PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research

Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan and
Anastasia P. Samaras (Eds.)

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Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research

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Rationale:
This series purposely sets out to illustrate a range of approaches to Professional Learning and to highlight the importance of teachers and teacher educators taking the lead in reframing and responding to their practice, not just to illuminate the field but to foster genuine educational change.

Audience:
The series will be of interest to teachers, teacher educators and others in fields of professional practice as the context and practice of the pedagogue is the prime focus of such work. Professional Learning is closely aligned to much of the ideas associated with reflective practice, action research, practitioner inquiry and teacher as researcher.

Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research

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To my daughters, May and Beth, for being my most beloved teachers

~ Kathleen

To my grandchildren, Rohan, Lucia, Teo, Susie, and Eli for their sweet voices and love

~ Anastasia

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Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan and Anastasia P. Samaras

KATHLEEN PITHOUSE-MORGAN
AND ANASTASIA P. SAMARAS

1. THE POWER OF "WE" FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

CONTEXT

Through self-study research, professionals seek out innovative and responsive ways of seeing, doing, and becoming. Self-study of professional practice has brought to centre stage the agency and lived experience of the professional in processes of learning and knowing (Hamilton, 2004). From this perspective, professional learning is seen as "embedded and constructed in the experience of being a professional in practice" (Webster-Wright, 2009, pp. 724–725). Loughran (2007) explained that this conception of "professional learning is therefore characterised by the role the individual takes in initiating and directing their own growth and development as opposed to being 'trained' to perform particular tasks" (p. xiii). As self-study researchers, professionals understand that learning starts with the self, but does not end there. They identify questions that they are concerned, curious, and passionate about and research those questions in their own professional contexts. While the research topics are diverse, the common purpose is to challenge, deepen, and extend professional knowing in the interests of making a qualitative difference to professional practice for self and others.

The research genre of self-study has its roots in work conducted by teacher educators in the early 1990s, which evolved into the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) Special Interest Group (SIG) of the American Educational Research Association (AERA; see http://www.aera.net/sstepsig109). *The International Handbook of Self Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices* (Loughran, Hamilton, LaBoskey, & Russell, 2004) provided a comprehensive compilation of self-study research and documented evolving definitions, theoretical underpinnings, and innovative methods. While this work done by the S-STEP community continues to serve as a foundational resource, self-study research is now being done by professionals across diverse fields and contexts (e.g., Pithouse, Mitchell, & Moletsane, 2009; Samaras et al., 2014a). *Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research* builds on this inclusion to offer varied exemplars of self-study as professional learning for practitioners

A key requirement for quality and trustworthiness in self-study research is that multiple viewpoints need to be solicited and taken into consideration in self-study research processes (Laboskey, 2004). These alternative perspectives often come

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 1–20.

from peers who, as critical friends, have agreed to assist in "critiquing existing practices and rethinking and reframing practice," while simultaneously "[providing] essential support and [maintaining] a constructive tone" (Schuck & Russell, 2005, p. 108). In transdisciplinary self-study, which offers a broader inclusiveness of practitioners inside and outside of teacher education, dialogue between multiple fields of professional expertise and diverse disciplinary backgrounds offers varied perspectives and can result in innovative ways of conceptualising and undertaking research (Harrison, Pithouse-Morgan, Conolly, & Meyiwa, 2012; Samaras et al., 2014b). However, self-study research texts do not necessarily make visible the researcher's interaction with others or the reciprocal learning that can occur. In this book, we take up the challenge of making encounters with diverse ways of seeing and knowing—what we have called *polyvocal professional learning*—a focal point of written portrayals of self-study research.

But, what is polyvocality? *Poly-* "is a word-forming element meaning 'many, much, multi-, one or more,'" and is associated with ideas of prosperity and abundance (poly-, n.d.). *Vocal* (vocal, n.d.) is derived from *voice* (voice, n.d.), which means, "sound made by the human mouth," but it can also mean, "to express, give utterance to (a feeling, opinion, etc.)." Hence, polyvocality can quite simply mean many voices, but it also has connotations of the potential fruitfulness of bringing into dialogue multiple points of view, with dialogue referring to "a conversation between two or more persons" (dialogue, n.d.). In understanding what this might mean for professional learning through self-study research, we have found it helpful to draw on Bakhtin's (1984) explanation of how polyvocality (which he refers to as polyphony) functions in a novel: "What unfolds … is not a multitude of characters and fates in a single objective world, illuminated by a single authorial consciousness; rather a plurality of consciousnesses … combine but are not merged" (p. 6).

What then is the significance of making polyvocality an integral dimension of a written research text? Smith (1997, p. 11) drew attention to how giving polyvocal accounts of research can "cultivate and maintain a pluralism of vocabularies and stories." Sparkes (1991, p. 103) considered how paying attention to the ways in which we produce research texts might serve as a "vital first [step] in opening up the possibilities for entertaining alternative views and exploring the intellectual landscape of others." Similarly, Vasudevan (2011) recommended that "at a time when evidence of human diversity is in abundance and accessible like no time before," a research text can "[function] as a living embodiment of where and how [a researcher's] own inquiry into ways of knowing has meandered, including through myriad theoretical frameworks, research projects and artifacts, conversations with [others], and a wide range of texts and media" (p. 2). And Graham Badley (personal communication, 19 February, 2015) proposed "that bringing others in to and connecting them with an ongoing conversation are vital in enabling them to become full partners in the shared experiences of making and knowing, in the aim of contributing to what we ought to do in our personal and social lives" (see also Badley, in press). This edited volume, therefore, seeks to demonstrate how self-study of professional practice can serve as

a conduit for polyvocal learning conversations and also how such conversations can enhance professional learning and knowing about, and for, practice.

The 33 contributors to this book include experienced and emerging self-study scholars, writing in collaboration, across multiple professions, academic disciplines, contexts, and continents. They are all taking part in dialogic professional learning through self-study research. Building on, and extending, the existing body of work on self-study, contributors offer their experiences of self-study from their fields of practice—including the how, why, and impact of professional learning through context-specific, polyvocal, practitioner-led inquiry. Each chapter provides both testimony and documentation from those who are supporting and engaging in polyvocal professional learning through self-study research. The chapters illustrate polyvocal professional learning as both phenomenon and method, with every chapter adding to the forms of "methodological inventiveness" (Dadds & Hart, 2001, p. 169) that have been developed and documented within the self-study research community (Whitehead, 2004). Taken as a whole, the transdisciplinary, trans-practitioner exemplars, situated within particular sociocultural positionings, offer a polyvocal conversation about facilitating and undertaking professional learning through self-study research and with implications for education in the professions. Within this conversation, contributors engage with the complexities, challenges, and value of supporting, doing, and going public with polyvocal professional learning through self-study research.

This opening chapter tells a story of how the thinking behind this book evolved over time through dialogue between the editors and with the contributions from a diverse group of self-study researchers. It demonstrates how a unique book design developed to bring together diverse contributors' voices through a peer response process, which entailed a reciprocal exchange and review of chapters. Each chapter in the book is represented through the voices of the chapter authors and their fellow authors who served as critical friends providing supportive feedback. We close this chapter with a poetic representation of insights gleaned from the process of developing *Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research*.

THE OUTGROWTH OF THE BOOK

We, the editors of this book (Kathleen and Anastasia), are teacher educators involved in facilitating and participating in transdisciplinary self-study research communities in our respective home countries of South Africa[1] and the United States of America (USA).[2] Our related experiences in facilitating transdisciplinary self-study research communities brought us together with the goal of learning from each other's experiences (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2014). We see ourselves in Eckert and Stacey's (2000) description of "complementary colleagues … who have different concerns, expertise, … and frames of reference," but who have a common purpose (p. 535). Our common purpose was initially to learn more about enhancing professional learning through and within transdisciplinary self-study research

communities. Over time, we developed a more specific focus on what we might learn from understanding how and why self-study research can bring about the interaction of multiple ways of seeing and knowing as an integral part of professional learning. In this section of the chapter, we look back over 18 months of almost daily e-mail correspondence to retrace how our thinking about this book evolved. We use lightly edited extracts from our transcontinental e-mail communication before and during the book process to make visible our interaction with each other as we developed our proposal for the book and engaged with chapter proposals and drafts submitted by the contributors. The dialogue that follows demonstrates our polyvocal professional learning as editors.

Thinking about a Book on Transdisciplinary Self-Study Research

Anastasia: I've been thinking about the idea of coediting a book on transdisciplinary self-study research. I strongly believe there's a need for such a book. Each time I teach the Advanced Research Methods in Self-Study course (which I am teaching now) students hunger for self-studies that are not only teacher education focused. The course is for all professionals who want to study their practice. For example, this semester there are students who are IT specialists; one works with home streamers who take an online course from home. Her job is to support their needs while she works with a larger team putting together the modules. I know you have students who have conducted self-studies outside of teacher education. What are your thoughts?

Kathleen: I think this would be a wonderful and much needed resource. We certainly have self-study researchers working across a range of disciplines in South Africa who would contribute to and benefit from a book like this.

Anastasia: So pleased we will explore an edited book together! We can begin a dialogue about that.

Returning to the Larger Story

Anastasia: Returning to the larger story or the "so what?" for the field will be important. Let's start thinking about *why* we are proposing this book and sharing our ideas with each other.

Kathleen: There seems to be a growing interest in self-study of professional practice beyond teaching and teacher education. I think that the so what question, or as Claudia Mitchell always asks, "What

difference does this make anyway?" (2008, p. 366), will be vital and will help us perhaps to begin to make some sense of what the field of transdisciplinary self-study might look like—in relation to the well-mapped field of self-study in teaching and teacher education.

Anastasia: Yes, new landscapes to travel. Improvement aimed for other fields. The Self-Study of Professional Practice (SSoPP) is really just emerging and our work with practitioners who are not all teachers has landed us at this new entry port to explore what difference does and can this make! Funny how our paths merged in similar work. What can other fields learn from a methodology that has been largely used by teachers, for teachers? We have observed the crossover impacts, and the hard work will be to help chapter authors articulate that reach beyond the self.

Kathleen: I think that the transnational, transcultural contributions will be an important feature of the book. I was also wondering about the methodological innovations or methodological inventiveness as another potential area of focus? Perhaps we could think of bringing together professional learning, transnational, transcultural dialogue, and methodological inventiveness to frame our book?

Polyvocality and Dialogue as the Lifeblood of Self-Study of Professional Practice

Anastasia: Ideally the book should draw from practice in multiple disciplines, professions, contexts, and countries, but with the self-study methodology as the heart of studying professional practice.

Kathleen: I'm wondering how it might work to start by inviting contributions from people who are passionate about supporting professional learning through self-study and who have been involved in innovative and often collaborative ways of doing such work—across continents and disciplines. This could link to and build on our Castle[3] conference paper where we developed a deep and dialogic understanding of why we are drawn to facilitate the development of transdisciplinary self-study communities (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2014). Certainly for me, our process of dialogue helped me to understand something that I had felt in an intuitive way. That understanding has helped me to gain more clarity about why collegiality, polyvocality, and scholarly collaboration matter (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2014).

Anastasia: I met yesterday with the co-facilitators of S[3]C (Self-Study of Scholars' Collaborative on the Visually Rich Digital Learning Environment)[4] and we remarked on the power of the "we" to develop the "I" as faculty. Faculty professional study groups give us that opportunity tenfold. The dialogue in our Castle paper is the evidence of the impact of our collaboration. We each grew in our individual understandings because and only because of the collaboration; it wasn't possible to learn what we did alone.

Kathleen: In reading through the proposals we've received from potential contributors to the book and also looking again at our Castle paper, my first thought is that what seems to be emerging is an emphasis on polyvocality, dialogue, conversations, collaboration, and collegiality as the lifeblood of self-study of professional practice. Of course, that is what your 2011 book (Samaras, 2011) and other self-study publications (Samaras, 2013; Samaras et al., 2014a) emphasised, but I don't think I have seen it so powerfully illustrated in one collection of self-study writings before. I think the transdisciplinary nature of this book will also contribute to the polyvocality. The book will demonstrate how polyvocal learning conversations happen through self-study of professional practice and also how such conversations contribute to professional learning and research. I'm just not sure yet how we might condense that into a title …

Anastasia: It gets complicated because we are breaking so much new ground, so we'll have to be patient with the process. I too thought that the title could include the polyvocality piece: *Polyvocal Professional Learning. ...* Eric Gudas, a poet and friend, shared with me that polyvocality is a common term in literature, for example, Toni Morrison (e.g., Morrison, 1992) and William Faulkner (e.g., Faulkner, 1977) used it when they interplayed different voices in their work. Characters in their novels come in and out of dialogue set within a meta-story that brings together their different voices and perspectives. Books have been written on self-study and a specific discipline (e.g., Bullock & Russell, 2012) or according to various self-study methods (e.g., Tidwell, Heston, & Fitzgerald, 2009), and with a focus on teacher educators' practice (e.g., Lassonde, Galman, & Kosnik, 2009), but the polyvocal calls for a seamlessness that transcends that. Our focus is on the many voices, whose voices, and the so what and for whom of this group of professionals working with others and beyond the self.

Learning about Written Portrayals of Polyvocality in Self-Study of Professional Practice

Kathleen: There are some issues I'm noticing as I'm reading the chapter drafts. I thought it might be helpful for us to consider these to see how we can offer consistent and constructive feedback to contributors. One issue is that the polyvocal chapters are complex and sometimes difficult to follow because of the multiple voices (and sometimes multiple studies). Some drafts are written in a more impersonal way, while some switch between the first person plural, first person singular and third person in ways that are confusing. To do this kind of polyvocal writing successfully might require stepping back at times to write about the authors as a pair or group (from the outside) and then also "stepping in" at times to write from the first person when it is appropriate, for example, to show divergent or individual voices. In chapters where there are multiple studies, I think that it might work well to try to bring the studies into dialogue with each other and to look across them for cross-cutting learning.

