generation.

However, I did not fully adopt the particular methodological rigour of Grounded Theory because several aspects of the strictest application of the theory are diametrically opposed to the research philosophies that have already been described as informing this project. Of fundamental significance in this regard is Grounded Theory’s emphasis on a strictly empiricist approach to generating theory. As a consequence the theory involves a strongly empiricist approach to planning, generating and handling of data (Bryman, 2004). My view was that a strongly empiricist approach diminished too much the existing conceptualisations I brought to the research process. Nevertheless, I considered the systematic data coding process that is at the core of Grounded Theory practice structurally useful and used it in the first stages of data analysis.

5.8.1.1 Coding
Coding of data is a central element of a Grounded Theory approach and is carried out in a series of stages:

Open coding – This first stage of coding involves line by line examination of transcripts (or other written data). This examination is designed to generate concepts about what the data is saying. Each section of data is coded according to the concept to which it relates. Grounded Theory suggests that it is important at this stage to undertake the examination in an open-minded way. This is problematic considering the way that I have consistently acknowledged reflexivity as part of the research process. However, in this instance, although I carried considerable background knowledge of theories and ideas concerning the data, I deliberately started the coding without preordained categories for organising it. For the same reasons that the active interviewing method was used because it allowed the content and emphasis of the interviews to emerge as much as possible from the participants’ experience, I wanted the coding process to allow concepts and meaning to emerge from the data. The open coding phase of the analysis created a multiplicity of concepts which were then compared, conceptualised and organised into categories.

Axial Coding – involves reconceptualising the data and putting it back together by making connections between categories. Making the connections involves considering the context behind the coded concepts in the categories. This stage considers such elements as patterns in interactions, causes, and consequences. During this process I made considerable use of non-interview data particularly my field notes from observations.

Selective Coding – This is the crux of the Grounded Theory process and involves selecting a core category and systematically linking it to the other categories. The core category is the central issue which integrates the other categories. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998)

5.8.1.2 Modifying the approach: The role of theory

As previously indicated, I share the criticism of Grounded Theory that it downplays the role of the researcher’s existing perceptions and thereby ignores the complex relationship between data generation and theory. Grounded Theory results in theory that is very specifically situated and does not easily acknowledge broader contextual factors (Denscombe, 2003). This latter aspect was particularly important given that my second research question was directed to developing a general model of partnership rather than just telling the ‘story’ of the Global Connections partnerships. For these reasons, I stopped the strict coding process at the second stage of looking for patterns and linking categories. I then linked my category data to the literature and my other research data to construct the final stage of analysis and theory building presented in chapter 9. In saying this
however, I need to acknowledge that a core category consistent with the selective coding stage of Grounded Theory did appear to emerge from the data and inevitably influenced the connections I made to literature and existing theory. ‘Interpretive frameworks’ or ‘interpretive difference’ resonated throughout the research from the beginning and as a consequence forms a dominant theme of this thesis.

5.9 Considerations of Research Quality

The issue of research quality is not easily resolved in the case of qualitative research methodology. The traditional criteria of reliability and validity that are widely utilised in the physical sciences and which have been adapted to a variety of forms of quantitative-based social research are of limited use in purely qualitative studies. However, because all research designs are supposed to represent a logical set of statements it is possible to judge the quality of the design with logical tests (Yin, 2003).

There are a number of frameworks which have been proposed for this purpose and I used a framework proposed by Guba & Lincoln (1994; cited in Bryman, 2004). Their framework is grounded in an interpretivism/constructivism paradigm which is consistent with this research. Guba & Lincoln argue that there is no ‘social reality’ that can be ‘captured’ by qualitative researchers and that there could be equally credible alternative explanations for the same phenomena. The framework they proposed is based on ‘trustworthiness’ and ‘authenticity’. Both of these criteria can be further considered in terms of specific sub-characteristics (Guba & Lincoln, 1994 cited in Bryman, 2004). The following discussion expands on these criteria and describes the attempts made to align the methodology of this project with the attributes of ‘best’ practice that they present.

5.9.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness consists of ‘credibility’, ‘dependability’, ‘confirmability’ and ‘transferability’ which can be considered to relate to empirical work in the following ways:

5.9.1.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to ensuring research is carried out according to established techniques encompassing ‘best’ practice and that the interpretive findings of the research process are confirmed by the research participants (Bryman, 2004). The major part of the data generated by me was from interviews and both the interview style involving active co-construction of meaning and subsequent checking with the interview participants reduced the degree of researcher subjectivity in the interpretation process. Additionally, the findings from the research process were periodically referred back to the ARC team and were considered alongside the research data, observations and impressions of the other researchers familiar with the research context. Another way of increasing
credibility is by using more than one method, source, investigator, or theoretical perspective to confirm data (Yin, 2003; Bryman, 2004). It is impossible to ‘freeze’ or replicate social situations and contextual factors to allow multiple methods to be applied or for multiple investigators to examine (Le Compte & Goetz, 1982). Nevertheless, I made a conscious attempt to obtain perspectives from multiple sources who experienced the same event (albeit in different ways). My rationale was that convergent perspectives would strengthen analysis interpretations and divergent perspectives could indicate areas that needed further data or adjustment to the frameworks being developed for interpreting the partnership interactions.

5.9.1.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the wider applicability of research findings to external contexts. The nature of case studies is that they are unique and as such are not transferable but I was guided in this instance by argument that if a clear and thick description is offered others will more readily be able to make judgements about aspects of the case in respect of their own cases (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, cited in Bryman, 2004).

5.9.1.3 Dependability

Dependability parallels the idea of reliability in quantitative research which hinges on the empirical work being repeatable by subsequent researchers. Once again, ‘cases’ are clearly not repeatable but dependability replaces this criterion with an audit approach which emphasises the completeness of records from design to analysis. The records should then be made available to peers to act as auditors. Throughout this research, documentation has been made available to the ARC team and full transcripts as well as digital recordings of interviews are held on a database available to all the team members. Other documentation used in the design and analysis stages of this project was similarly part of a commonly available pool of data. Additionally, the regular meetings of the research team provided a forum for ongoing informal, and in several instances deliberately structured, auditing of both the data and the research processes.

5.9.1.4 Confirmability

Confirmability relates to the acting in good faith of researchers. In particular, this means that although recognising that social research cannot be undertaken objectively, the researcher does not overtly attempt to inject themselves and their preferred views into the process. It is impossible to present evidence in this regard, but as discussed earlier in the reflexivity section my intention throughout was to avoid undue influence on the research outcomes.
5.9.2 Authenticity

Authenticity is the second criterion of Guba & Lincoln’s quality framework, and although Bryman (2004) suggests that it has not been widely influential I have found it useful when considering the ethical dimensions of this project and the potential wider impact of this study. Authenticity has the following dimensions:

- Fairness – Does the research fairly represent the difference of understanding represented among the participants.
- Ontological authenticity – Does the research help the participants to understand their own situation.
- Educatively authentic – Does the research help participants to appreciate the perspectives of other participants.
- Catalytic authenticity – Does the research act to help participants change their own situations.
- Tactical authenticity – Does the research empower participants to take action with regard to the themes of the research. (adapted from Bryman, 2004, p.276)

Of particular note here is that with the exception of ‘fairness’ these elements of authenticity are primarily concerned with the impact of the research on the participants involved. In effect they are asking ‘How useful is the research to the people and interest groups contributing to the data generation?’ Given that the theme of this research was strongly linked to transformative education there was always the deliberate intent for it to contribute to changed practice that benefitted the formal and non-formal education partners. As such, I envisaged that the research could potentially contribute authentically to the education sectors represented by the participants.

I was also concerned with the impact of the research process itself on the individual participants. This research involved a considerable commitment of time from interview participants and was invasive to a degree because of my physical presence openly observing their workplace environment. As such, I felt a responsibility to construct the research interactions in ways that could maximise the benefit to the participant. The characteristics of authenticity described above were important sub-themes that informed the data generation process and the selection of research techniques. They were particularly important in the interview process and the choice to adopt an active interviewing approach.
The active interview process allowed participants to reflect on their total involvement with *Global Connections* and review it in terms of their practice in multiple ways that were not directly relevant to the partnership theme. The interviews were effectively co-constructed and followed the (often different) agenda of both the researcher and the ‘researched’. This arrangement developed to be particularly important for several of the interview participants. Without confidence in the interview process and the belief that it was an opportunity to better understand and act on their own situation two of the interviewees would have withdrawn their ‘informed consent’ and terminated the research process. Nearly everybody interviewed was engaging with the *Global Connections* for the first time and was experiencing uncertainty with regard to the program and it was in the interactions with me as the researcher that informed consent was truly given and not in meeting the technical requirements of the University’s ethics guidelines. In this regard, I considered it necessary to go to extra lengths to provide anonymity for the participants (see section 6.1).

This research has been carefully constructed with maximum regard for trustworthiness and authenticity. As a result it tells a plausible story of engagement between two different education sectors and offers a feasible interpretation of factors important for harnessing the potential benefits from future such engagements.

### 5.10 Summary

The empirical research that supports this thesis was constructed within a qualitative case study framework. The five separate cases of school-Plan relationships developed over two years collectively contribute to a comparative case study of the *Global Connections* partnerships. The particular research approaches used to construct the case studies were justified with reference to social research literature related to the exploratory nature of the research aims and the epistemological assumptions that I, as the researcher, brought to the research endeavour. In particular, a socially critical constructivism view of knowledge claims informed the selection of participant interviews as the primary source of data generation. In turn, the interviews were developed using methods informed by theoretical approaches that recognised my active role in the research but which also allowed maximum opportunity for the interview participants to co-construct the interview outcomes.

In a similar way, the framework for analysing the data was established to enable both my interpretations and the participants’ perceptions of *Global Connections* to inform successive stages of data generation. In this regard, the use of data coding techniques informed by Grounded Theory were introduced to mitigate the extent to which my position as the ‘interviewer’ and ‘analyser’ dominated the research progression.
PART TWO: The *Global Connections* partnership case studies

**Introduction: The Case Reporting Format**

The second part of this thesis describes the case studies that comprised the empirical phase of this research. Yin (2003) states that the most common way of reporting case studies is to present each case separately and then present an analysis of them in a subsequent chapter. However, Yin also offers an alternative cross-case reporting approach and suggests that ‘In a multiple-case study, the individual cases need not be presented in the final manuscript. The individual cases, in a sense, serve only as the evidentiary base for the study and may be used solely in the cross-case analysis’ (Yin, 2003, p.149).

The format I have utilised was informed by this alternative approach and follows the chronological progression of the data generation rather than developing each individual school case separately. The approach was adopted for four reasons that arose during the processes of conducting the field work and carrying out the analysis:

Firstly, many partnership elements of the separate school engagements were very similar in 2008. As a result, reporting each case separately would be unnecessarily repetitive for the reader and would not be an efficient use of the word limit for this thesis.

Secondly, a cross-case reporting approach allows the ‘story’ that emerged from the research to be told more effectively by more appropriately representing the research process and my reflexive position. Although the data supporting each school case were generated separately, my interaction with participants during and between interviews meant that I had an immediate interpretive/analytic response to the data. As a result, the schools were never entirely discrete units with regard to my involvement but were integrated into my thinking about the broader research aim related to cross-sectoral partnership. As a consequence, the separate cases were contributing collectively and progressively to what was a single multiple-case study each year. Therefore, it seems appropriate that the data reporting should be structured to reflect this situation.

Thirdly, in contrast to the school interviews, the interviews with Plan were not conducted with a school-by-school approach. The same people from Plan were coordinating all the schools and the interviews involved constructing the story of Plan’s engagement with the ‘schools’. Plan often applied a common logic and developed common responses to aspects of the partnership activity without differentiation for individual school circumstances.
The final reason for adopting a cross-case report format (and arguably the most important) was linked to my view of ethical research reporting. Consent forms were signed by the teachers which included the following:

‘We will protect your anonymity and the confidentiality of your responses to the fullest possible extent governed by university ethics protocols and by Australian law. In the final report, you will be referred to by a pseudonym. We will remove any references to personal information that might allow someone to guess your identity. However, as the pool of teachers involved in the research is small, there is still a slight chance that the things you say may allow for you to be identified by others.’

As stated in section 5.9.2, I consider that informed consent is only truly given in the interactions between the researcher and interview participants. Although all of the teachers signed the form, two of them expressed considerable concern on occasions that what was being said might be identified with them. The schools involved are easily identifiable from other sources, and if a separate case format were used the ‘slight chance’ of identification would become close to a certainty. Therefore, if I were to honor ‘true’ consent I would need to remove one and perhaps two of the school cases.

However, the cross-case approach makes this unnecessary because it was possible to ensure that comments were not identifiable with particular teachers. To this end, I have chosen to present quotes without attributing them to particular teachers. Although it is usual to ascribe a pseudonym to interview participants to protect their identity, I have absolutely no doubt that with only four teachers involved in 2008 pseudonyms would not do enough to provide anonymity - particularly with regard to other Global Connections participants that might read this thesis. However, it is also important that the quotes used are representative of the different teachers. As a result, whenever I have used more than one quote to illustrate a point the separate quotes represent different participants. The range of views is what has significance for this thesis rather than who exactly expresses those views.

Using a cross-case approach, the following chapters tell the story of the Global Connections partnerships as they unfolded with evidence provided by the individual school cases\(^{58}\). Chapter Six is

\(^{58}\) A description of each school and its context is included as Appendix One. Where necessary they are referred to in this thesis as Schools A, B, C, & D
based on interviews with the key participants that took place before *Global Connections* began in 2008. It relates the processes, perspectives and expectations associated with introducing the program and setting it up to run in the schools. Chapter Seven relates the story of *Global Connections*’ implementation in 2008. It describes the reactions of the partners to significant elements of the program and their interpretations of both the program and the partnership. The final chapter in part two describes the 2009 version of *Global Connections*.

The chapters are organised to firstly describe the schools’ perspectives and then describe Plan’s perspectives with regard to their respective engagement with *Global Connections*. Each of the organisation’s perspectives are further organised into sections that reflect key partnership concerns and characteristics which emerged from the first data coding and analysis process (see section 5.8.1). These sections are:

- The educational work of the program: Perceptions of the educational activity - interpreted through Educational Purpose, Educational Content and Educational Methods
- *Global Connections* operations: Activity beyond the classroom required to implement the program - interpreted through School-based Activity, and Activity outside the school.
- Teacher’s Role
- Organisational interactions: Communications between the partners
Chapter Six: Beginning the 2008 journey: setting *Global Connections* in motion

6.1 Background: First Contact

Each of the schools initially became involved in *Global Connections* through the interest and passion of one particular teacher in the school. The teachers\(^{59}\) were all very experienced and were committed to providing their students with opportunities that engaged and extended them beyond core curriculum content. They were all initially attracted to *Global Connections* for reasons that were a combination of the potential it seemed to offer their students and their own interest in global issues and human rights. They approached Plan after learning of the program and subsequently assumed the role of ‘champion’ for the program with regard to finding a place for it within the school program and getting acceptance for its inclusion from the school management.

In two of the four school sites participating in 2008, the initial engagement phase happened in one of the earlier pilot programs. However, in both cases the original teachers associated with the program were not involved in 2008. The replacement teachers in these two schools were recruited to take over the program by the previous teacher through existing collegial relationships. The replacement teachers had been peripherally aware of the program in 2007 but were not actively involved and only had a vague idea about how the program operated. Nevertheless, both of these teachers were involved in the program by choice:

> I’m completely green as to what’s involved. I’ve been handballed this (Global Connections).
> XXXX actually came up with it but has got too much on (his/ her) plate so I...\(^{60}\) wanted to take it over, yeah.\(^{61}\)

The teacher who co-ordinated this last year ZZZZ ....is now teaching in another school. So, I was very keen to make sure it continued.

The teachers in these two schools where the program had previously been implemented were not building on previous relationships with Plan and were not assisted by people who had previously worked with Plan. Additionally, in both schools the program was implemented in significantly differently ways compared to the previous year so as to fit the different roles the teachers occupied.

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\(^{59}\) The teachers participating in this research all had different backgrounds, and different levels and types of experience. Their teaching experience ranged from 3 years to more than 30. They had different cultural identities and the specialist subjects they taught included: Technology, English, French and Geography

\(^{60}\) Where I’ve used dots like this ..... it represents editing that I have done to remove ums and ahs from the literal transcript

\(^{61}\) As I explained in the Part Two introduction I believe it is necessary to present quotes anonymously in order to adequately ensure (strongly requested) anonymity given the very limited pool of interview participants. Multiple quotes used in a particular instance represent different teachers
Global Connections was very much mediated through the work of a single teacher in 2008 and therefore the particular circumstances of the teachers were particularly important with regard to the initial phases of the program.

The other two schools were participating in Global Connections for the first time in 2008. As a result, all four teachers participating were new to the program in 2008 and as such were in a very similar position with regard to their initial interactions with Plan. The participating teachers were to all intents and purposes interpreting the beginning of a school-Plan partnership at the time of their initial interview.

6.2 Interpreting Global Connections: The schools’ perspective
The interviews reported in this chapter were conducted in the last two weeks of the second school term with Global Connections scheduled to start in the first week of term three.

6.2.1 The educational work of the program
This section interprets the school partners’ perceptions of the Global Connections program and was considered through three related categories:

- Educational purpose: Why the program was undertaken? What purpose did it fulfil?
- Educational content: What happens in the program?
- Educational methods/pedagogical approaches: How the educational activity is implemented?

Global Connections had not started in the schools at the time of the first interviews and therefore the following descriptions capture the expectations that the teachers had of the program.

6.2.1.1 Educational Purpose
The unanimous and overwhelming reason for being involved with Global Connections was the promise offered by the ‘connection’ to Indonesia. In particular, the teachers were interested in the opportunity that the connection seemed to offer their students to learn authentically about the young people in Indonesia. In this way, the purpose of the program was seen in terms of the program’s title – it was about connecting the students to a global community. The following are quotes from all four teachers:

I would like them (school’s students) to see what life is like in a third world country, really like... I’d like them to see, this is real life and be a bit more appreciative when you hear about things and just to know a little bit more about the world...
Me talking about it for a whole 75 minutes you know, they might listen to a little bit of it but then they tune out. But if you’ve got something written down from a student from Indonesia and this is what they’re going through and this is real life primary evidence, well that’s better than reading 20 books.

Just the connectedness to it, yeah. I think, as well, making it real... I can talk for a whole semester about development issues and the kids are going, oh yeah, that’s interesting....but this really makes it hit home to them... the kids would be engaged.

What I am keen to see happen... is kids be engaged and to be thinking beyond what they would normally think about.... I think kids learn best when they have real examples.... And what the people are doing over there, like, again, reading it through text books and stuff, that’s fine but is it real?

However, the connection was not entirely seen as an end in itself and the teachers all appreciated that the ‘connection’ was to lead to active involvement in social issues. In this way, the purpose was also seen as being directed to participation in a (global) social community. The teachers clearly related *Global Connections* to social purposes of education which they strongly identified as an important role of their school. In the early part of the interviews there was no concern at all with regard to the way that the program connected to the formal curriculum. Instead, everybody spoke about the ways that their school encouraged community projects and connected their students to outside organisations involved with social well-being and community development.

There were a large number of projects and organisations mentioned and a wide range of student activity including: fundraising projects to raise money for causes such as guide dogs, and the children’s hospital; helping sports clubs with coaching juniors outside of school hours; working with the local primary school to mentor students; and working actively in the school with outside organisations like SchoolAid, and the Oaktree Foundation and their respective missions of ‘helping kids in crisis’ (SchoolAid, 2011), and ‘ending global poverty’ (Oaktree, 2010). Much of the activity mentioned in the interviews was extra-curricular, but quite a few projects were generated from the classroom and took place in class time including, for example, a totally student driven initiative that resulted in painting a mural in a cancer ward in a Melbourne hospital.

In all of the ways discussed, the teachers indicated that the school was committed to facilitating the ways that students related socially and fit into their social communities. The balance of how social-
oriented education was prioritised or aligned with academic achievement was not explicitly addressed, but it was evident that real passion, enthusiasm and pride were associated with student engagement outside of discipline-oriented learning.

The theme of social engagement was strongly echoed by Principals’ and Assistant Principals’ comments. These school management representatives clearly had little specific knowledge of *Global Connections* and needed the program to be outlined but they quickly seized on the citizenship theme and how that connected to the schools identity:

> It obviously fits with core school values, very much, yeah. ...these are the issues that I really think are the key issues for educators. That statement sounds a bit sort of trite but education is actually the greatest resource we have now and if we can educate people to do the right thing globally, then we’re going to actually raise consciousness.

> Yeah, there’s not, there aren’t enough linkages between the broader community and schools. And that sort of partnership can be very powerful.

> This fits very much within where we’re going in terms of our vision as a school. One of the things is looking at them as global citizens. In fact, we’ve used that exact terminology. So, this fits in absolutely beautifully.

*Global Connections* was not seen therefore as necessarily transformative with regard to its focus on citizenship and its orientation to the social purposes of education. However, what all the teachers recognised in this respect was that although the principles were very similar to ones that underpinned other social action promoted by the schools, the particular global orientation was unique. The global focus was highly valued and although the schools made definite attempts to create global experiences for their students\(^\text{62}\) such experiences were recognised as being under represented in the mix of school activities.

To this end, the ‘global’ aspect was again interpreted through the connection to the Indonesian young people and it was assumed that the action phase of the program would also be embedded in that connection. In this way, the program was seen as contributing to what was already an

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\(^{62}\) There were exceptions for example one of the teachers accompanied students on a semester break exchange overseas; students at another of the schools were involved in a project that linked them into global online conferences on various global issues. One of the students at the school became the global adjudicator and ran an international conference from the school. However, such opportunities were not widely available to the majority of students.
aspirational goal of creating well-rounded global citizens. The program was endorsed at all levels by all the interview participants with regard to its philosophical intent and the broad goals of enhancing citizenship and taking social action.

Underpinning the teachers’ interest in making the global connection was the common view that their students were relatively unconnected outside their immediate communities:

I mean, for a lot of these kids XXXX (the local shopping centre) is a major big shopping centre. I mean that’s a lot of their existence (the shopping centre) and their home....a lot of them don’t get out a great deal so I think it’s good for them to expand their horizons.

These kids especially are insular..., I don’t know if it’s a generation thing or the demographic of the school or what it is but they definitely need their eyes or their mind broadened a little bit... some of them, some kids here have never been to Melbourne (central Melbourne – this school is in an outer Melbourne suburb).

They have no idea outside the square that there’s poverty and people are starving and the death rate of children. They have no idea, the kids at our school. I don’t know about other areas but (our students) live a very sheltered life.

There’s huge potential for international thinking with the types of kids we’ve got here but....

In summary, there seemed to be a very strong perception of the program as being about the actual connection with the Indonesian children. At the outset of the program the ‘global’ element was what captured attention and excited the teachers’ interest. Active ‘global citizenship’ as a concept was envisaged as being primarily developed through the actual connection to the Indonesian young people. This was also true with regard to the teachers themselves who acknowledged that they did not have a clear understanding of their own global identity and knew virtually nothing about Indonesia. As a result, the teachers were also looking forward to some kind of learning around their own identities, their relationships to their students, and to learning about the Indonesian groups. In this way, the teachers were positioning themselves as learners and the outcomes they hoped for themselves were merged somewhat with the outcomes they hoped for their students:

I’d love to learn what life is like there. I mean, it’d be great to know.
... it can engage, well it engages me so I’m hoping it will engage the students as well.

6.2.1.2 Educational Content

The content of the program was primarily understood in terms of the exchange of communication pieces between the Australian students and their Indonesian peers. The teachers knew little more than that there would be three communication pieces which linked together and progressively developed the relationship between the young people in each country. Additionally, there seemed to be a general understanding that the last communication piece was to be action oriented and was ‘the big one’. It was further understood that the youth-led philosophy of the program meant that the communications were not scripted and were to be developed by the students themselves working collaboratively with the facilitators. Overall, the program content was only vaguely understood.

As a result of not knowing what the day-to-day content of the program would be, the content of Global Connections did not feature significantly in the first interview. One teacher stated that they had received ‘masses of stuff’ from Plan at the pre-program meeting when they were introduced to the university students who would be facilitating the program. However, the teacher had been busy and had only skimmed the material. Two of the other teachers had not yet met with the Plan coordinator and the facilitators and so had not yet seen the supplementary material. The other teacher had only just had the meeting and was much more interested in the facilitators and the ways that the program would run than the specific content. The teachers were not directly responsible for developing or delivering the program content, and because they placed such a high value on the actual connection to Indonesia, they were all relaxed with regard to the specific content of the communications and assumed that ‘learning’ would develop from the exchanges whatever the content.

However, three of the four teachers were also required to take responsibility for periods that were timetabled to fit together with the Global Connections program and all were considerably uncertain about how that was going to work out. There was a lot of discussion about their thinking in this regard but it was tentative and speculative and reflected the planning processes they were going through. Several of the teachers did not feel confident that they understood the program well enough that they could develop appropriate content for their lessons which would integrate their work with Global Connections. Although, they had confidence in their professional ability to make

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63 The facilitators were only running the program for one weekly timetabled session and the teachers were responsible for the content of other sessions. Section 6.2.2.1) gives an account of how the program fit within the routine timetabled activity in each school.
adjustments as the program unfolded, they were not accustomed to, or entirely comfortable with, being as unplanned as they considered themselves to be at the time of the interview:

In theory it’s fantastic. I just hope it all works out ...we’ve got to start Monday as soon as we come back...We have to have an idea as to where we’re going and I need this (Global Connections) to fit in. We need to mesh... we aren’t sure what we were planning because we’ve got no direction. I just need a bit more clarification before we start term.

I have (given thought to supporting the program) but until I actually talk with them; I think they’re coming in on Wednesday, I’m not sure. To nut out sort of how we fit it in because I’ve only had one session with XXXX (from Plan) and since then nothing really so I’ve been unsure how much time they actually want to spend here and how much time I’m on my own doing this. It sounds fantastic and I’m pretty excited about doing it, I still feel a little bit in the dark about what it’s about.

Consequently, the specific content of the program was interpreted as unproblematic in itself, but integrating the content into the teacher’s own teaching responsibilities was causing some initial anxiety.

6.2.1.3 Educational Methods: Pedagogy

The Global Connections design involved youth-led strategies that aligned with Plan’s philosophical commitment to the program (see sections 1.5 & 3.2). Plan’s belief was that the young people participating in Global Connections should be empowered to make their own decisions about what the communication pieces would focus on, and how that focus would be developed and represented. A corollary to this belief, was that the young people would more authentically create understanding about their global identity than if the program were ‘delivered’ by adults (Wierenga et al.,2008).

Student-led learning using inquiry-based pedagogies is well established in education literature and endorsed in the policies of Victoria’s Department of Education (see section 2.3.5; VCAA, 2010b). One significant application of a student-led learning approach has been the use of innovative ways of structuring the learning environment for Years 9 and 10 in secondary schools. Historically, a body of both documented and anecdotal evidence has been concerned with the level of engagement of

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64 During my years teaching in a variety of secondary schools a very common staffroom and subject-based departmental topic of attention was the problematic nature of student engagement at these year levels. The tendrils of these conversations extended way beyond my own direct experience and folklore ‘wisdom’ declaring these years ‘difficult’ was featured when I was first training to be a teacher.
students in these year levels. To this end, two of the schools involved in this study had just completed major building projects and implemented a significant internal restructuring to create dedicated ‘Learning Centres’ designed to accommodate the students of these Year levels (In one school it was purely a Year 9 Centre and in the other it was Year 9/10).

The specific design of the Centres was different, but in both schools the Centres were designed around inquiry learning and student-led project work:

The guiding principle (of the Centre) is that we deliver the curriculum through inquiry-based learning and group work.

Additionally, the students’ projects in the Learning Centres were often directed by the ‘Physical, Personal and Social Learning’ Strand of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and as such actively encouraged social and personal learning purposes of education. The Assistant Principal in one school emphasised the social purpose of the Learning Centre:

One of the guiding principles of our program (in the Centre) is to develop community links and liaisons, whether it’s local, national, global.

Two of teachers involved with Global Connections were working in these Learning Centres and the program was incorporated into the Centres’ activity. As a result, these teachers talked extensively about the work they were doing in the Centres and were enthusiastic supporters of student-centred learning. One teacher produced evidence that it was positively influencing student outcomes:

Initially, we had data which showed our dip in engagement was at Year 9 and since the (Centre) has been running, the last two surveys have shown improvement, definite improvement.

The two other teachers working from traditional classroom environments were also active supporters of student-centred learning. These two teachers suggested that although there was not a formalised whole-school approach with an embedded structure to support such learning it was embedded in their own classroom practice. Therefore all the teachers went into the program

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65 See section 2.3.2 for an outline of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and the different foci of the strands that make up the key components of the curriculum.
supporting the basic student-centred design of *Global Connections* by equating it to their own experience.

A commitment to student-centred learning was endorsed by the school management people interviewed. As one of the school management team commented with regard to the teacher’s explanation of communication pieces as underpinning the *Global Connections* approach:

> It’s a truly constructivist approach; you construct something that is concept-based, not content based. And so you go away from the textbook and you come into an area where kids are actually doing real stuff.

As the quotes above illustrate, the student-centred approach of *Global Connections* was not necessarily transformative with regard to these teachers’ ‘usual’ practice but mirrored an approach that was being systematically supported as a whole school transformation.

However, the use of university students to ‘facilitate’ the program rather than the teachers did appear to be transformative. Unequivocally, all of the teachers in 2008 initially interpreted discussion of the ‘youth-led’ nature of the program in terms of the facilitators. The pedagogy discussion above was connected to student-centred teaching and learning, but the teachers equated idea that *Global Connections* was a youth-led project to the facilitators’ role. Specifically, they saw the facilitators as youth and as leading the project.

At this stage ‘leading’ the program seemed to be interpreted as ‘running the classes’. The teachers did not have well defined ideas about the program’s structure at the outset of the program and so they were framing the program in their minds as being ‘delivered’ by the facilitators. There was some anxiety expressed about what it would mean to have young people ‘running’ classes. It was clear that the main concerns with regard to the facilitators were whether the facilitators would be able to control the class and whether they would be able to keep the students engaged:

> Will they be able to control the class?

66 The facilitators’ backgrounds are included as Appendix Two
We have to sort of see how it goes. I’m a bit nervous about that bit because I’ve noticed in the past when we’ve had people in that sometimes it works fantastically and sometimes it doesn’t.

I think a lot of outside presenters come in and they get a bit disappointed that kids don’t take up on what they’re delivering.

Nevertheless, these general uncertainties notwithstanding, the teachers were all accepting and generally supportive of using facilitators. With regard to issues and problems that might arise they were unanimously but cautiously optimistic.

6.2.1.4 Preliminary analysis of Educational work of the program

After the first interviews, key concepts emerged during the first data coding and analysis. The concepts informed subsequent interviews and interpretations of Global Connections when the program was implemented. They are summarised below:

Educational Purpose
- Connection to Indonesia
- Student outcomes: Social learning purpose. Social action linked to Indonesia
- Schools’ values/mission support (global) citizenship
- Community engagement valued and practised
- Management support for social purpose
- Teachers’ values aligned with Global Connections’ aims

Educational Content
- Connection to Indonesia via communication pieces
- Teachers interested in Indonesian context
- Action on an issue (connected to Indonesians)
- Uncertainty about detail
- Responsibility for integrating other content
- Student outcomes: Learning ‘about’ Indonesians

Educational Methods: Pedagogy
- Schools/teachers valued student-centred learning
- Youth-led means facilitators in Global Connections
- Uncertainty about facilitators
- Student outcomes: Uncertainty about student engagement
The overwhelming impression I formed was that the teachers considered *Global Connections* was about the unique possibility of an authentic ‘connection’ to Indonesia. The outcomes for the students were anticipated to be strongly linked to the connection and would include engaging with and learning ‘about’ the Indonesian young people. There was considerable uncertainty about what the program would actually entail and how it would be implemented but any reservations were overshadowed by the potential benefit the teachers envisaged would accrue to their students through the connection. My field notes after each interview stressed the seemingly indispensible element that the ‘connection’ represented. All other aspects of the program were considered negotiable or fully compatible already, but there seemed little doubt that without the connection itself underpinning the program it would have had to have been presented in a very different way to interest these particular teachers.

### 6.2.2 Global Connections operations

This section relates to the non-educational elements of the *Global Connections*’ partnerships. It concerns the activity outside of the classroom that was part of implementing the program.

#### 6.2.2.1 School-based activity

*Global Connections* was integrated into the existing school structure through the work of the individual teachers. The school management, department heads, and other people associated with organising the timetable and allocating school resources (including teachers and classroom space) were not directly involved. This meant that the program needed to fit into the already established teaching routine of the teachers involved.

As a result, the way that the program was integrated into the ‘normal’ activity of the different schools was one of the few aspects of the individual school case studies that varied significantly. As indicated in the previous section, the program was accommodated within two of the schools as part of the activity in Learning Centres. However, each of these schools operated their Learning Centres in different ways.

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67 In schools, the decisions about the course structure offered by a school, and associated staffing decisions, resource allocation, and timetable structure are planned in the preceding school year and finalised by the start of each school year. Students who have electives are asked to make their preferences known well in advance (often in the second to last term of the preceding year). These decisions were made well in advance of the *Global Connections* program beginning and were already locked in place by the time the schools agreed to be involved with the 2008 program earlier in the year.
In school D the entire Year 9 cohort rotated through the Centre in three week blocks once every term. Each rotation involved spending two thirds of every day in the Centre. During the three weeks, the students formed into small groups and worked intensively on a project of their choice within a general theme. Although the teacher supporting *Global Connections* was part of the Centre team, it was clear to the teacher that the program could not be adapted to the Centre format. *Global Connections* was designed around the facilitators working in the school for one session a week over a period of two school terms. It was not possible to compress the activity of the program into two three week blocks because of the university students’ other course commitments and because of the logistics involved with communicating with Indonesia. At the time of the interview, program arrangements had not been finalised and the teacher had no definite idea about the way it would eventually run. There was a lot of discussion during the interview about possibilities and ideal models but the conversation was necessarily unresolved and ended with:

So, how’s *(Global Connections)* going to work logistically? I don’t know yet.

Nevertheless, the teacher was not overly anxious and felt sure the program would run somehow and that s/he\(^{68}\) would be a part of the program.

Follow up phone conversations subsequently established that what developed was that students would come out of other classes once a week to participate in *Global Connections* in the Centre. The weekly facilitator session overlapped two of the teacher’s scheduled non-contact periods\(^{69}\). As a result, the teacher would lose those non-contact periods and the students would miss two lessons in other subjects. This was an option that had been discussed during the interview but it was not favoured because:

The kids are really concerned about missing class time (in other subjects). If you just said, okay, come in, they’d be worried about whether they’d be missing English or Maths and the parents would be too….and particularly the electives because they choose their electives and they enjoy them…so we don’t want to punch a big hole in the electives. So they’re not faced with making the big decision about, do I do *(Global Connections)* or my elective.

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\(^{68}\) I have adopted s/he when it is necessary to use the third person pronoun to disguise the participants. Only one of the teachers was male.

\(^{69}\) By law in Victoria all classes must have a registered teacher in attendance who is responsible for the classroom activity. Therefore, although the facilitators were conducting the *Global Connections* program sessions the teacher needed to be present.
Nevertheless, this proved to be the only workable option and as a result *Global Connections* was positioned as a standalone project that would run parallel to but outside normal school classes. There were no other periods that the particular group of students doing the program were timetabled together and so there would be no integration of the program with other activity. In a similar way the teacher would not be able to engage the students in conversations about the program outside of the time the facilitators were running sessions.

In contrast to school D, *Global Connections* was planned to fit within the normal structure of the Learning Centre in school A. At this school, the year 9 and 10 students chose from a selection of elective topics developed by different teachers and then spent five out of six periods on two days of each week working in the Learning Centre on a project associated with that topic. *Global Connections* was offered as one of the topics. Each elective covered two school terms and so coincided with the planned timing of *Global Connections*. However, because the facilitators were only scheduled to be at the school for one session the teacher was required to develop a considerable amount of other activity to occupy the students for the majority of the day.

In principle this arrangement was not of concern to the teacher who was very interested in the program and had developed ideas about how the program might be linked to a broader study of child rights. The teacher was also thinking that the students could keep working on projects associated with *Global Connections* during the extra time and s/he could help to extend the learning started in the facilitators’ sessions.

Nevertheless, the teacher recognised that there would need to be close liaison and cooperation with the facilitators if the separate components were going to be harmoniously integrated. At the time of the interview, the teacher was due to meet the facilitators the following day and so much of what was discussed was speculative. The discussion did however clearly demonstrate the teacher’s strong interest in being involved in the program and in adding value to it in whatever way was possible. A follow up phone interview the next week established that the meeting with the facilitators resulted in a negotiated change to the program. The facilitators were going to be at the school for a double session bi-weekly rather than a single session per week. However, the teacher appeared to have a heightened degree of uncertainty about exactly what the facilitators would be doing each session and how it might mesh with other work.

