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INVESTIGATING TEACHER - STUDENT INTERACTIONS
FOCUSING ON FORM: A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

by

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The members of the Committee approve the master thesis of Mark Hershey

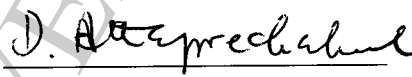
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Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude towards Dr. Graeme Ritchie for his patient and subtle, yet incisive assistance. His help was invaluable and I cannot thank him enough for nudging me in interesting and more expansive research directions. I sometimes felt that our conversations were the material for a thesis within the thesis, as those conversations were rich in sociocultural influences, involving a dynamic process of co-constructing meanings and more competent levels of understanding. One interesting insight I gained from this study, which reflected back on the development of the thesis itself, was the notion of how subtle, yet vital the process of dialogic collaboration can be to concept formation. When I was not certain of the answer to a question I had, I would occasionally go to Dr. Ritchie's office to fish for his thoughts. Occasionally, those questions led to much dialogue and negotiation before any light would switch on. However, there were other times when in the process of asking the question, the answer itself would suddenly dawn on me. These incidents highlight the assertion of sociocultural theorists that collaboration and social presence is central to concept formation. The mediating process of collaborative dialogue pushes private speech and

troubleshooting to the surface of conscious thought, where new understandings can emerge.

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