Anastasia: This is very tricky. Looking at drafts, as you noted, some authors are back and forth in using first and third person and yet each chapter is unique. Polyvocality isn't easy to write about for sure, but you can sense when there is enough balance for it to work well. Writing about themselves … writing about ourselves …

Kathleen: I also think that a context section for each chapter is vital. We all (understandably) tend to take our own contexts for granted, but as this is a transdisciplinary, transnational, transcultural book, maybe we need to prompt authors to engage in processes of cultural, linguistic, and disciplinary "translation" and explication.

Anastasia: Yes, positioning the study in terms of research literature connections, theoretical perspectives, and professional or disciplinary and socio-cultural contexts …. Regardless, I think we should indicate to contributors that we recognise that writing is different for different audiences and then ask them not to hesitate to send us their questions as they sort through our comments.

THE PEER RESPONSE PROCESS

An integral part of the development of the book was the peer response process. We asked each author, pair, or group of authors to work together to read and respond

to one other chapter draft.[5] Our intention was for all contributors to benefit from receiving constructive peer feedback from their fellow authors as critical friends. We anticipated this would add to the conversations that we as editors were having with contributors about their chapters as work in progress. We also saw this as an extension of the polyvocality of each chapter. As far as possible, we asked each author or group of coauthors to respond to a draft chapter that seemed to resonate with their own, but that was written in a context that was in some way different to their own. Our thinking was that this pairing of peer respondents across contexts might offer the authors alternative perspectives and thus help to make the final chapters more accessible to diverse readers. We also wanted the response to be a reciprocal process and so the peer response was an exchange where contributors received responses from the same authors to whose work they responded. Building on peer response guidelines that were used in Pithouse et al. (2009), our prompts for the peer responses were:

- What do you find most interesting or significant about this draft? Why?
- Do you have any questions about this draft? (For example, any points that are unclear to you, or that you think could be explained more fully.) Why?
- Bearing in the mind the limitations of the specified word count, do you have any particular suggestions for how the authors could enhance their discussion of issues such as:
  - the positioning of the self-study in terms of professional/disciplinary, socio-cultural, national, and so forth, contexts;
  - how polyvocal learning conversations happen through self-study;
  - using diverse approaches to self-study (for example, memory-work, arts-based methods, poetic inquiry, narrative, dialogue as method, and so forth);
  - ethical concerns in engaging in self-study;
  - methodological challenges and complexities in engaging in self-study;
  - what difference the self-study might make—the so what question?

The peer responses were sent to us and we then read them and sent them on to each author. As needed, we added our own comments to those of the peer respondents for the purposes of additional guidance or clarification. In reading the peer responses, we were particularly struck by the significance of the comments on what the peers found most interesting about each chapter and so we decided to ask permission to include excerpts from these peer comments in this opening chapter. We then asked the authors to contribute informal descriptions of their own chapters to express their thinking about the significance of their work. We envisioned the dialogue between the authors' chapter portrayals and the peer responses as adding another dimension of polyvocality to the book. In the section that follows, we offer a polyvocal depiction of each chapter by bringing together the voices of the chapter authors and their peer respondents.

THE POLYVOCAL CHAPTERS

"Work Gloves and a Green Sea Turtle: Collaborating in a Dialogic Process of Professional Learning" by David P. Evans, Heipua Ka'ōpua and Anne Reilley Freese. Chapter Consultants: Amanda Berry, Janneke Geursen and Mieke Lunenberg

Dave, Heipua and Anne. This self-study took place at a 4-year research institution in Hawai'i involving the polyvocal mentorship and guidance of Anne, a doctoral committee member, and the power of critical doctoral friends (Dave and Heipua). Dave and Heipua explore the use of artefacts and storytelling as methodological tools for self-study. Our chapter explores how the process of sharing and interpreting artefacts and stories led us to becoming more critically reflective of our personal and professional philosophies and identities. We draw upon an arts-based approach and narrative inquiry as a means of reflection and inquiry. Our self-study has implications for the use of artefacts to develop relationships, open spaces for critical self-reflection, promote polyvocal discussions, share research challenges, and improve professional practice. It demonstrates that arts-based research provides an effective methodological strategy for evoking untold stories, for generating individual and collaborative reflection, and for unearthing powerful discoveries of self.

Amanda, Janneke and Mieke. We found the ideas of the authors inspiring, both in relation to drawing upon authentic approaches to research (traditional story telling), and in the use of personal artefacts as self-study research tools. We enjoyed the opportunity to access ways of seeing into and understanding another culture through the chapter narrative. We think that the chapter will be helpful for self-study researchers and doctoral students in encouraging them to see into their research processes differently, embracing other cultural perspectives, as well as stimulating them to think about their own influence in the research process.

"A Dialogue on Supporting Self-Study Research in the Context of Dutch Teacher Education" by Amanda Berry, Janneke Geursen and Mieke Lunenberg. Chapter Consultants: David P. Evans, Heipua Ka'ōpua and Anne Reilley Freese

Amanda, Janneke and Mieke. This chapter explores how self-study research can be supported and promoted in the context of Dutch teacher education. Each of the three authors represents a different self-study perspective: as insider-facilitator of a Dutch project (Mieke), as insider-participant in the project (Janneke), and outsider-critical friend, who is also familiar with the Dutch context (Amanda). Our polyvocal approach, in the form of a metalogue, helped us identify and analyse issues for attention to further promote self-study research in a context whereby educators are not expected to do research and cannot always determine, themselves, how to

work on their own professional development. An important insight emerging from our collaborative research efforts concerns the differences between colleagues supporting one other within the safety of a self-study group, and convincing the outside (academic) world of the value and merits of this type of research. A strategy is needed that involves at least one person with "recognised" authority.

Dave, Heipua and Anne. We found the historical aspects that were clearly articulated in the theoretical framework of the chapter to be very beneficial to set the context of why these issues are important to discuss. We were appreciative of the cultural context of this study as it allowed us to gain some insight into higher education and teacher education as it is related to the Dutch study. Especially as the authors explain that being a teacher educator is complex and culturally determined. We also liked the composition of the self-study team—facilitator, participant, and critical friend—because this provided a variety of valuable perspectives.

"Confronting the Hearing Teacher in Deaf Education: Critical Friends in Self-Study" by Karen Rut Gísladóttir and Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir. Chapter Consultants: Claudia Mitchell and Fatima S. Khan

Karen and Hafdís. Working as an education practitioner requires critical engagement with one's practice, and exploring innovative ways to respond to the cultural and lingustic resources of students. In this chapter, we explore the efficacy of critical friends in Karen's process of recognising how her hearing frame of reference hindered her deaf students' use of their pre-existing resources in the learning process. This study takes place in deaf education in Iceland where Karen taught literacy. It addresses a battle with the conflicting ideological forces—the clinical and sociocultural perspectives—influencing the field of deaf education. In this context, Hafdís's critical friendship played a vital role in helping Karen base her practice on students' resources. In this self-study, we use retrospective data analysis to recall and reflect on how thoughts, beliefs, and actions emerging within a dialogue provided Karen support for understanding her practice. In that process, we develop a visual representation of our professional journey through this study. The findings illuminate the important role critical friends can play in thinking about and challenging one's own perspectives.

Claudia and Fatima. The incidents that Karen highlighted with her students were quite powerful. It was very interesting to see Karen's reflections and inner struggles. The flow between the incidents, Karen's analysis, and Hafdís' reflections was quite effective in illustrating the importance of having a critical friend. The chapter also meaningfully shows how the practice of self-study is enriched by such open and challenging dialogue.

"Jackie and Me, Jackie and Us: Productive Entanglements and Learning Conversations in the Supervision Process" by Claudia Mitchell and Fatima S. Khan. Chapter Consultants: Karen Rut Gísladóttir and Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir

Claudia and Fatima. In this chapter, we explore self-study and professional practice in the area of international development, childhood, and global adversity. We apply the biographical techniques of learning conversations and cultural biography to generate reflexivity between a doctoral supervisor and supervisee with reference to the work of the late Jackie Kirk, a pioneer in the field of humanitarian aid and development. We advance the concept of productive entanglements to examine how Jackie's work has influenced ours—individually and collaboratively—in a series of reflective pieces. We contend that cultural biography and dialogue, as tools, are instrumental to understanding our professional practices and ourselves by studying the influence of others on our work. By engaging in meaningful dialogic processes, we recognise that such entanglements continually inform our self-study, and raise possibilities to give back to Jackie what she has given to the academic community.

Karen and Hafdís. We found the content of the chapter to be of great importance and it generated a useful discussion between the two of us about self-study and the complex role of supervision in that process. One thing we find most significant about this chapter, is how well it illustrates the importance of events, relationships, and dialogue in finding meaning in one's work and developing a researcher's identity: how legacies, people's relations, accomplishments, and hard work influences and continues to live through the work of others—Jackie's work and relationship with Claudia continues and takes on a new form in Fatima's work and her collaboration with Claudia. And this is what we find most interesting with self-study. It is not only about presenting the findings but highlighting how researchers come to their findings and in so doing illuminating how the findings are interconnected with people's individual lives and their relation with other individuals, work, and events.

"A Technology-Enhanced Self-Study of Reversible Mentorship in a Modern Language Programme" by Cristina M. Hernández Gil de Lamadrid and Esperanza Román Mendoza. Chapter Consultant: Delia E. Racines

Cristina and Esperanza. Cristina, a teaching assistant in a basic Spanish language programme at a large public university in the USA, and her mentor, Esperanza, an experienced associate professor who served as director of Cristina's master's thesis, used self-study to examine their teaching together in a shared course working with each other as critical friends. Through the qualitative and quantitative analysis of all our online communications, consisting of a shared blog, an extensive e-mail exchange, and an exit interview, we realised how the relationship between us slowly changed to become more personal and truly bidirectional. Both self-study and the

online communication tools implemented during the study proved to be powerful means to create between us a long-lasting critical friendship based on collaborative inquiry and self-reflection, as well as an appropriate method to establish more effective mentorship practices and graduate teaching assistants' training programmes.

Delia. I think it is an interesting topic. The excerpts from reflections and from the interviews are very powerful. The chapter carefully balances the learned experiences from both authors' perspectives. I have never heard the term, reversible mentorship, however, I found it very insightful.

"Duality in Practice and Mentorship of an English Learner Instructional Coach" by Delia E. Racines and Anastasia P. Samaras. Chapter Consultants: Cristina M. Hernández Gil de Lamadrid and Esperanza Román Mendoza

Delia and Anastasia. This chapter stories the research of Delia, an English learner (EL) instructional coach (iCoach) with mentorship from Anastasia, a self-study research scholar, in their dual commitment to study and improve their professional practices. Set within the context of high-stakes accountability and meeting the needs of all learners, Delia examines how her firsthand experiences as an EL and EL teacher influenced her practice as an iCoach in a middle school in the USA. She utilised the self-study methods of personal history, memory-work, and photographic self-portraits to study the intersections and interplay of her culture and practice of coaching teachers. Anastasia considers the role that critical mentorship played in their reciprocal learning as they gained a deeper knowledge of their practices as teachers and facilitators of self-study research. Delia's study exemplifies how a bricolage self-study method can be useful in studying professional practice while building self-efficacy as a continuous learner that transcends to other practitioners interested in improving their practice.

Cristina and Esperanza. Delia is very honest about the impact this self-study and Anastasia's guidance and courses had (and still have) on her practice. It is a very good example of how transformative self-study can be! Delia's and Anastasia's pieces are very powerful.

"Creating a Culture of Inquiry in Music Teacher Education: Collaborative Self-Study Approaches in Music" by Ann Marie Stanley and Colleen M. Conway. Chapter Consultants: Linda van Laren, Inbanathan Naicker, Daisy Pillay, Thenjiwe Meyiwa and Nithi Muthukrishna

Ann Marie and Colleen. We are music education faculty members and music teacher educators in the USA. Our 10-year relationship has evolved: first advisor to doctoral student, then mentor and new professor, and now, co-researchers and critical friends. In this chapter, we detail our challenges and achievements in developing a culture of inquiry within music teacher education, especially our efforts to establish

a collaborative self-study culture within our own universities and in the larger music education profession. We explain how we have created and recreated our own relationship, and identified a network of like-minded music teacher educators. Self-study work has required us to alter our thinking about music teacher education research and practice, especially with regard to collaborative self-study, and we write about continuing to build a culture of self-study within music education and increasing its reputation in our field as a meaningful, rigorous methodology.

Linda, Inbanathan, Daisy, Thenjiwe and Nithi. The experiences of collaboration described in the chapter are similar to our own experiences. We found the conversations between authors (and others) relevant for understanding and exploring their experiences. The trajectory in adopting self-study in music education was interesting because the experiences of the authors seem similar to that of many other disciplines. The representation of the two different authors' narratives made for interesting reading and engagement. The authors' journey to self-study research (personnel and professional) is intriguing and once again demonstrates that collaborative inquiry through self-study is a powerful professional development endeavour for building communities of practice. The narratives further reflect how self-study is grounded in critical reflection, and how it enables one to engage at the intersection of theory and practice.