*Global Connections* was implemented quite differently in Schools B and C. In these schools the program was intended to fit within a curriculum-based geography elective. The schools are linked
and so the geography unit was jointly developed by the two teachers involved in *Global Connections*. The geography class was timetabled for three periods a week and the facilitators would take one of those sessions with the teacher taking the other two. The particular geography topic offered had not previously been taught and could potentially be written to supplement the *Global Connections* program. However, once again the uncertainty about what exactly the program entailed meant that in practical terms the early stages of the geography class were developed as separate entities. For one of the teachers in particular the restriction the uncertainty placed on planning was quite stressful:

> It’s a new unit, we’re just developing it, and that’s why we’re trying to include *Global Connections* now...but I’m still not sure as to what is going to be in it. We haven’t got it planned, it hasn’t been planned before. So we’re trying to accommodate both this plus the new unit plus everything....There’s a lot of uncertainty about what’s going to happen because I have no idea.

The teachers’ descriptions of the operational fit of *Global Connections* with the schools’ timetables highlighted the difficulty of bringing in a program from outside the formal school system. The program was scheduled to be incorporated in different ways to accommodate each school’s structure. The school context into which the program was introduced was on a continuum from; being part of a core curriculum elective (Geography), through inclusion in alternative learner-centred initiatives, to being completely outside other school activity and having students leave classes to attend the program.

However, none of the options appeared to be straightforward and all of the initial arrangements were problematic for the teachers in some way or other. Additionally, the teachers also drew attention to other potential problems arising from clashes with events like field trips and sports days. Finally, one of the teachers mentioned that a student teacher who was going to be attached to the class would need to be accommodated. This was going to require renegotiating the way that the facilitators could run their session. Once again, a series of follow up phone calls established that a change was made. However, although the change allowed *Global Connections* to operate within the classroom teacher’s framework it required last minute reshuffling that was significantly problematic with regard to the facilitators’ commitments.
6.2.2.2 Preliminary analysis of Global Connections operations

The first interview was characterised by uncertainty with regard to the way that Global Connections would fit within the school’s structure and the teachers’ own practice. Analysis of the interviews produced the following characteristics:

School Operations

- Diversity: Continuum of integration within ‘normal’ school programs from being part of core curriculum to being extra-curricular
- Limited flexibility: School timetables and resource allocation are fixed in advance
- Uncertainty
- Management not involved

6.2.3 The Teachers’ role

The first interview was characterised by uncertainty with regard to what the teachers imagined their role within the program would be. They all recognised that they would not be actively delivering the program. They were also aware that their statutory role of responsibility with regard to the activity that did take place meant that they would be in the class during the Global Connections sessions. In this respect the teachers all interpreted their role as one of supporting the facilitators during the sessions.

The teachers particularly recognised that classroom management would be one of the areas where the facilitators would need support. One of the teachers was particularly concerned about this element of the program and was actively trying to pre-empt problems:

...but I’m going to think positive and I’ll be there and we’ll just get rid of the bad kids if there’s any bad kids, because we’re talking about two young people that haven’t been trained as teachers. Would they have the skills...?

The other teachers were observed to be more relaxed about classroom management but were still uncertain about the interface between their role and that of the facilitators. In particular, the teachers raised three areas of uncertainty related to their involvement with the program:

- Participation: The extent they would be taking part in classroom activity.
- Supervision: Their role with regard to the facilitators including: How should they respond to lesson plans before the lesson, and how would they debrief the facilitators after the sessions?
Integrating: How they might extend the particular learning activity initiated by the facilitators during the periods when the facilitators were not present?

My reflections in field notes written after the first series of interviews highlighted the teacher-facilitator relationships as critical to the way the program would develop and be understood by the partners. My reflections ended with a summary question that seemed to capture the areas of uncertainty described above – Are the teachers mentors to, observers of, or co-constructors of learning with the facilitators?

Despite the uncertainty evident at this early stage of engagement with the program, the teachers were not generally portraying the situation as problematic. The teachers were all prepared to make adjustments as the program unfolded and were confident that the program would both run well and that they would find an appropriate level of input. What was evident was that the teachers were all keen to see the program in action and were all considering that they would find an active way of contributing. Without exception, the teachers consistently talked of what might happen in the program using the pronoun we: ‘We can...’ ‘We might be able to...’. In this way, they were clearly anticipating an active role with regard to the way the program would develop. The teachers described their interest in the program in terms of the potential it offered for their students and linked their own satisfaction from teaching as coming from enabling students to explore that potential:

Look, my engagement with teaching and pleasure with teaching is working with kids and seeing kids thinking and developing. You know, there’s opportunities I’ve had to move into administration roles and promotions and so on... but I resist it because I still want to work with kids....And that’s why this sort of stuff appeals to me...another way of me engaging with kids to further their learning.

I guess it just makes me feel good if I think that the students have grown in some way and a little light’s gone on in some part of the brain...and I want to be part of that.

As a teacher you feel like the focus is mostly about them...If their awareness has been increased in some way. And if I can be a part of that process then it makes me feel good.

Although the teachers anticipated having some active role, they were definitely expecting that role to be relatively peripheral. As such, they also indicated that they were interested in being an
observer in their own classes and observing their students interacting with each other, the facilitators and the project in what they thought would be a unique learning environment.

6.2.4 Organisational Interactions

At the time of the first interview, all of the teachers had met with the Plan program coordinator much earlier in the year to establish their willingness to be involved. At this first meeting they were introduced to the general outline of *Global Connections* and learnt about the way that it had operated in the pilot versions of the program. The possible ways that it might fit into the school’s program were discussed but not developed in any detail. There had also been follow up phone conversations and email exchanges with the Plan staff but not to discuss the program in depth. There had been no meetings or exchanges between Plan and the management levels of the schools with regard to planning the school’s involvement with the program.

Additionally, two of the teachers had met with the Plan coordinator and the facilitators immediately prior to the interview and others were due to meet in the next few days. These meetings were the final planning operational meetings before the program commenced after the school break. The teachers were unanimously appreciative at a personal level of their interactions with the Plan coordinator and considered that they would be able to establish a good working relationship. However, the frequency and timing of the interactions necessarily needed to be negotiated to accommodate the different partners and this was problematic in some instances:

> It’s a pity it’s Friday of the last week (of term). It’s really bad timing, I must say. I mean, at the moment, feedback - I’m disappointed it has to be so late....I’m not sure why – I did miss an email, yeah but...

This teacher felt that the communication processes had not worked well and was left feeling anxious and uncertain:

> I mean, I don’t mean it in a negative way. I’m sure, I really am sure it all works out in the end. But I just feel like I’m a bit lost now.

This teacher’s meeting took place on the last day of term and there was no time to effectively negotiate and respond to changes that might need to be made. The teacher indicated to me s/he had been told which day of the week the program would run but s/he would need to change it to
accommodate a student teacher. The teacher was uncomfortable about the situation but felt that the selection of a day had been made by Plan without adequate consultation:

(The Plan coordinator) just asked me what days. I just said the days the class is on but I thought we were going to discuss it and the student teacher has to take priority...and I feel bad having to ask them to change it. And I’m thinking, well I shouldn’t feel like that because it’s really accommodating us.

The ‘it’s really accommodating us’ part of the comment seemed particularly important. It seemed to suggest that an ‘us’ and ‘them’ position had remained with regard to the schools and Plan. There was no evidence during the first interviews that the teachers considered that Global Connections was a joint project and that the organisations were working collaboratively. In this way, although there was considerable goodwill expressed; genuine appreciation of the potential benefits for their students; and general satisfaction with the personal interactions involved to date, there was a clear impression that the teachers considered that they were accommodating Plan’s program and cooperating with Plan’s design. After making the first approach to Plan to become involved with the program, none of the teachers continued to initiate key interactions with Plan in the lead up phase but waited for Plan to make contact.

6.2.4.1 Preliminary analysis of Organisational Interactions

At a personal level the teachers related well to the Plan staff but the interactions did not always occur in a timely manner and aspects of what was communicated did not always resolve confusion. The following characteristics emerged from the data analysis.

Communication

- Timing: Timely communication required to fit teachers’ planning needs
- Clarity: Confusion remained pre-program. Key points were not documented
- Management not involved
- No program ownership: Teachers reactive not proactive

6.3 Beginning the Journey: Plan’s Perspective

This section focuses on the key components of Global Connections where a significant difference in perspective was identified which I thought could affect the way that the different organisations might interpret the program as it continued to develop. The interview with Plan reported in this section occurred after the teacher interviews but before the interviews were analysed. Nevertheless, particular aspects of the first teacher interviews were used by me as prompts for this interview.
The interviews involving Plan staff were undertaken with two key people involved in the program. In 2008, the day to day managing of the program was the responsibility of the ‘Youth Participation Coordinator’ in Plan. The person who filled that role for the majority of the year was newly appointed and in fact started taking responsibility for the program operations after the first set up and facilitator training phases had been completed. The previous youth participation coordinator left the organisation before the program had actually started in the schools and was not interviewed. As a result, the Plan representative who was to be most closely associated with the actual implementation of Global Connections was new to the program in 2008 in the same way as were the teachers.

As a consequence of the coordinator’s newness to the program, the first interview was conducted primarily with the coordinator’s supervisor although the coordinator attended and contributed to the discussions. The supervisor had been involved with Global Connections from almost the time of its inception and had been a part of both its implementation and the ongoing processes of evaluation and development that had characterised the program’s evolution to date. The supervisor visited the schools in the first contact stage of setting the program in motion and remained involved in a supervisory role and as part of Plan’s representation on the ARC project team throughout 2008.

The interviews with Plan were also characterised by high levels of uncertainty with regard to the program’s operations and impact. The uncertainty reflected a realistic recognition of the program as developmental and exceptionally complex. The complexity of the program was primarily described in the first interview in terms of the multiple groups of young people involved. Each group of young people was portrayed as having different objectives for the program and as requiring different types of support to facilitate their learning within the program. Plan as an organisation valued genuine youth participation as a core strategy and did not prioritise the learning of one group of young people over another:

> We’ve got all these different stakeholders, they all have different expectations, different needs, different wants from the program, so what we do we do with all that, and then how

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70 Throughout the reporting of the Global Connections case study, the term Plan Coordinator has been used to specifically refer to the Youth Participation Coordinator.

71 The incoming coordinator had previously worked with Plan and had been involved with the pilot version of the program in 2005 but was not at Plan during the next two years so had missed subsequent events and was to all intents and purposes starting again.

72 Plan considered the ‘multiple groups of young people’ as including: the different student groups in each school; the equivalent partner groups in Indonesia; and the groups of young people in both countries that were facilitating the program.
do we truly listen and respond to them, and feed that back into the program? As we’ve gone along it’s very clear that you know, kids in Australia are going to have very different expectations ... the program is going to impact on them very differently to what it will on the kids in Indonesia. But we feel as though we have an equal sense, we have an equal responsibility to both.

This situation was in direct contrast to the schools who were interpreting the program exclusively through the experiences of their own students.

6.3.1 The educational work of the program

6.3.1.1 Educational Purpose

Global Connections was interpreted as being directed to more than just educational purposes by Plan. Global Connections was also fulfilling organisational purposes with regard to Plan’s commitment to youth participation. This was particularly evident in the way that Plan utilised young people as facilitators and attempted to meet their expectations. The facilitator roles in the schools were a significant objective of the program for Plan. However, the facilitators were essentially incidental from the schools’ perspective except to the extent that the facilitators might affect the ‘real’ school student-centred purposes of the program. Finally, the program also served a purpose by contributing to strategic thinking about the way that Plan was engaging the Australian community.

One of the original stated objectives of Global Connections was framed in terms of Plan’s organisational learning (see section 3.2).

With regard to the educational purpose of the program activity, Plan considered that the connection to Indonesia and the communication pieces were just a vehicle for the program’s real purpose of empowering the school students to be active citizens:

The Global Connections program is a vessel or it’s a vehicle for them to be able to reflect, enter into dialogue, think about and gather tools to be able to deal with issues of interest and concern and engage so that they feel empowered to do that.

The supervisor recognised that the statement above represented a shift in the program objectives from those that were stated in the initial program development documents (see section 3.2) which emphasised the global connection:
Well ultimately how it was set up, it was about those global connections…now it’s more about citizenship, that’s the stronger emphasis is the way I see it…and that’s coming out in the stakeholder groups too.

However, the evidence of the teachers suggested that Plan had not communicated the change in emphasis to the schools as a stakeholder group because they were strongly interpreting the program in terms of the connections.

The program objectives had also shifted with regard to the students’ outcomes. Evaluations conducted in previous years suggested that the students were getting outcomes beyond those initially anticipated. In particular, the school students appeared to be getting outcomes that were very personally oriented including a sense of increased self esteem, and personal worth which related to a feeling of ‘I can do it’. This unanticipated but welcomed outcome was being written into new statements about the program’s purposes which were being developed at the time of the interview. Once again however, there was no evidence that this purpose had been communicated to the schools.

6.3.1.2 Educational Content

A consequence of wider interpretation of the program’s purpose and objectives and also Plan’s determination to maximise the youth-led nature of the program was that the supervisor was completely at ease with the possibility that students might choose to develop issues in a way that had no global element or connection to Indonesia:

For me the Global Connections program, even if in Australian schools the kids chose local issues and chose a local focus the whole way through, that’s perfectly fine, because the tools and the skills and the knowledge that they build within that program then leads to them being able to use that on a global scale.

From the outset therefore, Plan was looking at the content of the 2008 program as being primarily directed to the issues and empowerment to act component of the program and was anticipating that the issues could be local issues. The Indonesians were envisaged to be working concurrently on their own issues and then an exchange of communication pieces would take place. The communication pieces were therefore just the mechanism by which the work that one group was doing could be shared with their peers in the other country:
They do them (the communication pieces) at the same time, and then they swap them, and they then talk about them and learn about the issues.

In this way, the communication pieces were not in themselves the main objective of the program which was instead related to the thinking, processes and work that was done to develop the content of the communications.

With regard to the educational content of schools, the supervisor was familiar with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) and specifically said that the program was pitched to the schools as fitting within the citizenship focus of the VELS. However, the supervisor was not confident about how schools already dealt with this focus and suspected that it was probably new to most teachers:

I think the concept of citizenship is quite...new, so even with young and old teachers I suppose, so they are asked to incorporate something within their curriculum that they don’t necessarily have, they haven’t had a chance to reflect on, or internalise the issue themselves, so don’t then necessarily know how to apply it or integrate it within their school curriculum.

In this way, there seemed to be a definite view that the program was transformative with regard to its actual content and beyond what teachers normally did in class.

6.3.1.3 Educational Methods: Pedagogy

The commitment to Global Connections being youth-led was one of the strongest foundations of Plan’s commitment at all levels of the organisation to the program. From the outset, Plan was interpreting the youth-led nature of the program in the schools as involving both the facilitators and the students. Once again however, there appeared to be an impression held by Plan (not just the supervisor) that teachers were not generally familiar with and/or did not practise the student-led pedagogies which were the basis of Global Connections:

It (student-led learning) still doesn’t happen a lot or all the time...many teachers don’t use it because they find it, I imagine they find it, people don’t like change and they don’t necessarily like difference. So it’s important for us to articulate it because otherwise you’re faced with teachers who are deciding, yes, they say, they tell the kids that they’re going to do the program, and then they tell the kids how, even how they’re going to communicate.
My field note reflections after this interview questioned whether the assumptions made about ‘many teachers’ were likely to apply to the teachers involved in 2008. The situation described did not seem to reflect my first interview with the teachers and their descriptions of the work they were doing in the Learning Centres in particular. As an experienced classroom teacher, I was impressed with the Learning Centre methods and felt that they would be considerably more sophisticated with regard to supporting student-centred learning than what the inexperienced facilitators would achieve. My field note ended with ‘watch this space’.

6.3.2 School operations and the teachers’ role

Plan recognised the different contexts into which Global Connections fitted in each of the schools and believed that the program was flexible enough to be adapted to the situation in each school:

We learnt very quickly that young people needed some sort of framework or structure, but it’s still quite mouldable and bendable and it changes every year because you’re dealing with different situations every year.

In a similar way, Plan understood that the teachers involved would necessarily interact in different ways with the program according to their particular contexts. The teachers’ role with regard to the Global Connections sessions was seen as flexible provided that the role did not hamper the facilitators’ agency to facilitate. In other words the teachers were there in a support role but could take part in classroom activity designed by the facilitators if they so wished. Plan recognised that the teachers had a statutory role in the classroom and envisaged that they would be responsible for disciplinary incidents. However, outside of the direct sessions, Plan was keen to see the teachers develop other activity to support the program. The supervisor was particularly enthusiastic about the potential for the program to be enriched by the teacher in the school that had incorporated Global Connections into a whole day program in the Learning Centre:

We’re more than happy for them (the teachers) to embed it as part of their program, the same way that XXXX is doing. Yeah, no I could tell that XXXX was really, really strong, and is knowledgeable about the issues...And is going to support, or to integrate global, or help Global Connections integrate.

Of particular note here, is that the teacher involved was trying to do exactly what the Plan supervisor understood, however at the time of the interview in the previous week the teacher actually felt the opposite of knowledgeable with regard to the issues and was working hard to develop background
material. The teacher actually stated explicitly that s/he needed material and more support. The teacher acknowledged that the supervisor had provided some material months before when they first had contact but that it was not quite what was needed. This situation was relayed to the supervisor during the interview and the information was met with surprise:

We’ve given them resources, we’ve also given them ‘Action on global poverty’ which in a sense is meant to be a sort of self-inquiry resource, it’s got links to so many things.

Irrespective of the specific comment to the contrary, the supervisor remained confident that the teachers understood their role and that they had been encouraged and offered support for their own work so that they could add extra depth to the program. There seemed to be clear indications that ‘support’ was being differently understood.

### 6.3.3 Organisational Interactions

At this first stage of the program, very few interactions had taken place and Plan’s description of what those had entailed was virtually identical to the teachers. However, as has already been indicated the impressions that each party formed of what had been effectively communicated was in some instances quite different. There was no documented and shared record of the conversations or the decisions reached. Plan was generally satisfied that there had been adequate communication and interaction in the lead up to the start of the program.

### 6.4 Facilitators’ Perspectives

The facilitators’ perspectives are mainly reported in the final chapter of the 2008 report (section 7.4). Their reflections are used holistically as a whole program view to sit alongside the summary of the teachers’ and Plan’s views about the program in 2008.

Nevertheless, there were two unanimous and significant views of the facilitators related to the start of the program that are relevant to the discussion to date (see section 7.4 for evidence and further discussion). Firstly, the facilitators did not at the start of the program see themselves as part of the youth-led component which they interpreted as meaning student-led. Secondly, at the start of the program the facilitators also had no idea of the ‘big’ picture and how the whole program was supposed to work. They were interpreting what they needed to do at the start as related to producing the communication pieces and were not clear about specific learning outcomes that were to come out of the program.
6.5 Conclusion
The first interviews with the teachers were characterised by both similarity and difference. The differences came out through the active interviewing technique which empowered the teachers to be present as individuals. Their different backgrounds, experiences, interests and enthusiasms came to the fore. It seemed clear that the teachers’ personalities, teaching styles, and ways of relating to students and the school could have a major impact on the program through the relationships that they would form with the facilitators and their students and their interpretations of the program activity. Difference was also strongly evident in the school program structures into which Global Connections was going to be incorporated. In the latter respect it was clear that the program was entering four distinct school contexts.

The similarity was evident in common reactions to different elements of the program. In particular, the teachers all envisaged the program as being about the ‘connection’ to the Indonesian groups and understood the socially-oriented educational purpose of the program. They all endorsed the student-centred pedagogical approach but interpreted the youth-led dimension as meaning the facilitators running the program. Whether this was related to the introduction to the program by Plan or whether it was because of a commonly shared professional and institutional framework for interpreting the program’s structure and aims was not immediately evident.

The teachers were all looking forward to the program starting and were enthusiastic about the possibilities that could arise from connecting their students to groups of young people in Indonesia. However, the enthusiasm was tempered with uncertainty about what and how the program would unfold. The partnerships at this stage were characterised as being based on good personal interactions but were informal in nature and unstructured. The teachers were all reactive rather than proactive with regard to their interactions with Plan. It was Plan’s program and the schools were a cooperative partner.

Plan was also anticipating the start of the program with enthusiasm tempered by uncertainty. In their case, uncertainty was related to the program logistics and the outcomes of the young people involved. Plan was not concerned at this stage about the role of the teachers and the program outcomes from the schools’ perspectives. Although the support materials they had provided were common to all the schools and no detailed planning had been involved to adapt Global Connections to the separate school contexts, Plan was confident in the teachers’ ability to cope and the appropriateness of the support Plan had provided.
As the program was poised to begin classroom activity all the key participants exhibited enthusiasm and optimism for what the program might have to offer. However, there were also signs of confusion about exactly what it was that the program was offering and how the detail of the program would develop in practice. At this early stage, there appeared to be subtleties of difference with regard to the way that the different organisations were prioritising the multiple aims of a complex program. There also appeared to be a lack of clarity in the communications that had occurred between the partners which could potentially reinforce rather than diminish differences in the way that the program would be interpreted.
Chapter Seven: Global Connections in action: 2008

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is primarily based on interviews with the key participants during and after Global Connections implementation in the schools. It follows a similar format to chapter six and reports on the partners’ perspectives in relation to the same dimensions: Global Connections’ operations; educational activity; the teacher’s role, and organisational interactions. Although this research was explicitly not an evaluation of Global Connections as a program, in this chapter there is necessarily a degree of explanation as to how the program developed. In this regard, the focus is on the partners’ perceptions and responses to critical program events and the ways that they share and negotiate their individual reactions.

The final section of the chapter considers the facilitators’ role within Global Connections and their collective relationship with Plan is described in terms of being a contrasting approach to ‘partnership’. Additionally, the facilitators’ perspectives of key events are presented as further evidence of the ways that the partners contributed to Global Connections. The facilitators’ views both support and contrast particular interpretations offered by the teachers and Plan.

In addition to the scheduled ‘formal’ interview sessions, I had a number of opportunities to generate observational data. I attended several school classes throughout the program’s implementation as part of separate ARC research activity. Consequently, I was able to make observations of the classroom environments and informally talk to teachers. I also attended workshops and other activity organised by Plan to support the facilitators. On these occasions I was able to interact with and observe the Plan Coordinator and the facilitators. Additionally, I stayed informed through the wider ARC research about the program’s progress both in Australia and in Indonesia. As a result of these additional interactions, I participated in my scheduled research interviews with considerable background ‘knowledge’ of the program’s implementation. I also had advance insights into the way that different key participants were feeling about the program’s progress. Of particular note in this regard, was the way that the teachers shifted from being relatively distanced professionals speculating about Global Connections, which they were during the first interview, to being personally and professionally involved with the program. As a result, their communications and impressions came from ‘inside’ the sphere of Global Connections activity and there was a noticeably stronger ‘judgement’ element to the way that the program was described. Impressions, concerns and uncertainties were more authoritatively and more personally stated.
The final interviews were considerably more relaxed than the earlier ones and as such reflected the increased familiarity of the participants with me personally and the research process, and also the release of the tension that had been associated with negotiating a ‘live’ program which was an unknown quantity. However, the final interview phase was also characterised by a sense that the teachers had moved on and were preoccupied with wrapping up 2008 and looking towards their Christmas break. It was already known that three of the four schools would not be participating in Global Connections in 2009 and the fourth school would be undertaking the program in a changed format which did not involve the teacher from 2008. As a result, all four teachers were ending their association with the program and my interview was their final engagement.

7.2 The Schools
7.2.1 Global Connections’ operations
This ‘Global Connections’ operations’ section concerns aspects of the program that were needed to support classroom activity but which were outside the immediate control of the classroom participants – the teacher, facilitators and the students. The direct and indirect influence of factors originating beyond classroom control had arguably the biggest impact on Global Connections’ outcomes and the teachers’ perceptions of both the program’s and the partnerships’ effectiveness.

7.2.1.1 Activity outside the school
Global Connections was a complex logistical exercise with multiple groups in two countries contributing to the mix of operational activities that were required to bring about interaction between groups of young people in Australia and Indonesia. In 2008, the communication pieces could not be produced and exchanged in a timely manner within the limitations of the Australian school year. The first communication piece from Indonesia was significantly delayed and only arrived once Global Connections had been operating for a full school term. It further eventuated that the first communication piece was the only one that the school students were able to receive73. The communication difficulty was the single most significant unintended impact on classroom activity and as such it strongly influenced the teachers’ reactions to the program.

The teachers took no active part in the organisational connection to Indonesia and therefore had no channel to directly understand the difficulties that were occurring. By the end of the program, they had a complete lack of knowledge about what the Indonesians were doing and when if ever there would be more communication. Although they completely endorsed the value of the physical

73 The other Indonesian communications did arrive but only after the school students had finished their year and ended their involvement with Global Connections.
communication pieces and thought they should be retained, the teachers all felt that something was needed to supplement those communications. The unanimous conclusion was that a format dependent only on physical mail was untenable. This was not only because of the unreliability involved in 2008 but because IT communications were so much a part of how their students communicate. The following extract is one example of what was said by everyone:

Is there a way of using ICT more to do it? I mean… having the ability to communicate online somehow…And I guess, in Australia, that’s what these kids are used to…You know, short grabs of stuff… Even email. Basic level, just email.

Although the teachers became reconciled to the reality of the connection difficulties they were clearly frustrated and felt that operationally Global Connections did not function in the one key way that was most important to them. The teachers were all able to identify other positive outcomes for their students but at the end of the program they came back to issue of the program’s failure to establish a ‘real’ connection:

I was more interested in seeing the kids engaged in another community that wasn’t their own and that didn’t really happen – I mean, it wasn’t really a true, engaging interaction where they felt connected to that group and it was reciprocated and they felt that they were connected, that’s why I said superficial, because it felt like it was set up that the connection is going to be there and global connections and how do you connect with Indonesia and all of these things, but then it wasn’t really actually there. So it was like, for kids, probably a bit disheartening…Not disheartening maybe is not the right word but illusionary, made to think that it is this connection and then it’s not, which is almost…defeats its purpose.

I don’t think (the connection) was as relevant to students as it could have been. Given there wasn’t many opportunities for communication between groups.

If somehow communication could be improved so that it’s not just that one few pieces of paper that came after many weeks, and that’s where maybe blogs or websites or whatever could perform a role.

It seemed very clear to me that the teachers’ specific responses to program and partnership characteristics which are reported in following sections were all overlayed with a sense that Global
Connections did not really deliver on its promise because the ‘connection’ to Indonesia did not develop as they had anticipated.

7.2.1.2 School-based activity

The delay of the first communication piece from Indonesia threatened the completion of Global Connections in the schools. The school-based component of the program necessarily needed to fit within the school year. The problem of time was compounded for the three schools that had Year 10 students involved in the program. Year 10 students had a shortened school year (compared with Year 9s) because they finished normal classes to allow time for study and examinations. The Year 10 teachers anticipated that there were only six or seven weeks left to engage with the last two stages of the program by the time the first communication from Indonesia arrived.

There was a strong feeling mid-program that the time spent waiting for the Indonesian communication had compromised the ability to complete the program:

So my concern is, are we going to get up to the action part and actually make it happen? I think that’s what the kids are itching to do. I think they’re a bit sick of talking about it and whatever. They want to actually do it.

In order to mitigate the time pressure, the teachers attempted to make changes to the school operations. The teacher at the school which was incorporating Global Connections as part of the Learning Centre’s all-day program negotiated with the facilitators to do lengthened sessions in the last weeks. In contrast however, the two schools incorporating the program as part of a Year 10 Geography elective had no flexibility to increase time spent on the program. In those schools the existing situation, which involved the loss of a lesson each week from the Geography component, meant that the teachers were already feeling significantly pressured with regard to finishing their own course content.

School operations impacted in other ways on the time available for Global Connections. All of teachers indicated that sessions with the program had been lost or disrupted because students had clashes with other commitments such as school sports and fieldtrips. The teachers also missed a number of sessions for similar reasons. The school most affected was School D which had students coming out of other classes to do Global Connections. In most sessions there were students missing because of commitments they had in other classes:
The kids are coming out of classes to do it. They were aware of that initially but they’ve come under some pressure from class teachers that they’re missing a lot of class and... I think there’s been a little bit of pressure from some parents in relation to that too. So that’s compromised things a little and it’s unfortunate.

Therefore, although the operational factor that most affected the program was the problem with connecting to Indonesia which was beyond the schools’ influence (and beyond Plan Australia’s control as well) there were definite structural problems with the way the program was integrated into the schools’ activity. The timing problems and the way that the activity was compressed compromised the outcomes. The teachers all felt that this aspect of the program was partly in Plan’s control because the school timetable term by term was available from the start of the year - including examinations and sports trips. However, the teachers also acknowledged that although the examination period was timetabled, the fact that teachers stopped normal lessons to focus on revision two weeks before the examinations was not something that Plan knew at the start of the program. Nevertheless, the teachers considered that Plan should have managed the weeks available differently and curtailed the time spent on the first communication piece. The final action-oriented phase could have been started five or six weeks earlier. In the most extreme case, the teacher thought the introductory communication could have been very brief:

I think the first communication piece really could be done in one period. Just a quick thing...and then I guess go straight into issues and issues that affect you, issues over there.

At the end of the program, the teachers were very willing to discuss program development and ways that future versions of Global Connections might fit more appropriately with school operations despite the fact that three of the four schools and all of the teachers were not going to be involved in 2009. The discussions about school operations were wide ranging and included timetabling, teachers’ commitments, and the most suitable Year level to target. These discussions all emphasised that Global Connections remained essentially unknown within the school beyond the immediate participants. The program was not generally acknowledged or celebrated at assemblies, was not profiled in the school newsletters, nor promoted on the school website, and was largely invisible to the other staff. There was a strong emphasis placed on the desirability of acknowledging and integrating programs into the wider school culture if such programs were to become embedded as part of the ‘normal’ school activity. Global Connections in 2008 took place in schools but was largely outside of the school system.
The most significant discussions on school structure took place in the school which was expecting to continue the program in 2009. The teacher involved had arranged for the Assistant Principal responsible for the relevant Year level to join our interview and for over an hour the promise and possibilities of the program, its aims and how it could be integrated into the school were discussed. A key component of this discussion was that the school itself was in the process of a major restructuring of the way that the Year level used the Learning Centre. In this respect, it was known that a new manager was going to be running the centre and new ways of working would be involved but the details had not been finalised. The conversation ended with the Assistant Principal acknowledging the necessity of involving other people in discussions with regard to *Global Connections* and the importance of early planning with Plan at the start of 2009.

### 7.2.2 The Educational work of the program

This section considers the content (what happened) and the methods (how it happened) of *Global Connections* before the considering the educational purposes (why do it) and whether the work of the program achieved its anticipated educational purposes (see section 6.2.1.1) from the schools’ perspectives.

#### 7.2.2.1 Educational Content

The teachers’ impressions of what was done during the *Global Connections* sessions were essentially in accord. The first ten weeks of the program were almost entirely taken up with the Australian students producing their first communication piece in which they introduced themselves to their partnered Indonesian group. No substantive work was done to advance the issues phase of the program during this period. As a result, the program was unanimously seen as a bit slow by the teachers:

> It hasn’t been, – is this going back to them? (after being assured about anonymity the teacher continued)  It hasn’t been exactly what I thought it was going to be at the moment. I’m hoping it will just pick up standard it’s very lower level. I had thought that the first stage of the program would happen sort of in half the term and then we’d be moved on. So we haven’t actually started the second part.

> I guess, from my perception and from some of what the kids are saying that if it moved along faster it would be better. It’s been slow we’ve just sent ours (communication piece) off. But it’s already one term gone and we’ve only got next term.
Maybe less time to do that introductory piece because I guess it’s less about the issues and more about just a personal thing. After they produced their first communication piece there seemed to be a little bit of filling in while, a few filling periods while they were waiting to get the Indonesian one. I guess it is good to do it in a different way but as well they’re probably used to that cracking pace or get through things and lalala but when it’s so much slower, they kind of just lose focus.

I think it would have worked better if (the communication piece) had come through earlier and we could have moved on a bit quicker.

Additionally, three of the four teachers suggested that the students’ first communication lacked depth and accuracy. There were question marks raised about the suitability of the work for Year 10 students:

The ante should be up....they were sitting cutting and pasting for a couple of weeks and stuff. And is that what we want in Year 10 anyway? Is that sort of level of work that you want? That’s me thinking as a teacher. Maybe the bar should be a bit higher because we’re trying to get them ready for VCE next year. They won’t be sitting there cutting and pasting and doing beautiful little pictures and stuff about themselves next year. So I’m really, I’m not sure about the whole program at the moment.

I get the odd complaint from kids saying, oh look, there’s too many of those touchy feely games... and they want more informative stuff. But then other kids say, no, they like the games. So there’s a bit of mixed opinion in the group.

We spent the first two or three weeks there were a lot of those games, which are fun but it could have been contained a bit... a bit better and get them to do something meatier. They’re used to things happening quicker. ... to keep kids interests, like Year 9 and 10 kids, they’re what? 14, 15, some are 16 I guess by the end of it. But they can only sit still for so long. They need a range of things.

And in contrast to the other three teachers:
I think the level of thinking and the maturity of the kids here...It’s fine. Their communication pieces weren’t bad. You know, some of them were a bit shallow. But no, some of them were excellent.

One teacher had a real concern about the integrity of the representations being made to Indonesia. This teacher knew the students well and could judge the accuracy of what was said. The following was not an isolated case but was one of several examples given:

They just made up stuff about the kids who weren’t there. This girl’s gone home and just written it all up about everyone. So it’s not an authentic piece, as such....I was upset that they have lied. So I sort of think, what’s the value of some of it if they’re not being honest.

The most significant consequence of spending so much time to produce the first communication piece was that the time available to produce the next two was significantly compromised. The first of the two remaining communication pieces was designed to introduce an issue chosen by the students as being of concern to them. The last communication would then describe a plan of action that the students devised for making an active contribution towards an aspect of the issue. There also needed to be time for the students to actually undertake their actions. However, there was only one term (which was shortened by examinations) available to produce the last two communication pieces. As a result, the facilitators and Plan made the decision to tackle the issue and action components concurrently in a single communication piece. This arrangement allowed for the last part of the school year to be dedicated to taking action.

All of the Australian groups managed to complete their restructured communication pieces before the end of the program, but time pressure was such that the depth of the investigation and learning surrounding the issues was a matter of divided opinion among the teachers:

I’m not sure if it was the way it’s structured or whatever but my kids chose pretty innocuous – I don’t know if that’s the right word – but very kind of bland ways of approaching the issues, I think. They did it and it was sort of very, like low level sort of thinking and...Not Year 10 level, yeah...Some did minimal effort but you’re always going to get that but I guess...I think maybe they needed more scaffolding on that.

Well, it’s interesting because... there’s a bit of complacency amongst the kids here because they’re pretty comfortable. They don’t really have to think of issues a lot of the time so
exposing them to these sorts of ideas is often new material for a lot of kids. So there has been a bit of flippancy from some kids.

(The facilitators) immersed the kids in the issues with various resources; video and articles and so on. Pushing the kids to actually go deeper, yeah, some of them have done it quite well, some of them are still – it’s probably the standard range of how well they’ve got into it from any cohort of kids.

Another outcome of the time pressure was that the actions chosen to support the issue tended to be brief and relatively untargeted. For example, one group sold items during a single lunchtime to raise money for sending to an organisation involved with their issue. Although this type of action may legitimately be considered to be making a contribution, there was no opportunity to debrief the students afterward nor was there an opportunity to find out what would be done with the money and follow through on how the ‘action’ might help the issue. There was a sense that with handing over the money the action was complete. As a result some of the teachers expressed reservations about whether the final phase might have missed opportunities to add significant value to the students learning.

Two significant contributions to the program’s intended content did not eventuate. No further Indonesian communications arrived. The students had no feedback about their first communication and no knowledge of the issues that the Indonesian young people had chosen. Therefore, they could not explore links to their peers and develop understanding about the Indonesians’ issues and ways of taking action. It was also planned that the year’s program would end with a celebration exhibition that brought together all the students and teachers from all four schools to present their communication pieces and share experiences. However, this planned exhibition did not take place owing to time and logistical restrictions.

7.2.2.2 Educational Methods

Throughout the implementation of Global Connections the role of the facilitators dominated discussions about the pedagogical approaches employed within the program. Once the program was in progress, the uncertainty and concern about how the facilitators would manage the program and the students was largely replaced by respect and support:

I think that the girls that ran it were fantastic. They’re absolutely fantastic...For young girls that don’t have any teacher training or anything like that.....they get different.
outcomes...And I think that’s all really positive.... And they’re not teachers, but they’re still really great role models I think, yeah.

Oh, excellent. Yeah, they’re both good. They both know their stuff and they’re inspiring the kids, who are relating to them very well.

I’ve been very impressed with them. They’re really well prepared and they keep it moving and the kids are really enjoying that. I think the girls have actually done a really good job of mixing it up and having something for everyone.

I mean, I come in, say be quiet and things like that, but they’ve been doing really well I think, yeah. If anything, I think moving a little bit slow, yeah, but I mean, it’s such an expectation with them in there to be able to even facilitate the classroom I think. You know, it’s a pretty amazing thing to be doing.