"Learning about Co-Flexivity in a Transdisciplinary Self-Study Research Supervision Community" by Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan, Nithi Muthukrishna, Daisy Pillay, Linda van Laren, Theresa Chisanga, Thenjiwe Meyiwa, Relebohile Moletsane, Inbanathan Naicker, Lorraine Singh and Jean Stuart. Chapter Consultants: Ann Marie Stanley and Colleen M. Conway

Kathleen, Nithi, Daisy, Linda, Theresa, Thenjiwe, Relebohile, Inbanathan, Lorraine and Jean. We are postgraduate research supervisors who participate in the Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) project. TES is a research-intervention project that aims to study and nurture the growth of self-study research and supervision capacity within a transdisciplinary, multi-institutional, research learning community located across diverse university contexts in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces of South Africa. In this chapter, we portray our learning about co-flexivity (collective reflexivity) through a collective research process of composing poems and reflexive dialogues. We offer our polyvocal learning about co-flexivity in self-study supervision as a contribution to scholarly conversations about the impact of collaboration in self-study. While collaboration is well established as a central requirement of self-study research, our collective self-study draws attention to the significance of co-flexivity for those who supervise or enable others' self-study research.

Ann Marie and Colleen. We were impressed by the Transformative Education/al Studies project and inspired to read this well done description of the participants,

goals, and activities of the group. Readers will gain a heightened understanding of the notion of collaboration in self-study through the authors' discussions of co-flexivity. We were particularly impressed with the use of poetry-based arts research methods.

"Multiple Narrators: Using Double Voice Poems to Examine Writing Personas" by Arvinder Kaur Johri. Chapter Consultants: Delysia Norelle Timm and Joan Lucy Conolly

Arvinder. In this chapter, I offer a focused discussion on the self-study component of my doctoral dissertation, which was a deliberative endeavour to examine my practice and the assumptions embedded in my practice as a creative writing teacher in an alternative high school with a multicultural student population in the state of Virginia, USA. My exploration of how I influence the learning of my students and my role in the formation of their writing personas is reported in five double voice poems. The poems also capture the experiential narratives of my students. The self-study revealed that my writer's trajectory intersected with my students' writing experiences, and that these refrains in our writing persona narratives highlighted that writers are diverse in terms of their writing dispositions, interests, and abilities and, yet, enjoy some common connecting themes. This poetic inquiry gave me a platform to celebrate my students' perspectives and observe myself as another character in the narrative of writers.

Delysia and Joan. We find the double voice poetry most interesting, because it is aesthetically pleasing, socioculturally revealing, and densely informative. We find the focus on the development of writing personas, as distinct from development of writing skills, significant when read from the perspective of our experience of our own writing personas and skills, and the writing personas and skills of our students. We believe that developing a writing persona contributes to a sense of self-esteem and self-worth, which is a necessary if people are going to be able to make confident, informed, meaningful, and self-empowering use of writing as a form of communication. This chapter reminds us that developing a writing persona in the individual is an imperative precursor to developing writing globally as a contributor to planetary wellbeing.

"Interweavings, Interfaces and Intersections: A Co/Autoethnographic Self-Study" by Delysia Norelle Timm and Joan Lucy Conolly. Chapter Consultant: Arvinder Kaur Johri

Delysia and Joan. This chapter relates our experience of self-study research through co/autoethnographic conversations about a time when Delysia was simultaneously Acting-Director of a South African university's centre for higher education development and Joan's doctoral student, and Joan was Delysia's staff member. We inform these context-specific practitioner-led critical relational and

collaborative conversations with personal memory, self-observation, self-reflection, and self-analysis, and frame our writing in response to questions that simultaneously engage our readers in ongoing conversations. In the process, we have learned to pay close attention to the polyvocal conversations between our various inner voices, which we appreciate as an extended awareness of the insider perspective. These very numerous internal polyvocal conversations have contributed significantly to the interweavings, interfaces, and interactions of our individual and collective insights into our spiritual, professional, and research beings and practice.

Arvinder. The contrasting yet overlapping narratives of the authors and the multidimensional exploration of their intersecting narratives add complexity and authenticity to the research study. "Delysia and I are very different personalities but we interweave, interface, and intersect in significant complementary ways"—this profound statement of Joan succinctly captures the core theme of this chapter. The use of the dialogic technique to reveal the "messy" yet critical process of co/autoethnography augments the contradictions embedded in these polyvocal conversations. The rhetorical device of chunking based on time periods and relational dynamics is very effective.

"Integrating First, Second and Third Person Research to Lead the Creation of a Learning Organisation: A Self-Study Dialogue Between Doctoral Supervisor and Student" by Joan Walton and Nigel Harrisson. Chapter Consultants: Lynne Scott Constantine and Lesley Smith

Joan and Nigel. In our chapter, we provide an account of how we shared our ideas and experiences to explore the relevance of first, second, and third person perspectives to Nigel's research. Nigel is enquiring into how he can influence the creation of a learning organisation that increases the inclusion of children in schools within one local authority in the United Kingdom. Both in our supervisory relationship and in writing this chapter, we use dialogue as a methodology and as a literary device, which enables us to present the essence of our individual and collaborative perspectives as they evolve over time. We discover that the use of dialogue in a self-study encourages reflection, which generates theories in practice that influence actual practice.

Lynne and Lesley. By replicating an important aspect of the supervisor–student interaction, the chapter allows the reader to understand not just the material imparted, but also the context in which the material was developed. Among the chapter's premises is the idea that context, values, and worldview are a part of the equation in knowledge creation; hence, being able to see into the relationship through dialogue allows for a deeper and richer understanding of those interconnections. Beyond just the form, a key take away from the chapter is the way in which reflection on a critical incident, like the one Nigel describes, can become the organising principle

for one's self-study. We see this chapter as a powerful reading for scholars new to self-study, in the way in which it predicates broader social transformation on individual transformation.

"Breathing Under Water: A Trans-Continental Conversation about the 'Why' of Co-Facilitating Transdisciplinary Self-Study Learning Communities" by Anastasia P. Samaras, Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan, Theresa Chisanga, Joan Lucy Conolly, Lynne Scott Constantine, Thenjiwe Meyiwa, Lesley Smith and Delysia Norelle Timm. Chapter Consultant: Joan Walton

Anastasia, Kathleen, Theresa, Joan, Lynne, Thenjiwe, Lesley and Delysia. This chapter presents our transcontinental dialogue on our personal and professional impetus for co-facilitating transdisciplinary self-study learning communities in the USA and South Africa. In different places and seemingly at the same time, the eight of us have been working with colleagues to facilitate self-study learning communities. While our projects in facilitating self-study research take place in self-study groups at our respective universities, in this space, we bring together our many voices as we ask ourselves and each other why we facilitate self-study research. We openly assess our learning through a series of academic and personal–professional conversations through face-to-face and virtual exchanges using a bricolage self-study method. Our inner and meta discoveries are catalogued through poetry. The multiperspectival dialogue we represent in this chapter is an invitation to others to extend the conversation about co-facilitating transdisciplinary self-study research for polyvocal professional learning.

Joan. As someone who is very committed to forms of research that include self-study, and is particularly involved in developing ideas and practice around collaborative inquiry, I always appreciate reading about what other people are doing, what their challenges are, and so forth. The methods used to overcome geographical distance were interesting to read about. The use of poetry as a creative form of presentation was effective.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THIS MAKE?

In keeping with the book's focus on methodological inventiveness, this final chapter concludes with a poem that Kathleen composed to encapsulate our learning from the book process. The poem is inspired by Kathleen and Anastasia's conversations about why polyvocal professional learning through self-study matters.

Professionals working with others and beyond the self

Self-study of professional practice
Innovative and responsive
Ways of seeing, doing and becoming

Learning starts with our selves but does not end there
Challenge, deepen and extend professional knowing
Making a qualitative difference in professional practice

New landscapes to travel
Landed us at this new entry port
Polyvocal professional learning
Through self-study research
  Professional learning
  Transnational, transcultural dialogue
  Methodological inventiveness

Making interaction with significant others visible
Making diverse ways of seeing and knowing a focal point
Bringing into dialogue multiple points of view
The power of the "we" to develop the "I"
Polyvocality isn't easy to write about
Consciousnesses combine, but are not merged

"What difference does this make anyway?"
Adding to the forms of methodological inventiveness
Multiple ways of seeing and knowing
As an integral part of professional learning
Self-study methodology
As the heart of studying professional practice

Polyvocality, dialogue, conversations
Across continents and disciplines
Our focus is on the many voices, whose voices, and the so what
Professionals working with others and beyond the self
Collegiality, polyvocality and scholarly collaboration
The lifeblood of self-study of professional practice

The poem illustrates how the process of developing this edited volume has provoked new insights about the educative potential of polyvocal professional learning though self-study research. Here we are thinking about Dewey's (1938/1963) conception of educative experience as "[arousing] curiosity, [strengthening] initiative, and [setting] up desires and purposes that are sufficiently intense to carry a person over dead places in the future" (p. 38). We anticipate that these insights will be useful to others interested in exploring the promise of dialogue, collaboration, and transdisciplinarity in and for professional learning. Polyvocality, dialogue, conversations, and collaboration across continents and disciplines offer professionals a wide range of possibilities for learning from and with each other. This book illustrates the power of "we" for personal and professional learning that makes a difference. Taken together, the individual chapters offer evidence of how the editors and contributors grew in our

individual understandings because and only because of our interaction with critical friends who are committed to learning with and through others. We experienced the potential and value of self-study research as a powerful, diverse, and accessible medium for polyvocal professional learning across geographical, cultural, and disciplinary contexts.

Our work is useful to practitioners including, but not limited to, teachers and teacher educators, to methodologists including those who integrate the arts in research, and others interested in exploring innovative paths for professional learning. This collection of exemplars of self-study research suggests the importance of universities and centres of teaching and learning in facilitating access to physical and virtual spaces for polyvocal professional learning through collegial dialogue for educational change. The book documents the processes of our polyvocal discoveries across the globe and makes them public so that they can be available to others to consider and adapt in their own work in supporting and enacting professional learning through self-study research.

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NOTES

[1] In South Africa, Kathleen (University of KwaZulu-Natal [UKZN]) leads the Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) project (2014–2016) with Thenjiwe Meyiwa (Durban University of Technology [DUT]), Theresa Chisanga (Walter Sisulu University [WSU]), and Delysia Norelle Timm (DUT). The TES project (2014–2016) is funded primarily by South Africa's National Research Foundation, and follows the initial TES project (2011–2013) collaboratively led by Joan Lucy Conolly (DUT), Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan (UKZN), Thenjiwe Meyiwa (ex WSU), Liz Harrison (DUT), and Delysia Timm (DUT). Project participants are university educators from diverse academic and professional disciplines who are engaging in self-study research in a range of university contexts. Currently, the TES project has 40 active participants across six South African universities. These participants meet at least twice a year for inter-institutional workshops and also have regular contact via an online social learning platform. There are also TES groups that meet weekly or monthly at each of the three host universities. The central TES self-study research question of: "How do I transform my educational practice?" is explored in relation to participants' particular contexts and also across the TES learning community, becoming: "How do we transform our educational practice?" The project aims to support and study the collaborative development of self-reflexive pedagogic, research, and supervision capacity as participants engage with these questions.

[2] At George Mason University in the USA, Anastasia was inspired by the goal of introducing self-study research to faculty outside of teacher education who could work within a community to re-imagine and make public their new pedagogies. In August 2010, 11 participants from 11 specialisations and four colleges were competitively selected to participate in Scholars of Studying Teaching Collaborative (SoSTC), a multi-semester research trans-disciplinary faculty self-study learning

community sponsored by the university's Centre for Faculty and Teaching Excellence. Subsequent to the first faculty self-study group, in 2012 Scholars of Studying Teaching Collaborative on e-Learning (SoSTCe-L) was launched. Anastasia co-facilitated this year-long transdisciplinary faculty self-study with three SoSTC participants: Lesley Smith from New Century College and Higher Education, Esperanza Roman Mendoza, from Modern/Classical Languages, and Ryan Swanson from History and Art/History. In 2014, Lynne Scott Constantine, Lesley, and Anastasia launched a third transdisciplinary faculty self-study group of 17 participants: the Self-Study of Scholars' Collaborative (S^3C) on the Visually Rich Digital Learning Environment.

[3] The biannual International S-STEP Conference is held at the Queens University International Study Centre at Herstmonceux Castle, England. (www.castleconference.com/conference-history.html)

[4] S^3C is the Self-Study of Scholars' Collaborative on the Visually Rich Digital Learning Environment at George Mason University. The goal of this initiative is to support faculty development and a scholarship of professional practice, and to build research capacity using the self-study research methodology and tools of visually rich digital environments.

[5] The peer respondents are acknowledged as chapter consultants in each chapter.

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2. WORK GLOVES AND A GREEN SEA TURTLE

Collaborating in a Dialogic Process of Professional Learning

INTRODUCTION

We have often heard that it takes a village to raise a child. Any doctoral student could surely say the same about the substantial support they received from the village that was their dissertation committee (at American universities, a committee of senior faculty members are convened to provide guidance, expertise, feedback, and approval of the doctoral dissertation). This chapter discusses the polyvocal mentorship and guidance of Anne, a doctoral committee member, and the power of critical friends (Dave and Heipua) in a doctoral journey of self-discovery. As friends, colleagues, and doctoral students, Dave and Heipua embarked on studying two topics that, while sharing some similarities, were very unique. By purposefully collaborating during the research and writing of their dissertations, Dave and Heipua benefited from rich opportunities for discussions about both methodology and their transdisciplinary topics that illuminated their paths, while at the same time deepening their understanding and development as self-study researchers and professionals in higher education. Dave and Heipua started out with the intention of learning about the "other," and finished by learning so much about the "self."

Dave and Heipua's collaboration and dialogic process of professional learning began when they enrolled in a dissertation research and writing course taught by Anne Freese. The first day of class, Anne distributed artefacts to the class in small groups and explained that the artefacts represented aspects of her personal and professional life. Students were instructed to make assumptions about what each artefact represented. For example, Anne included a St. Patrick's Day card to represent her ethnicity, family photos to represent her background, a tennis ball and megaphone to represent her personal interests in sports, book reviews and photographs that represented her academic writing, and travel documents and name tags that represented her participation at professional conferences. In small groups, students were given a group of artefacts and asked to make assumptions regarding what the specific artefacts represented. After the entire class had reflected on the artefacts and shared their assumptions, Anne explained that she designed the arts-based artefact activity for several reasons. First, it served as an interactive way of introducing herself to the class by engaging the students in the process of

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 21–37.

reflection and discovery. Secondly, the artefacts served as data. As each group made assumptions about the meaning of the artefacts, Anne guided the inquiry and probed the groups as to whether there was evidence or data to support their assumptions. During the inquiry, Anne introduced aspects of self-study and research-related terminology (e.g., triangulation, critical friends, collaboration, data analysis). As a way of illustrating the importance of critical friends, she discussed several photographs that included her critical friends (Anastasia Samaras and Clare Kosnik). In her discussion of the photographs, she shared with the class the important role her critical friends have played in her development as a researcher, and how the relationship was a trusted one that provided a supportive and productive space to share her writings and teaching challenges without judgment (Kosnik, Samaras, & Freese, 2006). Anne's views of critical friendship also align nicely with Costa and Kallick (1993) who described a critical friend as a person "who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critique of a person's work as a friend" (p. 50).

After she modelled the activity, Anne asked the students to purposefully select five or six artefacts that represented their personal and professional characteristics and bring them to the next class meeting. She emphasised the value of reflection as an individual activity as well as a collaborative one. By reflecting on and collaboratively sharing their artefacts, the students and Anne gained valuable insight into each other. And the activity set the tone for establishing a community of learners, which ultimately led to developing critical friendships.

The above discussion provides a window into the context for the collaborative self-study that is the focus of this chapter. In the following sections, Dave and Heipua describe the context of their studies and explain how they incorporated the use of artefacts as an integral part of their dissertation research methodology. They discuss how the use of an arts-based and narrative research approach led them to collaborate with Anne to reflect and arrive at new insights about the research process and about themselves as researchers, leaders, educators, and doctoral advisor. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the role of critical friends and the value of mentoring, coinquiring, and coreflecting. This self-study systematically examines the authors' reframing of their work and provides important implications for self-study methodologies.

CONTEXT

This self-study took place in Hawai'i, a multicultural setting where "talk story" is the way in which islanders communicate with one another. This culturally appropriate form of communication developed in Hawai'i among marginalised and blended populations including Native Hawaiians and numerous immigrant groups. In keeping with the oral traditions of Native Hawaiians, who passed information from one generation to the next through storytelling, talk story includes elements of respect, humility, sense of place, and the importance of developing relationships. Living in an isolated island community,

developing trust and establishing a connection with others are essential elements of this form of communication. As with many Indigenous cultures, storytelling for Native Hawaiians has been and continues to be an integral way of imparting knowledge (Mataira, Matsuoka, & Morelli, 2005). Both Dave and Heipua's studies incorporated artefacts as a way of engaging their participants in talk story. In the following sections, Dave and Heipua describe their individual studies, and discuss how their methodology evolved into the self-study that is the focus of this chapter.

Dave's study focused on faculty perspectives of satisfaction at a research university. His study was inspired by prior research that explored how changes within universities are affecting almost every aspect of faculty work life and satisfaction for the professoriate. Concern over shrinking budgets and having to do more with less, increased demands to conduct assessments and be accountable, diminished quality of students, and an eroding public perception of what faculty do, have all conspired to negatively impact the enjoyment faculty are experiencing in their careers. Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) emphasised that the current landscape of change is unprecedented because of two powerful conditions that are reinforcing each other: the sheer number of institution-moulding forces that are at play, and the stunning rapidity with which these forces are reshaping the academy. According to Ambrose, Huston, and Norman (2005), the bulk of research conducted on faculty satisfaction has tended to be done on a national level with a focus that has been broad rather than deep. Because of that, Dave chose to collect detailed personal narratives from faculty utilising qualitative case studies featuring an in-depth, intensive, holistic description and analysis from those intimately involved in the situation (Merriam, 1998).

Heipua's study on the tenure experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty at a four-year research institution was motivated by her own disconcerting experiences while seeking tenure as a Polynesian woman in academe. Similar to the experiences of other Indigenous people, Native Hawaiians experienced oppression and colonisation (Wright, 2003) and actively resisted the erosion of their culture and language (Silva, 2004). In understanding the role of Native Hawaiian values and culture on the tenure experience, Heipua aimed to centre Indigenous culture and ways of knowing in the production of knowledge. To accomplish this, she intentionally used two indigenous methods, *mo'olelo* [storytelling] and *hō'ailona* [symbolic reflection of artefacts] to evoke personal and collaborative reflection.

METHODS

In Dave's study, 10 faculty members comprised the purposeful sample. Within these 10 faculty profiles (cases), intentional effort was made to select participants who represented the varied complexion of the faculty in attributes such as ethnicity, age, years of service, tenure status, rank, sexual orientation, academic discipline, duties, and birth origin. Dave used Hagedorn's (2000) conceptual model of faculty satisfaction as his theoretical lens, which provided an essential

starting point because Hagedorn's construct included a number of these important attributes.

Because a qualitative investigation is more open-ended and less structured, Dave employed several approaches during two 90-minute interviews to gain insight into the perspectives of faculty regarding their satisfaction of work life within the academy: (1) artefacts that define the individual, (2) visual or narrative depictions of professional journey, (3) semistructured interviews, (4) observations, and (5) field notes. The benefit of using multiple sources is that it provided Dave's study with stronger internal validity because these varied approaches allowed him to triangulate his results (Merriam, 1998).

In her study of tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty, Heipua used purposive criterion sampling to locate nine (from a total of 14) tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty at a four-year research university where the study was conducted. At this university, Native Hawaiian women hold only 3% of full-time instructional faculty positions and represent only 6% of all tenured women faculty. Heipua employed two theoretical lenses (poststructural feminism and Indigenous theory), two methodologies (narrative inquiry and arts-based research), and two methods *mo'olelo* [storytelling and storymaking] and *hō'ailona* [the symbolic reflection of artefacts] to gather and interpret data to understand the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women. Heipua interviewed each of her nine participants three times using a qualitative talk story approach to evoke storytelling. Meeting participants multiple times resulted in personal reflection and ultimately, collaborative reflection on a deeper level. Other methods used to understand the academic and tenure experiences of her participants included the use of visual or textual artefacts, observations, photographs, and field notes.

The Discovery of Artefacts and How They Were Used

Because the researcher is the primary research instrument in a qualitative study, Jones, Torres, and Arminio (2006) emphasised that the relationship between researcher and participant is one of the hallmarks of qualitative research—a relationship that can neither be presumed nor taken for granted. As noted earlier, relationships among Native Hawaiian people are particularly valued. It was during the development of their dissertation proposals, and through their collaborative discussions, that Dave and Heipua came up with the idea to use artefacts as a means to establish rapport and as a culturally appropriate methodology. This dialogue was made possible through the mentorship provided by Anne in a doctoral course designed to guide students in their dissertation development, research, and writing. As explained above, in this course, Anne demonstrated the efficacy of artefacts in a personal introduction session at the beginning of the semester and also encouraged students to work with a critical friend because the dialogue with others is an essential part to enhancing one's own professional practice. This new approach would prove to be essential to their research studies.

In both studies, data were collected primarily through talk story sessions that were conversational in nature. Semistructured interviews with open-ended questions allowed participants to feel comfortable and express their thoughts and feelings more openly (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p. 446). The interviews incorporated this conversational style of interviewing in keeping with the cultural context of Hawai‘i.

At the initial meeting with his participants, Dave asked them to bring four or five artefacts or objects that symbolise, represent, or describe them personally and professionally and to visually or textually describe their academic journey. The idea to have the faculty participants develop some sort of depiction of their path through the academy was based on the article, “On the Road to Becoming a Professor” where Nyquist et al. (1999) asked graduate students to draw their journey through graduate school. Through this arts-informed methodology, consistent images and metaphors clearly identified consistent emotional themes and challenges encountered by the graduate students. According to Cole and Knowles (2008), arts-based research can be used to capture the hard-to-put-into-words, and communicate more holistically because the metaphors, symbols, and artistic images can carry theory elegantly and eloquently. Dave also brought five artefacts because he felt that sharing some insight into who he was would break down some barriers and apprehension that participants might be feeling. Dave came to confidently believe that the time he took to get to know his participants provided a much richer, more honest dialogue as the participants opened up about their level of satisfaction with their work life within the academy. He found the process of gathering artefacts and interpretative drawings to be key elements that provided a more holistic interpretation of the faculty profiles. Dave was certain that the process enabled the participants to tell a more personal story in a nonthreatening way that clearly triangulated the circumstances and personal characteristics of each participant.

As a Polynesian American woman, Heipua approached the first meeting with her Native Hawaiian women participants through self-reflection by creating an Indigenous drawing of a Hawaiian green sea turtle, known as *hōnū* (see Figure 2.1). Among Native Hawaiians, it is important to follow established cultural protocols such as sharing one’s family history and genealogy as a means to establish trust and rapport (Mataira et al., 2005). The *hōnū* served as a personal artefact representing Heipua’s values, family background, genealogy, and her academic and tenure experiences. Though not illustrated, the soft underbelly of the *hōnū* signified her vulnerability and the many struggles she experienced along the doctoral journey. By sharing her personal story and her triumphs and trials in this manner, Heipua opened the way for participants to do likewise. She asked each participant to bring several artefacts to the second meeting representing their academic experiences from the bachelor to the doctorate degree. Similar to Dave’s experience, Heipua discovered the artefacts opened a rich, cultural dialogue and forged a closer relationship between herself and each participant.

Given that Native Hawaiians believe that their physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual characteristics are revealed through items they create, for the third meeting, Heipua invited participants to create an artefact representing their tenure experiences. Participants' reflection on their visual or textual symbols provided an invaluable source of data and contributed to Heipua's understanding of her own culture and values.

Figure 2.1. Hōnū

Using the method of constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), Dave and Heipua systematically analysed their participants' interview transcripts looking for recurring themes. As they analysed the participants' stories through the use of artefacts, Dave and Heipua gained insight into how the participants were making sense of their experiences as tenure track professors and Native Hawaiian women faculty. Dave and Heipua served as critical friends by meeting monthly for a period of 18 months to discuss and review each other's work and share their stories (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Samaras & Freese, 2006). Their roles as critical friends also served as a way of gaining additional perspective in that they were able to discuss and analyse their findings with one another, refine their processes and techniques, and arrive at new insights.

We Went Looking for Perspectives of Others and Found Ourselves

Dave and Heipua's original intent in using artefacts was to gain the trust of their participants and develop a rapport. By first sharing their own stories through the use of artefacts, they demonstrated their vulnerability, openness, and honesty which

allowed their participants to feel safe in sharing their artefacts and stories. As they shared their artefacts, the participants reflected back their interpretation of these artefacts causing Dave and Heipua to rethink some of their assumptions and to view themselves from a different perspective.

While self-study was not the initial objective of Dave and Heipua's dissertation research, it evolved as they explored the richness and depth of the data that emerged from incorporating their arts-based and narrative methodologies. In their book, *Self-Study of Teaching Practices*, Samaras and Freese (2006) pointed out that an "arts-based self-study method promotes and provokes self-reflection, critical analysis, and dialogue" (p. 73). Self-study emerged through Dave and Heipua's conversations as critical friends through self-reflection and through the guidance and mentorship from Anne. Their working relationship was consistent with the views of Bullough, Knowles, and Crowe (1991) who described critical friends as coconstructing knowledge through reflection, inquiry, and conversations within a trusting and supportive climate. Working together in a collaborative process as critical friends (Jara & Russell, 2014) resulted in unexpected discoveries and helped Dave and Heipua gain a deeper understanding of self as well as a greater appreciation for the implications for self-study methodologies.

The use of an arts-based approach and narrative inquiry informed their research path and led them to reflect and arrive at new understandings about themselves as researchers and individuals. As a form of qualitative research, narrative inquiry is a methodology for studying lived experiences (Clandinin, 2006). According to Pinnegar and Daynes (2007), narrative researchers contend that the story is "one if not the fundamental unit that accounts for human experience" (p. 4). These narratives provide connections, understanding, and new meaning. Learning, according to LaBoskey (2004), "is processed through previous experience so personal history and cultural context must be considered; and learning is enhanced by challenging previously held assumptions through practical experience and multiple perspectives of colleagues" (p. 819).