It should be noted however, that two of the teachers indicated that their own relationships with the facilitators were not straightforward in the early stages and in one instance the Plan coordinator had to come in and mediate a discussion about the roles of the teacher and the facilitators. Additionally, several of the teachers indicated that they did not routinely getting lesson plans from the facilitators and were not being informed about what was happening next so were not able to answer student questions between sessions or appropriately plan their own work. In this regard, although the facilitators were trusted to take responsibility for the classes the teachers felt increasingly distanced from the program’s activity as the facilitators became more confident.

However, as the program progressed, there also seemed to be a definite shift towards the teachers treating the facilitators as adults and colleagues rather than the ‘youth’ image they carried initially. The change was profound in the context of the program and seemed to be related to two interconnected reasons. The first reason was that the teachers clearly got accustomed to seeing the facilitators in their classroom every week over an extended period. The novelty of having the facilitators present and active in class wore off and the initial feeling that the teachers had of needing to watch over the facilitators vanished. There was almost a taken-for-granted element to the routine interactions. The teachers had come to trust the facilitators ‘professionalism’ with regard to taking responsibility for the classes.
This last statement links to the second and more subtle reason for the shift in the relationship. The teachers all suggested that the facilitators had begun to operate more like teachers when the pressure was on to compress the remaining activity into a short time frame. There were less games and ‘loose’ periods and the facilitators were pushing the students harder to meet the deadlines. In this way, there seemed to be a merging of approaches:

(The facilitators) recognised that the students were sometimes hard to keep on task and they’ve developed strategies about how to engage the kids over a time span like that on a Friday afternoon and they’re doing it pretty well. I think they’ve certainly grown as teachers if you like, educators.

The students are sort of seeing them (the facilitators) as teachers. Yeah, there is a bit of that I think. There is a bit of that for sure. Probably they are maybe just pushing them to be more productive. It is more about outcomes.

One of the outcomes of the perceived change in approach of the facilitators was that the teachers were more readily able to identify with the conversations that they were having with the facilitators. One teacher indicated that the facilitators were starting to question and think about the students’ engagement in the same way that s/he was thinking, for example:

I was talking to my facilitators about .... getting them (the students) involved in issues. There were some girls that were going for it, they were doing issues that they felt passionate about and there were others that just were drawing pictures... anyway we were talking about what’s prohibiting their engagement.

The last quote above also reflects a common theme that the teachers noticed in the ‘issues’ part of the program. The facilitators really struggled to get the students to engage more deeply with the issues. The teachers definitely linked the struggle to the facilitators not having some of the necessary ‘teaching’ and facilitating skills:

I think they either need training in scaffolding or the program itself is more structured...because I found there was quite a few times where what they’d organised to do needed a bit of building, I guess.
I guess it was hard to get more (depth) having not had training in scaffolding...And I guess you learn how to do that through experience and without that experience it's hard for them to do that scaffolding.

They’re young and they don’t have a lot of experience doing this either, I guess. So it needs to be tightened up and to keep moving and have something – like we have to do with teaching, you’ve got to have an objective for each session.... What do I want the kids to get out of this session?

The lack of ‘teaching’ skills notwithstanding, the teachers all thought that the facilitators produced valuable outcomes for their students that were different to those they would expect from trained teachers:

I think it worked having young people rather than, say, teachers....because they’re younger and, you know the (students) respond differently.

However, they were not able to elaborate on the results that they would expect to see an experienced teacher achieve. The teachers did comment qualitatively that the students really enjoyed the difference and by the end of the program there were very strong relationships between some of the students and the facilitators. They thought that the obvious enjoyment of the students justified the use of the facilitators and the difference was all to the good. The teachers thought that to a large extent the facilitators being younger than most teachers was an important element in the different relationships formed but the informal approaches used were also significant:

The students were definitely responding differently, but it appeared to be as much related to the freedom and informality underpinning the facilitator-student interactions as to the age of the facilitators. Although the teachers did not think the students saw the facilitators as peers, there was no change to their view that the youth-led design component of Global Connections equated to the work of the facilitators. The variety of activities undertaken and the production of the communication pieces were considered to be part of a program ‘managed and delivered’ by the facilitators who were ‘youth’.

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74 Several of the facilitators were in their mid-twenties and so were not in fact younger than many beginning teachers. The United Nations definition of youth is under the age of 26 for most of their youth related policy.

75 When I (as a middle-aged teacher) was in the classroom participating in an activity near the end of the sessions the students had no hesitation extending their informal approach to include me.
The teachers appreciated the relaxed and informal classroom environment that was fostered by the facilitators but there were inevitable comparisons with their own way of operating. In this regard, several of the teachers thought that the facilitators lost their way at times and as a result there was not a lot accomplished in some periods. They also felt that learning opportunities were lost when discussions took directions that the facilitators did not have the knowledge to support. This was particularly the case with regard to satisfying the students’ interest in Indonesia and issues of concern to Indonesians. The teachers all felt that the program would have been enhanced if it had a mix of pedagogical styles and included at least some ‘teaching’. In this way, questions developed about the learning that the students were experiencing as a result of the ‘facilitated’ approach.

7.2.2.3 Educational Purpose

Before the program started, the teachers strongly related the program’s primary purpose to the connection between their students and the young people in the Indonesian groups (see section 6.2.1.1). Through a ‘real’ connection the teachers envisaged that their students would learn ‘about’ their counterparts and develop a broader outlook and a more global sense of how they connected to the world. Although Global Connections was also recognised as including engagement with social issues, the issues involved were visualised as being linked to interactions with the Indonesians and therefore the program was in all respects related to the ‘connections’. As was described earlier, the connection was problematic and the teachers did not think it had been significantly established. As a result there was a prevailing sense among the teachers that Global Connections did not achieve its primary purpose.

However, the teachers also acknowledged that the program achieved other purposes. By the mid-point of the program, they had developed a broader vision of the program’s aims. They recognised that activity in the classroom and not communication with the Indonesians was Plan’s main foundation for developing the social purposes of the program. They had come to understand more fully that the communication pieces provided a structure for the program and were designed to focus, motivate and support their students to engage more deeply with a social issue of concern to them. Furthermore, they also realised that the issue chosen was not restricted by the Indonesian communications or the Indonesians’ issues. Communication with Indonesia could add a significant dimension but the program was not entirely dependent on the connection.

Additionally, the teachers acknowledged that the student-led emphasis used during the preparation of the communications was designed to encourage the students to think about how they wanted to represent themselves. The approach required the students to interrogate their own identities.
Similarly, the process of choosing an issue required the students to think about how they were connected to their communities and what issues were of most concern to them. However, Plan’s representation of the processes involved in the program as a major purpose in itself of the program was never reflected by the teachers. For the teachers, the methods employed were not seen as particularly innovative and were not seen as being particularly skilfully executed. As such, they were a means to an end. The purposes of the program were seen as related to the outcomes rather than the processes of activities.

To a large extent the shift to accommodate locally-oriented purposes was a reluctant but necessary response to the fact that the first communication piece took so long to arrive. During the last weeks before the Indonesian communication arrived there was a unanimously held view that the program had stalled. Because the program had been so strongly linked to the Indonesian connection by the teachers and their students, the time leading up to the communication arrival had been a time of gradual disillusionment and unfulfilled expectation:

I think all of them (students) wanted to see something from Indonesia and I thought it would have been from day one, we would have had some sort of, something happening with Indonesia...

A number of my kids sort of said to me, Oh XXXX, when are we actually going to find out more about the kids in Indonesia.

However, when the communication piece did arrive it partially rekindled the teachers’ enthusiasm and clearly reconnected them to the initial expectations they had developed about the global connection part of the program:

The translations though, gave me insights into the different kids, yeah, and the kids loved reading them because they were giggling and laughing at some of the things that were said in the translations.

The kids loved looking at (the communication piece) but that was only the very last session that we had (in the term).

They did respond very well when they saw the first communication piece they spent quite a long time looking at it and reading all the bits.
Although there was unanimous agreement that the first communication piece was the highlight of the first half of the program, one of the teachers commented that the level of student engagement was not what they had anticipated.

My surprise was the apathy... they were interested but they were a little bit just like, oh yeah, this is just another thing, and maybe not seeing the humanity of it or something, the fact that they’re actually real people and, you know...

There were also frustrations attached to getting the communication piece from Indonesia because translation was not complete, and the timing was such that it arrived right at the end of term and learning could not be immediately developed:

So we were looking at it, we could look at the pictures and some of the stuff that they’d written in English but there were a lot of bits that were written in Indonesian that we still have no idea what they actually say so we’ve got to wait. The girls (facilitators) had only just got hold of it, so they hadn’t had a chance to get it translated. It would have been great to have the whole thing because by the time it gets translated, the next session is not going to be for another four weeks (after school holidays).

There were some bits on it that needed translating and we didn’t ever get it back with the translations so I don’t know what happened. It sort of came for one session and then went away again and didn’t come back.

A lot of it’s in English but there was a few little bits they’d attached that need translating.

At the mid-program stage, Global Connections was at best partially fulfilling its potential and purpose from the teachers’ perspectives but they were still hoping that it would live up to the promise they could still see that it offered. Their support for the program’s purpose and aims was largely based on faith rather than the reality of what was happening. Neither the global dimension through the Indonesian communication nor the local dimension through exploration of an issue had advanced very far and the teachers were understandably reserved about the program:

I wanted more stuff; this is what I wanted. I wanted the kids to learn about Indonesia, learn about what’s happening there. Real, real, real stuff and that would engage the kids. I mean,
I’m dying to see the end. I’m dying to see what’s going to happen but I just thought a lot of the stuff would happen earlier...I don’t want to condemn the program. It sounds good. I’m still waiting because I reckon it’ll be good. I’m really hopeful.

But yeah, it’s sort of, I don’t know if it’s worked. I would like to see how it goes for the rest of it...And then, yeah, I would have to do another reassessment. I think, at this point I think it’s a little bit slow...and students haven’t been as engaged as I would have thought.

It seems to be happening a little bit differently to what I expected so...?

However, the doubts expressed were not unanimous:

Many of the kids are saying they’re really enjoying it. Yeah, no, it’s working. I think definitely their thinking about what it means to be a global citizen has gone up from very little to...

However, this teacher also recognised that the key element (for the teacher) of connecting the kids had not worked well and added a rider to the above statement:

Well, okay, there’s scope for improvement, yeah. To make it more real time connection with the kids rather than waiting for mail, yeah.

At the end of the mid-program interviews, there was a cautiously optimistic wait-and-see reaction to whether Global Connections would achieve its purpose that seemed to be heading along two paths. There were two distinct reactions suggesting: ‘I’m hopeful’ and ‘I’m hopeful, but...’.

As the program developed the teachers recognised that the connection to Indonesia was unlikely to progress and that program outcomes for their students would be linked to involvement with local rather than global issues. In this regard, Global Connections’ purpose was considered to be about exploring an issue and being empowered to take social action. By the end of the program the teachers also acknowledged that a purpose of the program was the creation an alternative learning environment that enabled the students’ to take control over their learning and thereby allow for their ‘voices’ to be heard. In this latter respect, the teachers all came to recognise that the youth-led component of the program was intended to include the students themselves through control over the selection of issues, the subsequent investigations and the action taken.
However, the teachers thought that the facilitators were never entirely successful transferring the responsibility for the learning to the students. In this respect, they felt that many of the student groups interpreted their issues within existing knowledge and experience frameworks. Although the students chose the issues, they did not really challenge and extend their understanding by critically examining their views. Additionally, it was problematic to get the students to select issues and decide on appropriate action and all of the teachers indicated that the facilitators had to make suggestions and guide the process significantly:

And that’s another thing we spoke about with the facilitators .... how can you be student driven yet help them be student driven and that’s pretty hard I think. .. and especially in this program where the main part of it is to get them to express their issues and it’s all about them. You can’t obviously tell them what their issue is but at the same time they need prompting and they need that input from outside.

A lot of them maybe don’t even know what it means to be active or passionate or express a viewpoint. They don’t even know what it is... They don’t have those skills and you need to be guiding them.

The possibility was raised that the issues chosen might not represent interests or concerns of all the students. There was a suspicion that some students may have been marginalised by the issue selection process. However, the opposite was also true and one teacher related the story of a student who started off hostile to the group’s choice but ended up getting drawn into the issue and really involved. In a similar, way there were several stories of particular students opting out of the action phase and others who were deeply involved. In each of the instances which the teachers related, the particular story was memorable to them because the student in question was changing their normal role within the class.

Despite the fact that the connections to Indonesia did not develop the way that had been anticipated, there were definite indications by the end of the program that the teachers thought some of the students had developed learning around their citizenship identities. The program was recognised towards the end as having two separate learning components with regard to citizenship. Firstly there was the actual connection to the Indonesian groups which did not develop significantly and secondly, there was the orientation towards action at a local level. The action part was seen as contributing to developing a citizenship orientation and was seen as the most significant part of the program. However, opinions were varied with regard to the degree that the students engaged with
the action pieces and the depth of learning about both the issues and the action that was generated. The program was very pressed for time and a fairly large number of students did not get to the point of actually taking action on their issue:

I think it’s very valuable as far as them developing their thinking about issues. They did the research and they had to actually think straight, sort of stuff that wasn’t just from prior knowledge... I suppose their (Plan’s) intention in having that program would be to bring about some change in issues, which is hopefully what it’s done in our case.

Contrasted with:

They all had different issues. I don’t think they all engaged really, no. I would like to think that they did but I actually don’t think they did. One group got it together really well. They were planned and they were doing stuff in between classes, sort of coming and getting permission for things.... another group of kids had a great plan and they kept coming up against hitches along the way. Whereas the rest of the class — so that was two groups — whereas the rest of the class didn’t have that sort of energy.

Probably half of them got into it and said the best part was the action bit and the other half couldn’t get their act together to do it.

The teacher who made this last comment moderated the opinion to an extent by acknowledging that this was a subjective opinion which did not seem to be the opinion of the students themselves as they revealed during the final evaluation session:

The last period they really engaged in. They were talking about the changes they’ve had in themselves over, the most significant change, changes they’ve had of themselves in the last two months..... for some reason that really made it personal for them and talking about themselves and some struggled with it but most could think of something that had changed in them and why and that was, yeah, they were really engaged

In summary therefore, the perceived success at the end of the program with regard to whether Global Connections achieved its purpose was decidedly mixed. However, the significance of the

76 The final evaluation session with the students involved ARC researchers doing the Most Significant Change technique where participants identified the most significant change they experienced doing the program. Section 5.8.1 of the Methodology chapter introduces Most Significant Change as a technique.
differences in the learning environment meant that the teachers did not have a framework to interpret student learning and they were left uncertain as to many of the individual student’s outcomes. Additionally, there appeared to be circumstantial evidence that all of the teachers were quite disengaged by the final stages of the program and were not knowledgeably aware of the extent to which the students were engaging in the final activities. The teacher who was the most satisfied with the action phase and who is quoted above as indicating the students were developing their thinking acknowledged that the facilitators had been ‘left to it’ because of the teacher’s extensive end of year duties. That teacher had very limited understanding of what had actually been produced and was uncertain of its depth:

How deep they actually got into the issues and the relevance of their issues – you know, the actual content is a bit shallow but they’ve produced stuff to send over. How well it connects with the Indonesians, it’ll be interesting to see.

The teacher who was least satisfied could not describe any of the issues chosen by the students or the final ‘actions’ that were being taken. Both of these situations not only suggest that the teachers were disengaging with the day-to-day activity in the final phases, but also reflect that observation was the only framework they had to assess or evaluate student learning.

An observational conclusion that I recorded in my field notes was that the Global Connections ended with the teachers seemingly having no definitive appreciation of the students’ learning and therefore no real measure of how well the program had achieved the various purposes that were envisaged. There was certainty with regard to the fact that the ‘connection’ did not eventuate, but uncertainty about how much that mattered beyond being disappointing. At a local level, learning was understood to have occurred but the teachers were unsure of the students’ depth of engagement or how they might have advanced their ability to take social action. At a global level, they thought Global Connections might have been a catalyst to initiate some thinking and learning with regard to the Indonesian young people but the program did not realistically offer a forum to critically consider and understand the connection. Any learning that did develop was not considered to be co-constructed with the Indonesians.

The teacher who was least satisfied with the program thought the program had considerable promise but failed to deliver in any meaningful way with regard to any of the aims or outcomes that were understood to underpin the program at the outset.
7.2.3 The Teachers' Role

There were a number of subtle but distinct changes with regard to the way that the teachers were considering their role within Global Connections that had become evident by the halfway point in the program. The most important change seemed to be connected to their professional identity and the lack of opportunities for contributing actively to the learning that was being constructed by the facilitators and students. In the early stages of the program the facilitators were emailing the teachers lesson plans in advance and there were debriefing sessions afterwards but both of these features of the early stages had dropped away by the mid-point of the program. As a result, the teachers’ anticipation of being active participants and co-learners with the students about the groups in Indonesia did not eventuate.

The teachers noticed when the facilitators seemed to get a bit lost but did not feel that they wanted to undermine the developing relationships that the facilitators were creating with the students. In a similar way the teachers were aware that the learning environment was different compared to the way that they would run the sessions and did not feel that it was appropriate to impose themselves into the mix:

Yeah, I keep out of it as much as I can and let them work.

I would maybe direct it more than they are, and teach the kids about Indonesia. Which then I guess leads to me driving the questions and things. Which I think actually it lacked a little bit as well. Maybe that’s because I am a teacher.

It’s (the teacher’s involvement) been sort of optional. That’s what I’ve felt. I’ve joined in a few of the games and activities. But I don’t feel like there’s been an expectation on me joining in.

I think, I mean, this isn’t a criticism, it’s just an observation, but I think it probably would have been better to involve me more. I did feel that it was, the facilitators when they were here, it was them and the kids and I was sort of... on the side.

The effect seemed to be that the teachers slowly distanced themselves from the program activity. Nevertheless, they still felt that they were required to be the disciplinarian when the situation required it and that it was ultimately their responsibility to maintain classroom control and encourage the students to participate:

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Like I’m still the mean one [laughs] Yeah, I can’t help myself, I still interject and have my say in the class and say, come on. I mean, I’ll sit back sometimes and let them sort of interact with the kids and then other times I can see that they’re not actually, kids aren’t doing anything. So I sort of push them a bit.

My role has been more keeping the kids...On track.

You need to give them guidance. Because if you let the kids go, they’ll do nothing. If you let them just roll, just do not much. I know they’ve (the facilitators) given them some guidelines but it’s very whatever you want..... But then I don’t want to be seen as wrecking their whole project by being mean.

For this last teacher the disenfranchisement was building to be a real concern:

The thing is, I become the meanie because that’s all I’m doing is like, come on, you have to do it. And that’s why I feel I’ve lost again because I just....I’m just the management control, the classroom control person. I’m not teaching and creating a relationship with the kids.

To some extent the distancing from Global Connections’ activity and its outcomes appeared to be related to the extra timetabled sessions for which the teachers were responsible. When the first part of Global Connections stalled without the students doing much more than introduce themselves in the first communication piece, the teachers had little to work with to integrate into their lessons. Because of the difficulty of aligning with Global Connections the teachers were developing their own course parallel to, but unconnected with the work of the facilitators. At the mid-stage of the program they were still trying to thematically find links but there was no liaison with the facilitators and effectively no active connection between the separate course components. The major difficulty in this respect was not knowing what was coming next in the program and not having information and resources that could be used to supplement the learning that was being done in the Global Connections sessions. This comment came from the teacher working hardest to support the program with targeted extra content:

We have to link a little bit but not a huge amount...The hard bit is getting information. Trying to get a feel on it because I don’t feel like I’ve got a clear view of what’s supposed to happen. I love developing stuff for the classroom...But I need to have a focus as well and I guess I’ve
been a little bit unsure of what the focus should be. I want to know, for each session, what’s the objective of this session? I don’t want to know that for the next three weeks we’re working on a communication piece. That doesn’t tell me what’s in it.

A significant feature of the ‘thematic links’ that were attempted by the teachers was that all three who were integrating the program into their teaching had adopted a deficit approach towards Indonesia. The teachers were all focusing on the third world nature of Indonesia. They introduced issues like human rights, child rights and child labour, orang-utan extinction threats, and deforestation to raise their students’ awareness of issues facing people in that part of the world. This approach is in direct contrast to Plan’s philosophy for Global Connections (see section 3.2). Plan’s approach was to actively avoid language of disadvantage and difference in favour of focusing on the similarity between young people in each country and the universality of some issues.

The issue of integrating Global Connections program with their own teaching activity was obviously not a problem for the teacher in the school where the program sat outside of the timetabled classes. The program only ran for one (double period) session a week and there were no other lessons when those students were together as a group and so there was no need for other activity. As a consequence however, the lack of a need to actively support the program’s content meant that the teacher was also distanced. As trust in the facilitators grew the teacher felt able to leave them to it and was able to spend time on other commitments that were supposed to fill what should have been the teacher’s non-contact time.

In summary, the teachers’ roles were significantly different from the active involvement with the students and the activity that they had imagined during the first interview. Although they were all attending the sessions and trying to find links to the other work of the school, their involvement was not such that they were able to take ownership of the program or its outcomes. The teachers did not feel that they were part of running the program in any real sense and were definitely not part of planning it. The ownership that they did take was limited to factors such as classroom discipline and managing school routines and issues. To a large extent they became disconnected from the work of the program. In a similar way, the teachers seemed to partially withdraw from their previous interest in the research process and my attempts to set up the planned (and previously agreed to) teachers’ forum to collectively examine the program met with polite but reluctant responses and was abandoned. By the end of the program the teachers were no longer seeing themselves as co-learners with the students in the program itself and were no longer seeing themselves as co-researchers with regard to developing the program.
7.2.4 Wider School Engagement

My end of the year interview with the teacher and the Assistant Principal at the school intending to continue *Global Connections* in 2009 drew attention to the fact that it is not just the teacher’s role that is important to enabling a program like *Global Connections* in schools. It also highlighted for me four key aspects with regard to the school’s role as a partner in the program:

- It demonstrated how little was known about the program by the school’s management when it ended in 2008. The Assistant Principal required extensive briefing about the program but eventually became animated and enthusiastic about the program’s potential for the students and for the wider school.
- It highlighted the increased contribution that the teachers could make to the program.
- It showed the extent to which the teacher’s understanding the program’s aims had developed during the program. In this respect, the teacher took responsibility for explaining the program to the Assistant Principal and did so by giving recognition to the importance of the issue and action component and the student-led approach to the program rather than emphasising the ‘connection’. This situation is in direct contrast to a parallel introduction given by another teacher to their Principal at the time of the first pre-program interview, in which the teacher described the program almost exclusively in terms of the Indonesian connection.
- The exchanges during this conversation between the teacher and the Assistant Principal made it clear that successfully running a sustainable program of this type required making links to many people (without being specific as to who or when) within the school in order to develop a school-wide profile.

This teacher was the only one who had made significant efforts to raise the profile of the program in the school and had pursued a self-appointed role of program advocate by actively spreading the word to colleagues and the wider school through a *Global Connections* wiki and staff online memos. However, those efforts were met with a muted response from other staff and only one staff member accepted an open offer to attend part of a session and watch the program in action. The teacher was also trying to give the students an opportunity to share their experience more widely with other students. The following comments are all from this teacher:

We’re having an assembly and we’re going to get these kids to showcase their pieces, their work to the rest of the Year 9 cohort and we’re also having a guest speaker.
(As) part of the assembly I want to present them with certificates and they will be credited with participation. In their reports we have a component for co-curricular activities.

The other way that they (the students) can communicate with the local community here is through a webpage which I have set up. I’ll update with their latest pieces so that during the assembly they can refer to that.

The teacher and Assistant Principal discussed at length possibilities for incorporating *Global Connections* more appropriately within the school’s activity. They were happy to talk to me about their ideas but had not actively approached Plan to discuss the program model. The way that Plan might be able to accommodate their ideas was purely speculative:

> It would be interesting to see, if we look at a different model of delivering learning activities around the same issues, how Plan can augment support, be involved in that, to what level, it’d be interesting.

When I asked the teacher at this point whether s/he would approach Plan with the ideas s/he indicated a willingness to respond to a Plan initiative but because s/he was not going to be personally involved next year would not actively pursue it further.

### 7.2.5 Organisational Interactions

There were more opportunities for the teachers and Plan staff to interact once the program had started than in the lead up period. The Plan coordinator visited the classrooms on occasion and in some cases co-facilitated the program when facilitators were absent. The coordinator was in phone and email contact with the teachers to keep them informed of developments as they arose. The coordinator also responded to issues that arose in the early stages of the program and arranged special meetings where necessary, for example when there was a problem with one of the teachers and the facilitators in the first weeks:

> I wasn’t sure what my role was or the (facilitators). I didn’t realise that I was meant to just be a normal teacher so (the Plan coordinator) came, we had a big meeting and I just said, well this is how I felt and they said this is how they felt and we’ve just been, it’s been good since then. I tell off the kids and do exactly what I have to do and they do what they do.
This exchange indicates again the way that the teachers looked to Plan for overall leadership of the program logistics and management. By the middle of the program *Global Connections* was still being interpreted as Plan’s program. The majority of interactions were initiated by Plan and they all took place at the schools. The role of the teachers was reactive and cooperative rather than driving the communication processes. At least one of the teachers felt uncomfortable about initiating contact or making requests:

> I don’t want to ask them, I don’t want to bother them though. I feel like I’m a bother every time.

One outcome of the teachers still regarding Plan as responsible for the program and for initiating planning and communication was that several critical issues discussed by the teachers with me had not been broached at all with Plan. Of particular importance were the school planning processes for the following year. The course structure for the schools was well underway for the following year at the time of the interview and in the case of two schools had already been resolved.

As a result, because *Global Connections* had not been factored into the planning it would not be possible to run it as a program in its own right. If it were to run at all it would once again have to be in an ad hoc way that involved inserting it into the existing school structure. The failure to actively approach Plan to make effective planning possible occurred even though the teachers had clearly reflected on the issue. They all talked extensively about ideas for program changes and further development during the interview in a way that indicated prior consideration of the issues involved.

The teachers were able to talk about strategies for strengthening the connections, mitigating negative impacts of a failed connection, and alleviating the reliance on the ‘connection’. These strategies and other ideas related to the program were all designed to strengthen the program and make it more resilient. This research is not intended as an evaluation of *Global Connections* as a program itself and so these strategies will not be developed at this point but the situation described emphasises the necessity of having a partnership structure that allows the partners to communicate understanding of the program as it is unfolding.

By the final stages of the program the teachers were more willing to initiate communications than they had been previously but also felt less need to do so. Communication only occurred when one organisation’s decisions was likely to impact on the other organisation. At that stage, the communication was primarily in the form of relaying decisions or information and maybe negotiating...
some aspect of accommodating what was going to happen. The program was past the point of being able to change anything of significance and the teachers were generally willing to let it run its course. There were no post-program meetings of the teachers and Plan staff to debrief and share the respective learning about Global Connections that had occurred. Overall, it seemed apparent that Plan and the teachers were dealing separately with aspects of Global Connections’ activity which had separated into different areas of responsibility.

7.2.6 Additions to the preliminary analysis of the schools’ engagement
The following points summarise the ways that the analysis of the teachers’ 2008 involvement with the implementation of Global Connections refined and added to their reactions to program characteristics identified from analysis of the pre-program interviews:

Educational Purpose
- Changed understanding of purpose (recognition of purposes beyond the ‘connection’)
- Lack of evaluating/monitoring purpose

Educational Content
- Depth and level of content questioned
- Time involved vs. Content problematic

Educational Methods
- Youth-led (who are youth?)

Global Connections operations
- Connection to Indonesia inadequate
- Time available in schools inadequate

Role of teachers
- Distanced from program
- No ownership
- Disciplinarian role unsatisfactory

Organisational Interactions
- Timely planning necessary

7.3 Plan
By the mid-point of Global Connections there was a high degree of concordance between the perspectives of Plan78 and the teachers with regard to the way that the program had developed to that point. Once the program commenced, the activity in the classrooms and the problems with

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78 I am using Plan in this section to represent perspectives that were shared by the Plan coordinator and the supervisor who both participated in the mid-program interviews.

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creating the connection to Indonesia dominated both partners’ involvement with the program and their interactions with each other. What the students did in class, the communication pieces produced and the eventual arrival of the Indonesian communication pieces were relatively unambiguous and there was essentially a consensus as to what had actually happened. This was the case even in relation to the day to day problems and disruptions that were experienced in the different classroom contexts. The descriptions of Plan closely matched those of the teachers and so the teachers’ descriptions in the previous sections will serve to inform this section. However, there were distinct differences in understanding why some events had occurred and what those events meant in the context of the overall program.

Plan recognised and shared the frustration and disappointment created by the delay in getting the first communication piece from Indonesia. In many ways Plan’s disappointment was more pronounced because their relationship with their Indonesian counterparts had been developed since the first pilot program in 2005 and was both professionally and personally important. Plan staff in both countries had invested considerable effort and personal commitment to ensuring that the logistics of communication between the countries would work effectively. Plan Australia and Plan Indonesia are independent entities and the relationship formed to enable Global Connections represented a partnership in much the same way as the relationships between Plan and the schools. Plan Australia was the initiator, designer and driver of the program but they necessarily needed to work with the structures, systems and people in Plan Indonesia. In this respect, there appeared to be strong parallels with the situation in the schools. Global Connections did not have a place of its own nor a dedicated support person in Plan Indonesia. Although the program appeared to have a reasonably natural fit attached to an existing Children in need of Special Protection\(^79\) (CNSP) program operating in Indonesia, Global Connections necessarily had to be balanced with the demands of the existing program.

Of particular significance in this respect was that the person taking primary responsibility for the CNSP program and hence Global Connections had changed in 2008. It needs to be reiterated at this point that this research did not extend to the Indonesian part of the program and I am in no way suggesting that the communication difficulties could in anyway be attributed to Plan Indonesia and particularly not to the coordinator in that country\(^80\). Instead, I am drawing attention to the similarity between the partnerships formed between Plan Australia and both Plan Indonesia, and the schools.

\(^{79}\) Children in Need of Special Protection (CNSP) was not a Plan Australia initiative. The program is introduced more fully in section 1.5

\(^{80}\) Although Plan Indonesia was not part of this research, I visited Indonesia as part of the ARC team and gained a significant insight into the Indonesian context. I can personally attest to the professionalism and competence of the Plan staff in Indonesia as well as the transformative impact of the outcomes for the Indonesian young people.
in 2008. In all instances, the relationships involved new people in key positions and negotiating a ‘fit’ within the existing activity, structures and responsibilities of the organisations. By mid-program it was clear that in all cases the relationships were more complex than had been anticipated at the outset.

The communication delay should have had less impact on the school activity than what occurred from Plan’s perspective. The next stage of the program involving the issues was not supposed to be dependent on the arrival of the first communication piece. The ‘stalling’ of the program while the facilitators waited for the Indonesian communication was therefore considered unnecessary. The coordinator accepted part of the responsibility for what occurred but also indicated that it was ultimately a shared responsibility:

The second communication piece could’ve started earlier (in the schools). There was a messy disconnect between what was on paper on that schedule and what actually was implemented…..I need to put my hand up there as well because I didn’t follow that as closely as I should have. I made assumptions that things were happening, that I should’ve followed up...so, it’s a bit of, bit of everyone - everyone’s responsibility.

Although the coordinator ‘put a hand up’ what happened seemed to be a logical consequence of both partners deliberately stepping back from the classroom activity to enable the facilitators to develop their confidence and fulfil their role with a minimum of interference. The coordinator had been quite actively involved in the early stages to support the facilitators and when the facilitators settled into their role did not want to be ‘peering over their shoulders’. Plan did not seem to assign the same degree of importance that the teacher’s did to the program ‘stalling’ and had moved on with their focus to the next stage. However, the supervisor acknowledged that the teachers felt differently and recognised that communication needed to be improved between all the parties.

In a similar way, Plan did not know that the facilitators had stopped giving the teachers lesson plans although they recognised that it was important to the teachers’ program participation and appreciation:

All of the teachers that I’ve spoken to said that sending the session plan and that debrief, which we’ve now found out hasn’t happened a lot, is really important because there’s the same as you would debrief with the student teacher or anyone that was in your class, that in a sense is their role in shared knowledge or shared learning.
In this regard, the teachers’ support of the facilitators notwithstanding, Plan recognised that the facilitators and the teachers had not yet developed a balanced working relationship:

I’m going to use a negative term, but there’s been a lapse from both ends, from the teachers’ end and from YAGs end... but that’s okay, we’ll work through it.

However, it was perhaps still not appreciated how important the facilitator-teacher interaction was with regard to the teacher’s own work. For example, the teacher who had been actively trying to integrate Global Connections into the Learning Centre project had given Plan and the facilitators a guideline that indicated the topics and themes with which the teacher intended to support the students’ learning in the facilitator sessions. The supervisor was excited about the framework and considered it to be an example of what could be achieved with input from teachers and thought it might be used with other teachers in the future:

This sort of stuff would be, if we could get (the teacher’s) permission would be really good to share before all of the teachers, to say this is the way that you can, this is an example of how you could integrate it.

The project outline indicated to the Plan people how the program could be wound up a notch and deepened and how well the teacher was managing the integration process. However, what was not realised was the difficulty the teacher was having in actually connecting their work to the work of the facilitators because of the uncertainty about what was going to happen next. As reported above (section 7.2.3), the teacher indicated that more of a guideline was needed than simply saying that for the next three weeks ‘we will be working on a communication piece’. The example just described is representative of several examples that indicated to me that there could be an increasing disconnection between Plan and the teachers. My field notes record that although there seemed to be concordance between Plan and the teachers with regard what was happening, there was increasing divergence with regard to how ‘what was happening’ was appreciated.

A large part of the way that Plan understood the program as it progressed was through interactions with the facilitators. By the mid-point of the program, the facilitators were occupying a lot of the Plan coordinator’s program focus. The relationship between Plan and the facilitators was significantly

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81 The facilitators were often called YAGs in-house which stands for ‘Youth Action Group’ and reflected the role they were first conceived as having (see section 3.2).
more developed than in previous years and was not straightforward. The facilitators were requiring a significant investment of time and support through such mechanisms as workshops and project meetings:

We were talking about dealing with the support that the YAGS need this year, this group seemed to even really want us to help work with them and plan their session forums. We’ve never had that before. Never had that before. They’re also the only group to date that has actually requested or demanded other things of us.

Plan considered that the facilitators were learners as young people within the program in the same way that the students were. As a result, Plan was determined to respond to the ‘youth-led’ concerns of the facilitators and work towards the facilitators’ learning goals alongside the program goals. However, there was a concern that the agenda of the program and the facilitators was diverging:

It’s almost that (the facilitators) place themselves outside; it’s almost like ‘that part will sort itself out, but I’d rather engage at this level’. They’re separating themselves from the program.

This project is not directly concerned with the work of the facilitators, but once again the relationships are relevant in as much they also represented a ‘de facto’ partnership arrangement with Plan. By this stage of the program the coordinator was relying on feedback from the facilitators to a much greater extent than relying on direct communication with the teachers to interpret the classroom activity. The facilitators’ comments and reflections on their relationships with the teachers were effectively framing the way that Plan understood the connection of the program to the schools. Of significance in this regard is that although Plan was committed to the facilitators as young people they recognised that the ‘school system’ did not have the same interest:

We realise that the schools don’t really care about the YAGs as learners.

Plan was aware that their own need to balance the interests of all the various groups associated with the program including the Indonesian groups was not directly the concern of the teachers who were primarily focussed on their own students. My reflections at the time were that Plan was developing a perception of the school environments as fundamentally problematic and limiting rather than extending Plan’s different aims of the program with regard to the multiple groups of learners and
their diverse needs. By the program’s end, it was mutually decided that the program was not going to continue in three of the schools that took part in 2008.

Plan as a partner in the ARC research was intending to utilise the research findings to reconfigure *Global Connections* and did not wish to pre-empt the input from the research team by getting involved in a subjective school-by-school post-mortem. However, there were some generalised impressions that had been formed throughout the year which framed the sort of thinking that Plan thought needed to be done:

There’s different levels of participation at the Australian end, there’s classes where the young people are participating and then others where they’re not and they had these issues around that....the program is not engaging for some but...influential...for others.

Time is not enough for both sides, so how does the program meet objectives and needs of stakeholders within its current time frames, or do we need to change those time frames, I think we realised that’s a big issue. The issue of time and reflection is such a big part of the program, and I think is such a big part of ... the way that we work within schools and with teachers, because so much of that learning around the process takes time and reflection.

How do we get YAGs, teachers and students all on the same page? You know... how do we facilitate them being able to think through and articulate, or think through, realise and articulate their objectives and their goals from the start.

Then the balance between a need for structure and framework within youth-led and participant principles. I think that’s interlinked with a lot of these things. In schools you need to provide some sort of structure so I think there’s some thinking around or flexibility in thinking around how, I mean, is it youth-led, is it social inquiry child-centred, does it come down to semantics within the school environment? I think if there’s not attention to the concept – whatever you call it – the concept, then we might as well just be doing a delivery of a curriculum resource and handing it over to teachers.