SELF-STUDY THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This self-study draws upon an arts-based approach and narrative inquiry as a means of reflection and inquiry. Cole and Knowles (2008) examined the burgeoning presence of arts-based research, and how this methodology can now be considered a milestone in the evolution of the qualitative research process—redefining research form and representations and creating a new understanding of process, spirit, purpose, subjectivities, responsiveness, and the ethical dimensions of inquiry. Allender and Manke (2004) explored the role of artefacts in self-study and discussed how artefacts can open up "methodological paths" (p. 20). They pointed out that while artefacts do not supersede other forms of data, "they need to be taken into account in developing a theoretical framework for self-study research" (p. 20). Weber and Mitchell (2004)

described how teachers use arts-based research to "reinterpret, represent and communicate their self-study research" (p. 979). In her book, *Self-Study for Teacher Educators*, Samaras (2002) stated her work to be a form of narrative inquiry. She wrote, "As I moved from my training in quantitative research to a narrative inquiry style and began to write not only for others but also for myself, I gained new insights about my teaching" (p. xiii). In discussing the potential for narrative self-study, Clandinin and Connelly (2004) explained,

> It is possible to study another, and to study collaboratively with an other—most of our work is designed this way—but no matter the duration nor the intimacy, one can never hope to achieve the nuanced, factual, empirical, historical, field base/data base that one might achieve in enlightened narrative self-study. (p. 577)

In this self-study, artefacts and narrative inquiry opened the way for Dave and Heipua to make connections among the objects and stories and eventually to their experiences, values, memories, and emotions. Building upon this theoretical framework, Dave and Heipua explore how the artefacts activity impacted the role of the researchers, leading to personal and professional self-study, and how the use of artefacts and storytelling and storymaking made a valuable contribution to self-study as methodological tools.

AIMS OF THE SELF-STUDY

With Anne's guidance, it became apparent that Dave and Heipua's dissertation studies had become as much about learning about themselves as their participants. At this transformative juncture of their research, Dave and Heipua became cognisant of how the research data collection instruments of artefacts and narrative inquiry impacted their learning. More specifically, their studies enabled them to explore how the process of sharing and interpreting artefacts and stories led to becoming more critically reflective of their personal and professional philosophies and identities. Four questions guided their exploration of self-study:

- What did the researchers learn from the use of artefacts and narrative inquiry in terms of their personal and professional identities?
- How did the artefacts become vehicles for reflecting on self and one's cultural identity?
- How did the artefact and story-making activities impact or transform the researchers?
- How did serving as critical friends throughout their dissertation journey help the researchers gain insight into the research process?

As a result of critical collaborative reflection, the following themes emerged: personal and professional growth, collaboration and critical friends, and reframing beliefs about research methodology.

Personal and Professional Growth

Dave discovered deeper meanings about himself as he shared his artefacts with his participants. Subconscious subtexts and insights emerged as a result of his explanation of the artefacts with the participants as they served as mirrors that prompted deeper reflection. Weber and Mitchell (2004) explained, "practical methods derived from cultural studies, visual studies, and the visual arts are particularly important to self-study…because they hold up another mirror to facilitate self-reflection" (p. 980). Discussions with participants about the artefacts revealed a connection between Dave's personal values and his professional beliefs and practices. For example, his leather work glove artefact (see Figure 2.2) provided insight into self in regard to his personal epistemology, teaching andragogy, leadership style, and work ethic. Dave found that the more he discussed his leather work gloves with each subsequent participant, a clearer, deeper meaning of the artefact began to emerge for him. While the initial purpose of the work gloves was to illustrate an appreciation of home improvement projects, the ensuing discussions began to highlight the valuable lessons learned through the countless hours spent working alongside his father. Dave realised how the artefact connected him to his prior experiences and memories, and how the values embodied in his experiences are manifested in the way he teaches, leads, and views the world. Another self-discovery from the interpretations made by the participants about Dave's artefacts involved a tennis ball. Originally selected to illustrate the unconditional affection for a beloved pet, through discussion and reflection, the ball, in fact, represented the importance of family. Dave's artefacts revealed connections between his personal and professional beliefs (e.g., work ethic and family), and how he aligns his beliefs with his practices. As an example, in his role as department chair, Dave repeatedly emphasises with his departmental colleagues that family should always be their first priority over work.

Figure 2.2. Leather work gloves

At one point in her study, Heipua struggled with using a Western approach to understand Indigenous data. As she shared her *hōnū* with others, she gained unexpected insights into her gender, culture, spirituality, and self-concept. She experienced *makawalu* or the ability to view things from multiple perspectives and learned to trust her *na'au* [intuitive knowledge], not just her intellect. In particular, as she began trusting her *na'au* and inviting spiritual knowledge through ancestral guidance, things became clear. Major themes and findings flowed through her as if she were a vessel of knowledge. Through the use of artefacts and narrative inquiry, Heipua was able to consider the multiple and circular dimensions of women's physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and cultural experiences, and the various modalities (visual, textual, embodied, and oral) through which Native Hawaiian women engage in the world. This caused deep introspection into her conflicted identity. Creating the *hōnū* and sharing it with others helped Heipua gain a greater awareness and acceptance of her own identity as a Tahitian American woman, something with which she had grappled her whole life. As she wrote the stories underlying each artefact, the art of storymaking helped her to discover her own strength and courage to persevere.

Collaboration and Critical Friends

Samaras and Freese (2009) emphasised that, "self-study is not done in isolation, but rather requires collaboration for building new understanding through dialogue and validation of findings" (p. 5). Seeing the value in this process, at the conclusion of Anne's class, Dave and Heipua intentionally met monthly to support each other throughout the completion of their dissertations. They came to each meeting with questions, stories, and resources to share. They often described a new idea or shared some of the challenges they experienced in the research process. As Dave and Heipua discussed their ideas and research challenges, new ways of thinking, doing, and being emerged. Serving as critical friends in collaborative inquiry allowed Dave and Heipua to share their research challenges, make continual progress in their research, and gain alternative perspectives in a supportive and intellectually safe space. As their research progressed, they engaged in collaborative dialogue and reflective inquiry, and they began to look inside themselves. According to Galman (2009), one of the strengths of arts-based research is its capacity to create a space for that shared discourse around data, impressions, and interpretations.

Through their discussions, Dave and Heipua became sources of sustained support and guidance for one another during their long and lonely dissertation journey. Serving as critical friends helped them to understand their unique positionalities within their studies, while gaining greater insight into the research process and their identity as researchers. Collaborating as critical friends provided Dave and Heipua with opportunities to share ideas, develop new understandings, hear themselves examine their beliefs and assumptions, and critically reflect. For example, Heipua was able to depart from traditional qualitative data analysis and embrace an Indigenous

approach that involved storytelling and storymaking and symbolic interpretation. This discourse between critical friends encouraged Dave and Heipua to explore and experiment with new methodologies and gain new insights in the process. Their conversations moved forward their understandings of self, and opened up new ways of seeing qualitative research methods and the appropriateness to their unique cultural context.

Anne participated in collaborative discussions with Dave and Heipua by providing another perspective on the data and by helping them explore their beliefs and findings. Sharing the emerging results derived from the use of artefacts and arts-based narrative inquiry enhanced the three authors' insights and learning. Critical inquiry and collaborative discussions created spaces for reflecting, probing, and seeing different perspectives. Anne validated and supported the emergence of self-study methods and contributed to the analysis and interpretation of the data. Together the authors saw how the artefacts evolved from being data collection instruments, to becoming rich sources of authentic data, and how storytelling affected storymaking and discoveries of self. These discoveries would not have been possible without the validation from critical friends.

Reframing Beliefs about Research Methodologies

This self-study helped Dave and Heipua to reframe their understandings about research methodologies as well as understand themselves. With the use of multiple data sources (interviews, drawings, and artefacts), Dave was challenged to look for patterns or contrasts in the individual portraits as well as comparisons and contrasts with the other cases. Because of the rich stories shared about each artefact, Dave came to appreciate their value as much more than a tool for breaking the ice. Understanding that self-study and qualitative research are by their very nature, emergent, Dave was open to allow the process to happen naturally. As he interacted with the participants and his critical friends, he gained trust in the emergent process and the validity of the artefacts. He came to see self-study research as less prescriptive and rigid, and as a way of recognising the important role of the self in the research process. Dave reframed his beliefs about methodology as the participants consistently shared something in particular: a specific artefact or symbol to represent them metaphorically and provide insight into their experiences and beliefs. Trusting in this emergent process, the validity of the artefacts, and employing a writing style involving both storytelling and report writing, enabled Dave to develop a more compelling profile with the congruent themes running through each participant's narrative.

Using artefacts helped Heipua to gain a broader and deeper understanding of Native Hawaiian history, culture, traditions, and values, many of which mirrored her own Polynesian values. She learned to shift her linear perspective and to accept multiple truths and ways of knowing. Lessons learned from participants' artefacts taught her to trust her heart and instincts and to accept spiritual and ancestral

knowledge. As a result, she created what she describes as a "collective artefact" symbolising the combined experiences of her participants in the form of a *koru* [an unfurling silver fern frond]. She then created a composite artefact by superimposing the collective artefact over the image of her *hōnū* artefact (see Figure 2.3). This composite artefact of the *hōnū* and *koru* signifies the interconnectedness of all things and a perpetual pathway of knowledge from one generation to the next. The use of collective and composite artefacts resulted in a unique way of representing the data as well as a unique approach to data analysis—something that was not part of the original research methods, but rather emerged from the self-study arts-based approach.

Figure 2.3. Composite artefact

Storytelling and Storymaking

Given that storytelling among Native Hawaiians is such an innate way of teaching cultural values, sharing historical data, passing down family genealogies, and imparting knowledge about customs and traditions, Heipua expected to elicit rich stories from her semistructured interviews conducted in a talk story format (Kaomea, 2005; Mataira et al., 2005). She intended to analyse the data using qualitative research software to code the data and identify key themes, patterns, and findings. However, as the study progressed, she began to immerse herself into the life story of each participant and wrote their *mo'olelo* [story] as if looking through their eyes. Contrary to non-Indigenous narratives that tend to follow a sequential timeline, native narratives tend to be more circular. As Heipua discussed these experiences with Dave in their monthly meetings, she discovered how Hawaiian storytelling had transformed her process of storymaking and her

understanding of self. In other words, hearing such culturally rich stories from these Native Hawaiian women changed the way in which she chose to interpret the data and recreate their stories. She transitioned from a linear way of thinking to a more circular and Indigenous worldview in which all things are interconnected and interrelated.

The power of artefacts to elicit meaningful stories was witnessed repeatedly in Dave's discussions with his participants. But perhaps one story in particular truly represented how one item could metaphorically illuminate so many genuine facets about an individual. During one of Dave's interviews, a participant offered a rubber bullet as one of her artefacts. Instantly, before any words or explanations could be exchanged, Dave was overwhelmed with connections the item had to conflict, unrest, violence, anger, and mistrust. The rubber bullet, the participant explained, was given to her by a young girl she had befriended while at a conference in Belfast, Ireland. The participant had been simply walking around the area waiting for a festival to start when the young girl had invited her in for tea. The bullet came from a whole basket of them that the girl's family had collected from their front yard. This artefact so deeply captured the essence of this woman who talked at length during her interviews about how important a sense of place is for her in her research, and how valuable it is to collaborate with others on work that can benefit humanity. This one artefact, and the significance that the story represented, clearly speaks to this participant's identity and interest in people and connections to places. In her words, "for me, place and where I am living has always really been important and I believe that some of the best work comes out of a connection, a strong connection to the place." Another important element in this intense connection to places comes from her connection with people. Friendships, collegiality, and collaborations are valued parts of her professional and personal life. As the example of the young girl in Belfast who invited her into her home indicates, Dave's participant walks easily in other worlds with a natural ability to befriend people from a variety of backgrounds. In the writing of his dissertation, Dave frequently found himself wondering if he would have gotten such rich stories and insights into his participants without the use of artefacts. The artefacts gave voice to the participants' histories and, equally powerful, was how Dave himself was transformed in the process of storymaking as he crafted each of his participant's stories.

Heipua experienced a transformative process as she reflected on her identity as a Polynesian woman scholar. One particular story, shared by Pi'ikea (pseudonym), had a profound effect upon her. At a young age, Pi'ikea's mother taught each of her children the process of catching fish in the tide pools. Instead of reciting a list of the necessary steps to catch the fish, her mother suggested that Pi'ikea imagine herself at the bottom of the tide pool looking up. Suddenly, instead of reciting the list her brain had memorised, Pi'ikea's mind moved her beyond the bony limits of her cranium, into the surging sea filling the tide pools, down to where the string fish spreads its white tentacles on the floor of the tide pool. As she sat among the coral

and the seaweed-covered floor, the two-dimensional list in her head was gone. In its place was a three-dimensional pool that her empathic imagination had placed within her. She had become part of the tide pool. This incredible story taught Heipua the importance of empathetically immersing herself into every learning experience and to look at things from the inside out.

Reflections from the Mentor

As Anne reflected on her collaboration with Dave and Heipua, she shared what a rewarding and insightful experience it was to observe their creativity, their cultural sensitivity with their participants, and to see their ability to transform the artefact process that she introduced, and make it their own. She saw how Dave and Heipua transformed the use of personal artefacts into a powerful data collection strategy. Collaborating with Dave and Heipua, Anne brought her self-study lens to their research studies and, through the rich collaborative process, she reframed her views regarding the value of artefacts and arts-based studies in the data collection process, particularly in the cultural context of Hawai‘i. She saw how incredibly appropriate this methodology is in eliciting rich data.

An essential element of this research was the dialogic process and the role of critical friends. As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, Anne always emphasised in her classes the value of developing critical friends to work with during the dissertation journey. And just as Dave and Heipua served as critical friends to one another throughout the journey, Anne had the opportunity to work closely with them and offer another lens and perspective on their work. The lens she offered primarily came after they had completed their dissertations. She assumed the role of professional comentor as she helped to illuminate the self-study aspects of their research. She provided a variety of articles, proceedings, and books in the area of self-study and arts-based literature within self-study. Anne, Dave, and Heipua met on a regular basis, wrote together, and established a collaborative relationship involving ongoing dialogue. Although Anne served as an advisor, methodologist, theorist, and experienced researcher, the relationship was one of mutuality and reciprocal learning. Together they examined the data and critically reflected on its meaning. Anne observed how Dave and Heipua’s use of their selected artefacts, and the engagement of their participants with their respective artefacts, not only resulted in very rich data but also led to insights into themselves. It was remarkable how the deeper layers of meaning emerged through the probing discussions.