The issues and questions raised and the feedback through the students Most Significant Change stories suggested to Plan that the objectives for the program might need changing:
I think it’s (the program) shown that it’s having different outcomes for people, and those outcomes if you track back, can reflect refined objectives....and that’s why we’ve recognised that the objectives need to be revisited.

However, from Plan’s perspective, the program was considered successful in as much as it produced good outcomes for all the groups of young people involved. They recognised however that the program had not been interpreted in the same way within the schools it operated. Plan used the Most Significant Change stories of the students as the main way of evaluating the students’ outcomes. Although several of the teachers described how engaged the students were with this process and one commented on being surprised at how many positive things the students were finding to relate, the process was not in itself enough to give the teachers a clear indication of the learning that had occurred in the program. This was partly because the teachers did not see the students’ stories of change and only witnessed the writing of them, and partly because not all the students were involved.

Plan acknowledged that the Most Significant Change process was voluntary and that the final number of stories accounted for only a portion of the students who were part of the program. They also recognised that they had no way of interpreting the outcomes for the students not represented by the stories. However, the stories that were received all indicated that the students had gained value from the program and in diverse ways which ranged from personal growth and confidence to increased awareness of ‘others’.

I recorded a query in my field notes about the depth of learning that was communicated in the stories. For example, one of the largest categories of change among the stories was the significance of learning about their peers in Indonesia. Given that only one relatively brief introduction piece arrived from Indonesia and the students’ interaction with it was only one session, there seems to be justification to question the depth of the students’ learning. By the end of the program the Australian students had no idea of what the Indonesians’ issues were and had no feedback on their own communications. The Plan supervisor commented:

A lot of it does ride on, and that’s where again this year I’m a bit perplexed ...a lot of it does ride on the learning around the communication pieces.

However, the range of stories suggested to Plan that the program was in fact operating at many levels and was broadly fulfilling worthwhile educational objectives. Plan was also satisfied with the
final communication pieces produced and the ‘actions’ that had been taken given the time constraints that restricted the final stages of the program. Although once again, there was acknowledgement of the fact that not all the students were involved.

Additionally, Plan was also evaluating the program in terms of other learners and the facilitators were identified as being one of the real successes of the program. Taken in total, Plan recognised that there were problems and that the connection with Indonesia did not develop well, but concluded that Global Connections was largely successful in 2008.... except for the level of the schools’ satisfaction.

As far as the schools were concerned, Plan had developed a few general ideas from the 2008 program to take forward. They considered that the program had definitely not worked as part of a core curriculum Geography class and was better suited to a Learning Centre type of program. They also recognised that the relationships with the teachers were pivotal and that these and other relationships in the school needed to be more actively developed:

People come in with different purposes within the program...which is where I think I can identify a gap being...I needed to do more relationship stuff.

In particular Plan recognised that the way that they had interpreted what the teachers were trying to do and the reactions they were having to the program were misunderstood and perhaps not well managed:

So when (a teacher) showed me what s/he was doing (with regard to preparing supplementary resources – see section 7.2.3), I was like ‘oh right, it would’ve been great to do this at the start’... it just came out, and her/his eyes kind of went...

There was difficulty reconciling the teachers need for more help developing activity to support the program. There remained what appeared to be a disconnection between what exactly the teachers needed and how Plan was interpreting the teachers’ work:

Some of the things that you’ve said about the teachers (feedback I had provided from my interviews with the teachers)and some of the things I’ve learned in the last couple of

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82 Subsequent evaluation and communication with Indonesia (of which I was a part, in 2009) also suggested to Plan that the program had a strong impact and positive outcomes for both the program participants and the facilitators.
weeks, have been a little bit of a surprise, when it was originally set up … I was quite confident.

As suggested earlier though, an in depth analysis was being left until the research findings could be compiled and because I was part of that process it was enough at this stage to register that Plan acknowledged that the ‘partnerships’ were still problematic and that *Global Connections* had to a large extent operated apart from other school activity. Plan recognised that the schools had not taken ownership of the program and there was a clear gulf between how the program was valued compared to their own interpretation.

### 7.4 The Facilitators

The facilitators were a critical component of *Global Connections* within both the conceptual and practical frameworks of Plan’s original model for the project. As young people, the facilitators were conceptually part of Plan’s commitment to youth participation and empowerment, and as the classroom presence of the program they were responsible for implementing *Global Connections*.

The facilitators and Plan were effectively involved in a partnership with regard to the program in a similar way to Plan’s relationship to the schools. However, Plan approached the ‘partnerships’ with the schools and the facilitators differently and committed time and resources to each group in quite different ways from the first engagement onwards. Plan advertised for the facilitator positions and conducted an interview and selection process. The facilitators who were selected signed a memorandum of understanding which outlined formally the terms of engagement. They then participated in a comprehensive orientation program over ten days which was designed to equip them with understanding around the program ideals and the practical requirements of the classroom sessions. Once the program commenced there were regular sessions scheduled for debriefing and further developing the program’s progress. Additionally, there were specially organised workshops and guest speakers³ to respond to recognised needs or interests the facilitators identified. None of these structured events occurred in relation to Plan’s engagement with the schools.

Whatever the reasons were for the different ways that the two sets of relationships were structured, it seems logical to assume that the difference might illuminate understanding of partnership activity within the *Global Connections* context. This assumption is reinforced by the final partnership outcomes which were starkly divergent. The facilitators and Plan ended the program mutually

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³I was invited as an experienced secondary school teacher to contribute to some of these sessions and so have an ‘inside’ perspective on how these sessions functioned. However, I did not formally record or document my involvement beyond adding comments to my field notes after the events.
sharing the view that their relationship provided valuable learning for both groups. Although there were difficulties with the relationship during the program that resulted in the facilitators feeling unappreciated and undervalued at times, the issues were worked through. By the program’s end the facilitators’ ‘partnership’ with Plan was generally considered successful\textsuperscript{84}. This is clearly in contrast to the school-Plan partnerships in which similar problems ended with the partners going separate ways and a lingering dissatisfaction with what eventuated from the relationship.

Although the respective relationships ended differently, there seemed to be a strong resonance between the perceived starting points of the facilitators and the teachers and the kinds of problems that were encountered as the program progressed. As indicated in section 6.4, the facilitators began their involvement in a state of considerable uncertainty about several aspects of the program including:

- The program’s exact aims including the relative significance of the ‘connection’ and other program aims. To a large extent the problems that were to develop later when the program stalled were because the facilitators considered from the start that the connection was critical to the program. The facilitators believed that they could not go to the next phase before the first phase was completed with the arrival of the Indonesian communication.
- Their roles: including uncertainty about whether they would be able to control the class and effectively engage the students.
- The teachers’ roles: Particularly with regard to their interaction with the teacher. They had no idea whether the teacher would interfere, be a useful mentor, or passively observe. They also had no idea about the other work the teacher was linking to the program.
- Plan’s ongoing role.

The uncertainty described with regard to elements of the program bear a strong similarity to the way that the teachers started the program. In contrast though was the fact that, unlike the teachers, the facilitators did not see themselves conceptually as the youth-led part of the program:

All the facilitators, we didn’t see ourselves so much as the young people, it was a bit of a misconception in terms of us seeing ourselves as ‘youth’. I think youth-led was always directed at the youth that we were ‘teaching’.

\textsuperscript{84} In fact the facilitator-Plan relationships proved to be enduring beyond the 2008 program for some of the facilitators. One of the facilitators worked in a paid role with the 2009 version of the program and several of them applied for the position lending support to the idea that most of the facilitators ended the program strongly connected and prepared to take the program forward.
However, in common with the teachers the facilitators started with high expectations and a high level of enthusiasm:

When I first started it was with great enthusiasm.

Yeah I think that when the program started I was actually really excited because I thought that... I had all this experience with the cross-cultural issues and... I felt really very passionate about thinking that some of the kids...will go through these processes as I did in a different way and that I would facilitate those processes like maybe finding answers to questions or finding questions to ask.

The facilitators appeared to experience the first phase of the program in very similar ways as the pre-program uncertainty carried through to the reality of the classroom environment. The following comments represent all four teams in the schools:

I don’t know, when we actually got out there most of the kids really weren’t into it at the start because they see it as another class...And I think that was really hard for us because when we were in the training program we just thought that most of the kids will take part.

I went into the sessions I thought it was different to the expectations that I had kind of created during the training sessions. I probably thought the students would be far more engaged than what they were.

I thought maybe a more realistic approach in the orientation would’ve been great, like I mean there were so many games and things that we were given the impression that would be appropriate in the classroom, but then when we went there it was not very well received, so I thought, you know, a heads up about that would’ve been good.

The part within the school and that was a bit difficult for us because at first we had trouble with the students and then we had some trouble with the teacher and there were disciplinary problems as well and it was really hard because we were new at this and so we just found it a bit difficult in the school.

The comments used throughout this section are not comprehensive to include all the facilitators but have been selected from among the total comments to illustrate particular points. If more than one quote is used they are sourced from facilitators at different schools. In general there was no significant divergence in the facilitators’ views and when divergence did occasionally occur the difference will be noted.
As *Global Connections* unfolded, the facilitators developed a distinct identity and presence within the program and were separately negotiating their relationships with the teachers, the students and with Plan. The problems they were experiencing by the mid-program stage were similar to the ones described by the teachers. They recognised that the program had lost its way while waiting for the first communication piece from Indonesia, and that they were having difficulty engaging the students. The interactions with the students seemed to lack depth and were generally unsatisfactory. The facilitators were also aware that both Plan and the teachers had become less actively involved and several of them were wondering what they were accomplishing with the program and became dispirited. Facilitators from the four teams had these comments:

(The coordinator) is great but at the start she kind of gave rein to us a lot more because she wasn’t sure of her role I think at the start as well, so...her not being sure what her exact role was made it hard for us to understand ours as well.

I think a lot of us got a bit dispirited because, you know, what happens in the theoretical side, you know, it was all lovely and dah, dah, and it didn’t quite translate into the practical all the time.

We weren’t having good connections with the kids we felt a bit dispirited and then we weren’t getting enough feedback from the other end from (Plan).

I know some felt a little bit dispirited, like they didn’t feel like their contributions were recognized enough in a way. I started to take this view at least from my perspective that I kind of started to feel that I wasn’t,...that my time wasn’t being taken seriously.

The facilitators were becoming disillusioned by the halfway stage of the program in the same way as the teachers. However, the facilitators were more active in giving voice to their problems and they all recognised that the Plan coordinator responded:

(The coordinator) kind of kicked in an extra gear and she started to pick up a little bit more as well.

Things weren’t working and things just weren’t fitting and that’s when (the coordinator) kind of did a bit of a spike but it was towards the end of the term. Like Plan’s involvement I think
wasn’t consistent throughout.

Not all of the facilitators believed the teachers were sincere when they had told me about what a great job they were doing at the mid-point stage. Nor did they reciprocate the feeling and often felt that the teacher was an obstacle. The facilitator teams in three of the four schools had significant complaints about how the teachers interacted with them at some stage and two of the school teams thought the teacher related inappropriately to the students. The following comments relate to three of the four schools:

(The teacher) had confronted XXXX (the other facilitator) and had said a few things to XXXX and after that XXXX just didn’t want to go back because of what had happened and – I don’t know, and then (the teacher) wouldn’t pick up any of our phone calls.

(The teacher) did undermine our authority and kind of mocked us our inability to control the class which we felt wasn’t our responsibility. After that session I approached (the teacher) and I was like hey, you know, it’s a really hard – you know, it’s not our job to discipline the students, that’s yours and we’re facilitators, we’re not teachers.

When (the teacher) wasn’t there we just felt so free to – I don’t know, sort of facilitate the class how we wanted and the kids were really into it as well, so because (the teacher) is there as a teacher they still see that the teacher is there and that’s why they still think of it as a class.

Of particular interest with regard to the teacher being an obstacle is the facilitators’ reaction to the situation described previously (section 6.2.3) of the teacher who wanted more detail than ‘for the next three weeks we are going to do a communication piece’. The facilitators working with that teacher said:

We would approach (the teacher) because s/he wanted our lesson plan before each class...if there were like activities s/he’d be really against –so s/he actually told us–nuh don’t do it, you won’t be able to do it with these kids. So we had to really, really restrict some of the stuff that we were doing in the program.

However, the facilitators in the fourth school had a different experience and considered that the teacher they worked with was an example of how teachers can add value to the program:
I had a really positive experience with our teacher. – yeah. I think that (the teacher) was kind of motivated and excited about the program as we were, so it was kind of easy to have these processes flow.

These facilitators described how Plan had suggested in training that the teachers should not step in because they would then be leading the process. However, when their teacher did so for the first time the facilitators realised that after it had happened things worked for them the way they had been trying to make them work. They also said that the teacher apologised afterwards and said that s/he had felt sorry for the facilitators looking lost and struggling unnecessarily. The facilitators realised that what happened was exactly what they needed and recognised that there was a fine balance involved in giving the ‘right’ amount of support.

Nevertheless, as a result of their overall experiences with the teachers, there was no doubt in all the facilitators’ minds that the program should be implemented through using facilitators rather than teachers. My observation at this point was that the comments made by the facilitators about their respective teachers seemed to reinforce the importance of the teachers within the program. Both the best and worst experiences of the facilitators with respect to their relationships with the teachers came at the two schools that were running the program as a Geography elective with the same course structure. The inference that seems to follow is that the teacher was much more significant than the way that the program was timetabled.

By the end of the program there was a mix in the way that the facilitators were seeing the program compared with the general impressions of Plan and the teachers. The facilitators’ interpretation of the students’ learning was one area where the facilitators varied considerably with their opinions. This reflects perhaps the complexity of the learning environment but also perhaps reflects the difficulty untrained young people would inevitably have understanding student learning. The impressions the facilitators formed ranged from students who got very little out of the program to others for whom they thought it was very significant. The program was described by one or other of the facilitators as engaging all the learning objectives articulated by Plan but there were also cautionary notes sounded. In some cases the lack of information coming from Indonesia was thought to reinforce rather than breakdown stereotype images and for many students the deficit image with regard to the Indonesians was maintained:

The kids kept talking about doing things ‘for’ as in ‘to help’ the Indonesians... I think it is quite
a difficult move to really understand the young people in Indonesia as people themselves and as not needing help so much but as needing dialogue.

Additionally, the strong focus on group work was thought to perhaps let some people dominate and others to be marginalised. The facilitators’ impressions confirm that the program involved complex learning processes which were perhaps inadequately assessed and understood (particularly by the school partners) to allow informed judgements about the program’s outcomes. With regard to the program complexity, the facilitators agreed with the teachers’ view that the program operated in two separate and disconnected parts. There was the first part of communicating with the Indonesians and the second part of issues and actions. Further to this, the facilitators considered that they and the students struggled to make realistic links between the parts:

I felt that there was the Indonesian aspect of it of communicating with this other group from Indonesia, so I felt that that was one program. And then I felt that the other program was the issues area of it where our class kind of – they started figuring out things that are important to them as youth. And I think that there wasn’t enough connection between the things that they think are important to them and Indonesia. I felt that there was a disconnection between those two and I think that they felt it too.

I felt that there was a disconnection, that even though yes it’s an issue that it’s – that they think it’s important to them, to their context and their life, it didn’t fit with communicating with Indonesia I don’t think.

None of them were global issues now that I think about it. I mean they could be depending from, you know, which aspect you look at it...where they were coming from it was very personal.

Additionally, in a similar way to the teachers and to a lesser extent Plan, the facilitators felt that the first of these ‘separate programs’ the connection to Indonesia ‘failed’ for the Australian students. Irrespective of the learning outcomes, the facilitators confirmed the teachers’ impressions that they had formed strong relationships with the students:

I don’t know if they saw us as learning teachers or substitute teachers to begin with, but later

The student learning outcomes were the focus of other research undertaken by the ARC team and will be reported elsewhere, but for the purposes of this research it is the differing perceptions of the partners that are important rather than any claims regarding those perspectives’ accuracy.
that diminished quite a bit and now I’m able to joke with the kids, and I call them my kids too and I talk about them with great affection and attachment.

However, the facilitators thought that it took the whole program to reach a point where they were really working well with the students:

I’ve noticed as well is that it was only towards the last maybe three sessions that I really felt that we had gotten to a point of feeling comfortable with each other that we were working really well and that they were really letting go and they were really taking ownership of the program.

They also confirmed the teachers’ view that during the last part of the program they were working more like teachers and doubted that the students ever saw them as peers:

Like we tried to really emphasise that we weren’t teachers but throughout the whole program they wouldn’t stop calling us Miss, so I think it’s just that they’re really bound by that traditional form of education.

I kind of thought that I’d have more in common with them than what I did end up having.

Finally, the youth-led (in the sense of student-led) dimension of the program was problematic in an ongoing sense for the facilitators and they struggled to find a balance between giving the students freedom to control their learning and a structure to enable it. Their extensive descriptions of difficulty in implementing a youth-led approach adds support to the teachers’ view that it was facilitator-led more than it was student-led.

However, the facilitators did not ever come to see themselves as leading the project in the youth-led sense that Plan anticipated. Although the facilitators came to understand that their role within the program was as youth they never felt that they were part of setting the big picture program goals or the ways of achieving them and did not feel that were leading the project. They were facilitating and implementing it but could not take ownership of the overall design or intent of the program. It was Plan’s program.

I think we were quite constrained by the program objectives and structure that was in place prior to us coming. It didn’t feel like we had a lot of room to devise our own program.
7.5 Conclusion

The partnerships formed between the schools and Plan to enable *Global Connections* in 2008 ended with the last sessions of the program itself. Additionally, the partnerships ended with the partners working with each other less actively than they were at the start of the program. *Global Connections* did not end with joint celebration nor in fact were there debriefing sessions that allowed joint recognition of the program and partnership outcomes. It seemed that by the end of the program neither partner was interested in exploring the transformative possibilities of the program with regard to understanding their own practice by actively sharing and exploring the experiences and interpretation of their partner. As a result, the partners developed their impressions separately of the effectiveness of the program using their existing frameworks for understanding educational activity despite the fact that the program was recognised as transformative with regard to those existing frameworks.

Analysis of the 2008 data suggested that although the ways of understanding ‘what the program was doing’ seemed to merge towards a common interpretation, the value assigned to what was done seemed to be diverge. In particular, the partners developed separate impressions of the learning outcomes that accrued to the school students who were participating in the program. Nevertheless, all the key participants recognised that a unique and productive learning environment had been created and retained a belief in the promise that the program seemed to offer as a way of engaging the students in social issues and ideas surrounding their sense of citizenship.

However, the ‘promise’ of the program was not sufficient to encourage the teachers to commit to the program in 2009. The teachers’ lack of willingness to commit to further involvement was not entirely related to the students’ outcomes but also appeared to be the result of the impact on their own practice. By contrast, Plan’s reluctance to pursue the ongoing involvement of the 2008 schools was related to the logistical problems associated with incorporating the program into the schools’ limited structures and timetables. As a consequence, it was evident that construction of the partnerships to enable educational activity needed active negotiation of organisational roles and processes alongside consideration of educational outcomes. Although School D was going to be involved with *Global Connections* in 2009, the involvement would be in a different way with a different teacher and would ‘start again’ in the New Year. Both the school and Plan recognised that new ways of working together and integrating the program into school activity needed to be developed in 2009.
Chapter Eight: Global Connections 2009

8.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the empirical outcomes generated in conjunction with the 2009 version of Global Connections. Plan made the decision in late 2008 to use 2009 as a period of consolidation so that the data which had been generated by the ARC team could be processed, analysed and interpreted. The learning generated by the research was envisaged as providing a foundation for re-visioning and restructuring the program in subsequent years. As a result, the program was scaled back and only operated in the one school (School D) from 2008 that had expressed interest in running it again in 2009.

The impact on this research was that there was only one ‘partnership’ that could contribute new data to the understanding of partnership which was emerging from the 2008 research. However, because the school had previously been involved with Global Connections and had actively engaged in thinking about future versions of the program there seemed to be an opportunity to advance the ‘story’ of partnership by looking at the way the existing relationship was used to refine and build the 2009 partnership. Therefore, although there was sufficient data from 2008 to support this thesis, I decided to continue the planned data generation process in 2009. I hoped the extra year would provide an opportunity to trial interventions which the 2008 data seemed to suggest would strengthen the partnership effectiveness. Despite the necessary changes to the research design and the limited partnership interaction, the 2009 story made a significant contribution to the empirical data generated by this research.

The changes to the research environment in 2009 are reflected by a changed reporting approach in this chapter. The first section of the chapter describes pre-program activity which did not occur in 2008. Included in this section are attempts to use understanding from the 2008 research process to try and improve the 2009 program. The section ends with descriptions of the key participants’ positions as the program is about to commence. The next section describes the implementation of the program with an emphasis on the partners’ interactions and experiences. The following section relates interviews which took place after the program was complete. These final interviews were reflective and cover the whole program with a targeted emphasis on perceptions of partnership. Finally, the chapter ends by considering the facilitators’ perspectives and their relationships with the school and Plan. Once again the emphasis is on thinking about partnership and the ways that the facilitators’ experiences reflect application of partnership elements that can be contrasted with, and used to inform, understanding of the school-Plan partnerships.
8.2 Preliminary thinking and preparing for 2009

Although analysis of the 2008 data was at best partial, early findings strongly influenced Plan’s approach to *Global Connections* in 2009. Plan’s commitment to the ARC project as a linkage partner meant that the key Plan staff members responsible for managing *Global Connections* were engaged with all stages of the research. As a result, these key people were part of the discussions being developed around the data. Emerging themes that cut across the data appeared to suggest that changes to the program structure were worth trialling even if it were, as yet, uncertain as to the best approach to adopt. In particular, the following program elements were prioritised for attention in 2009:

- The connection and communication processes between Indonesia and Australia: These had been problematic in 2008 and a number of steps were implemented to mitigate difficulties associated with effecting the actual communications. The priority was to enable timely exchange of communication pieces but contingency plans were also developed to reduce the reliance on the exchanges.

- The role of the facilitators and their relationship to the youth-led learning principle of the program: In 2008 there were multiple perspectives and understandings with regard to the ways that the program was ‘youth-led’. Plan changed the approaches they used in order to develop and support the multiple ways that the program was youth-led.

- The partnership relationships with the schools: Positive outcomes for their students and continued endorsement of the program’s educational aims notwithstanding, the individual school teachers all chose not to continue their involvement in 2008. The school relationships had problematic elements from the perspectives of both partners.

The first two of these program elements were related to Plan’s area of program responsibility and were not the subject of the partnership activity they undertook with the schools. As such, they are not directly related to my research and are not reported in detail. However, these elements again impacted strongly on *Global Connections* in 2009 and, as was evident in 2008, all aspects of the program were interrelated and impacted on the perceptions of the partners and the partner relationships. For this reason, these elements are recognised here for their potential to alter perceptions of the partnership effectiveness.

Additionally, these elements were partly negotiated by Plan through partnership relationships. The communication exchange issues relied on interaction with Plan Indonesia, and the youth-led issues were partially negotiated and interpreted interactively with the facilitators. In both instances, the relationships involved partnership-like interactions that contrasted with Plan’s interactions with the
schools. As such, they are described in limited instances as a way of indicating Plan’s range of organisational responses to partnership and the possibility of alternative approaches to the school relationships.

8.2.1 The school relationships

My early analysis of the empirical outcomes from 2008 suggested that Global Connections was problematic with regard to fitting the schools’, the students’, and the teachers’ timetabled activity. As a result, the program seemed to sit outside other school activity. The program ended with none of the schools having a clear idea about their students’ outcomes or a sense of ownership of the program. Global Connections effectively displaced the normal school activity that would be occurring during the scheduled sessions but was not effectively integrated into the existing school systems and culture to a degree that it could be assessed and valued as ‘normal school activity’. Additionally, the program only ever fitted into the activity and timetable of one particular teacher in each school. A corollary to that situation was that the teacher’s perceptions of the program were the sole basis that the school had for interpreting both Global Connections and the partnership relationship with Plan.

The feedback I offered to Plan from my early analysis included the suggestion that the program should be developed through a wider school engagement than was being achieved through a single teacher. In particular the school management, people responsible for timetabling, and other teachers in the relevant Year level and curriculum strands should be included in the early planning and program implementation. Additionally, the interactions with the schools needed to be carried out in a timely fashion that fitted the school planning cycles.

In this latter respect, the planning cycle of the school had already reached the point that program structures were in place for 2009 by the time that Global Connections finished in 2008. As a result, the program could not run except in an ad hoc way similar to how 2008 unfolded. However, School D’s existing relationship with Plan and Global Connections going back to 2007, with the accompanying history of support and goodwill, encouraged the belief that an ‘ad hoc solution’ might be workable in 2009. The belief was reinforced by my interviews with the 2008 teacher and the school’s Assistant Principal who both showed willingness to engage in dialogue about how the program could be developed.

Nevertheless, it was evident that significant changes would need to be made in the way that the program operated in the school and that any changes made would necessarily be less than if they had been introduced at the start of the school planning process for 2009. School D was perhaps the
school in which *Global Connections* was least closely aligned with the rest of the school program in 2008. Students who were engaged with the program left other classes to undertake the program once a week during a double period slot that coincided with the school teacher’s non-contact periods. Because the *Global Connections* session covered two consecutive periods, students in some cases missed periods from two different subjects. There were many instances during the year where students missed part or all of a *Global Connections* session owing to the conflict created by their commitments to the other subjects and the requirements of that subject’s teacher.

Additionally, that the program was not part of the teacher’s programmed teaching load meant there was no requirement to match the program outcomes to the ‘normal’ activity that it replaced in the other schools. This situation allowed the teacher to assess the program with a more open framework and without pre-determined agenda. However, the situation was problematic from a practical point of view for the teacher who gave up non-contact time to attend the sessions and thereby compromised the alternative duties that he would normally attend to during that time.

It was clear to all the participants in 2008 that in order to carry the program forward the arrangements for both the students and the teacher needed to be explicitly addressed. To this end, Plan approached the 2009 year with the specific intent of making the relationship more collaborative by giving the school wide scope to suggest how the program could operate effectively within the school structure. Plan was then prepared to work from a base structure proposed by the school and adapt its program operations to fit.

### 8.2.2 Early engagement: Pre-programming planning by Plan and School D

A meeting was set up involving the Plan coordinator and a number of key school staff members at the start of the 2009 school year. The meeting was organised in response to an email from the Plan coordinator, by the teacher associated with the program in 2008 who was keen to see *Global Connections* continue even though s/he was not going to be part of the daily running of the program in 2009. The teacher invited a number of people to meet with the Plan coordinator including; the incoming Director of the Learning Centre for 2009; the Head of the Middle School; the Curriculum Director; and a Community Liaison person. Unfortunately the Assistant Principal responsible for the Learning Centre who had been part of the research interview process the previous year and had initiated the proposal for a changed program structure was committed with other duties and could not attend. I had requested an opportunity to attend and support the process but was not invited and so the following account is reconstructed from casual conversations with the Plan coordinator.
supported by a written copy of the informal notes she took at the meeting and a subsequent email chain that was forwarded to me.

The Plan coordinator did not have input into who was invited but felt that the representation was appropriate:

If I’d known who to ask for I could have had input....but I think the people that were there were good.

However, the coordinator also indicated that she was uncertain what positions all the people occupied in the school or how their responsibilities might impact on Global Connections:

...there was XXXXX– I’m not entirely sure what his position is though.....and....YYYYY was there but I’m not entirely sure what her position is either.

Although the meeting represented progress compared with what had been done in previous years with regard to involving the school more holistically, it was clear that it had still fallen short of giving the Plan coordinator a comprehensive understanding of the school’s systems and processes. Nevertheless, the meeting was wide ranging and encouraging. The school participants linked the aims of the program to the school’s commitment to developing leadership and to providing their students with opportunities to look at themselves as Global Citizens. Additionally, the curriculum crossover from Global Connections to themes from Geography and English was recognised as well as links to the major interdisciplinary themes of the Learning Centre. The new timetable structure was covered including the way that students would use the Learning Centre within the broader timetable framework (Plan Coordinator, 2009).

However, what could not be finalised was the exact way that Global Connections could fit within the Learning Centre framework. The situation that existed in 2008 which required students to come out of other classes was recognised by all the meeting participants as being unsatisfactory but avoiding the arrangement in 2009 looked to be problematic. The students at the school were only timetabled to use the Centre in three week blocks each term but Global Connections required more sustained involvement over two full terms. Logistical issues related to connecting to Indonesia meant that it was not an option to condense the program activity into three week blocks. The meeting ended with the school making a commitment to design a possible structure that could accommodate Global Connections and get back to Plan.
The teacher from 2008 remained the point of contact with the school and sent through a model program structure for Plan’s consideration. The model involved a compromise format that involved three facilitator teams working respectively with each of the three Year 9 groups using the Learning Centre. The facilitators would start *Global Connections* in the three week block that their assigned cohort of students was in the Learning Centre. The school students would then continue the program beyond their Learning Centre block by coming out of other classes as they had the previous year. However, the proposal offered was that the program would occur only every second or third week to minimise the disruption to other classes. The school suggested that with this scenario the program could be supported in between sessions with of a variety of eLearning communication technologies. In essence, the proposed program format would result in three parallel streams of *Global Connections* running in the school during timetabled classes on a co-curricular basis. The students involved would only be required to miss three or four periods of the co-curricular subject each term (Teacher D, 2009).

This compromise proposal appeared to be workable within the frameworks of both partners and was agreed in principle. There was however one further key point which was raised in the teacher’s memorandum outlining this proposal. The proposal that was offered involved an increased staffing commitment from the school to provide a teacher to support the program in the co-curricular sessions that were required after the students finished their Learning Centre ‘block’. The question was raised in the memorandum as to how the funding of that extra teacher could be achieved. This was a major point because the school had no available teachers to meet the mandatory requirement of classroom presence during the facilitators’ sessions and no funding to enable additional staff to be utilised on a casual relief basis. Nevertheless, both the teacher in School D and the Plan coordinator considered that a workable structure for the program had been developed and the program moved forward to the active recruiting and training of facilitators who could run three streams of *Global Connections* concurrently in School D in 2009.

**8.2.3 Pre-program interview with the teacher**

The first interview took place with the teacher responsible for *Global Connections* three weeks into the second school term. The Plan coordinator had already visited the Learning Centre to introduce the idea of the program to the first cohort of Year 9 students and was scheduled to do the same introduction with the next cohort in three days with the final group scheduled three weeks later. Fifteen or twenty students were being sought from each cohort of about a hundred students to volunteer for *Global Connections* which would begin in the next school term and continue until the
end of the year. The facilitators had not yet been to the school and the program had not yet commenced.

It was apparent from the opening exchanges in the first interview that the problems associated with integrating the program into the school’s activity in 2008 had not been fully resolved in 2009 and may in fact have been exacerbated. The feeling of uncertainty with regard to the program which had characterised the initial interviews with teachers in 2008 was still strongly evident despite a concerted effort by the Plan coordinator to make the planning process more collaborative. As in 2008, the teacher involved in 2009 was new to the program and the pre-program introductory communications he[^87] had exchanged with the Plan coordinator did not appear to have resolved key components of the program’s operations. The situation was further complicated because the teacher had not previously been associated with the Learning Centre and so was also new to the other activity of the Centre of which he was also the Director. The teacher had not actively chosen to be involved with *Global Connections* but had ‘inherited’ responsibility for it as part of the existing Learning Centre activity when he was appointed as the incoming Director. In this regard, the program was just one of many new responsibilities that accompanied his appointment. Although the teacher had attended the first planning meeting at the start of the year he was not at that time conversant enough with the program or the Centre to be able to understand the impact of the program with regard to his particular responsibilities.

By the time of the first interview however, the teacher had been the Director of the Centre for several months and the difficulties presented by the program had become evident. Additionally and perhaps more importantly, the teacher did not feel that Plan was on the same page as the school with regard to the program requirements. The very first comment the teacher made with regard to *Global Connections* was:

> What I think is interesting is, I guess, the disconnection between the people on the ground for say Plan looking at Global Connections...thinking about (the Plan Coordinator) specifically here...a sort of disconnect between the work that is done in schools and the day to day work of the teachers. I guess in a sense being loaded one task on top of the other.

Although this comment was perhaps a bit obscure as a first statement, it clearly signalled the

[^87]: There was only one teacher contributing to the data generated in 2009. As such, a reporting format that allowed comments to remain unconnected to a particular respondent is impossible. However, I took particular care to ensure that consent was fully informed. I have kept the teacher anonymous and have not reported selected comments that were given ‘off the record’ but see no reason for adopting the s/he disguised format of personal pronouns.
teacher’s concerns about how the program would actually run. Subsequent elaboration made it clear that the teacher was effectively handed the responsibility for *Global Connections* but was not supported with adequate resourcing. I have been referring so far to the teacher as the ‘teacher responsible for *Global Connections* in 2009’ but the responsibility at this stage of the program was a nominal responsibility related to his position as the Learning Centre Director. The teacher was not anticipating an active involvement with the program as the sessions’ supervisor. As the Director of the Learning Centre, the teacher had a supervisory responsibility for the entire Centre’s activity including *Global Connections* which was physically taking place in the Centre and which was beginning as part of the Centre’s normal activity. However, the program was also scheduled to continue after the three week block that students spent in the Centre and would require that students come out of other classes for one double-period session every two weeks. As such, this part of the program was running as a co-curricular option operating alongside the school’s normal program and required additional classroom space and staffing.

Although the problem of staffing and of funding the teachers who were required to be in attendance during the *Global Connections* sessions was identified in the memorandum from the school to Plan when the program structure was first proposed, the problem was not addressed in practice. The teacher had no idea of who the extra teachers would be, how they would be funded or when the extra sessions would actually take place during the week. It was clear during the interview that the teacher was not anticipating being directly involved with *Global Connections* beyond his overall responsibility as the Centre Director. In this latter capacity it was evident that the program was competing for attention with a range of other commitments and the teacher only had a vague idea about how the program was going to fit into the school’s activity. The teacher’s initial reactions were connected to the immediate future and seemed to reflect the nature of adjusting to a new position with new responsibilities. Issues were being tackled one at a time in a short term framework.

It appeared that the teacher was primarily operating reactively and had not developed the planning for the next phase when the facilitators would be actually in the school running the program. In response to probing about how the program would be run and staffed the teacher was extremely uncertain:

> I believe we have agreed on an afternoon every fortnight for 3 weeks when the facilitators will come out and work with the groups. Well, an afternoon, it might be a morning because we might rotate it throughout the timetable so it is not always a Tuesday afternoon or something like that so that one class isn’t always affected.
This is the issue we are going to have though isn’t it? (Our) staff teach 12 periods out of 15, and (when Global Connections is on) they have either got a class, in which case they’ve got to go to their Chemistry class or whatever, or they have got a free, which they won’t want to lose... But the thing is we need to be able to cover those teachers. How do we do that?

Because the teacher was not anticipating being directly involved he was only broadly aware of the aims and content of Global Connections and was reliant on the previous history of the program in the school and the endorsement of the 2008 teacher as justification for the program. The teacher had no questions and very little specific knowledge with regard to the educational purpose of the program, its content, or the pedagogical processes that would be utilised by the facilitators. The logistics of how the program would run dominated the first interview and the uncertainty of the situation was magnified by a perceived lack of adequate communication with Plan:

There needs to be a bit more communication. I wish... I sent an email yesterday and I sent another one today but it bounced back so I don’t know. I’m not sounding irate because its one less thing I have to think about but...

It seemed apparent to me that the ‘new’ program structure was in fact highly problematic and that there were no easy answers to what might be significant logistical obstacles.

8.2.4 Plan

The Plan coordinator and I had both participated in discussions, data review workshops, and ARC research group meetings that occurred between the end of 2008 and the start of Global Connections in 2009. At various times, these research oriented sessions were also attended by other senior Plan staff. As a result of the variety of pre-program interactions and the access to the documentation related to the early 2009 partnership interactions I did not consider it necessary to undertake a formal pre-program interview to identify Plan’s perspectives. However, the first interview with the school teacher seemed to indicate that there were particular issues that had not been resolved and that there remained a communication gap about the program’s structure. Therefore, the day after that interview I made contact with the Plan coordinator. I outlined the situation with regard to the perceived program timing and staffing problems that the teacher had described. The Plan coordinator was scheduled to visit the school to introduce Global Connections to a new group of students in two days and undertook to address the unresolved issues at that time.
In a subsequent telephone follow up, the Plan coordinator indicated that the situation was resolved. *Global Connections* was going to start in the school the following term and run in an extended session every two weeks. The coordinator believed that the school was going to take responsibility for staffing the sessions when they did occur the following term. Plan’s focus at this early stage of the 2009 program was primarily on the recruiting and training of the facilitators.

### 8.2.5 Summary of the early partnership engagement: Pre-program meeting and first Interview

The Plan coordinator made a deliberate effort in 2009 to change the way that the organisation worked with schools. A more collaborative approach was adopted that more fully recognised the need for schools to integrate outside activity with the logistical requirements of their timetable and resource infrastructures. The coordinator decided that Plan would take its lead from School D and adapt the *Global Connections* design to be the ‘best fit’ with whatever configuration the school determined was the most appropriate in 2009. It was hoped that by enabling School D to develop an operational design from the outset that was compatible with the school’s operations the program might work more effectively alongside *and within* other school activity. Early planning was initiated to facilitate the opportunity for the school to take a more active part in the program’s operational design.