An important aspect of the reciprocal learning that Anne experienced involved the insights she gained regarding the value of using artefacts as a research methodology. Dave and Heipua served as mirrors and helped Anne see the broader application of the artefacts. Together they discovered how artefacts and storytelling, used as methodological tools, can advance self-study by opening up possibilities for

culturally appropriate research approaches and pathways of deep self-study. As Weber and Mitchell (2004) noted, artefacts and stories can become valuable lenses to represent, reflect, reinterpret, and reframe everyone's personal and professional beliefs and practices. Dave and Heipua's narratives clearly show how their use of artefacts were powerful tools for evoking stories and for encouraging voices that might not otherwise have been heard. Together, the collaborative process opened up hidden cultural spaces and discourses, and provided opportunities to ask questions, encourage, and support one another. As a result of this collaborative self-study, the authors uncovered for themselves the power that artefacts have in evoking the self and their usefulness as a research methodology (Allender & Manke, 2004). This self-study provided the authors with new understandings of themselves and revealed how artefacts, stories, and critical friendship contributed to their polyvocal professional development.

And lastly, an interesting legacy of Dave and Heipua's work is the powerful impact their research methodology has had on other doctoral students. Anne is currently working with three doctoral students who were inspired by Dave and Heipua's work, and have incorporated the use of artefacts as a methodological approach in their dissertations. This is again a testament to the value of collaborative reflection and inquiry and polyvocal professional learning.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This self-study has implications for future research and contributes to theory by demonstrating that arts-based research (particularly, the use of artefacts) provides an effective methodological strategy for evoking stories that might not otherwise have been told, for generating individual and collaborative reflection, and for unearthing powerful discoveries of self. It also demonstrates how narrative inquiry examines ways in which stories illuminate knowledge.

In addition, this self-study has the following implications for practice: (1) the use of artefacts in the classroom to develop relationships and open inquiries into the self, (2) the use of artefacts in self-study groups to open spaces for critical self-reflection, and (3) the value of critical friendship in research and practice for promoting polyvocal discussions, sharing research challenges and ideas, and improving professional practice.

Finally, this self-study contributes to research by encouraging future researchers to explore the use of artefacts and narrative inquiry in qualitative research and self-study, and to develop critical friendships that provide constructive feedback and guidance in an intellectually safe space.

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3. A DIALOGUE ON SUPPORTING SELF-STUDY RESEARCH IN THE CONTEXT OF DUTCH TEACHER EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Over the past several decades, growing numbers of teacher educators around the world have been studying their individual educational practices. This movement has been precipitated, in part, by developments in teacher education such as the growing awareness of the need to connect theory and practice, and the increasing influence of constructivism. This has prompted a growing number of teacher educators to study the processes involved, in new attempts to improve teacher education practices. In the tradition of teacher research (Corey, 1953; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Stenhouse, 1975; Whitehead, 1989), individual teacher educators started to focus their research on their own teacher education practices. Noting the rise of this movement, Zeichner (1999) stated:

> The birth of the self-study in the teacher education movement around 1990 has been probably the single most significant development ever in the field of teacher education research. (p. 8)

Yet, the idea of conducting systematic research, let alone research into one's own teaching practices, is still rather new to the majority of teacher educators. At the same time, the role of research has become more important in teacher education, including in countries where the position of teacher educator only entails teaching—even in a university setting (such as in the Netherlands). Not only is there an increasing pressure on teacher education research to become more evidence-based, teacher educators in many countries are also required to support their students' research projects. However, not all teacher educators embrace the idea of also becoming a researcher, and many of those who try, often wrestle with finding a balance between their role as teacher of teachers and as researcher (Chetty & Lubben, 2010). Not only is the idea of conducting self-study research new to many teacher educators, it also raises issues with regard to the contexts in which they work. In many institutions, teacher educators report that a research culture around their work of teaching prospective teachers is often missing and, added to that, they lack time, information, and support to study their own practice (Gemmell, Griffiths, & Gibble,

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 39–55.

2010; Griffiths, Thompson, & Hryniewicz, 2010). Moreover, in the academic world, self-study research is often criticised because of its supposed lack of quality and generalisability.

Taking these issues into account, initiatives have been made in several countries to support teacher educators in studying their own practices (Hoban, 2007; Samaras et al., 2007; Vanassche, 2014; Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2015). Studies into these initiatives offer insights into productive ways of supporting teacher educators as researchers of their own practice and, also, possible pitfalls in the process.

One initiative from the Netherlands, *Teacher Educators Study their Own Practices,* began in 2007 and was carried out twice—each programme lasting one year. The project design built on Hoban's (2007) framework for creating a self-study group. This Dutch project was researched and the results were presented in the form of guidelines for supporting self-study research (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Zwart, 2010).

However, although these guidelines for supporting self-study research now exist, an important question remains: How can we use these guidelines and insights from other studies to further promote self-studies by teacher educators? Therefore, the focus of this chapter is to take discussion on this issue a step further. We feel the discussion could be fruitful because we each represent a different perspective in relation to self-study: the insider perspective of one of the facilitators (Mieke) of the Dutch project (Lunenberg et al., 2010), the insider perspective of one of the participants of the Dutch project (Janneke), and the outsider perspective of a critical friend, well-known international expert on self-study research, who is also familiar with the Dutch context (Amanda). We hope our polyvocal discussion will not only broaden our own learning and professional development, but will also contribute to knowledge about how to recognise opportunities and work towards removing obstacles for the growth of self-study research by teacher educators. Because we are working in a university context in the Netherlands, in which doing research into teacher education practice is not self-evident, we feel we can benefit greatly from expanding our awareness of what helps to promote self-study in our own context—but we expect our insights to be valuable to those working in other contexts as well. After explicating our theoretical framework, we describe our approach to our collaborative self-study, and then share with the reader some insights into the processes we engaged in as we studied the guidelines together. Finally, we present our learning about both the barriers and the opportunities to promoting self-study, as well as our insights from engaging in a collaborative metalevel analysis of the project from our different perspectives.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

An important characteristic of self-study research is its focus on the "I." Given that a deep personal need to study one's own practice and one's own role in it is generally seen as the starting point for self-study research, one could argue that

teaching self-study research could be complicated, and could carry the risk of self-study research being reduced to a technical activity—thus losing the "self" and the impetus of personal need. The other side of the coin, however, is that to be a teacher educator, is also complex, culturally determined, and dialogical (Coia & Taylor, 2009; Lunenberg & Hamilton, 2008). Many teacher educators who participate in self-study research discover that an important characteristic of their self-studies is that the problem under investigation develops, shifts, and changes in response to the continuous shifts in their educational context. This means that working from some kind of framework and being supported in the process is important to maintain a sense of focus and to avoid the risk of the self-study becoming idiosyncratic and narcissistic (a point of criticism of self-studies). Hence, some support to counter these aspects would seem to be useful. In the last decade, several experienced self-study researchers have looked for ways to do so.

One of the first studies on systematically supporting self-study research was Hoban's (2007) report, *Creating a Self-Study Group*. His study addressed the question of how to support a group of Australian teacher educators at one university, who were inexperienced researchers, in doing self-study research. Outcomes of Hoban's study drew attention to six main points: (1) making a connection with one's own practice; (2) having an external goal for participants (e.g., publication, presentation at a conference); (3) providing suitable literature and external sources (e.g., for learning about the technical aspects of research); (4) social aspects such as organising group meetings, because of their support function but also because of the "voyeurism" aspect (e.g., hearing from colleagues what we did not know about them); (5) having facilitators create a sense of "being next door," that is, participants should receive feedback from the facilitators in a timely and easy to access way; and (6) finalising the self-studies—for a sense of closure as well as discussing possible follow-ups, to prevent the results from fading into oblivion. Hoban noted that although the last two points, (5) and (6), are very important they can be difficult to organise.

Following Hoban's (2007) study, comparable projects were carried out in the Netherlands (Lunenberg et al., 2010; Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Zwart, 2011) and in the USA (Samaras et al., 2007, 2008). In the Dutch project, Hoban's points of attention were further developed into a set of seven guidelines for facilitating self-study with teacher educators:

1. Guard the connection between the self-studies and the individual practices and concerns of the teacher educators.
2. Formulate an external goal and stimulate the researchers to go public (e.g., give a presentation or write a conference paper).
3. Realise the availability of external sources (literature, experts in the field, and experienced researchers).
4. Consider the social aspects. Create a sense of belonging to a group because of its support function, but also because of the voyeurism aspect.
5. Create a sense of being next door.

6. Take the wrapping up of the self-study studies seriously. Discuss possible follow-ups to prevent the results from fading into oblivion.
7. Support the participants in finding fitting research methods and instruments.

The starting point of the USA (Samaras et al., 2007, 2008) project was slightly different, but a comparative study (Lunenberg & Samaras, 2011) between the Dutch and the USA projects showed remarkable similarities with regard to an answer about the question of what guidelines could help support self-study research in a productive way. Another interesting outcome of that comparative study was that through their joint reflection, the authors became conscious of the value of also studying their teaching of self-study research. This led to an additional guideline for the importance of teacher modelling: Carry out a self-study on your teaching of self-study research, and explain the underpinnings of the process of doing so to the participants (i.e., a double helix design). In this way, a teacher of self-study research embraces the spirit of self-study through making him or herself vulnerable too, and becomes a model of what it means to study your own practice. Lunenberg and Samaras (2011) also stressed that the guidelines presented are not intended as ultimate or definitive, but as an exemplar of learning about teaching self-study. Following their study, a further study (Samaras, 2013) was conducted which added a new guideline to their work: Participant leadership—invite shared leadership with participants by encouraging them to contribute their expertise and talents.

Another study, from New Zealand (Davey et al., 2010, 2011), focussed on collaboration in supporting a self-study group. In self-study literature, many studies advocate collaboration as an important element, but it seems that few have made collaboration itself the focus of the study. Davey's group not only supported each other in their individual self-studies, but also carried out a group self-study on their processes of collaboration to better understand the effects on each of them as well as on its collective effect. In this way, their collaboration contributed not only to the development of their individual professional identities as teacher educators, but also to a shared sense of belonging, as a "we-identity."

Vanassche and Kelchtermans (2015) provided a recent addition to knowledge on supporting self-study from a Belgian self-study group. Vanassche and Kelchtermans' study confirmed that connecting systematic reflection on data from teacher educators' actual practices, with relevant theoretical frameworks, supported and facilitated the public sharing and critical discussion of teacher educators' normative beliefs. Combining research and practice stimulated the learning of these teacher educators and contributed to public knowledge building about a pedagogy of teacher education. Their study also confirmed the importance of paying attention to the quality of relationships amongst group members:

> the quality of the collegial relationships amongst the peers in the research group needs to be actively guarded and stimulated because they constitute a crucial supporting factor in the risky process of self-study and professional development that the teacher educators are supposed to engage in. (p. 47)

An aspect that was less explicit from the studies mentioned above, but that Vanassche and Kelchtermans (2015) emphasised, is that when teacher educators become involved in self-study, this implies that they have to engage simultaneously in two potentially very different agendas: their own personal professional developmental needs, and institutional priorities around their work—which can create a source of tension. They stressed that facilitators have to acknowledge and discuss this tension with participants to avoid it jeopardising the professional development process. They also drew attention to the possible conflicting relationship between the individual teacher educator's own professional development and the practices and normative beliefs of his or her teacher educational institution. This can make it difficult for teacher educators to report what they have learned outside the safe environment of the learning community. Facilitators need to be sensitive to this issue and actively support teacher educators to find ways to handle this tension.

In a different study, Butler (2014) worked with a group of doctoral students who were beginning as teacher educators at the same time as beginning to work as researchers. Butler set up a self-study group as a means of supporting their identity development as teacher educator-researchers. Outcomes of this self-study group highlighted the importance of personal aspects, such as building and maintaining an environment of openness and constructive honesty and willingness of participants to grow and change, and public aspects such as having an intention to make findings of the collective learning public. Similar to research by Davey et al. (2010) and Davey et al. (2011), participants in Butler's study reported the importance of the group in providing both individual and collective support: "Discourse must be driven by the participants' desire to learn and improve, thus providing each participant with critical friends who help promote and sustain the growth of the individuals and the collective" (2014, p. 264).

METHODS

Collective Self-Study from Three Perspectives

In writing this chapter, we utilised a collective self-study method, that is, an interactive exploration of the issue stated above. Davey and Ham (2009) identified the potential for collective wisdom to be gained using this approach:

> Methodological collaboration in the self-study of teacher education practices comes in many forms and guises, ranging along various continuums of participation, purpose, and process from assistive support from another individual colleague at one end, to full blown cultural-collective studies undertaken by entire organizational and even national communities at the other. (p. 188)

The starting point for this work emerged through a shared conversation in which we each expressed our wish to further promote self-study in the context of Dutch teacher

education. We felt that, together, we could enhance the fruitfulness of reflection and discussion on the issue of supporting self-study research by teacher educators, because, as mentioned earlier, we represent three different perspectives: that of facilitator (Mieke), participant (Janneke), and critical friend (Amanda). We felt that studying the same question from these polyvocal perspectives together, would help us to broaden and deepen our own learning about the issue.