However, the best design structure that the school was able to develop still contained operational obstacles in relation to staffing that were potentially significant enough to derail the whole program. The resource limitations of the school meant that they could not resolve those obstacles on their own. Although the problems were clearly recognised and were outlined in the document proposing the structure, they were not initially addressed. Additionally, when the problems were directly addressed after being raised again in my first interview with the teacher they still did not appear to be definitely resolved. At this point, the documenting of the negotiations stopped. There was no written resolution of the issue. In other words, nowhere was it specifically stated or recorded that ‘Session 1 will take place on X day at Y time and the teacher present will be Z’. As critical as this information was, it appeared that by the time the program start was imminent there was no clarity for the key stakeholders about exactly what was going to happen.

### 8.3 Global Connections implementation

The anticipated difficulties with regard to the school’s systems, the teacher’s practice and the students’ competing commitments remained unsatisfactorily resolved throughout *Global Connections* in 2009. The extent of the difficulties were such that School D as an institution and the
teacher associated with the program were in fact significantly less engaged than during the previous year.

Although, I continued with my schedule of interviews, it quickly became evident after *Global Connections* had begun in 2009 that the program was not being implemented through any kind of partnership. The program was once again operating in the school but outside of the school’s ‘normal’ activity. As such, the implementation phase of *Global Connections* did not advance the story of partnership and the next section is a brief description of how the situation developed with evidence of the nature of the school’s connection to the program and selected examples of partnership interactions, but it does not go extensively into the program operations.

### 8.3.1 The Teacher’s story

By the time that the *Global Connections* sessions began the staffing issue was not resolved. There had been no teacher assigned to the program for any of the extra sessions that were taking place outside of the Learning Centre activity. As a result, the teacher who participated in the pre-program interview was overseeing all three groups involved in the program from a distance in addition to his fully allocated workload duties as the Director of the Learning Centre. In this regard, the concerns he had expressed in the first interview had materialised in what was the worst case scenario with regard to his workload.

> I, sort of, was made aware at the beginning of the year but didn’t quite know what it translated into that it was an expert teacher’s responsibility, in the case of *Global Connections*, to actually facilitate that program. Now someone sort of slipped through the net on that one, no-one was appointed to that particular area of responsibility and I assumed it.

*Global Connections* sessions were scheduled to coincide with the teacher’s non-contact periods so the teacher was technically available and was nominally assigned to the sessions. However, the teacher had other obligations to meet during his non-contact periods and much of the *Global Connections* supervision was necessarily undertaken from a relative distance. If the teacher had fully attended all the sessions, he would not, at those times, have been able to execute his other responsibilities associated with running the Centre. However, the active management nature of those other duties meant that many could not be deferred. Inevitably, a compromise situation resulted with regard to the sessions which meant that *Global Connections* took place in a physical space that could be monitored while the teacher attended to other duties when necessary.
As a result, it proved impossible for the teacher to commit 100% to *Global Connections* when it was in session:

(Last year’s teacher) was there the whole time with them sitting in the classroom whereas this time I am already looking after 100 kids and four teachers. I can’t presume to be around the *Global Connections* session as well....So I am not necessarily totally across every little aspect of their work, although I am in here when they are working on it so I am able to give a bit of a background.

The single issue of appropriately assigning a school teacher to the *Global Connections* sessions was perhaps the defining element that dictated the way that the program could be interpreted within the context of the school’s activity. The design of the program was such that the teacher responsible for the program was the only active connection to the organisational structure of the school. This in turn meant that the activity of the program and the outcomes for the students involved were understood primarily through the involvement of the teacher. However, although the significance of the teacher’s role was strongly highlighted in the 2008 program, the teacher in 2009 was actually less engaged with the program than in previous years.

Another critical operational element that was not resolved from 2008 was the way that students were timetabled to attend *Global Connections* sessions. Although part of the program coincided with the timetabled sessions that the students had in the Learning Centre and could be accommodated with minimum disruption, the balance of the program required the students to leave other classes. Such a situation was related by the teacher as being quite common within the school’s normal way of working but in the case of *Global Connections* had not been adequately thought through:

We actually oversee and facilitate externally run programs here as well which we do for several things during school hours...So kids do come out of class. So I don’t see it (Global Connections) as being unviable and inconsistent with the way the school runs, it’s just we haven’t been very strategic about it. We haven’t really thought it through. It should line up, we’ve just got to be a bit smarter about it, a bit more strategic.

By mid-program the conversations seemed to be paralleling the interviews with the teacher involved
the previous year. There was extensive discussion about how the program might be more compatible with the school’s operations and once again the need to formally include the program in the school planning process was emphasised.

To a large extent the focus on the operational fit of the program was because the teacher was distanced from the day-to-day activity of the program and was unsure of what exactly was happening. Once the program was established and it was apparent to the teacher that the facilitators were in control and running the sessions appropriately, he spent less time monitoring each session. As a result, the teacher seemed to have only minimal knowledge about what was occurring in the individual sessions:

At the moment they tend to look after themselves, although, you know, I don’t sense for a moment that there are really any problems. (It would be good to) have a little bit better idea of where they are up to, what they are doing, who is making contributions and so on.

The extent of the uncertainty about the program was such that the teacher was even unaware when the first communication pieces arrived from Indonesia. At a time after I knew that the students had seen the first communications I asked the teacher about them:

I haven’t seen any evidence that the first communication piece has come back from Indonesia, I am not sure actually. I don’t know that they have been pulled aside and shown anything. No I can’t say for sure. I haven’t spoken with (the Plan Coordinator) in a while actually.

This particular exchange highlighted not only the teacher’s disengagement from the program activity but also that his default reference for what was happening was through the Plan coordinator rather than his students or the facilitators who were implementing the program. Despite the importance of the connection to the coordinator in this respect, communication was unplanned and intermittent:

I don’t speak with (Plan Coordinator) that much as I said, but I think next year what we hopefully would have done by then is worked out a bit more of a strategy as to how we can make this work, how we can incorporate and embed communication a little bit more.

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88 I had hoped to be able to include the previous year’s teacher in the early interviews to add an extra dimension to the comparison and to help identify why some recommended changes did not eventuate but the teacher was on long service leave and was away for the rest of the year.
Regular communication between the organisations, which was an issue identified as needing attention in 2008, was again considered to be an important element that needed strengthening. In a similar way, communication with the facilitators was not considered to be fully effective and there was not a sense of partnership with regard to their activity:

I don’t really talk in advance with the facilitators about what they intend to do and I wish I did, you know it’s all, I’ll email you but I don’t get much communication....After each session they tend to be out the door.

Irrespective of the lack of direct communication the teacher was very aware that the approaches the facilitators used were creating a learning environment that was distinctive. As in 2008, the teacher clearly recognised that the school students were interacting differently with the facilitators compared with the ways that they typically interacted with teachers:

I would say they (the students) relate well to them (the facilitators)....They are somewhere in the middle actually between teachers and peers.

The teacher was not in a position to make judgements about the learning that was resulting from the changed environment but was completely supportive of the facilitators. He recognised that the facilitators were fully engaged and well prepared for their sessions:

They have a very clear sense of purpose, of what is going on, it is pretty clear that they have planned their time in here and moved things along fairly well.....I wouldn’t presume to make any criticism of any approach they have used. Their lack of..., knowledge of pedagogy or educational theory; it’s not an issue given the level they are working at.

The program continued in much the same way to its conclusion from the teacher’s perspective. In essence, not much had changed at all with regard to the way that Global Connections of 2009 was integrated into the school’s activity compared to 2008. The program was nominally running in the school Learning Centre with school students but it was operating apart from the school. Global Connections was less connected to the school than it had been in previous years and was in fact linked in the most minimal way possible:

So really it is happening sort of...apart. Very much so. I am pretty much the only guy here that knows anything about it (Global Connections).
Although the teacher was the only point of contact between the program and the school, his conflicted schedule meant that he could give little attention to the program and was unsure of what was occurring in the program or the nature of the learning that the school students were experiencing.

8.3.2 Plan’s Story

In the early stages of the program, the Plan coordinator did not recognise the significance of the effective marginalisation of the school’s role that the teacher reported. The coordinator had developed the impression during the early planning meeting that the teacher from the previous year would still be involved and would be working together with the new Director of the Centre. Despite the situation that was relayed after the first interview with the teacher, the impression remained:

The teachers were going to be XXXX (the previous teacher) and YYYY (the Director) was my understanding and YYYY is there. How engaged he is I’m not entirely sure to be honest... when I’m there he didn’t engage but when I’m not there maybe he does....

The comments about engagement were added because the coordinator knew that the teacher was combining supervision of the Global Connections sessions with other activities but did not fully appreciate what the situation meant to the teacher in terms of his need to balance multiple responsibilities:

My understanding is that he has fit it into times when he is responsible for activities happening in the Centre, but Global Connections isn’t the only one happening. There are other classes happening, which are being taken by other teachers. I think the way so far that I’ve understood is that he’s there but he’s engaged in the Centre, not there the way YYY (the previous teacher) was.

In a similar way, the coordinator was not initially aware of other logistical characteristics related to how the program would be implemented.

The previous teacher was on long service leave that had been scheduled the previous year during Global Connections 2009 and was never intending to be part of the program. He had clearly signalled in 2008 that he did not wish to be involved in 2009.
There was such miscommunication about how this would run. I was not under the impression that students would be coming out of other classes at all.\textsuperscript{90}

Nor was the coordinator aware that logistical elements of running the program would be so problematic:

I think XXXX (the teacher) is running around trying to find cameras and access to the internet and all these different things that I’ve just assumed are part of the (centre) program...I actually find they’re not.

In hindsight, the coordinator considered that all these issues could have been negotiated at the early planning meeting and that aspects of the program had not been made explicit enough.

We were talking (during the early meeting) about the conceptual fit, so yes this works because we’re looking at local and global there was such a great ...energy for it. There was a lot of nodding heads and yeah, we’re on the same page, in hindsight people in there were assuming that everybody was actually understanding those things in the same way when maybe they weren’t.

In hindsight, the coordinator also felt that perhaps there were key people missing from that early conversation:

I didn’t feel at the time that anybody was missing....I thought, wow, all these people are getting buy-in and really excited about this; this is great. But again, now that we’ve started to implement the project I can see where that gap is.

The uncertainty about exactly what was happening extended to the mid-program stage and seemed to be related in part to the fact that the coordinator had not visited the school since the very early program engagement:

I was planning to be revisiting the school again this term and building that relationship a bit more and not leave it until next term, and unfortunately other commitments got in my way... after our discussions last year (her discussions with me) it’s really been in the forefront of my

\textsuperscript{90} The need for students to come out of other classes was signalled in the pre-program memorandum from the school.
mind to try and build the relationship and see where else we can be along the way which is the bit that I’m missing.

To a large extent the partnership relationship could not be actively developed in the initial stages of *Global Connections* because the coordinator’s time and focus was concentrated on implementing the program. In particular, the coordinator was concerned about the communication exchanges and facilitator issues from the previous year together with new program issues that were arising in 2009. The Plan coordinator was actively managing the program but was not actively seeking input from the teacher despite the fact that some of the most significant issues were directly related to classroom activity and the program’s progress. For example, the coordinator felt that because all three groups in the school were operating independently and because all three were experiencing the same issues that there was probably a structural problem related to the way that they were working with the students:

There’s an underlying structural issue and probably an underlying issue in the way that Plan’s role and my role in facilitating these sessions as well.

It’s frustrating, really frustrating, but ... it’s just crazy. Five years of just stuck in this rut! Unlocking it, the same problem it’s halfway through before it starts.....Despite the interventions!!

The coordinator felt that it was her responsibility to get actively involved to progress the project:

The project itself, not only the facilitators; the project itself needs a lot of support....it can’t be on cruise control because we don’t have enough time... and it needs me to push in terms of if this doesn’t happen then this will happen because there’s not enough time for it to be a participatory plan B

My field notes highlighted this point because it seemed that the coordinator’s willingness to enter the classroom environment when program issues arose epitomised the way that the program had developed to exclude the teacher and underlined the school’s marginalisation. It would seem that this type of intervention could be an area that experienced teachers could contribute to the program if they were in attendance and in regular conversation with the facilitators and the Plan coordinator.

Like the teacher, the coordinator was also concerned about the isolated nature of *Global Connections*
within the school environment. The coordinator became aware in the first session of *Global Connections* that the pre-program meeting had not gone far enough to establish a connection with the wider school system:

I was there with the three facilitators because it was their first session and (the teacher) had taken the day off sick but there hadn’t been another teacher to replace him at the centre and no one quite knew what was happening and, you know, the Deputy Principal got involved at that point because the administrator asked him to...and there was a lot of face-saving.

The feeling that the program was not connected to the school carried over to the coordinator’s sense that the students’ learning was not connected to their other activity and to other teachers:

My understanding was that some of the teachers (in the centre) would be involved but even though it’s in the same space....none of the teachers know what the others are doing...none of the students know.... there’s no overlap.

The coordinator recognised that to all intents and purposes *Global Connections* was not working the way that had been hoped for despite the interventions. The coordinator felt very much that the responsibility for the program rested with her but had come to realise that much of what happened was beyond Plan’s control and that the only way to resolve the disconnected elements was through genuinely collaborative partnership.

In summary, the 2009 *Global Connections* program was characterised by its separation from the activity of the school. Very different ways developed regarding the ways the teacher and the coordinator interacted with the program. The teacher was primarily disengaged from the activity of the program itself and was concerned mainly with managing the way the program was operationally implemented in the school so that its problematic elements were minimised. The coordinator accepted the way that the program was running operationally and was primarily concerned about the program activity. There was minimal communication between the coordinator and the teacher and no jointly developed responses to program events. This was never more evident than when the coordinator (who was not a trained teacher) felt that it was necessary to actively participate in classroom activity to progress the program. By the end of the program, the teacher and the coordinator as representatives of their respective organisations were interpreting the program in quite different ways just as happened in 2008. Neither person showed active interest in making changes to move the partners’ positions closer together in the later stages of the program and
appeared to let the program run its course.

8.4 After Global Connections: The Final Interview

8.4.1 The Teacher

The final interview took place in the last school week of the year, after Global Connections had been completed. The timing meant that the teacher involved was relatively free of the time pressure and competing agenda that characterised the earlier interviews. He was fully engaged throughout the interview process and the discussion ranged widely and reflectively over the program’s events. The teacher had clearly felt that he was disenfranchised with regard to being an active participant in the program and that for him it was far more challenging professionally than rewarding. He made it explicitly clear that repeating the experience of 2009 was not an option for him:

Oh look, it’s not ideal (as it is) and I wouldn’t be prepared to do it again next year.

Nevertheless, the difficulties it had created for him notwithstanding, the teacher recognised that the program had produced positive outcomes for many of his students. Ironically however, awareness of those outcomes only really eventuated after Global Connections was completed in the school. The teacher attended a post-program exhibition organised by Plan at a downtown Melbourne venue to enable the different student groups to share and celebrate their involvement. The exhibition underlined his sense of disconnection to the program but also brought the elements of the program together and the teacher seemed to regret that his own involvement had not been greater:

I didn’t really know that the kids had received communication pieces from Indonesia until the exhibition night!

Had I known, really at the beginning of the program that (Plan) was going to hire us an exhibition space (in Melbourne), give us all those fantastic resources in terms of the space, the ability to present ....I would’ve probably, well hopefully ensured a better product from the kids. I would have probably tried to look at how we could give the kids more structured time to ultimately develop a better product I guess. I wasn’t sort of, I wasn’t that disappointed with what the kids had managed to do, I thought they did quite well, but I thought they could have done a lot better.

This second comment seemed to indicate that although the teacher gained a real insight into the value of the work that was done during the Global Connections sessions he thought the program
could have accomplished even more. Elaborating on this statement the teacher expressed the belief that with a teacher more involved the outcomes for the students would have been enhanced:

I’m not saying it didn’t mean anything to the kids, I think they got a lot out of it. And I think that they were genuinely committed to a positive outcome, but I’m just wondering how we could’ve captured that enthusiasm and ensured basically a better product. It could’ve gone probably into more depth culminating in a little bit more for the kids, or meant a little bit more for them over the time.

These comments were consistent with the comments that were made during a mid-program interview and suggest that although the teacher was not closely involved with the program he had definitely formed an impression that the educational content was falling short of what he thought such a program could achieve. Nevertheless, the value created for the students was clear to him at the exhibition and he regretted that it went unnoticed and uncelebrated in the wider school community:

It was my first year but I would definitely know next year, let’s celebrate it at assembly.....let’s share with the wider year level as well.....It didn’t twig with me to get up at a staff briefing and say, okay, well on this day there’s an exhibition and any interested staff, we’d love to see you there, or you know, contact me by tomorrow morning or whatever, all those sorts of things.

The final exhibition was only attended by Global Connections students and the teacher from the school. There were no parents, other teachers, management staff, or students from outside the program at the event. I have worked in schools as a teacher with projects of various kinds and the lack of wider representation at this event was very unusual and was graphic evidence of the failure of Global Connections to establish an identity within the wider school. However, it was also unusual that such an event was held outside the school and making that choice\(^{91}\) may have been counter-productive by reinforcing the separation of the program from the school.

The lack of connection to the school was also made evident to me during the final stages of the program. The final weeks of the program involved the students undertaking the ‘actions’ that they

\(^{91}\) The hiring of an outside venue was related to the fact that in previous years multiple schools have been involved and a central venue was convenient and appropriate but in 2009 there was only the one school involved and it was my view that an opportunity may have been missed to link the program to the school’s culture. Parents, staff and students are geared to attend school events and can do so relatively easily.
had developed in the program relating to their issues of concern. The ‘actions’ were undertaken at school during intervals and lunchtimes. I attended these events and made a number of observations. Firstly, the energy, commitment and general enthusiasm of the students who participated in these final stages was strongly evident (it should be noted however that not all the students were still participating at the end)\textsuperscript{92}. The actions the students undertook in the school were well supported by the students from outside the program but it was starkly evident that the teachers and management of the school were not actively involved. That the teacher did not include these events in his comments about the exhibition was probably because he was committed with other activity and was also unable to attend the action events. Those teachers who were incidentally present (for example teachers on duty) were largely uninformed and indifferent\textsuperscript{93} with respect to why the events were occurring even if they were interested in the event itself\textsuperscript{94}.

The teacher emphasised that the situation he described, including his failure to promote the significant events of the program, was related to how \textit{Global Connections} operated as a standalone activity that was independent from and did not fit easily with other school activity:

\begin{quote}
There’s lots of things that it sort of almost is but never quite... manages to be.
\end{quote}

Elaborating on this statement the teacher concluded that the program really did not work within the existing school system:

\begin{quote}
So, you know, if somebody were to say to me, the current (\textit{Global Connections}) program at XXXX (the school), how does it fit into, the work that students do in a formal sense, and I would say, ‘well it doesn’t, it sits apart’.
\end{quote}

These comments were entirely directed towards the way that \textit{Global Connections} was structurally integrated into the school system and stood in contrast to the way that the teacher considered the program’s philosophical intent and the type of learning it encouraged:

\textsuperscript{92} Although this project is not directly concerned with interpreting the students’ outcomes from \textit{Global Connections} it is worth noting that there was clear evidence at this stage that the students were intensely involved in the actions they were undertaking. Although this in itself does not speak to the learning that the program generated it shows the potential of the program to engage students and thereby create a positive learning environment.

\textsuperscript{93} I engaged several of the teachers on duty in informal conversation and not one of them had any idea what was happening and had not heard of \textit{Global Connections}.

\textsuperscript{94} For example, one of the actions involved a talent quest that was run to raise awareness of an issue. I spoke to two teachers who were attracted by the music and looked in on the event but they were only interested in the performances and even then stayed only briefly.
In a philosophical sense....well that’s something else there are definitely links philosophically, but you know, working in a school you can’t help but sort of be conscious of how that’s formalised.

It seemed clear throughout the interview that the teacher was completely supportive of the educational purposes guiding *Global Connections* and that the problematic elements were structural rather than philosophical. Of particular educational importance from a structural standpoint was that the students were still coming out of other classes and up to a third had stopped attending sessions:

Probably 70% of the kids remained committed to the end. It was that 30% that sort of came and went and then just stopped coming.

The significance to the teacher was that there were obviously mixed learning outcomes for the students and he was concerned that the school had no way of individually interpreting the students’ achievements:

We don’t assess it. Which is strange. I don’t think we should revisit you know the prospect of the kids actually doing it, I think the kids should do it, but what we should do as a school is be more conscious of monitoring what they can get out of it and recognising that.......how do we somehow recognise the work they have done in the *Global Connections*?

At this point in the discussion the teacher talked extensively about how the program might be engineered so that it could fit within his school’s structure and have a teacher assigned to it as part of their normal teaching load. The discussion was considered and detailed but much of what was said was specifically constructed to fit the circumstances of his school. As such, the detail of the conversation does not advance the focus of this study which is directed at developing a more generalised understanding of formal/non-formal educational partnerships. However what did seem relevant during the development of the teacher’s ideas was not the proposed solution itself but the claim that a solution was possible. The claim was particularly significant in the context of a school which had ‘hosted’ *Global Connections* three consecutive years without it being integrated at all into the school’s systems. The details of his ‘solution’ were also significant in that they mirrored an elective structure that the previous teacher had outlined in 2008 but which was proposed too late to be incorporated in 2009.
The overwhelming insight that I gained from the combined 2008 and 2009 data was that this school could not integrate ‘ad hoc’ changes. The school’s system acted to further marginalise rather than absorb programs that did not fit formally planned activity. Further to this, what seemed clear was that the teachers considered change was possible and relatively straightforward provided the appropriate steps were taken at the appropriate times to enable it:

*Global Connections* was time penniless; there was no formal allowance for it in the school program whatsoever and I really don’t think that there would be until such time as we formalise it....I mean in terms of making it more formal...It would be, it’d be a breeze.

In making the program more formal, the teacher was adamant that that the existing content and aims of *Global Connections* would not need to be compromised or changed. This view included retaining the facilitators in their current role which the teacher valued:

I love the fact that the facilitators get together and that they plan their own, you know, scenarios and goings on or whatever and that would be a really important part of the program of course and it really is, it’s essentially the program....and what teachers are doing is basically monitoring, assisting, assessing and definitely supplementing. So really, I mean, you know, how much better would that be for the kids and their thinking, yeah.

However he was clear that the program would need to be integrated into other activity because it was not extensive enough on its own to occupy a ‘slot’ in the timetable:

You could have a weekly facilitation session which is the one period a week run by the facilitators and then you have other periods which would be run by a teacher. I mean it could be made very, very clear that the days that the facilitators are in they run it...but what it does is formalise the teacher, the supervision question and how we just basically manage space and kids, because that’s sort of been the issue this year.

Although the formally planned solution proposed by the teacher was specific to his school, a number of points distilled from the discussion seem to be generically applicable to most schools and these are summarised below:

1. Planning processes for a school year occur mid-way through the previous year. All programs that are intended to be part of students’ timetabled programs of study are proposed and
decided at this time. New programs cannot be realistically added once the year has begun.

2. Only a limited number of timetable options are logistically possible with regard to the number of periods a particular program can occupy and when they can be scheduled. Programs are designed to fit the available timetable allocation not vice versa.

3. All programs that are proposed to fill a slot need to go through a formal process involving curriculum design and justification within VELS. The formal process involves a number of stages, contains specific elements and involves a number of people. Teachers do not operate independently with regard to the courses they teach and have limited scope to introduce material outside of the approved course design.

4. All timetabled programs need to have a registered teacher in attendance and need to be actively monitored, assessed and reported.

5. Most of the timetable slots at Years 9 and 10 are occupied by Discipline-based subjects that are relatively inflexible with regard to their content but schools also have elective slots that allow for a wide range of educational activity directed towards a wide range of educational objectives and purposes.

6. Electives are often tagged to a particular teacher’s interests or to school objectives that are related to the school’s culture and mission statements.

7. Electives need to go through the same formal processes as Discipline-based subjects.

8. Any activity that occurs outside of the planned and approved timetable structure must necessarily fit as co-curricular or extra-curricular activity and is necessarily limited in scope.

9. Resources including teachers and classrooms are allocated during the planning stages in conjunction with finalising the timetable structure.

10. Schools have their own cultural identity which is actively developed and supported through newsletters, websites, assemblies and other such activity.

11. *Global Connections* can easily be justified within VELS either within Discipline-based subjects or as an elective. The program is philosophically compatible with many schools’ educational purposes.

12. *Global Connections* does not on its own represent enough periods to fill any existing slot in the timetable but is more extensive than what an individual teacher could easily add to an existing course.

These points emphasise the critical need to include the school as partners in pre-program processes and planning rather than just as partners implementing the program. Such inclusion would mean that *Global Connections* would acquire recognition and a sense of legitimacy with regard to the way that it was seen by students, staff, management and parents. However, formal recognition of the
program would also mean that there would need to be opportunities for the teachers and the school to meet specific learning objectives which could be assessed according to the appropriate curriculum guidelines.

The discussion to this point was very much grounded in what needed to happen from the school’s perspective but introducing the idea of collaborative understanding and timely planning opened the way for me to raise questions about the partnership processes. The interview at this point became more structured and I specifically asked the teacher about qualitative dimensions of the partnership that connected to the analysis framework I had developed from the literature. In particular, the teacher was asked about the way that the partnership seemed to fit on a cooperation-to-collaboration continuum and about the trust, mutuality and reciprocity dimensions of partnership.\(^9\)

The teacher situated the relationship with Plan as quite heavily towards the cooperation end of the continuum:

> I don’t think the school….I don’t really see us as having made any contribution besides offering a space and some students.

This comment was specifically referring to the overall design and structure of *Global Connections*. However, with regard to his ongoing interactions with the Plan coordinator to implement the program the teacher felt that the relationship was much more collaborative. Although the contact was not extensive, the teacher definitely felt that the incidental issues that did arise were collaboratively managed:

> We had a very good working relationship and I would contact Plan and Plan would get back and vice versa.

Expanding on the advantages of working together on educational programs like *Global Connections*, the teacher considered that schools could only run such programs with outside organisations

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\(^9\) The aspects of partnership referred to here were introduced in sections 4.5.1 & 4.5.2 and are developed in detail in section 9.3.2). These elements form the basis of the analytic framework used in the next chapter to inform the proposed model of partnership. The definitions of trust, mutuality and reciprocity as used here are:

- **Trust**: the commitment and expertise that each of the main stakeholders brings to the partnership in the expectation that it will provide them with the benefits each seeks.
- **Mutuality**: the extent to which the stakeholders recognise that working together does lead to the benefits each esteems.
- **Reciprocity**: each stakeholder recognises and values what the others bring to the partnership.

(Kruger et al, 2009)
because the school itself did not have the contacts and personal access to the groups overseas. In this way mutuality was strongly evident in the teacher’s appreciation that working together was essential. It was also evident that although the teacher valued what Plan had brought to the partnership little was known about Plan and its aims beyond what had become known through the program. Further to this, the teacher felt that in fact such knowledge was not necessary:

I don’t really need to know their aims, their objectives, and who they’re answerable to.

However, at the same time the teacher thought that it was problematic for NGOs working in schools when they did not understand the same things about schools:

I think (Plan) probably understands what schools try to do but maybe not what they are able to do....I think though that the accountability measures that are in place and that schools have to use and be seen to be using are things that the NGO’s aren’t necessarily aware of...but that’s understandable.

There appeared to be an imbalance that was accepted as ‘normal’ with regard to the way that the teacher positioned his own organisation and Plan within a ‘mutual’ relationship. It seemed clear that the teacher was recognising and valuing Plan only through the operations of Global Connections in the school. There was no wider appreciation of what Plan was trying to accomplish through the program or elsewhere, and in a similar way the teacher thought that Plan’s understanding of the actual work of schools was limited. In this respect, the relationship seemed to reflect a limited vision of ‘reciprocity’.

Finally, the discussion addressed trust and the commitment and expertise that each of the partners brought to the partnership. In this regard, the teacher had consistently demonstrated throughout the program and was further evidencing in his participation in the research process, that he was fully committed and giving of his experience and expertise. Although the actual commitment of time was less than what was desired owing to the organisational constraints already described, at an individual level the teacher gave much more than what could have been expected and beyond his contracted responsibilities. It was his belief that Plan, and in particular the coordinator, was just as professionally and personally committed. However, at an organisational level the commitment had not been manifest to the same extent by either Plan or the school. The teacher felt that despite a philosophical commitment to the program and its aims, critical organisational elements beyond his control (or the coordinator’s control) had not been addressed and so undermined the partnership:
I think there’s a level of trust. I think that every year you...you’ve got a list as long as your arm as to how it could be improved but I think fundamentally there is a compatibility there between Plan and XXXX (the school). I think philosophically they’re very compatible. It’s just organisationally that’s the issue.

This comment in many ways encapsulates the school’s experience of *Global Connections* in 2009 and brings this description of the school’s experience in 2009 to a conclusion by returning to where it started. The final interview with the teacher reaffirmed the promise of the program and endorsed its aims and intentions while simultaneously lamenting the structural incompatibility that meant that the program ran alongside but outside the normal school activity. As in 2008, the obvious enthusiasm of the students who participated and the positive outcomes that seemed to be generated were the driving force behind trying to design a more compatible framework to operate the program. However, as in 2008, the verdict remained ‘Not again’ with regard to what actually took place.

### 8.4.2 Plan Coordinator

The interview with the Plan Coordinator took place after the interview with the teacher and after the program was fully wrapped up. The interview was far reaching, reflective and as was the case with the teacher did not add anything further to the interpretation of the way that *Global Connections* was operationally implemented. There appeared to be a tacit understanding that the structural problems related to the way that *Global Connections* fitted within the school were unresolvable in 2009 and so that aspect of the program was allowed to run its course. The coordinator focused on the students and the facilitators in the second half of the program and concentrated on maximising the experience for both groups. In a similar way to the program itself, the coordinator worked alongside but outside the school system. There was only minimal contact with the teacher and then only on a day to day contingency basis when the need arose. A sustainable collaborative partnership had not eventuated and Plan’s involvement with the school finished with the exhibition event. There was no final meeting between the teacher and the coordinator to debrief the program or to make plans for the following year.

In fact the decision had already been made by Plan not to work with schools in 2010. The coordinator was fully committed to the future of the program in some form but it was by no means certain what form that might be. The program was recognised within Plan as being complex and as speaking to multiple objectives which needed to be reconceptualised and reconfigured. The major part of the interview revolved around the more general ways that Plan was thinking with regard to working with
young people in Australia and was not relevant to this project and the specific case of school partnerships. In saying that however, a lot of the learning that Plan was using to frame its thinking as an organisation was developed through the experiences of *Global Connections*, including the experiences associated with working in schools.

The effective failure of the partnership notwithstanding, the coordinator considered that the program had largely been successful for the students and the facilitators:

> I think the facilitators had a much stronger engagement this year, which was great. I think overall it was a really positive year...... I think most of the students felt that they’d had a really positive experience, there were reports of attitudinal change; some people have reported behavioural change that they’ll take on now.

It was interesting and seemed significant that despite the fact that the school had made less of a contribution to the program than any of the schools in 2008, the outcomes for the young people involved (the students and the facilitators) were maintained or enhanced. This result raised a number of questions. In particular, it raised a question about the contribution that the schools made to the students’ learning in 2008. I was in no doubt that the different teachers in 2008 all had significant interactions with the *Global Connections* students that influenced their learning and the possibility arises that Plan understood the classroom activity in too narrow a way and only evaluated the program against facilitator influenced outcomes. It definitely seemed to beg the questions ‘How can the schools contribute to the learning in the program?’ It also accentuated the mismatch of the educational contributions that each partner makes to what is ostensibly an educational partnership.

I talked to the coordinator about the same theoretical elements of partnership that were discussed with the teacher - the cooperation-collaboration continuum and the dimensions of trust, mutuality and reciprocity. The coordinator completely agreed that the school was only a cooperative partner with regard to the design and preparation of the program. There was no mechanism in place for example, that enabled the teacher to attend the facilitator training sessions or the ongoing reflective meetings which followed the *Global Connections* sessions and so the school as a partner had no power to influence such events. Nor could the teacher interact directly with Indonesia:

> (The teacher) can’t call (the Indonesian coordinator) and ask where stuff is...

In the same way however, the coordinator felt powerless to influence the way that the program ran
in the school and thought that Plan was purely a cooperative partner in that respect:

I’d never thought about that...trying so hard to control what I can, I didn’t think about what I don’t have control over...... the fit with the school, yeah....not at all!

It appeared that although the program required action from both Plan and the school, there was effectively a ring around each organisation’s contribution. In each case the respective organisations considered that they were effectively powerless to influence the areas of the program that related to their partner’s expertise and were ‘cooperating’ with the frameworks that were presented to them. Similarly, each organisation took control of their own areas and did not actively invite their partners to contribute in a substantive way.

This being said however, both partners had a very high level of trust that their partner would bring a full measure of commitment and their expertise to bear on their own spheres of influence. The Plan coordinator had this to say about trust in the school:

You know I really feel that, as much as it was an uncomfortable place to get to where (the teacher) wasn’t there that first day and no-one else was there and we couldn’t do the session, the fact that it did go to the Deputy Principal and he was there personally apologizing and doing what he could...You can trust them...So, yeah, absolutely.

It could be noted however, that the example given here relates to an operational trust and a reaction to an extreme event\textsuperscript{96}. I did not find evidence in either year that Plan embraced the philosophy of trust in their partners’ expertise and commitment to an extent that they invited the school to have professional input into the educational activity of the program\textsuperscript{97}.

The Plan coordinator had a strong belief that the work done in schools had produced positive outcomes that met Plan’s program goals. The work done to date had also advanced Plan’s strategic thinking with regard to Australian community engagement and youth participation. It was clear that Plan needed to continue to work with schools if Global Connections were going to operate with school students. In this respect, Plan clearly appreciated that working appropriately with schools could lead to benefits of high value to Plan and there was a strong presence of ‘mutuality’ in their

\textsuperscript{96} The event is described in one of the coordinator’s quotes in section 8.3.2 and involved one group of facilitators who arrived on their first day when the teacher was absent sick and nobody else was expecting them or knew what to do with them.

\textsuperscript{97} Arguably the opposite was the case in 2008 when Plan often seemed be ‘managing’ the teachers’ involvement to actively limit their input.
decision to work with schools. However, school students are not the only young people that could participate in a program like *Global Connections* and the coordinator was very aware that in the five years to date the relationships with schools had not worked as effectively as had been hoped. As a result, Plan was reviewing the possibilities for running the program with other groups of young people; for example, youth groups. In this way, although there was unqualified commitment to ‘mutuality’ in Plan’s recognition that a partner organisation was necessary to realise the goals of *Global Connections*, the partner did not need to be a school. Nevertheless, there remained a strong desire to keep working with schools and a strong conviction that effective partnerships were possible. The coordinator was less certain whether the program was meeting the goals of the schools:

I feel the age old pressures that every participatory approach feels in that, what are we offering the school for them to participate in? What’s in it for them? Because I think at the moment it’s a big blank canvas and we’re expecting them to have some kind of innovative input but we need to give them...a framework to colour in, you know... with the school I’m not sure we’ve got common goals.

This statement exhibited a strong resonance with the teacher’s comments about Plan. In both instances the interview participants had a high level of ‘mutuality’ in their attitude to the partnership in that they recognised that working together would lead to the desired outcomes. However, in both cases understanding with regard to how the outcomes were interpreted by the partner organisation was somewhat nebulous. This situation seemed to suggest that the level of reciprocity in the partnership was low. The partners were not adequately recognising the ‘Why’ with regard to the other organisation’s involvement and so were not fully appreciating what they brought to the partnership.

The coordinator initially believed that Plan and the school recognised and valued what the other partner brought to the partnership but on further probing realised that very little had been explicitly discussed. I used the example of Plan’s relationship to Plan Indonesia and specifically the coordinator’s interactions with her Indonesian counterpart. I put the suggestion to the coordinator that the relationship between the two Plan organisations was also operating as a partnership. The coordinator agreed but did not initially think the partnership was comparable with the school partnership:
It’s different because we’re one organisation; we’re working under a similar umbrella and... we’ve got common goals.

However, on closer examination the coordinator realized that there were subtle but important differences between each organization’s goals with regard to the program. *Global Connections* fit within each organization’s structure and programs differently, was serving different purposes and was managed in different ways. The coordinator eventually realized that the key to the Indonesian partnership feeling different was not related to a greater level of trust or mutuality but rather that these things had been discussed explicitly. As a result, the coordinators in each country understood each other’s goals, they knew the extent to which each could commit to the program, and so they better understood the ways that working together could accomplish their own goals:

It tended to still be a little bit assumed... with the goals...where are we going with this? It wasn’t automatically there with (the Indonesian coordinator) We worked on getting to that same point too, why are we doing this, what are we doing, what do we want out of it. It took quite a while to get there.

The explicit communication raised the level of reciprocity – each partner recognised more fully and was therefore able to more appropriately value what the other was contributing as a result of making the assumptions explicit and negotiating differences that arose. After the previous comment, I suggested to the coordinator:

Now the sense of reciprocity has got a real, solid framework around it and makes communication easier. What I’m suggesting is that needs to happen as well with the other partners. You need to keep talking about, why are we doing this, what’s it for?

The coordinator responded with:

You’re exactly right, you’re exactly right....and now we (the Indonesian coordinator and the coordinator) connect more often in a way that is more productive because you move straight to where you need to be.

After further discussion the following was added:
We’re communicating over thousands of miles, you know. I mean, that communication space should be possible with someone down the road. We just have never articulated the need for it...or how to actually construct it...It’s glaringly obvious, isn’t it? How’s that been missed?

8.4.3 Final Interview summary
The partners were both very aware of the disconnection between Plan and the school during 2009 and focussed in the interviews on ways of bridging the gap. They were both able to articulate their understanding of what occurred in 2009 in ways that linked to theoretical elements of partnership. What was particularly significant for this research was that, although the two key participants from each of the partner organisation experienced the program in very separate ways, there was a strong concordance in the way they thought it operated. The reality remained however, that Global Connections in 2009 did not run effectively as a partnership. As a result, the interviews were reflective and interpretive rather than providing evidence of effective interactions and collaborative processes. The data generation finished as it began – strong on potential and promise. However, it was unfortunately light on realised expectations.

8.5 The Facilitators
Extensive interviews were conducted with the facilitators at the end of the program. These interviews highlighted many differences in the ways that the individual facilitators interacted with the program and significant differences in the way that each group of facilitators worked with their group of students. However, despite these differences, there was a general consensus about how the program was implemented. In this respect, the observations of the facilitators closely aligned with the observations of the teacher and the coordinator and so do not need to be detailed at this point. As a result, the description below is a brief summary of the most salient points with only a few representative quotes to illustrate what were consensus observations.

The most significant element of the Plan-school partnership with regard to the impact on the facilitators was the lack of involvement of the teacher. The facilitators did not quite understand why the teacher was not really involved but were quite appreciative of the space that it allowed them. However, they did find that it was difficult to get specific cooperation when they needed it:

(The teacher) was hands off... I’m not quite sure how that works within the school but I don’t think that the teacher brought anything to the project for me.
Towards the pointy end of the project we were in more communication we would harass (him) to get things done but I never felt that (he) was, (he) never participated in any of the activities.

Like it was almost like oh you guys are here there are your students, here have some textas, wash my hands of it....I don’t feel that (he) really knew what was going on and I’m not saying that (he) needed to integrate himself fully into what the students were doing but just a general awareness.

I think not having a teacher that involved, kind of gave us the freedom to do what we wanted to.

I really didn’t understand (his) role to be honest...I tried to understand it.

Similarly, the facilitators felt completely disconnected from the rest of the school and confirmed that the program did not seem to be acknowledged within the wider school environment:

I didn’t feel integrated with the school.

The first two weeks we had the misfortune of the school actually not knowing we were coming and there was just no integration with the school.

The second important impact on the facilitators was their relationship with Plan which stood in stark contrast to the relationship with the teacher. While there was minimal contact occurring between the coordinator and the teacher, the coordinator was putting significant time and energy into developing the relationship with the facilitators as partners in the delivery of the program. Plan set up a complex system to support the facilitators and to create the space for reflection and adjustment to planned activity as the program unfolded:

Plan gave us lots of support through the whole project. I think we had sufficient training and feedback, meetings, sessions.

I think Plan were really good and that meeting every second week was good. I felt like I could always if there was a problem send off an email and get support right away. I think they have been very supportive and like really nice and really understanding.
Apart from their direct relationships with the coordinator and the teacher and the sustained feeling of being ‘outside the school’ the facilitators had nothing of substance to say that casts light on the working of the partnership between the school. In this way however, their reports are entirely consistent with those of the other interviews. The partnership was at best minimal and existed only by the physical locating of *Global Connections* within the school space and the involvement of school students.

### 8.6 Conclusion

Instead of being the story of continuation and development of an existing relationship, the 2009 data is characterised by the lack of continuity and the fact that after the first engagement between the partners there was no carry forward and resolution of the issues that arose in 2008. The effect on this research was that despite promising initial steps a collaborative partnership didn’t eventuate. Although there were significant pre-program efforts to improve the collaborative nature of the way it operated, the 2009 version of *Global Connections* was less integrated into the school activity than any version of the program in 2008.

Primarily, it was the problem of staffing the program that acted to undermine the partnership relationship. This single factor prevented any possibility of ongoing collaborative interaction based on mutually constructed understanding of the way that the program was developing. The potential significance of the staffing problem was highlighted during the operational planning at the start of 2009, but it was never satisfactorily resolved. The situation that developed underlined the importance of collaboratively negotiating and documenting operational details alongside considerations of educational objectives when programs are the subject of partnership activity.

Although the 2009 program did not provide an opportunity to trial changes to the partnership structure, it provided confirmation of ideas that emerged from the 2008 research. In particular, it confirmed the differences in implementation of educational activity and its subsequent interpretation within the different fields of formal and non-formal education. It highlighted the way that ‘taken-for-granted’ assumptions about critical program elements were not necessarily commonly understood. The overriding conclusion was that explicit attention was needed at a pre-program stage to bridge organisational difference alongside operational planning that addressed all elements of the program implementation. Additionally, the 2009 research seemed to suggest that ongoing partnership activity to regularly re-interpret activity within both organisational frameworks was essential. Nevertheless, despite the distancing of the school from the work of *Global*
Connections, the final exhibition event, combined with the intermittent contact he had throughout the program, left the teacher convinced of the program’s value. The ‘promise’ of Global Connections survived 2009 even though a working model of effective partnership interaction was not achieved.
Chapter Nine: Final Analysis: Addressing the research questions, considering partnership and developing a model

9.1 Introduction

This chapter combines the preliminary analysis that accompanied the empirical stories of ‘what happened’ to the theoretical discussions in the earlier context chapters in order to address the research questions. The empirical evidence generated in this research was consistent and strong enough to enable observations to be made about principles that support effective partnership. In the final section of this chapter these principles are brought together and suggestions are made about ‘things to consider’ in future models of partnerships between schools and the non-formal education sector.

9.2 The research questions revisited

This research was designed to address two research questions:

1. What can we learn from the context of the Global Connections program about appropriate and effective partnerships between non-formal education and formal education providers?

2. What might an effective and appropriate model of a formal and non-formal education partnership for constructing school-based education look like?

9.3 The first research question: Addressing the sub-questions

The first research question will be addressed through considering the sub-questions that were developed to divide the scope of the question and which guided the data generation. Those questions were:

1(a) What happens in Global Connections and how do the schools and Plan respond to the significant events that occur?

1(b) How important is the specific ‘global citizenship’ purpose of Global Connections in enabling schools to form partnerships and share their responsibility as education providers with outside organisations?

1(c) How do the schools’ and Plan’s processes, structures and roles respectively contribute to the operations and educational activity of Global Connections and its evaluation?
1(d) How can the other learning partnerships that exist within the wider Global Connections program (for example; Plan Australia-Youth facilitators, Plan Australia-Plan Indonesia) inform understanding of the school-Plan partnerships?

1(e) How do the schools and Plan interpret the educational activity of Global Connections?

The first sub-question has been addressed in the previous chapters which reported and interpreted the 2008 and 2009 program events. The other sub-questions are answered below.

9.3.1 The importance of a ‘global citizenship’ purpose

1(b) How important was the specific ‘global citizenship’ theme of Global Connections in enabling schools to form partnerships and share their responsibility as education providers with outside organisations?

This question is being addressed first because it speaks directly to the extent that the work of this project might be relevant to other partnership situations. As such, the answer critically informs the way that the subsequent questions are treated.

The empirical evidence in all instances indicated that the implied purpose of the program as suggested by its title ‘global connections’ was what immediately captured the attention and interest of the teachers (and school management) when they were first introduced to the program. Everybody reacted to the title as if it embodied the program aims in a self-explanatory way. Further to this, the envisaged aims were closely aligned to core school values and an educational area of interest that was considered difficult to address. However, taking the step from interest to commitment required further knowledge that the ‘connection’ was an actual rather than a theoretical connection. Global Connections offered a way of creating a learning environment that was not otherwise available to the teachers. In this way, it was the content of the program in the form of the ‘connection’ rather than just the program’s aims that led to a ‘partnership’ arrangement.

The ‘global citizenship’ theme was clearly important and created instant interest, but all the school people were at best vague as to what the term meant and what specific learning objectives should accompany such an educational theme. The teachers were uncertain of their own global identity or how global citizenship explicitly connected to the curriculum. The significant interest generated by even superficial contact with the program ideas was primarily related to the uniqueness of the way that the program would engage students by creating the actual connection to Indonesia.

Within the broad guidelines of formal curriculum requirements, schools make considered choices about what they include in their educational programs and how those programs will be delivered. It
was not enough that *Global Connections* was an educational initiative directed towards an ‘important’ purpose, the program needed to represent educational promise beyond the normal activity of the school and the normal capability of the teachers.

The word ‘promise’ is used advisedly, because the teachers became engaged with the program based on very little specific knowledge. The purposes of the program were understood in general terms but not clearly defined as addressing particular learning objectives. Detailed content was not known because *Global Connections* had intentionally been minimally scripted to allow for students’ input. Similarly, the ways the program would be implemented were a cause of uncertainty in as much as they relied on university students, who were not educationally trained, as facilitators.

Despite the uncertainty, the research evidence was clear that the teachers considered that the ‘promise’ of a ‘real connection to Indonesian young people’ was sufficient to justify their involvement. The teachers’ willingness to accept relatively vague learning objectives was directly related to the strength of their faith that the ‘real’ connection to Indonesia would inevitably produce positive outcomes. Such a connection was beyond the limits of the schools’ experience and resource capability and therefore represented a learning environment beyond what the school could construct by working independently. Without the distinctiveness of the Indonesian connection the particular teachers involved would not have committed to the program so readily.

However, the evidence generated once the program was operating suggested that the promise of the program could also have been interpreted in other ways that may have been sufficient to encourage partnership – for example ‘social action’. In the case of *Global Connections*, the ‘issues’ phase involved limited and school-based action only and was not considered to offer something beyond what the teachers could themselves construct, but they could see its ‘promise’. They recognised that partnership with an outside organisation could extend opportunities to take social action and could create unique learning environments.

The significance of the discussion above for this research is that the ‘*Global Connections* partnerships’ were distinct from the ‘*Global Connections* program’ and their respective purposes should not be conflated. Many of the particular dimensions of the *Global Connections partnerships* could be disentangled from the specific context and work of the program. The purpose of forming the partnership is one of those dimensions. The partnerships were formed because the program promised the schools a valued learning environment that they could not otherwise achieve.

This in turn suggests that any program that connects to any valued area of a school’s activity could be supported by such a partnership if it involves a unique dimension beyond what the school itself could
offer. That unique dimension must also be visualisable as creating valued learning outcomes for students that fit with the school’s educational and organisational agenda. The conclusion therefore, is that educational partnerships can potentially be constructed to address a range of purposes but in order for schools to share their control of the educational environment (rather than deliver the program themselves) the program involved would need to offer a unique dimension beyond the schools’ ability to replicate.

A corollary to this discussion is that the vaguely defined ‘promise’ of the program made it difficult for the schools to evaluate the program and they were overly dependent on the envisaged nature of the ‘connection’. It seemed that the difficulties experienced in effecting the connection to the Indonesian groups was strongly influential in the schools’ decisions not to continue with the program. However, it was also apparent that other sets of judgements were involved at the end of the engagement in addition to those that were initially used to anticipate the partnership’s worth. This point will be developed further in addressing the next sub-question, but it is worth noting at this stage that once the program was operating all aspects of it contributed to perceptions of its worth. The promise of an alternative learning environment was enough for the teachers to accept the program and commit to the partnership but the program’s worth was eventually judged against a range of factors not initially considered. In this way, the lack of initial specificity with regard to both the program and the partnership objectives made it impossible to evaluate the program or the partnership against initial expectations.

In Plan’s case there was a much more prosaic reason to form a partnership to run Global Connections. Plan needed appropriate access to young people to provide the Australian connection. Schools were only one of several possibilities that existed with regard to potential partners but were favoured because they seemed to offer a stable structured group of young people.

The primary conclusion drawn from this first research sub-question is:

- Partnership programs can serve multiple purposes. Partnerships between formal and non-formal organisations are formed to realise the promise of creating educational opportunities that extend what either partner could achieve independently. The ‘global citizenship’ purpose was important but other purposes could equally encourage partnership.

Other conclusions contributed to the primary conclusion:

- Each partner needs to contribute something that the other partner values and does not readily have available (In Global Connections the schools contributed the students and Plan contributed the connection to Indonesia).
The perceived success of the partnership is likely to be strongly related to, but not limited to, each partner’s ‘special’ contribution.

The purpose of the ‘partnership’ arises from but is not the same as the purpose of the ‘program’. The purpose of the partnership needs to be understood distinctly and separately.

9.3.2 The contributions of the schools’ and Plan’s processes, structures and roles

1(c) How do the schools’ and Plan’s processes, structures and roles respectively contribute to the operations and educational activity of Global Connections and its evaluation?

Any inter-organisational commitment to act in partnership implies that each partner carries a belief that partnership activity could advance their own organisational goals. However, because partnership involves more than one organisation, the two different frameworks of organisational culture and systems can potentially impact on every aspect of proposed partnership activity. In the instance of cross-sectoral partnerships the implications of different organisational frameworks are magnified. Cross-sectoral partnerships involve not only negotiating different operational systems but also negotiating different interests and different ways of thinking and acting.

Within this context, Plan and Melbourne secondary schools both made critical contributions towards enabling Global Connections but this research identified considerable variation in the nature and extent of each organisation’s contribution. The evident variation combined with fundamental differences in the organisations’ existing culture and systems created a foundation for differing interpretations of the program itself, which in turn impacted on the perceived success of the partnerships. The following analysis considers two frameworks. One of those frameworks is primarily concerned with the objective meshing of two operational systems. The other framework incorporates affective considerations of partnership which can usefully aid consideration of how institutional difference can affect the disposition of the partners towards partnership activity.

9.3.2.1 Partnership Continuum: Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration

The way that the existing systems of each partner are utilised by a partnership to address aspects of partnership activity is a key determinant of the way that the partnership functions. Numerous practical and theoretical models have been developed that describe partnerships in terms of the relative contributions of each partner. The extent of each partner’s contribution can vary along a continuum that ranges from one partner having total control through to control being evenly shared between the partners. In broad terms, particular positions along such a continuum can be usefully
Several writers have used the terms cooperation, coordination and collaboration\textsuperscript{98} to signify different levels of engagement and the following descriptions have been adapted from categories of inter-organisational interaction that were described by Forrester (1998 cited by Birzea 2000) in a report to the Council of Europe on a project aimed at education for democratic citizenship:

- **Cooperation**: Informal relationships that exist without any commonly defined mission, structure or planning work. Information is exchanged as needed, and authority is retained by each organisation. Resources and outcomes are separately determined.

- **Coordination**: More formal relationship with understanding of compatible mission(s). Division of roles is agreed and communication channels are developed. Authority remains with individual organisations. Resources and rewards are mutually acknowledged.

- **Collaboration**: More durable and pervasive relationship. Collaborations are of previously separate groups creating new structures with commitment to a common mission. Information is exchanged and collaboratively used. Authority is determined by the new collaborative structure and resources are jointly secured and outcomes shared.

\textit{(adapted from Forrester, 1998 cited in Birzea, 2000)}

This framework suggests that as partnerships become increasingly collaborative, reliance on existing systems within each of the partner organisations is replaced by reliance on new systems that are set up to specifically address the partnership activity. The new systems effectively mirror the individual organisational systems they replace but have their own mandate for engaging in operational activity and their own mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the work of the partnership.

\textit{Global Connections} partnerships between Plan and the schools interpreted within this framework were essentially cooperative but with elements of coordination. The cooperative nature of the partnership structure was determined from the outset by an informal approach to the relationships. The initial contact between Plan and the schools was developed from contact with a classroom teacher and as such bypassed the senior school management and most of the schools’ formal planning mechanisms. There were no memoranda of understanding or similar documentation established which formalised involvement between the organisations. Consequently there were no documented expectations regarding contributions to the program that could guide Plan’s and the schools’ ongoing involvement with each other. This situation meant that many partnership details were not addressed at an organisational level. Details such as: the allocation and use of resources

\textsuperscript{98} Some writers have used these three terms in a different order and have added further divisions (see for example Himmelman, 2002) but all develop the same idea of a continuum engagement which has collaboration as the highest level of interactive involvement.
(including human, financial and physical resources); methods for resolution of issues; decision-making structures; and leadership, all have critical implications with regard to partnership success (Argyris & Schon, 1996). In the case of the Global Connections ‘partnerships’ each organisation retained its existing structures and authority and the majority of decisions regarding program details tended to reside with one or the other partner rather than being the subject of deliberate joint planning attention.

Additionally the program was presented to the schools with an essentially intact educational structure and purpose. Although the program intent was agreed to by the schools there was no joint pre-planning towards a commonly defined mission. In a similar way, the outcomes of both Global Connections and the partnerships were separately determined.

Nevertheless, lines of communication were established and a limited division of roles was agreed which established a degree of coordination in the partnership structure. Additionally, there appeared to be recognition that the organisations’ respective goals were compatible. However, the data analysis suggested that the elements of ‘coordination’ were not explicitly understood. In particular, the exact aims of each organisation for Global Connections were not clearly stated and it was evident that the roles of key participants were uncertain. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there did not seem to be a mechanism for mutually acknowledging the rewards of the program at an organisational level.

The overview presented in table 9.1 illustrates the division of responsibilities and the limited nature of the inter-organisational connection. The only active point of contact between the organisations was through the Plan coordinator and the classroom teacher. In both organisations, the work of the partnership was enacted through one person.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Interaction</th>
<th>Level of Engagement</th>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operations:</strong></td>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>Plan structures and processes utilised for implementing all program activity in school sessions and beyond the school boundaries. Unilateral changes to program content possible. Communication through the Plan coordinator but several people actively involved.</td>
<td>School structures and processes utilised to source students, allocate space, timetable sessions, monitor student attendance, discipline. Unilateral changes to program schedule possible. Only the classroom teacher with an active role and in communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving the logistics of ensuring the program could take place</td>
<td>Characterised by: Distinct division of roles, Separate authority, Communication channels established</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational activity:</strong></td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Plan designed and managed the educational content and intent. Educational activity mediated through the facilitators. No Plan involvement with school-based activity outside of Global Connections sessions</td>
<td>Schools systems managed all activity outside of the facilitated sessions – extra classes linked to sessions not recognised as part of Global Connections. No school systems or roles involved in educational content of Global Connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving what happens during classroom sessions</td>
<td>Characterised by: No common planning. Information exchanged as needed. Communication minimal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment and evaluation of the program</strong></td>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>Independent evaluation of student outcomes, and program effectiveness. MSC, Focus groups, facilitator interviews, Plan coordinator report. Compatible with Plan’s systems of accountability</td>
<td>No formal evaluation of program – subjective interpretation by teacher. Different evidence base. Plan evaluations not compatible with school systems of reporting and accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation of the partnership</strong></td>
<td>Cooperative or less</td>
<td>Independent evaluation subjective evaluation of coordinator and facilitators</td>
<td>No formal evaluation of partnership – subjective interpretation by the teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beyond the actual activity of *Global Connections* there was a significant difference in the way that the program was recognised within each organisation’s operational and strategic context. In Plan’s case the program was recognised as important at a strategic level and was supported with an organisational structure that formalised the significance of *Global Connections*. In addition to the *Global Connections* coordinator, there were several people actively supporting, interpreting and developing the program. The full range of Plan’s structures, roles and processes were able to support *Global Connections*. In the schools’ case, the teacher was acting individually with formal endorsement but without active support. Knowledge of the program in the wider school was minimal and active support and acknowledgement of the program while it was operating was effectively non-existent. As such, the connection of the program to the school was essentially a connection to the micro-environment of the teacher’s own practice within the macro-environment of the wider school activity\(^99\). The dependence of the connection on one individual in the school context was highlighted in 2009 when the teacher was absent for the first session and no-one else in the school was expecting the facilitators or knew what was happening.

In practice therefore, the ‘partnership’ only superficially interacted with the wider school environment. As a result, the schools’ structures, roles and processes influenced *Global Connections* but were not actively engaged to facilitate its operation. The schools as institutions could accept the program provided it could be accommodated within the existing systems and in particular within the practice of a single teacher. In 2009 there was a limited attempt to engage the school systems through a pre-program planning meeting (see section 8.2.2) but it was too late to be effective and did not engage the school’s senior management levels. Nevertheless, the meeting provided evidence that the school structures, roles and processes had the potential to be more actively cooperative, coordinated and probably collaborative.

Therefore, *Global Connections* was implemented in both years within a school context that had partnership capability only in the extent to which the teacher involved had agency within the structures, roles and processes of their own practice. In effect this situation reduced the ‘school’ as the active partner to being the ‘teacher’ as the active partner and the engagement with *Global Connections* became a personal interaction rather than an organisational commitment.

In this regard, there was discussion before the program started about how the program might fit within each teacher’s practice. However, after the program started the Plan coordinator and the teachers effectively carried out their roles independently within their existing organisational

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\(^99\) My interaction with the teachers during the interview process led to a limited degree of wider school involvement in 2009 but prior to that there was no active involvement of other school staff and there was only minimal knowledge of the program at a school management level.
frameworks. The results of that independent activity were then communicated and aligned in a way compatible with a ‘coordination’ partnership. There was no ongoing joint planning process and once the program started the organisations operated independently in all key respects. Information was shared as necessary in a way characteristic of a cooperative relationship. Other people within each organisation were aware of, and supportive of, the program to differing degrees but were not directly involved with implementing the program and were not in direct contact with their counterparts in the other organisation. In effect the organisations were minimally connected.

Figure 9.1: Representation of the inter-organisational connections in the Global Connections partnerships. The program was designed and managed by Plan and connected to the schools through intermittent communication with a single teacher

The cooperation/coordination/collaboration continuum discussed is purely descriptive with regard to the extent that partnership activity resides within each partner organisation. As such, it offers no statements about the relative effectiveness of different partnership constructions in different contexts, or the type of partnership outcomes that might eventuate in each instance. Therefore, although there was sufficient empirical evidence to interpret in a reasonably definitive manner where the Global Connections partnerships were positioned on the cooperative-collaborative continuum it was less straightforward to determine whether that position was the most appropriate.

The cooperation/coordination nature of the Global Connections partnerships initially appeared to be the logical consequence of bringing together two highly experienced organisations with different...
areas of expertise and different resources. There was a ‘common sense’ logic to structuring a partnership between such organisations so that each organisation retained control over the aspects of the program that were particular to their specialised areas of expertise.

However, it was possible to infer from the data that the partnership construction was not optimum. All the key participants exhibited frustration at times with regard to their lack of input into elements that were in their partner’s sphere of control. Additionally, the program was an educational intervention and as such crossed the boundaries of separate expertise and spoke to the core values and institutional purposes of each organisation. The cooperation/coordination partnership structure meant that there were effectively two parallel processes contributing to Global Connections. In each instance the cooperative partner felt that they had very little influence over the relevant decisions being made by their partner. The parallel nature of the processes extended to interpreting the work of the program and the outcomes for the students. Parallel lines do not meet and nor did the separate experiences of the program. The program ended in all instances with the distance between the partners’ involvement preserved and with no way of taking common ownership of the program’s outcomes. The ultimate result was that all the partnerships proved unsustainable. The partnership dissolution occurred despite the fact that all the key participants retained and even enhanced their belief in the ‘promise’ of Global Connections. The question at issue is therefore how to change the partnership in order to nurture rather than frustrate that promise?

This question can be informed by application of the cooperation/coordination/collaboration framework to different contexts and partnership purposes. For example, Denise (1998) used the framework to consider ways that people work with one another in groups that have come together from separate organisations (or from separate places within one organisation):

- **Cooperation**: Starts with an assumption of differences and manages the differences - ‘Get with the program’ – ‘join the team’. A cooperative approach does not encourage innovation and requires a controller.

- **Coordination**: Starts with an assumption of differences and aligns the differences. Aligns different inputs which without coordination would produce a natural divergence. The approach requires that people know what they have to do, when and how.

- **Collaboration**: Starts with an assumption of differences and works to resolve the difference. Collaborations use the differences to create something new. Collaborations create new understanding. A collaborative approach requires an interpersonal structure as well as an inter-organisational structure. (adapted from Denise, 1998)
Denise (1998) suggests that the first two structures are about ‘getting it done’. In contrast, he positions collaboration as a way of solving problems and developing new understandings. Denise further suggests that effective collaborations are anchored in the pursuit of specific results and often involve major differences in perspective. The search within such a partnership is for a shared understanding that neither party could, by itself, create or even derive. Collaborations end in some common ground but they do not begin there (Denise, 1998).

This view implies that collaboration is the most effective approach when innovation is the desired outcome of the partnership activity and when two very different perspectives are brought to bear on the partnership ‘problem’. Such an interpretation is supported by Schrage (1990) who identifies collaboration as being about shared creation. Schrage states that collaboration involves:

...two or more individuals with complementary skills interacting to create a shared understanding that none had previously possessed or could have come to on their own. Collaboration creates a shared meaning about a process, a product, or an event. In this sense, there is nothing routine (about collaborative activity). Something is there that wasn’t there before (Schrage, 1990, p.140).

I concluded that Global Connections was not problematised enough at the outset with regard to the way that it represented innovative practice for both the schools and Plan. The program itself was innovative but so too were the partnerships that enabled it. In both respects, Global Connections was about creating ‘something new’. Therefore, it was perhaps not possible to rely on a cooperative/coordinated partnership structure which used existing systems and roles to support a program that was specifically designed to operate outside of the normal way of doing things. The inherent ‘differentness’ of the program and the partnership relationships would seem to suggest that collaboration should be consciously structured into the partnership approach. However, collaboration interpreted in the context of Global Connections was far from straightforward.

Collaboration in the way it is described above is about acknowledging, using and resolving difference to create new common ground. Such an approach implies compromise and change with regard to the existing ways that the individual organisations function. Birzea (2000) suggests that appropriate structures for civic partnerships involve a willingness to ‘give up unselfishly a part of their previous prerogatives to create a new identity, more efficient and appropriate to common needs’ (Birzea, 2000, p.59).

However, the data from this research appeared to indicate that many of the individual prerogatives that Plan and the schools respectively claimed could not, or should not be changed to involve
collaborative control. In some instances this was because the areas of expertise were distinctly different. For example, none of the teachers considered that they should be part of the recruitment of the facilitators. In a similar way, the Plan coordinator was not looking to be actively involved with student selection processes. Both partners seemed comfortable in these instances to be a cooperative partner.

In other instances the prerogative was so strongly entrenched in the wider culture and practice of each organisation that compromise was not realistic. For example, timetable choices were part of a complex system that linked to all the choices and decisions that schools made about how they run and what they teach. Similarly, the processes of communicating with the Indonesian groups were anchored in the core activity of Plan as an organisation. In these instances, partnership activity necessarily needed to coordinated to fit within the existing organisational constraints.

A further factor that can be considered alongside both these types of organisational prerogative and working against a more collaborative approach was that the schools in particular were time poor. A collaborative approach requires a significantly greater input of time if whole new ways of doing things are constructed rather than deferring to the default of existent structures.

Therefore, in many respects the cooperation/coordination framework for the partnership was not only unchallenged but actively supported during the early stages of establishing the framework for joint involvement in *Global Connections*. However, even though tacitly agreed, the separate spheres of responsibility indicated a need for stronger collaboration for two reasons.

1. Decisions within areas of separate expertise which were just described as being appropriately undertaken separately by each partner were also understood separately and differently. Neither partner understood sufficiently how a decision that they made might impact on program activity that was their partner’s responsibility. A corollary to this was that the processes associated with making decisions were not understood either so the organisations could not offer input in a timely way for consideration by their partner.

2. The program could not be divided into two clearly defined areas of separate expertise. Decisions made by one partner related to an area of overlapping expertise were often understood in different ways. The differences in understanding were often poorly communicated and created confusion. In particular, all aspects of the educational activity and the role of the teacher during the *Global Connections* sessions were ongoing areas of uncertainty. There was no evidence that the teachers wanted to share control or design of *Global Connections* but they did want to be more aware and involved with what was being
done. This was particularly evident when *Global Connections* required integration with the teachers’ own activity.

### 9.3.2.2 A Collaborative Space

I concluded that the problematic elements of the ‘partnership’ were not so much related to certain things being done separately but rather that what was done was understood separately and incompletely. It could be inferred from the lack of mutual understanding that the cooperative/coordinated partnership structure did not provide a sufficient mechanism for each organisation to value the decisions that were being made. For this reason, I am proposing that a ‘collaborative space’ was needed in which all aspects of the partnership could have been explicitly understood by both partners.

A ‘collaborative space’ in the intended sense is not a project management space but represents something that is more akin to a governance framework for the partnership activity. ‘Governance’ is a complex and contested concept which has been appropriated in different ways by many disciplines in many different contexts including education and development (see, for example; AusAID, 2011b; World Bank, 1991; DEECD, 2007). The discourse on governance is beyond the scope of this thesis but it generally involves consideration of ethics and values and implies a high level of responsibility. I have used it (albeit in a limited way) to reflect the fact that bringing different organisations together collaboratively requires consideration of higher order dimensions of engagement like values and strategic missions rather than just operational mechanics. In this thesis, I intend that governance should be interpreted in a specific way informed by Pierre (2000) who describes governance as establishing and sustaining coherence between different interests which have different purposes and objectives.

The significance of thinking about the inter-organisational connection from this type of governance perspective is that it inherently involves taking collective ownership and responsibility for the partnership’s activity and outcomes. In turn, collective ownership implies that an area of overlap needs to be created between the disparate realities of the different sectoral interests. In this way, whatever the difference in the roles of each organisation with regard to the program operations, the aim of creating a collaborative partnership space within the overall partnership structure would be to strengthen the common ground between the partners and to allow each partner to appreciate the other’s perspective on ground that was not common. Such an aim implies that the collaborative space should be about more than ‘making it happen’ and should explicitly address the reasons for, and consequences of the program activity.
9.3.2.3 Complicated and Complex

*Global Connections* was both ‘complicated’ with its many moving parts and ‘complex’ with the uncertainty of its outcomes (Rogers, 2008). The complicated nature of the program was primarily an operational issue which could, in many instances, be managed by cooperative or coordinated action. However, such coordinated action needed to be collaboratively understood so that the consequences could be anticipated and communicated to the people likely to be affected by the actions. The complexity of the program was perhaps more significant and requiring of higher level collaborative attention. The emergent and innovative nature of the program with its lack of clearly defined outcomes called for new understanding that linked to each organisation’s reasons for undertaking the program activity.

In summary, a collaborative space would focus on collaboration towards shared understanding and shared meaning that particularly addresses the program’s complexity. As such, a ‘collaborative space’ would allow expectations to be defined along with making clear areas of responsibility and ways of determining and representing the program performance. The ‘common mission’ of the collaborative activity would be the success of the program from both organisations’ perspectives.

9.3.2.4 Trust, Mutuality, Reciprocity

A more specific framing of what and how things should be addressed within a collaborative space can be informed by considering the role of trust, mutuality and reciprocity within partnerships. The work of Kruger et al. (2009) on school-university partnerships describes partnership as a social practice characterised by Trust, Mutuality and Reciprocity which they define as follows:

- **Trust:** the commitment and expertise that each of the main stakeholders brings to the partnership in the expectation that it will provide them with the benefits each seeks.

- **Mutuality:** the extent to which the stakeholders recognise that working together does lead to the benefits each esteems.

- **Reciprocity:** each stakeholder recognises and values what the others bring to the partnership.

These descriptions contain an implicit component of faith and goodwill that suggests high levels of these factors can support partnership in a way that does not need to be explicated. Indeed, the authors specifically state that ‘The condition for partnerships based on trust, mutuality and reciprocity is that the stakeholders can come together in ways which do not tightly define their expectations for and contributions to the partnership’ (Kruger et al., 2009, p.10).
In keeping with this statement, this research showed unequivocally that the partners’ expectations and contributions were not tightly defined when they came together and that there were apparently high levels of trust, reciprocity and mutuality involved. However, this research also showed unequivocally that the lack of defined expectations and contributions was problematic. It seemed probable that the high levels of trust, mutuality and reciprocity acted against a need to explicitly state expectations and reinforced the division of operational responsibilities. The data analysis indicated that the factors of trust, mutuality and reciprocity were based on platforms derived from each partner’s own practice and did not incorporate the uncertainty that was inevitably present in such an innovative program. Additionally, fundamental differences in organisational structure and educational approach within each sector meant that the platforms were different and therefore common understanding generated by reliance on trust, mutuality and reciprocity rather than active negotiation could not be assumed. The following discussion considers the ways that each of these factors operated to generate similar but different understanding in each sectoral context:

Trust: Each organisation fully committed their expertise. The extent of the commitment was demonstrated in multiple ways and was exemplified by the willingness of key participants to commit their time and energy beyond their normal employment obligations. This was particularly evident to me in my role as the researcher in the unreserved acceptance of the added time demands which the research interviews created. However, any commitment made was unavoidably limited by the parameters of existing organisational constraints.

In addition to the high trust shown by their own commitment, each organisation believed that their partner was highly committed to *Global Connections*. However, this belief was not accompanied with sufficient knowledge of their partner organisation’s constraints and how those constraints might compete with their commitment to the program. In a similar way, not understanding exactly what constituted expertise in areas outside each partner’s own expertise created misunderstandings of what could be done. It seemed that a high level of trust notwithstanding, both partners (and the program) would have benefitted from articulation of the extent and limits of the commitment and expertise each was providing. In some instances, the ‘full’ commitment of both partners still left unfilled gaps with regard to the program needs – for example the lack of funding for a teacher in 2009. In other instances, a commitment of expertise had no outlet in the program. For example the passionate interest and commitment of some teachers in 2008 was not utilised within the program. In both situations, frustration resulted and an opportunity to potentially strengthen the program appeared to be missed.
Mutuality: Both partners absolutely believed that some of the outcomes they hoped for from the program would only be possible by working together. The program itself was recognised as innovative and beyond each organisation’s individual capacity to create. However, ideas of exactly what working together would look like were more informed by faith than actively constructed. By the program’s conclusion, the data indicated that none of the teachers thought they were ‘working together’ with Plan (or the facilitators) on the educational activity of *Global Connections*. As a result, the teachers were marginalised from their professional roles and were effectively observing a program ‘delivered’ from outside.

Additionally, the ‘benefits that each partner hoped for’ were not clearly understood by their partner. In particular, the multiple purposes of the program to which Plan was committed were not understood by the schools, and the heavy weighting that the teachers were attributing to the ‘real’ Indonesian connection was not recognised by Plan in 2008. There was very strong evidence that the differences of the organisational contexts meant that the promise of benefit represented by mutuality was differently framed. The failure of the program to deliver that promise contributed strongly to the dissatisfaction that led the teachers to withdraw after one year. The teachers did not feel that they worked together with Plan and felt that the program did not deliver the connection-related outcomes they esteemed. It seemed certain that both of these elements could have been more collaboratively understood earlier in the program.

Reciprocity: Each partner believed that they recognised and valued what the other partner brought to the program. However, as the discussion on trust and mutuality indicated, value tended to be assigned to what each partner understood of the others ‘normal’ practice and this was generally incomplete and in several instances misleading. Compounding the lack of understanding of what their partner was bringing, was that each partner could not be fully sure of what they themselves were bringing because of uncertainty about the transformative impact of the program.

The research data indicated that reciprocity in the partnerships was limited and was not strengthened during the program. Each organisation maintained their separateness throughout *Global Connections* and did not actively seek to extend their understanding and appreciation of their partner’s contribution. As a result both partners finished their involvement unsure of what the program meant to their partner.

It did not appear that either organisation incorporated learning from the engagement based on the other organisation’s interpretation of education. It seemed clear that although some of the teachers had been learners within the context of *Global Connections* in a way that might inform their own practice, the schools would move into the following year untouched by the contact with the
program. In a similar way, although *Global Connections* was constantly evolving in response to Plan’s learning about the way it functioned, there was no evidence in either year that Plan actively sought input into interpretations of the educational activity from the schools. It seemed that the partnership did not provide a forum for either organisation to really recognise and value what the other organisation represented as an education provider.

The research analysis indicated that the levels of trust, mutuality and reciprocity fell during all the partnerships. Of particular significance was the low level of reciprocity by the end of the program which seemed decisive with regard to the lack of sustainability in the partnership relationships.

In Plan’s case, trust remained high in as much as their level of commitment was maintained and perhaps increased when it became necessary to respond to unplanned program events. However, mutuality and reciprocity both declined as the program progressed and it became necessary to make compromises owing to some of the school restraints (especially the impact of the shortened Year 10 program in 2008). In all instances the program ended with Plan seemingly less involved with the schools than they were at the outset. This situation led to Plan rethinking the way that they were working with schools in both years. In fact, Plan was led to seriously question whether working with schools at all was the best way of further developing *Global Connections*. Clearly reciprocity as measured by the value Plan assigned to the schools’ contributions declined significantly.