Such an approach is in line with self-study researchers, such as Loughran and Northfield (1998) and LaBoskey (2004), who emphasised that it is important to include alternative perspectives and interpretations in the self-study process. Accordingly, including alternative perspectives and interpretations can lead to genuine reframing, to "seeing a situation through others' eyes" (LaBoskey, 2004, p. 847) and thus adds to the trustworthiness of the analysis.

The Dutch context

In the Netherlands, teacher educators teach in bachelor- or master-level programmes. Bachelor programmes prepare teachers for primary or lower secondary education and are mostly located in *hogescholen* [vocational universities], while those who follow a master's programme, conducted in both *hogescholen* and universities, can teach classes at both the lower and higher secondary levels. Most Dutch teacher educators are experienced teachers at the level they teach to novice teachers. Some teacher educators work only in teacher education, whilst others combine a teaching job at university with a position in school. Until this century, only university-based teacher education institutions had research programmes. Although this situation has changed and more staff working at *hogescholen* are expected to be active in research, the number of teacher educators formally involved in research is still rather limited. Within this changed context, the idea of teacher educators studying their own practice has become quite popular. However, choosing to include one's own role as a teacher educator in such a study requires courage because in the somewhat bold and critical Dutch culture, it is not easy to make oneself openly and publicly vulnerable.

Dialogue

Our main methodology is to dialogue, electronically as well as in face-to-face meetings. Loughran and Northfield (1998) pointed to several elements of dialogue as a methodology in self-study, which was further developed by Guilfoyle, Hamilton, Pinnegar, and Placier (2004), among others. These elements include the use of multiple sources (e.g., discussion, journals, observations) and the importance of working with collaborators to help "step outside" one's own personal practice in order to notice patterns and trends. Berry and Crowe (2009) identified the collaborative relationship nurtured through their dialogue whereby partners can engage each other in critical reflection on shared issues by deeply questioning,

analysing, and reconsidering experience through alternative perspectives. For us, dialoguing as methodology is productive because of the above-mentioned elements, as well as its personal characteristics such as being caring and respectful, and accepting inconclusivity. We take time to understand each other's lives and concerns and to build a relationship (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1. Taking time to build a relationship

According to Peterson (1992), caring helps set the context of dialogue and can repair impasses in it. In our dialogue, we also respectfully recognise each other's voice through careful listening, asking for further clarification, and acknowledging our openness to different viewpoints to improve our collective work.

Guilfoyle et al. (2004) stated that dialogue "can begin with a fulsome statement of an idea of inquiry" (p. 111). This statement characterises the beginning of our joint inquiry as we shared what mattered to each of us in taking forward a self-study agenda in teacher education in the Netherlands. Guilfoyle et al. explained that after the dialogue has started, it can take different forms such as analysis, critique, and reflection. In this way, the method of dialogue establishes its power as a basis for meaning making.

Useful in the context of this paper is Roth and Tobin's (2004) distinction between two levels of dialogue. The first level, which they call cogenerative dialogue, involves discussing and reflecting on a collaborative practice. The second level, is called metalogue (a term first used by Bateson in 1972), and is a way of moving up from data presentation and description to theory, while preserving the voices of individual authors. Our aim in this study was to engage in both levels of dialogue. In our text, metalogues represent instances of our learning about our learning. Within the metalogues, the boundaries that exist between doing research and analysing data and writing the research studies become blurred. Writing a metalogue is part of the data analysis, as another pass over the data but now concerning our own learning in the process of doing the study. In this way, the unfolding text as a form of culture can have its coherences and contradictions, and readers can follow our reasoning

first hand. It is interesting to mention that in the last stage of writing this chapter, the metalogue of the three of us was broadened by the voices of the reviewers who, among others, challenged us to further elaborate on our final section.

We decided that we would use particular guidelines developed from the Dutch project (Lunenberg et al., 2010, 2011) as our starting point for discussion and then progress from there, including information from other studies as appropriate, to enrich and promote the focus of our dialogue.

EMERGING DISCOVERIES

The Problem of the Personal

Research on the Dutch project. As the research in the Dutch project (Lunenberg et al., 2010, 2011) showed, several participants experienced difficulties in identifying how to explore the personal questions they had identified about their practice. The first guideline (Guard the connection between the self-studies and the individual practices and concerns of the teacher educators) has its roots in this finding. As we will elaborate below, four related aspects of this problem were identified in the Dutch project: (1) the development of a researchable question, (2) the recognition that self-study is an accepted type of research, (3) the risk of focus shift, and (4) the aspect of vulnerability.

Self-study research begins with a question from the teacher educator's own practice, but translating this practice-based question into a research question and research format is not necessarily a straightforward process and, as a consequence, can cause friction between teacher educators and facilitators. It is particularly problematic in self-study research, which begins with the I. Loughran (2010, p. 225) identified this important step in self-study research as "going beyond the story" of sharing experiences of what happened, to identifying deeper issues, beliefs, motivations, and concerns that influence how one experiences a particular problem or question of practice. In the context of this project (Lunenberg et al., 2010, 2011), one factor playing a role in participants' readiness to go beyond the story was a felt uncertainty about whether a small aspect from one's own practice was interesting enough for research. One of the participants said in the exit interview:

> [A] strong point of the facilitators was their fight against the idea that Research is about Important Things (with capitals). I too, have found this out. When I look at our group and myself, I see that we have a lot to offer. We have baggage important enough to describe and report on. (Lunenberg et al., 2010, pp. 284–285)

Participants kept a logbook during the self-study project, in which they kept track of their experiences and associated learning. Several entries showed how motivating it was to receive a message from an international expert in self-study (Professor John Loughran from Australia) who shared some insights about the process and

importance of studying one's own practice. Loughran's message built participants' confidence that they were not a small group of hobbyists but part of an international educational movement focused on developing knowledge for improving teacher education.

The study on the Dutch project (Lunenberg et al., 2010, 2011) also showed that moving from a question of practice to a robust research question included the danger of focus shift—drifting away from the problem, challenge, or fascination that triggered the study in the first place. Moreover, studying a sometimes very personal question about one's own functioning requires courage to make public what might be seen as deficiencies or limitations in how one acts in, or understands, the role of teacher educator. Such issues highlight enduring challenges of self-study research collectives around building and supporting trust (see also Guideline 4). In sum: Guideline 1 emphasises that facilitators should support new self-study researchers to recognise the problem of the personal.

Dialogue. Reflecting on this guideline, the three of us became conscious that the problem of the personal could be an important obstacle for teacher educators to learn to recognise and manage in starting self-study research.

> *Janneke:* I think the word *problem* is telling, because it explains why it is difficult to spread the self-study message. Researchers generally look for generalisable outcomes, and teacher educators themselves often think their particular questions may not be important enough to be researched. So both groups need convincing.
>
> *Mieke:* The culture in teacher education institutions may play a role. Vanassche (2014) stated that if we want to support teacher educators' professional development we have 'to take into account the shared knowledge, beliefs, values, and norms …, since these … influence which actions they can take' (p. 36).
>
> *Amanda:* The cultural aspect of what counts as research and who is permitted to conduct research is a very important question, particularly for teacher educators who do not have much experience with research and may not be encouraged by their institutions to engage in research. As a self-study researcher, I also recognise the difficulties of moving from a problem of practice to a researchable question. How do you frame the personal in terms of the researchable? Doing self-study requires courage and perseverance to look beyond immediate, everyday concerns and be willing to uncover, and share, what lies beneath.
>
> *Janneke:* I think culture plays a very important role here, and not just research culture. There is a tendency in the Netherlands to be rather critical of others, but also of ourselves. Being open, sharing insecurities, and even showing achievements is not really encouraged. And although the value of critical

> reflection backed by theory is recognised by many teacher educators, you still feel the fear of being considered "soft."
>
> *Mieke:* Maybe this is where the community becomes important.

The Strength of the Community

Research on the Dutch project. Based on research from the Dutch project (Lunenberg et al., 2010, 2011), the conclusion can be drawn that the sense of belonging to a group (Guideline 4) proved to be vital. Working together in a group stimulated the participants to keep to the time schedule and made them conscious of the importance of taking time for their own professional development. The researched group proved to function as a support, also because of what Hoban (2007) called the voyeurism aspect whereby participants were keen to learn about what the others were doing. One of the participants said in the exit interview:

> The group made the meetings more important. The chemistry between us was very pleasant. The openness, everyone struggling, and the fact that you all experience the trajectory in a comparable way. (Lunenberg et al., 2010, p. 1285)

The group meetings also helped the participants to develop as a research community in the sense we described above. There were, however, limitations with regard to taking responsibility for each other's studies. Although they would have liked to have more time for peer feedback and group discussions, the time available was mainly needed for individual study. As a result, their role as critical friends to each other was rather limited.

Nevertheless, after the project was finished, participants and facilitators decided to continue their collaboration as a community of self-study practitioners, taking turns in organising the meetings (Lunenberg et al., 2012). For more than four years after the official project timeline was complete, the group met regularly to reflect on their work, discuss their research in progress, and explore the boundaries of self-study. In the final sessions of this informal community, each participant explained in what way and to what extent doing research had contributed to his or her daily practices. For some, the roles of teacher educator and researcher had become more integrated, so that doing research had contributed to better teaching practice—for themselves, their colleagues, and their students. They had continued to carry out self-study projects and some had even started working on a doctoral thesis. Other group members defined themselves primarily as teacher educators for whom research had become part of their professional identity. They had developed a better understanding of research, a more solid theoretical background on which to base their teacher education work, and felt more comfortable in supporting their students' self-study research projects, even though producing public knowledge was not an official task within their teaching-only positions.

Dialogue. Reflecting on this guideline, we became more conscious about the importance of working in a community, not only because it supports group members' progress in their self-studies and offers an environment in which uncertainty can be revealed and discussed, but also because the supportive context stimulates professional identity development as a teacher educator. We also, however, discovered a missed opportunity.

> *Mieke:* One thing that really strikes me, looking back, is the strength of the group. Although is it quite clear that after several years everyone has found and follows his or her own way, working together on self-study issues for all these years seems to have strengthened everyone.
>
> *Amanda:* Working in a community can be an important means to support identity development processes—in this case, learning to see yourself differently as a teacher educator, as someone who both teaches and learns about not only their subject and how to teach it, but also about being a teacher educator. Taking time to study and learn about teaching teachers, experimenting with ideas in practice, and sharing these ideas through research then shifts from being a luxury activity on top of normal work, to an important part of teacher educators' normal work. Unfortunately, such a view does not seem to be valued in many institutions, nor does it seem to be valued by some teacher educators themselves. This is where having a community of practice really matters. A community of practice can help build support and momentum around the importance of doing and learning from both research and practice.
>
> *Mieke:* I recognise that. In the beginning of our self-study project, most participants saw themselves as a teacher, or as a subject expert. Later on, they presented themselves as teacher educators. So the community contributed to the development of a teacher educator identity.
>
> *Amanda*: I believe that the community of practice needs at least one member with institutional power to show that doing this work matters. With growing numbers of experienced self-study researchers moving into senior academic positions, there should be more opportunities to mobilise this power. Something I find disappointing is that in some institutions, paying attention to the professional development of teacher educators is limited to a checklist of activities to make up required professionalisation hours, rather than focussing on developing a coherent professional trajectory as a teacher educator. Communities matter but communities need institutional support and acknowledgement.
>
> *Mieke:* You put forward two interesting points. Firstly, in the Netherlands, learning to conduct self-study research most times has to fit into the time allocated for professional development as a teacher educator. For some participants, however, it also became the bridge to becoming a researcher—

> getting time for research. Secondly, I fully agree with you that learning and working in a community should include the relationship with the world outside. We gave it some attention, but I feel this is an aspect that requires more thinking in a future project. The recommendations formulated by Vanassche (2014; see also the Theoretical Framework section of this chapter) can be helpful in doing this.

The World Outside

Research on the Dutch project. Two of the guidelines developed in the Dutch project (Lunenberg et al., 2010, 2011) refer to the world outside the community: Guideline 2 (Formulate an external goal, and stimulate the researchers to go public (e.g., give a presentation or write a conference paper) and Guideline 6 (Take the wrapping up of the self-study studies seriously. Discuss possible follow-ups to prevent the results from fading into oblivion). As pointed out above, making the step from the inside world of the teacher educators' own self-study and the safe environment of the learning community, to the outside world of the institution or local, national, or international communities, deserves attention. This matters, not only from the perspectives of participants and the facilitators, but also from the teacher education institutions involved. In the Dutch project outlets for going public were discussed, which led to positive experiences. Karen, for example, presented her study several times to, amongst others,

> a group of fifteen school principals cooperating with our teacher education institute. I presented our work as a school-based language group and my study into the facilitators' role. They were very interested. (Karen, digital logbook, in Lunenberg et al., 2011, p. 415)

Ron also emphasised the importance of presenting his study to colleagues, as the following shows:

> My presentation to colleagues has been received with huge interest, also by my manager. The result is that I got the opportunity to carry out a follow-up study. (Ron, follow-up questionnaire after 6 months, in Lunenberg et al., 2011, p. 415)

However, even despite these positive examples, finding—or fighting for—a new place in one's own teacher education institution, did not get explicit attention in the Dutch project. Also, the research on this project did not include this aspect. So, while the identity and the capabilities of the participating teacher educators had changed (Lunenberg et al., 2011), their position may or may not have.

Dialogue. Reflecting on this guideline helped us recognise a missing dimension: In taking their learning to the outside world, self-study researchers are also taking their changed selves to the outside world, and this can be a confusing and confronting experience.