The schools’ all appeared to experience a lowering of all three attributes. As the program unfolded, the teachers downgraded their perception of the benefits associated with the program and came to realise that their own expertise was only required in a very limited way. These developments led to a lowering of their commitment and they did not develop any sense of ownership with regard to the program outcomes. The unanimous view was that *Global Connections* was a program which was ‘owned’ and delivered by Plan (albeit indirectly through the facilitators). Mutuality fell proportionately, and in tandem, with the teachers reduced involvement and the growing expectation that some of the principal benefits would not eventuate. It was clear that the teachers were no longer valuing *Global Connections* as highly by the end of the program and by extension they were not valuing what Plan was contributing. Reciprocity had fallen to the extent that the teachers were not interested in continuing their involvement.

In making their judgements however, the teachers were distanced from the kind of evidence base that they would normally use to assess student learning and there was a distinct lack of certainty about the type and depth of the learning that did occur. Essentially the teachers were using.

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100 In 2010, Plan did not work with schools and trialled a version of the *Global Connections* program with young people in youth groups outside of schools.
experience accumulated through their own practice to subjectively evaluate a program that they acknowledged was outside their experience. In this respect, all the teachers exhibited a high concordance with regard to their dispositions towards aspects of the program despite their very different personal and situational circumstances. This in turn suggested that interpretations of the program were being constructed through a commonly held and strongly influential framework in a way that aligned with Bourdieu’s (1974, 1980) description of institutional influence on habitus and practice (see section 4.2 for elaboration of Bourdieu’s social theory).

Given also that the individual schools represented a wide spectrum of the different schools in Melbourne, it seems likely that the common interpretations of the teachers reflected the broader context of formal education as a social field. Bourdieu (1974,1980) suggests that the conditioning associated with a particular set of influences like those of formal education systems can ‘collectively orchestrate and regulate responses without requiring the organising action of a conductor’ (Bourdieu, 1974,1980, p. 439). It would seem that in the absence of alternative evidence gathered through active participation, the teachers’ durable habitus structures operated to inform their evaluations and that the institutional effect of formal education was producing a ‘second nature’ regulation of their responses. Although it seemed that Global Connections might offer the possibility of an event that would confront the habitus of the teachers they were not closely enough associated with the program for it to provide the necessary argument towards dispositional change (Bourdieu 1974,1980).

Although Plan was the only NGO sector organisation involved, the common commitment of individuals within the organisation to particular educational interpretations was evident. The difference in the way that Global Connections was understood by Plan compared to the teachers’ common view suggests that a similar set of influences might operate in the case of other development NGOs to influence habitus and practice.

An inference that can be drawn from the action of different institutional influences on ‘second nature’ responses is that trust, mutuality and reciprocity cannot be taken for granted as supporting partnerships involving cross-sectoral interaction and/or transformative programs. Specific questions that underpin trust, mutuality and reciprocity need to be consciously addressed:

What constitutes each organisation’s commitment and expertise?
How will that commitment and expertise be called on?
What benefits are sought? How does working together enable those benefits?
What does ‘working together’ mean?
Addressing these questions collaboratively automatically raises reciprocity by anchoring more accurately each partner’s recognition of the other. The evidence from this research suggests that trust, mutuality and reciprocity were interdependent and were responsive to program events. Further to this, it seemed that the base of support that these factors provided shifted in response to interpretations that were anchored in a wider context than the Global Connections events that were taking place in the classroom sessions.

9.3.2.5 School Management

In order to connect the collaborative space to the wider context of each organisation, and to give credence and authority to its governance purpose it would seem to be axiomatic that the space should link to the higher management levels of each organisation. In the context of this project that would mean more inclusive involvement of the schools. The fact that Global Connections was enacted through one teacher inherently limited the extent of the schools’ commitment and expertise to that which the teacher could contribute. Additionally, the teacher’s contribution was inevitably limited by Global Connections being only part of their workload and considered more in the nature of an experiment than part of a key goal of their professional year. Limiting the commitment and expertise in turn limits the perception of the anticipated and realised benefits of the program to the teacher’s vision and practice. Ultimately the teacher was the sole arbiter of the program’s success but was not accountable for decisions within a framework of organisational expectations. There data provided strong circumstantial evidence that the lack of integration with the school contributed to the ease with which the teachers could disengage from the program.

This discussion suggests that the schools need to be represented in the proposed collaborative space by other people in addition to the teacher. In the same way that the effectiveness of education for citizenship is strengthened with a whole school and wider community approach (Tudball, 2009) it would seem reasonable to assume that partnerships to enable such education would also be strengthened by reaching beyond the classroom to the wider school community. Although the existence of a ‘champion’ teacher has been identified as extremely significant with respect to establishing reform and transformative programs in schools their effectiveness is significantly magnified when school management and the wider school systems actively support change (see for example evaluations of a transformative program to introduce sustainability initiatives to schools Guevara & King, 2009; Guevara et al., 2010).

In particular, the school management (preferably the Principal) should be part of the early phase that establishes the program and the final stages that evaluate and celebrate the program. Although the collaborative space should not be conflated with ‘project management’, the involvement of the
Principal facilitates the possibility for other people to be included in critical management decisions involving program operations. For example, timetablers, academic advisors, curriculum designers, people responsible for pastoral care of students, and people tasked with communicating school activity to the school community can all contribute to particular decisions and activity. Including such people supports the teacher and broadens the connection to the school at the same time as strengthening the operational effectiveness of the program. The data strongly indicated that it did not work for the teacher to replace all the existing systems that controlled, coordinated and assessed school activity. The attempt in 2009 to structure an early planning meeting in a way that included a range of people who occupied key roles in the school hinted at the promise of a more collaborative approach, but there were no senior management present and so authority to ensure action outside of the meeting was significantly diluted.

It could be argued also that it is inappropriate for an outside organisation to bypass the school management systems and enter a classroom to run a program of their own design without being accountable to school expectations. Although the research showed that Plan assiduously avoided presenting a particular worldview in *Global Connections*, the possibility for ‘advocacy’ to replace ‘education’ is inherently present when an organisation with particular vested interests takes control of educational spaces (Jickling, 2003; 2005).

The more transformative a program is intended to be, the more difference there is between the organisations, the wider the intended reach of the program, and the more that a program is managed from outside the school, then the stronger the imperative for a collaborative space to be created which establishes a partnership governance that equalises the organisations’ representation. In many ways the collaborative space that has been proposed parallels the intent of *Global Connections* itself. A ‘collaborative space’ is about recognising and negotiating of plural rationalities thereby enabling alternative worldviews to be represented without prejudice and collectively understood. My impression during the research was that the processes which operated to give ‘voice’ to the other that characterised the *Global Connections* program did not work as effectively to give ‘voice’ to the partners that enabled the program. I concluded that without including the school management it was not possible to represent the schools’ voices appropriately.
Figure 9.2: A ‘Collaborative Space’ – overlapping and bridging the two organisations but distinct from each organisational space

Key points from addressing this research sub-question to carry forward to a model of effective partnership include:

- Partnerships can involve cooperation, coordination, collaboration or a mix of these characteristics.
- Cooperation and coordination can ‘get things done’ and can be effective operationally. Collaboration is required to address purposes and consequences of partnership activity.
- Collaboration implies an equal ‘voice’ but not necessarily an equal contribution to program activity.
- Cross-sectoral educational collaboration involves different structures, roles and processes but also involves different worldviews, values and purposes for education.
- Cooperative and coordinated components of cross-sectoral partnerships need to be collaboratively understood.
- Governance and collective understanding of cross-sectoral partnerships requires collaboration – but management of programs does not.
- Collaborations involving governance and invoking consideration of purposes, strategic goals and values should involve senior management.
- Transformative and complex programs invoke the same collaborative imperatives as cross-sectoral interactions to understand the change they represent.
• Trust, mutuality and reciprocity underpin partnerships and cannot be taken for granted in cross-sectoral partnerships but need to be constructed and supported.

• Partnerships are stronger in schools if they connect to the wider school context.

• Champion teachers are important to transformative programs but need wider school support to be fully effective.

• Multiple connections to the school reduce reliance on a single person and increase accountability for outcomes.

9.3.3 Other partnerships within Global Connections

1 (d) How can the other partnerships that exist within the wider Global Connections program (for example; Plan Australia-Youth facilitators, Plan Australia-Plan Indonesia) inform understanding of the school-Plan partnerships?

In addition to their relationships with the schools, Plan also formed ‘partnerships’ with the facilitators to deliver the program in the schools, and a ‘partnership’ with Plan Indonesia to enable the connection between the groups of young people in each country. The full range of interactions that took place in these other partnerships were not actively investigated in this project but sufficient evidence emerged from primary and secondary data sources to permit a limited comparison of the way that particular partnership characteristics impacted on the different partnership contexts. In particular, the approach to these other partnerships was able to be considered with regard to their position on the cooperation/coordination/collaboration continuum; the impact of complicatedness and complexity; and how trust, mutuality and reciprocity were manifest in the relationships. Plan was the common denominator in all these relationships and a comparison of the different partnership attributes allowed an insight into the flexibility within the organisation to adapt their approach to partnership - ‘Did one size fit all?’

9.3.3.1 Plan and the Facilitators

Several observations were made that compared and contrasted the relationship of ‘Plan and the facilitators’ with the relationship of ‘Plan and the schools’:

• A Memorandum of Understanding established the facilitator relationship (No documentation equivalent existed with the schools).

• Many scheduled semi-structured and structured meetings to support the facilitators took place before, during and after the actual period of the program. Some were partially
documented and identified specific actions to be initiated (very few Plan-school meetings occurred and no clearly documented and structured ones).

- Pre-program facilitator meetings involved an introduction to the program and the theoretical principles behind its design. These meetings were scheduled and were in the nature of training for the facilitators. Plan set the agenda and determined the content (No pre-program ‘training’ occurred for the teachers).

- Regularly scheduled mid-program meetings involving the Plan coordinator and the facilitators covered all aspects of the program including educational activity, its purposes, and outcomes but also addressed issues, problems, relationships and other factors relevant to the context as well as the content of the program. The facilitators and Plan could both add to the agenda (ad hoc contact with the teachers in response to events usually by email or phone).

- Post-program meetings allowed evaluation, celebration, and debriefing of Global Connections experiences (no post-program debriefing or project review with the schools).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Element</th>
<th>Plan - Facilitators</th>
<th>Plan - Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-program meetings</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-program training</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-program structured and planned meetings – interpreting program activity and intent</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-program unplanned meetings responding to program events</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-program collaborative evaluation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.2: Comparison of interactional structure: Plan-facilitator and Plan-School relationships
The research data also enabled a comparison between the experiences of the facilitators and the teachers.

- The facilitators all had different and primarily individual goals related to their participation in *Global Connections*. (Teachers were all driven by student-oriented goals).

- Despite the initial training, the facilitators had only vague understanding of the program aims at the time the program began, minimal pedagogical knowledge and a high degree of uncertainty about what the classroom interactions would look like (the teachers had pedagogical knowledge but a very similar level of uncertainty).

- The facilitators’ personal experiences of the program significantly impacted on the value they attached to the program. Most of the facilitators had moments of discomfort during the program and many were led to question their involvement but nearly all viewed the program as an extremely positive experience by the end (The teachers personal experiences were filtered through a lens of professional practice but were similarly important).

- The facilitators had a wide range of views about the learning that occurred in the program and were uncertain about depth of learning and engagement of some students (mirroring the teachers).

The Plan-facilitator relationships appeared to begin as strongly cooperative but progressed along the continuum to be highly collaborative at the end. The facilitators had very limited knowledge of, or expectations for, the program initially. Everything concerning the program needed to be introduced and led by Plan at the earliest stages. However, from the outset Plan invited the facilitators to actively participate and their contributions increased in scope as the program developed. By the final stages, the relationship was essentially collaborative and in many instances the facilitators were the more interactive and active partner. Coordination was an ongoing feature of the relationship as a result of the logistical necessity of aligning the ‘structures’ of the facilitators’ different university timetables and work commitments with Plan and the schools’ operational timetables.

Trust, mutuality and reciprocity (Kruger et al., 2009) were evident in the partners at the outset of the relationships in a way that closely approximated the situation with Plan and the teachers. However in contrast to the school-based partnerships, these attributes of partnership increased as the partnerships progressed.

- Trust: As were the teachers, the facilitators were fully committing their ‘expertise’ at the beginning but were unsure of what that commitment would entail. Specifically, they were
unsure of their respective expertises and how they would be able to respond to the demands of the partnership and the program. Additionally, they were unsure of how their commitment would conflict with the reality of other commitments in their lives that acted to limit their involvement. At times, nearly all the facilitators had moments of crisis when their commitment wavered as the reality of the program’s impact became clear. However, the ongoing processes of interaction between Plan and their fellow facilitators allowed the facilitators to work through the issues and by the end of the program most of them were even more committed and were working hard towards achieving the best possible outcomes for ‘their’ students. They all recognised that their involvement with the program had been a positive learning experience and that they had extended their ‘expertise’.

Plan considered that the facilitators were a major part of the Global Connections design. The facilitators were considered equally as young people alongside the school students and the program goals were directed towards the outcomes for both groups. In this way, Plan was specifically committed to the facilitators as learners within the program as well as partners delivering the program. Philosophically Plan was very strongly committed to empowering the facilitators within the relationship and there was always a drive towards collaboration. Trust for both groups remained intact at the end of the year and had come to be grounded in the reality of the program rather than assumptions of what the program might be.

- Mutuality: There were again parallels with the teachers at the outset. The facilitators felt that working with Plan was the only way to achieve the benefits they esteemed but they were also framing those benefits in ways that were different to Plan. In the case of the facilitators the benefits were largely interpreted in terms of their own goals and development which were not immediately related to the outcomes of the school students. For example some of the facilitators were interested in careers in development and were looking to gain insights into what working with Plan could mean professionally. In a similar way to what eventuated with the teachers, many of the facilitators came to realise that the benefits they esteemed may not develop as they had anticipated. However, in contrast to the teachers, the facilitators were able to recognise other benefits that were emerging and could focus on those to an extent that mitigated the prospect of disillusionment. By the end of the program the facilitators had gained benefits that they were able to recognise and value as being the result of the interaction with Plan.

In a similar way, Plan was responsive to the particular circumstances of the facilitators and was able to reformulate their own vision of the benefits from working together. It was clear that Plan did not
have a ‘one size fits all’ approach to the facilitators and the benefit outcomes for Plan in 2008 and 2009 were significantly different as described by the Plan coordinator. In both years the reality of the benefits by the end of the year exceeded the anticipated benefits even if they were framed in different terms. It seemed that mutuality was increased for both Plan and the facilitators.

- Reciprocity: The facilitators, like the teachers, believed they recognised and valued what Plan brought to the partnership but that belief was based on assumptions about the organisation and the development sector rather than detailed knowledge. Unlike the teachers however, the facilitators were interpreting Plan in a much wider context than Global Connections of which they knew nothing initially. By the end of the program the facilitators had all come to value what Plan brought to Global Connections from a significantly more grounded view of what Plan represented as an organisation.

Similarly, each new group of facilitators was recognised from the outset as being different and Plan was philosophically committed to enabling each of them as young people within the context of Global Connections’ aims. As such, the value that the facilitators were seen as bringing to the partnership was initially based on assumptions and the promise of contribution rather than knowledge of what the facilitators could bring. The involvement with the facilitators that occurred during the program meant that the appreciation of what had been brought to the program was very high by the end of each year. It was evident that reciprocity had been significantly raised for both groups.

Both the Plan coordinator and the facilitators identified the interactions outside of the Global Connections classroom sessions as critical with regard to building understanding, resolving issues and thereby strengthening the relationship. The interactions were both formally structured through regular meetings and also informally constructed through phone calls or email. I concluded that a ‘collaborative space’ was created that enabled a progression from cooperation to collaboration to occur. The interactive space was not created for project management in the sense of constructing the classroom sessions. In fact, each team of facilitators effectively prepared each session with very little input from Plan or other teams. Instead, both Plan and the facilitators identified the meetings as important for understanding the program by addressing ‘How and Why?’ and ‘What does it mean?’ questions. This was confirmed by my own observations and involvement in some of the mid-program sessions.

101 Several of the facilitators from these years maintained relationships with Plan in a variety of ways – see section 8.3 footnotes for more detail.
In this way, the meetings between Plan and the facilitators addressed the ‘complexity’ of *Global Connections* and seemed to parallel the governance intent of a collaborative space in that it was primarily concerned with maintaining coherence between different interests, different purposes and multiple objectives (Pierre, 2000). The collaborative interactions were about creating an enabling environment for mutually interpreting what was occurring. It seemed evident that without this extra collaborative activity the facilitators would have found completing the project challenging. The meetings were equally important for the Plan coordinator who was not directly involved with the delivery of the classroom sessions and so relied on facilitator feedback to be informed of the program’s progress. Although the rationale for the interactive space was primarily related to the program’s complexity and the recognition that meaning would need to be consciously and collaboratively created, the space also proved to be important for negotiating the program’s complicatedness. This was particularly evident when problems developed with regard to the exchange of communication pieces, and timing issues meant that the program design needed adjusting.

**9.3.3.2 Plan Australia and Plan Indonesia**

I visited the Indonesian sites of *Global Connections* as part of the broader ARC project and the Indonesian coordinator also visited Melbourne. During these occasions there was a limited opportunity to observe the relationship between the two Plan organisations but no formal research data was generated specific to this project. Nevertheless, the firsthand contact with key people enabled me to develop a strong sense of the relationship and the impressions formed were further developed in the last interview with the Plan coordinator.

Although Plan Australia and Plan Indonesia had jointly facilitated *Global Connections* in previous years, the Indonesian coordinator and the Australian coordinator were both new to their roles in 2008 when this project commenced and in many ways the partnership relationship needed to be re-established.

Trust, mutuality and reciprocity were inherently high given that both Plan offices were broadly under the umbrella of Plan as an international organisation. For similar reasons, the partnership intent was aimed at being collaborative from the outset. Nevertheless, *Global Connections* fit within each organisation in fundamentally different ways and these partnership characteristics all needed to be constructed and then supported throughout the program’s duration. Both the complicated and complex nature of the interactions meant that communication and negotiation was required with regard to all aspects of the program’s operations and aims. The two Plan organisations were strongly
committed at a philosophical level but were unsure of the constraints and practical realities that limited each other’s practical commitment.

The Plan coordinator described how multiple interactions between the coordinators were required to develop appropriate understanding of what each organisation was able to bring to the partnership, their aims for the program and the extent of their ability to commit to the program’s practical requirements. The nature of the program and the cross-cultural connection meant that nothing could be taken for granted and each component of the program had to be explicitly addressed. Despite the core connection of the two Plan offices, trust, mutuality and reciprocity needed to be continually built and reinforced during ongoing interactions in order to negotiate the program’s complicatedness, interpret its complexity and thereby strengthen the value and effectiveness of the partnership.

As a result, the partnership was not automatically collaborative. The interactions between the organisations started from a cooperative and coordinated framework that allowed the different inputs to be aligned before more collaborative interaction was possible. The implication for this analysis is that an effective ‘collaborative space’ was created in tandem with a ‘management space’ to enable the partnership. Although much of the activity that the coordinators communicated about was directed towards operational management, there was necessarily an extra dimension that connected the organisations in a way that bridged their cross-cultural and cross-country separation. This connection recognised the different motivations and purposes of each organisation and my suggestion is that the cross-cultural and cross-country nature of the connection mirrored in many essential respects the cross-sectoral connection of Plan and the schools. The implication would seem to be that similar attention is required to bridge the cross-sectoral divide.

The key points to take forward to a model of partnership essentially mirror and therefore reinforce the key points identified when addressing the previous sub-question which was limited in scope to the Plan-school relationships. This suggests that the findings from this research potentially inform thinking about wider partnership contexts than those of schools and NGOs.

- Collaboration increases effectiveness for partnerships involving essentially different groups.
- Collaboration bridges difference and builds trust, mutuality and reciprocity.
- Collaboration clarifies understanding of complex and complicated programs.
- Complex and complicated programs require collaboration to support them even in same sectoral partnerships.
• The more complex and complicated a program the more collaboration is implicated.

9.3.4 Interpreting the educational activity of Global Connections

1 (e) How do the schools and Plan interpret the educational activity of Global Connections?

Global Connections is an educational intervention and its success must ultimately be judged in terms of the educational experiences it provides for the learners involved. Although there were multiple groups of learners within the broader context of the program the appropriateness of its inclusion in schools is necessarily specifically aligned to the outcomes for the school students. In this respect, analysis of the data indicated that both the schools and Plan were considering the students’ engagement with the program’s:

• Purpose: Why commit to Global Connections?
• Content: What happened educationally in the program?
• Pedagogy: How was the education constructed?

The nature of Global Connections was such that all three of these elements were inextricably intertwined. However, the three categories were identifiable in the data and they will be considered separately before being combined holistically at the end of this section.

9.3.4.1 Purpose

Within the multiple purposes for educational activity (see section 2.3.3), Global Connections serves a socially-oriented purpose that aligns with transformative educational purposes in the tradition of Dewey (1916/2009;1938/1997), Freire (1970) and other socially concerned educators. Plan envisaged the program as being inherently transformative in the way that it encouraged critical thinking and could lead students to reconceptualise the ways that they fit within the global context of modern society.

Although some writers suggest that formal education is currently concerned primarily with economic goals and that educational systems are strongly influenced by neoliberal political agenda and managerialism (for example: Priestley, 2002; Marginson,1999; Wyn and Woodman, 2006; Vongalis-Macrow, 2007), the formal curriculum documents governing education in the state of Victoria and broader educational guidelines issued at a Commonwealth level provide scope for incorporating social-oriented agenda (VCAA, 2010a; MCEETYA, 2008). Global citizenship is specifically identified as being an educational aim within these documents but there are no clear guidelines as to what
constitutes a global citizen or how the aim of global citizenship might be accomplished (Rizvi, 2004; Henderson, 2005).

The transformative intentions of *Global Connections* and the emergent nature of its scope to create innovative learning meant that the program’s purposes were described and documented in general terms only. Nevertheless, the schools at both an individual teacher and a management level unanimously endorsed the general ‘active citizenship’ aims of *Global Connections*. The key people in the schools understood that the general aims of *Global Connections* fit within the domain of ‘Civics and Citizenship’ as part of the ‘Personal and Social Learning’ strand of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) and as such the aims were endorsed by the formal curriculum. However, exactly what this meant was extremely vague and no specific learning objectives from the VELS were attached to the students’ participation. There seemed to be an unspoken consensus that the program offered students a unique opportunity to engage with young people in Indonesia and that this in itself would lead to positive learning outcomes. In this way, the program was recognised for its transformative potential with regard to the students’ experiences but was not seen as transformative with regard to the purposes of formal education.

Additionally, all the schools strongly identified the program’s social action aims as being consistent with their school’s broader social mission. In this way, the program seemed to serve an organisational purpose with regard to the way that the schools connected to their communities and were seen to promote particular values including those associated with supporting global citizenship.

For Plan, *Global Connections* was connected to multiple purposes that extended beyond the school arena of educational outcomes. The program was connected in a wide range of ways to Plan’s core philosophies about working with young people. However, Plan did not specifically articulate the wider context of the program’s purpose in discussions with the schools and focused instead on the student-centred educational purposes which they interpreted in a similar way to the schools. They did not have specific learning objectives beyond the students’ actual engagement with the program activity. It was assumed that the opportunity for students to construct the interactions within the program around areas of concern to them in ways that they chose would create a productive learning environment with positive outcomes. In this way, the processes of engagement in the program were considered a major part of the learning. Plan believed that the nature of the program would lead students to develop ideas about global citizenship and the ways that they were part of a global community. However, the program was specifically designed to avoid shaping the learning towards a particular image of global citizenship. The lack of specified outcomes was a

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102 As distinct from program objectives. For example, a program objective was to produce a ‘communication piece’ but specific learning outcomes that should result for the students from producing the communication were not prescribed.
deliberate strategy by Plan. *Global Connections* was a response to an organisational purpose related to Plan’s commitment to promoting genuine youth participation and youth-led learning. In this respect, Plan wanted to give as much autonomy as possible to the program participants including control over what and how they learnt.

It seemed that the educational purpose of *Global Connections* was essentially uncontested with respect to the ways that the schools and Plan were interpreting the program’s aims when the program was first introduced to each school. However, it is probable that each of the partners understood differently the way that the purpose would be fulfilled. In the case of the schools and in particular the teachers, there was an expectation that particular preconceived changes in thinking would result from the program but for Plan the possible outcomes were considerably more flexible. Nevertheless, both partners seemed to be looking at the program’s purpose in terms of it being socially transformative education with a goal of social reconstruction of a type consistent with socially critical constructivism (see for example: Geelan, 1997; Kincheloe, 2008). Any possible differences in specific interpretation appeared unproblematic at the outset. None of the partners articulated specific learning outcomes and there appeared to be a belief that the uniqueness of the educational environment would create a meaningful experience for the students. There was certainly a willingness to let the program unfold and a sense of anticipation about what would develop.

As the program unfolded in both years, uncertainty developed in the schools about whether the program was meeting its purpose. In 2008, both Plan and the schools were aware by the mid-program stage that the connection to Indonesia had not occurred in the way that had been anticipated and was impacting on the program. In the case of the schools the situation conflicted with what they had understood to be the fundamental purpose of the program. The schools had anticipated that a major part of the ‘real’ learning for their students would come out of the interactions with the Indonesians. In 2009, the school was additionally uncertain because the teacher was not fully aware of what was happening in the program.

For Plan, the uncertainty was more related to their inability to effect the connection which had stalled the classroom activity and their perception that the students were not as deeply engaged as had been intended. Although the program had not stalled in 2009, the program had developed slowly and Plan was again concerned about the lack of engagement by the students with issues at a deeper level.

The key participants involved in the program’s delivery (the Plan coordinator, the teacher, and the facilitators) communicated with each other and the program’s purpose was refocussed on the goal of taking social action about a local issue of concern to the students. Once again however, there was
uncertainty expressed by the school as to how well the program met the final goal. There was considerable time pressure and some groups did not get to take action while others did so in what was considered a minimal way. None of the groups had time to reflect on and process the learning associated with their actions. The schools’ concerns about the incompleteness of the action phase link strongly to literature which suggests that engagement in issues of concern without being able to take action and make a difference that is perceived to be effective can be disempowering (Hwang et al., 2000; Nagel, 2005).

Plan by contrast recognised that the final action stage of the program was abbreviated and less than had been planned but was reasonably satisfied that the students had remained engaged and had had very positive outcomes during the processes that led to the final stages. Of significance here, is that Plan used an evaluation process (The Most Significant Change Technique) to specifically discover the students’ ideas about what the program meant to them and were able to match the perceived outcomes to their concept of the program’s purposes. The schools by contrast had no way of interpreting the students’ outcomes directly and could only draw conclusions from their observations. As a result, the schools necessarily gave considerable weight to such things as whether or not the exchange of communications happened and whether or not the actions were completed when judging whether the program achieved its purposes.

The actual effectiveness with which the purposes were achieved notwithstanding, the educational purposes were essentially embraced by both Plan and the schools suggesting that Global Connections is potentially able to meet the educational purposes of both formal and non-formal education.

In terms of Global Connections meeting the wider purposes of the organisations beyond the students’ learning outcomes there was a stark contrast. Plan fully engaged with all aspects of the program at an organisational level and used the knowledge generated from it to enhance their understanding of how they set strategic goals related to young people. However, in all cases, the program failed to establish an identity within the schools’ wider community beyond the classrooms actively participating. As a result, Global Connections was not celebrated at a school level and did not become part of the frameworks that the school used to inform its own practice or to communicate its role in the community. In this sense, the program did not effectively serve an organisational purpose in the schools.

Global Connections was complex in the way that it was interacting with multiple but inexactly articulated aims (Rogers, 2008). It would seem to be inevitable that organisations with fundamentally

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103 Although the Most Significant Change stories were made available to the schools at a later date it was well after the program had finished and after the researcher’s interviews. Additionally, the technique was not one that was a familiar way for teachers to evaluate students.
different mandates for engaging in education would be looking for a different mix of outcomes before, during and on completion of an educational intervention. This in turn reinforces the need for a collaborative partnership space that allows explicit sharing of the alternative perspectives relating to the program’s purposes in order to facilitate understanding about the program. The purposes do not need to be the same for both partners but they do need to be mutually understood by each partner. In particular, Plan’s multiple aims of the program should perhaps have been shared in a collaborative partnership space to strengthen the vision of the program within a wider global context. It is probable that such action would strengthen reciprocity and possible that it would enable the schools to connect the program more holistically to the wider context of their own community.

There are a number of key points from this analysis that can be taken forward to inform the design of an educational model involving formal and non-formal education partnerships:

- There are both educational and organisational purposes associated with a program and both sets of purposes should be addressed by each partner.
- The program that is the subject of the partnership can serve different purposes for each partner provided they are not contradictory.
- The purposes need to be made explicit by both partners.
- The ways that the purposes will be interpreted as having been met need to be made explicit.
- The purposes need to be mutually understood and documented.
- The program needs to be evaluated against the purposes and mutually acknowledged.
- Successful partnerships achieve their purposes.

Recommendation

- All of a program’s purposes together with ways of monitoring and evaluating achievement of the purposes need to be explicitly and collaboratively addressed.

9.3.4.2 Content

It was problematic for both partners that particular content of Global Connections did not eventuate as anticipated. The relationship between the ‘big picture’ views of the content and the program’s purpose was identified in the previous section. However, there were two other dimensions of Global Connections’ content that also impacted on perceptions of the program. Firstly, there was the
ongoing detail of the daily work of the program. As well as the big picture view of the content (the communication pieces and the action) the teachers and Plan had differing impressions of the ways that students were benefitting from the myriad of activities that made up each session. Secondly, in the instances where Global Connections was being integrated into other curriculum contexts, aligning the content of the different parts of the timetabled classes was problematic. In both these respects, there were no specific expectations going into the program. The detail of what would happen in each session was deliberately left unstated to allow for a genuinely student-centred approach and the teachers felt that they would be able to adapt to whatever eventuated. Therefore, the limited extent of the predetermined content of Global Connections was initially endorsed by both partners but as the program developed the detail became increasingly important.

Plan considered that the classroom interactions and the act of participating in the learning environment were themselves a major part of the program content. The most important consideration for Plan was that the students should be able to make their own decisions about how they developed and represented their ideas and as such there were no judgements made about the quality of the representations. Nor did Plan have an expectation in each lesson that a particular amount needed to be covered and particular things needed to be achieved.

However, the teachers were concerned with the actual outputs and the level of work that was being produced in each session. The activity of the program was taking place in school classrooms with groups of students who were defined by year level and so were inherently part of wider school systems with complex sets of judgements used to assess student learning and student activity at different year levels. The teachers were therefore inevitably considering the students’ work in Global Connections within a broader framework of expectations based on their knowledge of the particular students’ abilities and also their understanding of the general standard of, and amount of, work appropriate to the year level. In this regard, although Global Connections was a standalone project the teachers did not have a separate framework for interpreting the program’s activity. As a result, all the teachers made comments at different times that indicated they felt the program was a bit slow and that the work produced was at times superficial and lacked depth. While not doubting that learning was occurring, the teachers were uncertain as to the depth of the students’ engagement and tended to believe that the students were working more slowly and at a level below what they could have accomplished. Additionally, the teachers were concerned with the rate and depth of progress achieved by individual students. They were very aware of individual students who were significantly engaged and others who were not participating.
Plan by contrast had no specific awareness of individual learners. They had no frame of reference for making comparative judgements about the learning occurring in *Global Connections* in relation to the wider context of the students’ school activity. Therefore, Plan was only able to consider in general terms whether learning occurred and had neither a qualitative or quantitative framework for evaluating the learning with regard to other learning environments that students experience in the schools. A situation developed in all the school contexts whereby Plan and the schools were considering the students work in separate ways based on different kinds of evidence that were not available to their partner. The school teachers were interpreting the program contextually and incorporated other knowledge about their students learning and their own experience-based observations of the students’ depth of engagement with the *Global Connections* activity. Plan did not automatically have access to these types of information and the partnership structure did not allow for it to be shared. Similarly, Plan was partly interpreting the program through the students’ outputs but was also using a context wider than the classroom to assess the Australian side of the program including knowledge about how the Indonesian participants were valuing the communications from Australia. As a result, interpretations that were increasingly divergent coexisted.

The situation was complicated by the presence of the facilitators. The facilitators communicated to differing degrees with both the teachers and Plan and were able to identify with the various views of each partner. They recognised that at different times the students’ level of engagement was uneven and at those times shared the teachers’ uncertainty about the learning that was being generated. However, they also shared Plan’s view that the program had cumulative benefits for the students that meant good learning resulted by the final stages. Once again however, the facilitators had no framework for interpreting the learning in relation to expected outcomes. Although the facilitators were communicating with each of the partners there was no forum established for collectively interpreting the work that was being done in the classroom. In both years, a similar situation developed whereby Plan was primarily concerned with the ‘big picture’ and whether students were generally able to engage with ideas about how they connected to the world by the end of the program, but the teachers were more actively concerned with each session.

The lack of collective understanding of what was being done became problematic for the teachers who were responsible for other classroom activity in the timetabled sessions that were not facilitated. The need to align the program with other activity was owing to the program not being extensive enough to occupy a timetable slot on its own and thereby constitute a separate program. In the three school cases that involved incorporating *Global Connections* as part of another program, the content of each part became increasingly separate. The lack of initial detail combined with ongoing uncertainty about what was to happen next meant that the teachers effectively ran a
separate program in the time that they were responsible for the classes. In these instances, the lack of integration of *Global Connections* into school activity was most pronounced. Nevertheless, in all instances the teachers suggested that the strongest and most sustainable model for *Global Connections* within schools was if it were integrated or at least strongly linked to another program already in the school rather than being extracurricular or co-curricular.

The situation described seems to suggest again that a collaborative space is needed to interpret the complex nature of the program’s content. In this instance, the attention of the collaborative space is more intimately involved with the work of the program and as such seems to indicate that it should be a collaborative *program* space. Such a space would aim to make coherent the different views of the work being done in the program but it would not design or construct the content. Nevertheless, the collaborative understanding developed would enable those responsible for different parts of the program to create links that could enhance the benefits to students. The result of such collaboration should strengthen mutuality by building recognition of the advantages that accrue from working together.

The key points for carrying forward to a model are:

- Schools have frameworks for interpreting student learning and engagement.
- Schools are concerned with all learners and need ways to evaluate individuals.
- Schools have expectations with regard to quality and quantity of classroom activity.
- NGOs have different measures of learning (from those of schools).
- Incorporating a program from ‘outside’ into an existing program requires actively integrating the content.

**Recommendation**

- The content of the program is collaboratively monitored and evaluated with regard to all learners if not collaboratively designed and constructed.
- The content of the program is collaboratively integrated into an existing or specially created school program.

### 9.3.4.3 Pedagogy

*Global Connections* was characterised pedagogically by the emphasis on student-centred learning and the use of facilitators rather than teachers to conduct the classroom sessions. In both instances
these characteristics were supported by all the schools at the outset and were perhaps even more strongly supported at the program’s conclusion. The facilitators were considered to be an effective innovation and all the teachers described their students as interacting with the facilitators in different and positive ways. The resulting sessions were unanimously identified as involving a different learning environment to that which students would normally experience through the teachers’ normal practice.

Although the facilitators were endorsed as an integral component of the program, the teachers made a number of comments that suggested they considered the changed learning environment involved a trade-off against particular outcomes. The teachers all recognised that the facilitators were untrained in a classroom context and as a result took time to establish relationships and make progress. They unanimously felt that the connections eventually established with the students were very positive but the time it took to reach the stage of an effective working relationship was at the expense of finishing the program. In other words, the facilitators were very slow to progress the program in the early stages. Additionally, the facilitators’ inexperience made it difficult for them to scaffold the students in the critical ways that support student-centred learning activities. The difficulties the facilitators experienced with encouraging genuine student-led learning meant that there were times when it was unclear whether the program was student-led or facilitator-led. As a result, the teachers felt that opportunities were missed to engage the students more significantly and thereby take the learning to a deeper level.

The presence of the facilitators also impacted on the teachers’ personal experiences of the program. The teachers all felt distanced from the program and although at times they took part in particular activities they generally felt marginalised with regard to their normal practice. In this sense, the teachers were effectively repositioned from being ‘champions’ of the program to being ‘bystanders’. As a result, none of the teachers developed a sense of ownership with regard to Global Connections. The lack of advance communication about what was being planned contributed to the teachers’ disconnection to the program and they necessarily worked around the program with their own planning rather than working with the program.

Without exception, all teachers expressed the opinion that the program would have benefitted from a teacher having a more active role. They were not suggesting that they should replace the facilitators or co-teach but it was very clear that they wanted to have input into what was happening (Suggestions included: mentoring of the facilitators; reflection; planning; limited involvement in classroom activity; running other sessions to expand on what the facilitators were doing). Additionally, it was apparent that the distancing of the teachers from the active work of the program
significantly compromised their ability to make informed judgements about the students’ learning. This seemed to be exacerbated because the activity of the program was transformative with regard to the teacher’s own practice. Teachers tend to feel less competent and need extra support when they are acting out of their field (Eames et al., 2007; Darby, 2009), and the data from this project indicated that all the teachers were responding to the program themes as being at least partially transformative. Indeed the opportunity to add to their own expertise was a strongly motivating reason for the teachers’ engagement. In this sense, the teachers were seeking collaborative interaction that was something more than tacit cooperation (Fosler, 2002). In lieu of other information about their students’ learning when it came to finally evaluating the school’s involvement with Global Connections, the teachers put considerably more emphasis on their personal experiences than they normally would with a program designed primarily for their students.

Similarly, the teachers’ presence impacted significantly on the facilitators’, and therefore indirectly Plan’s, experience with the program. Although not directly involved in the program delivery, the teachers were all present[104] in the classrooms and influenced in different ways and to different extents the learning environments that the facilitators were trying to create. Uncertainty about how that influence might be manifested from day to day created uncertainty and anxiety for some of the facilitators and added a layer of complexity to the program delivery.

It seemed clear that the unstructured nature of the working relationship between the teachers and the facilitators created the source of the most variation between the ways that Global Connections fitted within each of the school environments. These relationships were essentially the locus of engagement for the work of the school and the work that Plan was intending to accomplish through Global Connections. Once again, it appeared the sense of ‘partnership’ could have been strengthened by a more deliberately constructed way of communicating about key issues important to each partner. A more deliberately structured process of communication in a collaborative program space could potentially mitigate the influence of individual personalities and individual interpretations.

The key points for carrying forward to a partnership model are:

- Student-centred pedagogies are supported by schools.
- Outside facilitators can be used in schools and create different learning environments.
- Teachers must legally be present in school classrooms.
- Teachers who must be present want to be actively involved.

[104] In 2009, the teacher was not continuously present but was in attendance often enough to exert an influence.
• Use of outside presenters necessarily limits teachers’ active involvement.

• Teachers have a strong influence on classroom environments whether or not they are actively presenting.

Recommendation

• Teachers and outside presenters should communicate explicitly about what is happening in the learning context.

• Teachers should have an active role of some kind connected to their students’ learning.

9.4 What does it all mean? – addressing the second research question

What might an effective and appropriate model of a formal and non-formal education partnership for constructing school-based education look like?

The first research question was framed to investigate the characteristics of the Global Connections partnerships and was in itself justification enough for the research. However, my aspiration was always to identify generic aspects of the partnership relationships that might usefully inform the ways that other people might be able to think about their particular contexts of formal/non-formal education partnerships.

A common sense generalised answer to this research question was assumed from the outset and this guided the research process. It was that:

‘An appropriate and effective partnership creates opportunities for both partners to realise valued outcomes that are consistent with their individual pre-partnership missions and goals’.

It stands to reason that each partner becomes involved initially because they anticipate benefit, and it further stands to reason that an effective partnership delivers benefit.

Further to this, two other assumptions were made at the outset of this research:

• In the instance of this kind of cross-sectoral partnership the essential domains of NGOs and formal education systems are immutably separate and therefore partnership activity would ultimately be justified and evaluated in two distinct domains.

• The legitimacy of the separate mandates under which each domain conducted their activity means that their respective frameworks for determining purpose and value are equally valid and contextually appropriate.
The research data confirmed that these assumptions were consistent with the way that *Global Connections* appeared to operate and they are carried forward to underpin the more general interpretation of partnership that is developed here.

A cross-sectoral educational partnership under these assumptions would not collapse the dualism of formal and non-formal domains of education but would act to bridge those domains. An effective ‘bridge’ would be firmly anchored and supported in both domains. This view respects the difference of sectoral interests and suggests that the ‘appropriateness’ of partnership is best determined by the individual organisations engaging in such partnerships. As such, the interpretation offered here considers that both partners must agree before a bridge can form and if both partners agree to the appropriateness of partnership activity then it is ‘appropriate’ by definition. The appropriateness of the partnerships was not in question at any stage of the empirical research process that examined the *Global Connections* partnerships.

However, what this project confirmed is that the initial basis for each partner determining ‘appropriateness’ involved anticipated future benefit derived through achieving positive outcomes from the partnership activity. As a result, ‘appropriateness’ was never an ethical issue related to the different sectoral rationales for their activity but was decided on a practical basis related to outcomes. However, the ‘appropriateness’ could be rescinded if the reality of partnership activity was that the outcomes were not perceived to match expectations. The primary challenge of establishing effective cross-sectoral partnerships in this context is the need for the partnership activity to be considered and eventually proven as ‘appropriate’ within two different worldviews and operational systems.

The conclusions about the conditions of formal/non-formal education partnerships offered in this section do not carry the authority of empirical evidence derived from proven examples of ‘what works’. However, the consistency of the evidence generated and the interactive involvement of experienced professionals generating and interpreting the evidence created strong and credible support for an interpretation of ‘how and why things work’. The insights developed inform this description of partnership characteristics relevant to supporting educational programs designed for classroom delivery. I suggest here that consideration of these characteristics can usefully inform, and perhaps frame decisions about ‘what might work’ when partnership between formal and non-formal education providers is considered.
9.5 A model of engagement

In this section I bring together the key points and recommendations which were developed by addressing the research questions. My conclusions about how those key points might influence decisions about partnership construction are presented. I then outline the characteristics of collaborative spaces for considering partnership construction and operation. Finally, I offer a model that illustrates my thinking about collaborative spaces and the ways they support critical considerations associated with constructing cross-sectoral, education focussed partnerships.

9.5.1 Extent of partnership interaction

Partner organisations can contribute to each component of educational activity to different extents which can be described using a cooperation/coordination/collaboration continuum framework (Forrester, 1998 cited in Birzea 2000; Denise, 1998):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cooperation</th>
<th>Coordination</th>
<th>Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Interaction</td>
<td>Maximum Interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manages</td>
<td>Aligns</td>
<td>Co-constructs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>inputs</td>
<td>inputs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9.3: Operation of a cooperation/coordination/collaboration continuum framework

I contend that the optimum position for a partnership to occupy on the continuum is significantly influenced by the complexity and complicatedness of both: the program’s educational characteristics, and its operational requirements. In particular, complicated programs with many moving parts increase the need for cooperation/coordination frameworks and complex programs that are uncertain with regard to their outcomes require increased collaboration in the partnership frameworks. Table 9.3 on the following page summarises the relationship between complicatedness, complexity and program dimensions and highlights the implications for partnership structures.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Highly Complicated</strong></th>
<th><strong>Complicatedness</strong></th>
<th><strong>Program Characteristic</strong></th>
<th><strong>Complexity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Highly Complex</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple purposes</td>
<td>Single purpose</td>
<td>Clear purposes</td>
<td>Purposes</td>
<td>Multiple purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different purposes</td>
<td>jointly accepted</td>
<td>understood by both partners</td>
<td></td>
<td>Competing purposes</td>
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<td>for each organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transformative aims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-curricular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Socially oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>Discipline based</td>
<td>Compatible purposes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Requires strong</td>
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<td></td>
<td>links to curriculum</td>
<td>if not same</td>
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<td>collaboration to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>interpret</td>
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<td>Requires some</td>
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<td>purposes</td>
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<td>collaboration to understand the other’s purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Many different</td>
<td>Single activities</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Unscripted</td>
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<tr>
<td>activities</td>
<td>Contained in one</td>
<td></td>
<td>content</td>
<td>content evolving</td>
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<td></td>
<td>session</td>
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<td>with activity</td>
<td>with activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unquantifiable</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Simple inputs</td>
<td></td>
<td>or unassessable</td>
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<td>components (e.g.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Requires cooperation</td>
<td>Student-centred</td>
<td>cooperative</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>and/or coordination</td>
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<td>participation)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Requires cooperation and/or coordination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple ‘teachers’</td>
<td>Single teacher</td>
<td>Established methods</td>
<td>Transformative</td>
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<tr>
<td>using multiple methods</td>
<td>Single method</td>
<td>Consistent with existent methods and approaches</td>
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<td>Teacher-led</td>
<td>Student-led</td>
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<td>Requires cooperation</td>
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<td>Requires strong</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and/or coordination</td>
<td></td>
<td>collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners contribute</td>
<td>Partners contribute</td>
<td>Clear division of</td>
<td>New or changed</td>
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<td>jointly their</td>
<td>separately their</td>
<td>responsibility</td>
<td>Structures/</td>
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<td>existing</td>
<td>structures,</td>
<td>Existing structures</td>
<td>processes/roles</td>
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<td>structures,</td>
<td>processes</td>
<td>processes and roles used</td>
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<tr>
<td>resources, roles</td>
<td>resources and roles</td>
<td>unchanged</td>
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<tr>
<td>processes</td>
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<td>Requires some</td>
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Table 9.3: Educational program dimensions and operational requirements interpreted through a lens of complicatedness and complexity to indicate the implications for partnership structures.
In summary, if the existing systems of the organisations can be used essentially unchanged to enable and interpret the program activity then the partnership problem is primarily one of logistics and determining who does what and when. In this instance, a cooperation and coordination partnership approach to align and manage the different organisation’s inputs is indicated. In a similar way, educational activity that fits with established purposes and consists of easily interpreted/assessable content delivered in a way compatible with ‘normal’ classroom activity can be ‘managed’ and different contributions can be aligned by cooperation and coordination partnership structures. More complicated programs require more inputs and a higher degree of coordination and cooperation.

However, I concluded that uncertainty and therefore complexity should be assumed to be intrinsically present as part of the educational and operational components when partnership involves cross-sectoral interests. Even elements of a program that appear straightforward to each partner may be seen as straightforward in different ways when different interpretive frameworks are used. I suggest that a degree of collaborative involvement is always implicated to ensure the respective inputs and interpretations are mutually understood.

Complexity is increased as uncertainty increases about what and/or how the program relates to the purposes of education and particular learning objectives. Programs that: are consciously intended to be transformative; have social rather than discipline-based purposes; utilise alternative pedagogical approaches; are not tightly structured; are without predetermined or quantifiable learning objectives are all inherently complex. Programs that involve changed roles, processes and structures of the partner organisations are also inherently complex.

9.5.2 Partnership Collaboration: A ‘Collaborative Space’

The complexity introduced by the inevitable uncertainty about each other of partners from different social fields suggests collaborative space for negotiated understanding is necessary for all formal/non-formal partnerships. More specifically, I propose that two collaborative spaces are required with distinct though overlapping purposes. The first is a ‘collaborative partnership space’ which acts to bridge the organisations and govern the enabling conditions that the program at the centre of the partnership activity requires. The second is a ‘collaborative program space’ that allows the activity of the program to be understood and evaluated. In effect, the ‘program space’ governs the classroom activity, and the ‘partnership space’ governs activity outside the classroom.

In both instances the collaborative activity that takes place in the collaborative space should act to make explicit and strengthen three attributes of effective partnership:

- Trust: The commitment and expertise offered by each partner.
- Mutuality: The extent each partner recognises working together achieves valued outcomes.
- Reciprocity: The extent to which each partner recognises the other’s contribution.

9.5.2.1 Collaborative Partnership Space

Within the ‘collaborative partnership space’ expectations for the program and the partnership in relation to organisational objectives should be made explicit as well as the means by which the partnership and program activity will be enacted and evaluated. The initial task of the ‘space’ is to make explicit each organisation’s aims for the program and their corresponding commitment of expertise to the partnership. In this way, ‘trust’ is actively constructed. Similarly, ‘mutuality’ and ‘reciprocity’ are built from that base of trust and are grounded in collaboratively constructed knowledge of what each organisation is ‘bringing to the table’ and the way that working together can achieve specific outcomes rather than being based on assumptions. The collaborative understanding developed about the partnership allows shared ownership of, and responsibility for the program to develop.

The collaborative partnership space would therefore create the ‘bridge’ between the alternative educational paradigms. Such a space should recognise equally the contributions of each organisation. This definitely does not mean that each organisation needs to contribute equally to the activity or the design of the program. Instead, it means that each organisation should have an equal opportunity to interpret, position and represent the program in relation to their wider organisation’s purpose and should in turn make an equal effort to understand their partner’s representation of the program and its significance. The aims each organisation has for the program may be different but in a collaborative space they would carry equal weight and should be equally understood and respected. Both organisations should commit to enabling both sets of aims because sustainable successful partnerships require positive outcomes for both partners.

What this means in practice when a program is introduced to a school from ‘outside’ is that the space should actively seek to embed the program in the school’s culture to the extent that it is embedded in the NGO culture from which it emanated. As such the space would have a role that aligns with governance imperatives rather than managerial duties. This in turn suggests that the collaborative partnership space represents organisational rather than individual commitment. I envisage that the ‘collaborative partnership space’ would involve a minimum of people with maximum authority. The implication is that the space should include senior school management and preferably the Principal who is the person most strongly linked to a school’s wider context and strategic aims. Inclusion of such people adds authority and formality to the deliberations undertaken.
which should then be documented. The key characteristics of a ‘collaborative partnership space’ can be summarised as follows. The ‘space’ should:

1. Include
   - People who can represent organisational interests (particularly school management and preferably the Principal).
   - People who can represent educational interests (particularly teachers associated with the classroom in which the program is to take place).
   - Minimum of people with maximum authority.

2. Make explicit:
   - Perceived purpose(s) of program and expected outcomes/benefits including wider organisational aims (addresses complexity).
   - Division of responsibilities (addresses complicatedness) and ways of coordinating roles.
   - Commitment of expertise and resources and time – including further involvement of collaborative space.
   - Key processes and structures in each organisation and their requirements and limitations as they impact on the proposed program activity (including organisational planning processes like timetable and curriculum issues).
   - Way(s) of evaluating partnership and program activity.

3. Acknowledge
   - Difference.
   - Respective organisational contributions.
   - Value of combined activity.

4. Facilitate
   - Involvement of others as appropriate in the program activity: Timetablers, curriculum developers, community liaison, Year level leaders etc.
   - Wider recognition of the program in the organisations and their communities.
5. Build

- New Understanding.
- Trust, Mutuality and Reciprocity.
- Shared ownership and responsibility.


7. Monitor and evaluate the program’s progress towards achieving partnership aims.

Figure 9.4: The ‘Collaborative Partnership Space’.

The extent to which these different characteristics are developed within the collaborative space depends on the nature of the educational activity at the centre of the partnership. The more transformative a program, the greater the extent to which the program relies on different expertise and resources in each organisation, the wider its intended reach, the longer the time frame of the relationship, and the more strongly it connects to the core aims of both organisations, the more it would seem that the activity of the ‘space’ is important. A collaborative partnership space sets up the enabling conditions of the program but is not a program management space and as such does not require an extensive time commitment.
9.5.2.2 Collaborative *Program Space*

This research clearly indicated that collaboration was required to address educational activity. In this instance, collaboration should involve the people in each organisation to whom the responsibility for the educational aspect of the program has been allocated. In this regard, three key observations specifically related to introducing programs into school classroom contexts from outside the formal education sector resonated strongly through the data:

1) School education is about student learning and favourable student outcomes must be observable within school frameworks if a program is to be judged successful.

2) Teachers interpret what happens in the environment of ‘their’ classroom and have very high levels of influence and control.

3) Programs are evaluated by teachers with regard to their impact on student learning *and* on their own practice.

With these observations in mind, the following considerations are offered with regard to introduced programs:

- Education programs have more traction in schools and are more sustainable if they link to the curriculum as it is interpreted by the school - either to core discipline-based curriculum or as electives. Programs are not limited with regard to theme and purpose.

- School time is organised in discrete slots (period length, number of periods per week, and number of weeks) and programs need to find a place within the defined structure.

- Programs that do not occupy a full ‘slot’ need to be collaboratively integrated with other activity undertaken by the teacher responsible for the activity of that ‘slot’.

- School-based education programs need to be assessable against learning objectives in a way that enables teachers to appreciate the learning experiences of *all* students (assessment does not need to be ‘testing’ – schools assess in a variety of ways and the method chosen can be negotiated).

- A program imported from outside needs to offer something unique. Something of value not available to teachers in their normal practice – could be related to the purpose the program serves, *and/or* its content, *and/or* its methods.
• Irrespective of student learning outcomes, imported programs need to fulfil their ‘unique’ promise.

• Teachers should have an active role in educational programs – not necessarily in program delivery but they should not be limited to observer and enforcer. The longer and more complex the program the more important this seems to be. A strong option for involving the teacher appears to be by actively linking the program to their other work.

• Teachers should be part of a collaborative monitoring of ongoing activity (mid-program or more often as required) and the final evaluation processes.

These characteristics need to be explicitly and collaboratively negotiated with classroom teachers. In particular, the role of the teacher and the educational fit with their work should be collaboratively developed. It is possible for programs to be negotiated at this collaborative program level only but doing so limits the program’s reach and where possible the work of the collaborative program space should be connected to, or at least report to the collaborative partnership space. Connecting the program activity to the higher governance level partnership space mitigates reliance on the subjective impressions of the classroom teacher by adding a degree of accountability to the wider school. However, the teacher is ultimately the only person closely connected to the classroom activity and as such is enormously influential. As a result, sustainable and effective programs will only be possible by working ‘with’ rather than ‘around’ classroom teachers by utilising a collaborative program space.

9.5.3 Further considerations of Collaboration

I am not arguing for compromise and agreement as a result of collaboration within my proposed ‘model’. Instead, understanding is the goal of the collaborative activity. It seems entirely appropriate that different systems should be brought to bear on the partnership activity and that the consequence may be alternative ways of evaluating the program. However, through collaboration each organisation can appreciate how the program serves the needs of their partner and how it will be evaluated by their partner - including the reasons that such evaluation is considered necessary and the evidence base that will be used. In many instances, the processes of collaboration may well produce consensus or compromise but the imperative driving collaboration should be the understanding of the program’s impact on each organisation’s context and mutual recognition that both organisations’ aims for the program are achievable.

Finally, another general recommendation for school-based partnership activity is that as many links as possible should be made to the wider organisational environments. In schools for example: school
websites, newsletters, and noticeboards; presentations (by students and/or teachers and/or NGO representatives) at assemblies and year level meetings; presentations (by students and/or teachers and/or NGO representatives) to staff and community groups; linking to other school-based activity; dedicated promotional event/exhibition/celebration. Maximising connections to a school’s community promotes the likelihood that a program will be able to find a place within the ‘normal’ activity of the school. In a similar way, the partner NGO should take whatever opportunities are possible (including perhaps presentations by the school students) to increase the connectedness of the program to their community of interest.

Figure 9.5 on the following page summarises the collaborative space relationships in diagrammatic form:
Collaborative Space
Organisational Commitment
School Management, Teacher, NGO

NGO Structures
coordinate

School Structures
coordinate

Mutuality
School Roles
coordinate

NGO Roles
coordinate

Purpose, Content, Pedagogy
Collaborative PROGRAM
Program Space
Teacher-NGO coordinator
Collective Understanding

Others – Staff, Students, Community

NGO Processes
coordinate

School Processes

Trust

Partnership Governance
Establish Educational Expectations
Commitment, Roles, Evaluation, Ownership

Reciprocity

NGO Community

Figure 9.5: Diagrammatic representation depicting the highest order of engagement in formal/non-formal education partnership. The program at the centre of the partnership activity is collaboratively understood in a collaborative program space. This space is supported by a network that is anchored in the systems, roles and processes of the contributing organisations which are coordinated and collaboratively governed through the activity of a collaborative partnership space. The collaborative space also acts to bridge the respective organisations and their wider communities.
Chapter Ten: Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

10.1 Conclusions

This thesis was designed to address theoretical and practical understanding of partnerships between formal and non-formal education providers. In particular, it was aimed at developing understanding of ways that such cross-sectoral partnerships, as investigated in this research, can be constructed to effectively support educational programs in schools. The conclusions reached in this thesis are supported by empirical work that was undertaken to investigate one set of such partnerships formed between Plan Australia, as a non-formal education provider, and the formal education sector as represented by government secondary schools in Melbourne, Australia. These partnerships were formed in order to implement an innovative program called Global Connections which was designed to engage young people in ideas and action related to global citizenship and social issues.

The empirical work was constructed to address two research questions. Those questions asked firstly ‘what could be learnt’ about partnership from the situated context of Global Connections and secondly how the findings might be applied to theorise more generally about attributes of effective formal and non-formal education partnership. However, research questions establish what a research study is aiming to find out but do not in themselves indicate what should be studied or the methods that should be used to generate the data that will be used to address them (Yin, 2003). In this regard, an extensive review of literature related to the separate contexts of formal and non-formal education as well as literature related to partnership activity highlighted the Global Connections partnerships as involving partners from different social ‘realities’ with different rationales for educational activity. The social situatedness of the partners, the Global Connections program, and this research was further interpreted by reference to the social theories of Bourdieu (1974, 1980; 1993).

The partnerships were interpreted more widely than through the particular educational activity they were enabling and were conceptualised as bridging separate social fields that were acting differently to legitimate particular ways of knowing and which are not reducible into each other (Bourdieu, 1977; Seidman, 2004). The research implication was that a strategy should be employed that allowed the different knowledge frameworks and social ‘realities’ of Plan and the schools to emerge. In a similar way, the researcher represented another ‘framework of knowing’ and reflexivity needed to be acknowledged and incorporated as part of the research process (Yin, 2003). The data generated and any knowledge claims that might eventuate would be socially situated and co-constructed by the research participants and the researcher.
Qualitative case studies were developed around each of the individual schools that implemented *Global Connections*. The primary data source was interviews that were informed by participatory principles of active interviewing and action research which maximised the potential for research participants to contribute in a way that acknowledged their separate ways of knowing. Similarly, the analysis of the data generated was informed by data handling principles of grounded theory that maximised the contribution of the data to theory emerging from the research process.

*Global Connections* provided an open and accessible research environment with multiple opportunities to investigate the separate partnerships between Plan and the schools from both practice and theory standpoints. The participatory interviewing techniques allowed the participants to be present as individuals but also enabled them to contribute as reflective professionals, and rich data were generated. It was unfortunate that the planned forum involving all the teachers could not take place because it seemed likely that the data would have been further enhanced with the extra layer of collaborative interpretation that could have eventuated. Nevertheless, the separate interviews provided credible evidence with a high degree of ‘trustworthiness’ and ‘authenticity’ as these terms are used to interpret social research quality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994 cited in Bryman, 2004). The ability to link the interviews with observational and other data enabled development of comprehensive cases. The coherence of the cases that resulted and the analytic possibilities they provided confirmed the appropriateness of the research strategy and techniques used in the research design.

The data generated were immediately characterised by evidence of multiple ways that the program challenged operational systems within both Plan as the program designer and the schools as sites of *Global Connections*’ implementation. The operational challenge that it represented notwithstanding, *Global Connections* was established as being compatible at philosophical and conceptual levels within both educational sectors. Although the program was designed by Plan outside the formal education system, the schools identified strong thematic links to the curriculum and to their school values and broader social context. Additionally, the schools supported the program’s pedagogical approaches which aimed to engage students in student-led, socially-oriented action. In addition, the schools recognised the advantages of working with an organisation outside the formal education sector. They unanimously supported the principle of cross-sectoral partnership as a way of extending and adding value to their own role as education providers and as fitting within the terms of their operational mandate.

Nevertheless, creed is not deed and the partnerships all proved to be unsustainable and ended with a prevailing sense of unfulfilled expectations. In this respect, the ‘unfulfilled expectations’ seemed to
emanate from operational difficulties and interpretive difference associated with the reality of implementing the program. Global Connections was a complicated (with many ‘moving’ parts) and complex (with uncertain outcomes) program that challenged operational systems and interpretive frameworks utilised within the ‘normal’ activity of all the contributing partners.

The schools and Plan contributed to critical aspects of the program’s implementation separately rather than collaboratively. Differences in each organisation’s understanding of their partner’s separate contributions combined to undermine the effectiveness of the program’s implementation and the interpretation of learning outcomes that resulted. Belief in the intentions of the program did not easily translate into a way of recognising and valuing the extent to which the intentions had been realised. In this respect, there was strong evidence that confirmed each educational sector was contributing from fundamentally different educational perspectives in ways that were consistent with Bourdieu’s social theories related to social fields. As such, the organisations seemed to be influenced by systems of logic and practice that reflected the relatively autonomous fields of formal and non-formal education. Irrespective of the program being endorsed in principle within each field, subtleties of difference with regard to those justifying principles seemed to operate to divide rather than unite the partners’ experiences of the program.

Further to this, and consistent with Bourdieu’s theories of habitus, was the finding that the systemic influence of the different educational fields operated at a mundane level, translated through the daily work of the people who implemented Global Connections within each organisational context. The data from individual school participants exhibited a very high concordance even though they all had very different personal and professional orientations and were working in very different disciplinary areas within schools that were geographically and demographically diverse. Additionally, the concordance was evident with regard to impressions and feelings about program activity and not just with regard to observable characteristics.

Similarly, although Plan was the only organisation representative of the non-formal education sector, the key participants recognised that limitations were placed on the range of their interpretations by their philosophical positioning as a development NGO. Participants from each organisation utilised ‘taken-for-granted’ understandings of the program that were not commonly held or automatically transferrable to their partners. The result was that in all instances the partnerships were characterised by differently understood elements of organisational capability and/or educational expectation. There was considerable uncertainty about the program when it ended and the somewhat ironic situation developed whereby the individual partners all made choices to end their involvement even as they acknowledged the positive outcomes of the students in the program,
reaffirmed their belief in the ‘promise’ of Global Connections, and expressed their certainty that such promise could only be realised through partnership!

Considered more generally, these findings suggest that the challenge of cross-sectoral education explicitly includes the challenge of bridging different worldviews that produce different ways of implementing and interpreting education. Alongside the outcomes for learners, educational programs constructed in partnerships must also serve separate organisational purposes and be justified within each organisation’s rationales for their activity and in relation to the question ‘what else could we be doing instead?’

A logical corollary of this situation is that collective understanding grounded in both partner’s contexts seems to be critical if sustainable partnerships are to be constructed. In this regard, cross-sectoral ‘bridges’ need to be actively constructed that allow critical ‘taken-for-granted’ understandings to be explicitly articulated so that differences can be identified and collective understanding developed. This research fell short of providing evidence from ‘what worked’ that could lead to a formula for building a cross-sectoral ‘bridge’. However, the consistency of the data across the range of independent school research sites and the commitment and expertise of the research participants combined to support a number of conclusions about the nature of such a bridge.

Perhaps most importantly, cross-sectoral bridges are created through, and supported by, levels of trust, mutuality and reciprocity. These factors establish the significance of the program and the partnership to each partner. However, this research provided evidence that these factors cannot be assumed and need to be explicitly addressed, actively strengthened and regularly monitored during the partnership engagement. In particular, the partnership interactions should begin with establishing the basis of ‘reciprocity’ by enabling each organisation to understand what their partner is able and willing to bring to the partnership and the goals they are addressing through their involvement. An explicit understanding of what each partner is able to contribute to the relationship and why they are doing so allows ‘mutuality’ and ‘trust’ to be grounded - recognition that joint action is necessary to create the educational environment, and the respective commitment of each organisation to that joint action, can be made explicit. In this respect, it seemed critical that three areas of contribution are explicitly identified and addressed:

- Areas of shared expertise need to be negotiated so that each partner has a way of contributing and is clear about the nature of that contribution. In particular with educationally-oriented partnerships key participants need an avenue for contributing their core educational expertise. For example, this meant with Global Connections that teachers
needed some way to input into the teaching and learning associated with the educational activity. While this did not need to be an active role as ‘teachers’ there was strong evidence that the teachers needed to contribute as educators rather than as observers and disciplinarians.

- Areas of separate expertise. A potential strength of cross-sectoral partnerships is that they provide alternative expertise that extends each individual partner’s capability. However, a logical corollary is that each partner will not immediately understand capability that is beyond their own expertise. In *Global Connections* this was primarily manifest in a lack of recognition of what was logistically possible. The schools did not adequately understand the reality of exchanging communications with marginalised groups in developing countries and Plan did not adequately understand the restrictions of school structures and timetables.

- Areas of no expertise. Transformative programs particularly those in developmental stages will inevitably involve uncertain elements and these need to be recognised and mutually monitored and evaluated. In *Global Connections* these elements were particularly evident in the emergent nature of the learning. Interpretation of learning outcomes was theoretically an area of shared expertise albeit by use of frameworks that were not shared. However, the particular nature of the learning proved to be outside either organisation’s existing expertise.

In a similar way, the aims that each organisation hopes to meet through the program activity might be considered in terms of shared aims, separate aims and uncertain aims. The evidence from this research was that the global citizenship aims were important but in principle such school-based programs could be constructed through partnerships to address a wide range of educational aims if they involve opportunities not otherwise available to schools. Additionally, the separate partners could have separate aims provided those aims were not mutually exclusive and could be jointly understood as being achievable through the combined utilisation of the organisations’ committed expertise and resources.

The extent of shared expertise/aims seems to be an appropriate indicator of the type of partnership structure that is implicated with regard to implementing a program. Aspects of a program that are recognised as appropriately relating to separate expertises/aims can be coordinated or cooperatively managed but areas of shared expertise/aim or no expertise/aim need collaborative frameworks to negotiate contributions and interpret outcomes. It seems probable that complex and complicated programs require partnership structures within which these different approaches can co-exist. This in turn suggests that the partnership structure is itself complicated and complex in the way that it accommodates and negotiates: each organisation’s logistical and educational contribution to
implementing the program; their separate aims for the program; and the ways that progress and outcomes will be monitored and evaluated.

In order to accomplish this, the partnership must be initiated and active at a stage that fits the critical planning phases of each organisation and needs to include people with authority to make decisions about different spheres of each partner’s normal activity that are affected by the proposed program. This in turn suggests that although the contributions of individuals are critical and need to be acknowledged and negotiated, the different interests and interpretations of each partner need to also be represented at an organisational level.

The intrinsic difficulty of connecting to the wider organisational context of the separate partners implies an additional layer of partnership activity is required with a governance-like function. The governance role of an overarching collaborative partnership structure would act to provide the grounding for reciprocity and would establish the operational partnership structure. The governance role should extend to evaluating the eventual outcomes of the partnership and would thereby ensure the shared ownership of program outcomes and its recognition in a wider organisational context. These ‘governance’ roles were strongly implicated as being likely to strengthen the integration and sustainability of partnership activity within each partner’s separate contexts.

Once again, the work of this thesis was speculative rather than definitive with regard to the exact structure of, or activity within, a collaborative partnership governance framework. However, the conclusions presented here were indicated in this research by the data generated about the Plan-school partnerships and supported by data generated about the other partnerships Plan formed with the facilitators and Plan Indonesia. Those other partnerships provided evidence that fundamentally different perspectives can be negotiated to mutual advantage.

To this end, dialogue and relationships need to be actively constructed within a ‘collaborative space’ that enables the ‘meaning’ of the partnership and the ‘meaning’ of the educational activity it enables to be generated and understood by both partners. The importance of collaborative governance seems to be increased by: transformative aims; complexity and/or complicatedness within a program; programs involving extensive commitment of students, teachers, time or resources; programs reaching to the wider school community; and partnerships involving very different organisations. Additionally, it seems that the more important it is that educational activity is seen beyond the classroom as relating to organisational goals the more important it is that management-level people are involved within the partnership governance structure.
Although *Global Connections* did not provide evidence of ‘best’ partnership practice or even evidence of ‘what worked’, the strength of the evidence generated was such that this research might usefully inform thinking about other such partnerships involving school-based education. Partnerships between differently resourced and differently motivated organisations are inherently transformative in that they require changed practice by one or both of the partners. The overwhelming conclusion of this research is that to be sustainable such partnerships require the reality of cross-sectoral difference to be explicitly addressed and negotiated in ways that both partners understand and accept.

It is not enough that such partnerships might address important issues or represent enormous promise. The partnerships need to support explicitly articulated goals rather than a belief in an ill-defined concept of ‘promise’. Realising promise firstly requires that the promise is identified and understood and without conscious and collaborative attention such understanding of promise cannot be taken-for-granted when the partner organisations represent fundamentally different purposes and roles in society.

Nevertheless, belief in the potential and promise of *Global Connections* underpinned the initial partnership engagement and even if unrealised was sustained to the end. In a similar way, belief in the potential and promise of partnership underpinned this research and has been sustained to the end. It is my final conclusion that while such partnerships failed to eventuate, *Global Connections* unequivocally confirmed the promise and appropriateness of partnership between formal and non-formal education providers as a way of extending school-based education.

### 10.2 Limitations

This thesis was limited in that the empirical research undertaken involved investigating the characteristics of only one set of formal and non-formal partnerships. In this respect it was further limited by only one organisation representing the non-formal half of all the partnerships. Additionally, the partnerships involved were linked to only one educational intervention. While the common link to *Global Connections* provided advantages of comparison between reactions to common program elements, it also dictated the range of those program elements. Although this study was not an evaluation of the *Global Connections* program it was clear that a program which engaged the partners differently and which had different outcomes may have produced different responses.

This research was perhaps most limited by the difficulties the partnerships experienced. The comments and conclusions about proposed partnership structures are generally speculative and not
empirically tested. Although evidence based, the conclusions were not supported by evidence of successful and sustained partnerships. Instead, the evidence from the *Global Connections* partnerships was often of discontinuity and alternative interactions that might produce better outcomes were developed by inference.

The research was also limited by missing voices with regard to interpretations of the significance of such partnership activity. In particular, other stakeholders in activity undertaken in schools including parents and the Department of Education did not contribute to the research. In both instances, these stakeholders represent influences that have impacts on decisions made about school-based activity. The research undertaken was conducted over two years but was nevertheless a situated and limited snapshot of the educational environment in Victoria.

### 10.3 Recommendations for future research

This research involved a unique set of partnerships that involved innovative characteristics. The conclusions about partnership that have been made in this thesis contain a largely theoretical construction of partnership practice. The theoretical model developed would benefit by further theorising and additional empirical research undertaken to trial the proposed elements of the model.

Additionally, I recommend that similar research is undertaken to address the limitations identified in the previous section. In particular, other educational programs, other educational partners, and other locations need to be considered. The voices of the school community and the Department of Education need to be heard with regard to cross-sectoral partnership engagements.
References


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Appendix One

The Schools involved in the research

The schools involved in the case studies are profiled below:

School A

School A is a large coeducational state secondary school in an inner Melbourne suburb with an ethnically diverse school population. The school has around 50 different nationalities represented on its roll including a number of new immigrants of varied status. Some of the immigrant students have had minimal previous experience of formal education. As the teacher interviewed described, the way that the school manages the diversity of its population is one of its strengths:

“I think one of our strengths is kids fit in. There’s somewhere, everyone fits in somewhere. We’ve got a very diverse group of kids. We’re pretty much an inner slice of Melbourne. We have everything from the sort of very low socio-economic to the high. We’ve got 46 different nationalities, lots of kids from non-English speaking backgrounds but equally a lot of very middle-class inner city Melbourne families. So to me it seems like a reflection of Melbourne; we’ve got a bit of everything here and everyone seems to find a place. So it’s generally a fairly harmonious place”

Schools B and C

Schools B and C are on separate campuses several kilometers apart (in different Melbourne suburbs) but are linked through a common governance structure. They share many curriculum planning and processes but operate independently with regard to daily activity. The schools are both coeducational state secondary schools and have feeder communities with a similar socio-economic demographic. Compared to the other two schools involved in Global Connections in 2008, Schools B and C represent a demographic middle ground. Ethnically however, School B is significantly more diverse than School C with only 6% of their student roll representing Australia’s Anglo-Saxon ethnic majority. The schools are outer rather than inner Melbourne schools and the teachers from both schools suggested that their students exhibit a narrow worldview with a suburban focus rather than the broader interpretation of their community as part of a multi-ethnic cosmopolitan city.

School D

School D is a coeducational state secondary school located in an affluent suburb of inner Melbourne. The school’s immediate community is in the highest socio-economic range and the school’s student population reflects this status. Although the school also represents Melbourne’s considerable ethnic
diversity many students at School D come from wealthy immigrant families or are fee-paying international students rather than being from the refugee immigrant families common to School A. The most prominent links to international communities are to the affluent areas of Asia and in particular China. The school has a strong focus on high achievement with regard to both academic performance and extracurricular activity.

“They are fairly privileged kids here. There are very few kids who don’t know what their future holds for them. They come in here, they’ve got a fairly clear idea of where their lives will be going.

Appendix Two

The facilitators

The facilitators were recruited through advertisements in Melbourne universities and were all volunteers. Students applied for the project and went through an interview process conducted by Plan. The young people selected were from several different universities and were students in different disciplines (but not teaching). Some of the facilitators were using their involvement in Global Connections to contribute to university course work but others were involved out of interest and to develop experience.

Although they all fell within the United Nations description of ‘youth’ as 26 and younger, some of the facilitators were experienced postgraduate students with considerable work experience. The oldest of the facilitators was 26 but most were in their early 20s. As a result, the facilitators were very similar to the profile of pre-service teachers which school students would be accustomed to seeing in class.

The facilitators went through a short but intensive training course which was designed to give them an understanding of Global Connections and its underlying philosophies of participation and youth-led learning. Additionally, the training was intended to give the students confidence to carry out the facilitation and to learn to work together themselves as a group. The facilitators were paired to form the teams which went to each school.