Janneke: Our dialogue has helped me understand what it means to go public, outside of the safety of the group, to an environment that needs to be convinced of the value of a research approach that is precious to you. First, I had to be introduced to the self-study approach and to other people conducting self-studies. That was the easy part. Now I need to find ways of sharing my findings and experiences with people who are not familiar with what I have done and, sometimes, simply are not interested or try to dissuade me from spending time on it. I was once told that I should focus on my core tasks. Well, isn't doing self-study focusing on my core task?

Mieke: Looking back, maybe that was one of the reasons that the community was a success: It offered a safe place to return to. In that context, it is a pity that we did not allocate time for strategic discussions about how to conquer the world or, more concretely, how to create space for self-study in your own institution. This is an important learning point for me: As a facilitator, it is not enough to support teacher educators who conduct a self-study to go public and to think about a follow-up project—also encourage them to find a niche or create the opportunity to do so.

Amanda: This discussion highlights a really important point for me that may even lead to an additional guideline about supporting self-study research. It could be a variation on Guideline 6 (Take the possible consequences of engaging in self-study seriously. Discuss ways to support participants in maintaining changed thinking and practice). Teacher educators have trusted the facilitators by making themselves vulnerable, researching their professional practice and developing their voices and identity as teacher-educator-researchers. Taking this changed stance outside the group can be tricky, especially in an environment that can be unfriendly towards teacher educators as researchers and towards self-study research. It's one thing to experience an identity shift; it's quite another to enact that shift in an academic environment.

Mieke: As you mentioned before Amanda, experienced self-study researchers moving higher into the academic hierarchy might also help here. In this context, the conclusion of the (2012) collaborative self-study of Mills, Loughran, and Clift—experienced self-study researchers who have become deans—are hopeful. They emphasised their responsibility to recognise the importance of, and to create an environment for, the growth of scholarship of teacher education.

Including More Voices

As mentioned in the Methods section, at this point of our metalogue more voices, that is, those of our reviewers were included.

These critical friends remarked that they liked that the cultural context of this study was discussed, and encouraged us to "help the reader to understand a challenge

to being a part of self-study might be very different in the regional or national environment they operate in." They also stressed that we "clearly devoted this study to the value of collaboration, dialogue, and critical friendship," which helped us to make this value more explicit. Finally, they remarked: "We think the value to your dialogue is opening up the discussion of self-study in varied cultural contexts as well as how the different perspectives and systematic study can inform practice and further research." They encouraged us to elaborate and discuss ways in which these concerns can be addressed. These perspectives of the reviewers have helped us to take the final section of this chapter to a next stage.

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS FROM THREE PERSPECTIVES

In the past few years, researchers around the world have been developing guidelines for supporting self-study research, including in the Netherlands. However, since these guidelines now exist, the question remains as to how we can productively use them. The purpose of this paper was to further explore this question from a polyvocal perspective: the insider perspective of one of the facilitators (Mieke) of the Dutch project (Lunenberg et al., 2010, 2011), the insider perspective of one of the participants of the Dutch project (Janneke), and the outsider perspective of a critical friend, who is also familiar with self-study and the Dutch context (Amanda). We have undertaken our exploration through dialoguing, electronically as well as in face-to-face meetings. The method of the dialogue was new to us and proved a very helpful instrument in supporting our learning processes.

> *Amanda:* I found the process of exchanging ideas within the text and keeping our individual voices intact is a really respectful way to work. We could each say what we wanted to say from our different perspectives and push each other's (and, hopefully, the readers') thinking by showing these different perspectives. Thinking through the guidelines together led me to an important insight about how self-study facilitators must also learn to recognise and manage their moral responsibilities.
>
> *Janneke:* I am really pleased you introduced me to this methodology because it enabled me to join in an academic exchange which felt like an ongoing conversation, a gradual process. By writing down the steps in between, I expect the reader will feel more involved, too. One thought led to another and thus new insights came to light. For me it was important to acknowledge that the step outside the safety of the self-study group is a scary, but important one. I may come across unwelcoming comments or responses, but this should not deter me because I do believe that by fulfilling the deeply felt personal need to better understand my teacher education practice, I will become a better teacher educator and thus help the institute as a whole.
>
> *Mieke:* The ongoing aspect of the conversation and the mutual respect were indeed characteristic of our dialogue—and that all three of us constantly

> reacted in a few days, kept the dialogue moving. That pushed my thinking and stimulated my learning. Our dialogue has offered me new insights that I hope to be able to put into practice; I am grateful for that.

As the polyvocal exchange above shows, we have learned about our learning processes. We have also learned that this way of learning requires a trusting relationship in which individual voices stay intact in a respectful way; that writing down the steps in between is essential, as well as keeping the dialogue moving. For us, this way of working proved to be productive as well as satisfying. We feel that it could be interesting to further explore the use of this metalogue method for self-study research.

Collectively, our dialogue focused on three main themes: the problem of the personal, the strength of the community, and the world outside. Our dialogue about the problem of the personal has highlighted the issue that it is difficult to move from a problem of practice to a researchable question, particularly because in the academic world there is a widespread idea that a question related to the researcher's own practice is unlikely to be a serious research question. This makes it even harder for a beginning self-study researcher to explicitly incorporate the I in his or her research question. Our dialogue also pointed to cultural issues that might or might not make it harder to show vulnerability. Hence, recognising and managing this issue with participants is an important initial task for facilitators of self-study research. Also, in this context, the strength of being part of a community cannot be underestimated. The community offers its participants a safe environment to further develop their identity as teacher educators who learn by studying their own practice. The community also offers an opportunity to prepare a presentation for publication to share the outcomes of one's self-study with the world outside. Our dialogue uncovered, however, that this kind of support might not be enough. There are important other aspects that also require the attention of the facilitators. Because many teacher education institutions lack a research culture or have doubts about the legitimacy of self-study research, beginning self-study researchers also need to be supported to find ways to get and keep time, resources, and support for continuing their work. They also need to be supported in taking their changed identity into their regular world of work. Again, this requires attention for cultural issues, not only in a practical way. We found that these are aspects that do not get sufficient attention in research.

It would be interesting and helpful if more insights were gathered about the way national and local cultures influence the space that teacher educators have to expose their vulnerability through self-study research, and what this means for those who support new self-study researchers as facilitators.

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KAREN RUT GÍSLADÓTTIR AND HAFDÍS GUÐJÓNSDÓTTIR

4. CONFRONTING THE HEARING TEACHER IN DEAF EDUCATION

Critical Friends in Self-Study

PREFACE

It was November 29, 2007. Fifteen months had passed since Karen (first author) reentered, as a teacher researcher, the classroom of middle school-aged children who are deaf. Her intention was to uncover and build her instruction on the literacy practices students brought to the classroom (Gísladóttir, 2014). At that moment, Karen was getting ready to work with students on their writings. As she walked towards the classroom, she began to wonder about students' individual projects. She had noticed several areas for improvement in Viktoría's writing. They had been working on how to represent dialogue in a story, and Karen wanted Viktoría to look at this to make sure she was formatting it consistently. As Karen told Viktoría what she wanted her to do, she could see Viktoría stiffen.

"I'm not in the mood for this," Viktoría informed Karen as she took her draft and went back to her seat. Once Viktoría was seated, Karen could observe how she signed herself through the text. After she finished, she turned to Karen.

"In Sign Language this all works. I think it is better to use Sign Language. I am bad in Icelandic. I just want to use Sign Language. I don't know anything in Icelandic."

Victoría's reaction came as a big surprise to Karen who had been noticing subtle but very real changes in Victoría's writing, indicating that she was making progress. Karen told Victoría this, wondering how she could intervene in Victoría's writing process and nurture her developing identity as a writer without breaking her down.

INTRODUCTION

Victoría's mixed feelings towards Sign Language and Icelandic illuminate how conflicting discourses on deafness and literacy, the clinical and sociocultural perspectives, have coalesced to shape the institutions of deaf education (Brueggemann, 1999, 2004; Jankowski, 1997; Ladd, 2003; Lane, 1984, 1992; Valente, 2011). From the clinical perspective, deafness is perceived as a disability that needs to be treated or fixed. The educational goal is to intervene, using strategies that effectively remediate the condition of deafness. From the sociocultural perspective, deafness is

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seen as just another way of being in, and understanding, the world. The educational goal is to draw on students' unique ways of being to facilitate their development into multilingual, multicultural, deaf adults.

Karen entered the field of deaf education in fall 2000. During her first year of teaching, literacy instruction became one of her main concerns. By the end of the school year, she decided to leave the classroom to find ways to address her concerns. It was then she became familiar with teacher research. It seemed to be the tool she needed to grapple with the complex reality of the classroom. In preparing for entering the classroom as a teacher researcher, Karen found herself amidst the ideological battle that has long dominated the field of deaf education, whereby the competing discourses have coexisted, intersected, and tried to eradicate each other (Ladd, 2003). In learning how to discover the resources students who are deaf bring into the school setting, Karen realised she needed to recognise how her hearing frames of reference hindered her from identifying students' strengths within the classroom. In order to see beyond her hearing perspectives, Karen equipped herself with two bodies of sociocultural literature. Once in the classroom working as a teacher researcher, she realised she needed a critical friend to support her during the process of her research.

Five months into the study, Hafdís entered the research process as a critical friend. She had 26 years of experience teaching Grades 1–10, both as a general classroom, and special education teacher. As a teacher, she had focused on creating learning environments that responded to students' resources, strengths, and interests. She is also a teacher researcher, with 27 years' experience in action research and self-study of teacher education practices. Over the years, she has been a critical friend with her colleagues in their research projects. Her theoretical background is in critical theories including critical social theories and critical pedagogy, inclusive education, and pedagogy and social constructivism. She came into the project without a formal position, but with an enthusiasm for becoming Karen's critical friend. In this chapter, we describe two separate but integrated dimensions of self-study: first, Karen's self-study of her practice and, second, the role of a dialogue with a critical friend in that process.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Entering the study, Karen had found two bodies of literature that spoke to her concerns. First, sociocultural theories about deaf children's literacy education emphasised the importance of uncovering and basing literacy instruction on students' literacy practices (Andrews & Gonzales, 1991; Brueggemann, 1999; Livingston, 1991; Williams, 1994). From that literature, emerges the image of hearing professionals who consciously and unconsciously impose their worldview upon deaf students (Brueggemann, 1999; Humphries, 2004; Lane, 1992, 1997). When these impositions have failed, these professionals have tended to assign negative characteristics, the "psychology of the deaf," to deaf individuals (Lane, 1988, p. 8). Secondly, Karen read sociocultural theories of literacy, particularly the New Literacy Studies (NLS).

NLS researchers have expanded on the traditional definition of literacy. Rather than defining literacy exclusively as a set of neutral or technical skills, NLS researchers contextualise literacy within individuals' social and cultural experiences (Gee, 2000; Street, 1984, 2001b). This understanding of literacy, the ideological model, is considered more sensitive to culture and context (Street, 2001a). This ideological model declares that literacy is not a neutral "thing," transferrable from one setting to another; rather, it varies from one context to the next. In other words, there are many literacies, or multiliteracies (Gee, 2008). Thus, literacy education should encompass the skills needed to explore the multiple literacies students bring to the classroom.

To further develop the idea of multiple literacies, researchers working from the perspective of NLS have introduced new concepts and redefined traditional literacy concepts such as *text, reading,* and *writing* (Kress, 2003, 2005). Text goes beyond the printed word; rather, texts exist within students when they come to classrooms. Texts can be seen as students' experiences of the world, and teachers need to encourage them to use multiple means of expressing or "writing" these understandings through drawing, dance, art, play, and spoken and written language.

When teachers attempt to develop students' understanding of the world through written language, and assist them to read and write, they need to negotiate students' texts, experiences, and understandings through the multiple ways students have of expressing them, and help convert these into the written word. As she delved into the New Literacy Studies, Karen realised that she needed to learn to identify and base her literacy instruction on students' literacy practices, which might be outside her hearing perspective on what counts as literacy.

In this chapter, we illustrate how unpacking the image of the hearing professional, and adopting the idea of multiple ways of understanding the world through a dialogue with a critical friend, helped Karen recognise how her frame of reference hindered students' use of their literacy practices within the classroom. The following questions guided our study:

- How does a hearing teacher of students who are deaf, confront her living self in order to base her instruction on literacy practices beyond her hearing perspective?
- What is the role of a critical friend in facilitating that process?

METHODOLOGY

In this study, we describe a self-study of a practice and a role of a critical friend in gaining an alternative perspective of that process. In her self-study, Karen intended to explore the gap between who she was, and who she wanted to be in her practice, by studying herself and the others involved as she attempted to reduce that gap (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2010). For that reason, she asked Hafdís to enter the research as a critical friend, and participate in a dialogue and the process of coming-to-know within the context of this study. Critical collaboration builds on interpersonal,

interactive, and critical reflection in and on practice (Bodone, Guðjónsdóttir, & Dalmau, 2004). The collaboration with Hafdís was not meant to be judgmental or evaluative, but provocative and give Karen new lenses and perspectives to explore her experiences (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2010; Samaras, 2011). It required that the tender ideas emerging were not only nurtured through support and understanding, but also reinforced through opposition and resistance. In this sense, the dialogue was both a means for Karen to declare the authority of the assertions she made, and to reveal her ontological understandings and practical actions (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2010). This was not always a straightforward process. Listening to Karen's stories, Hafdís' intention was to encourage her to see beyond the challenging situation she was facing. Karen heard what Hafdís was saying, but grappled with how to engage these multiple stances in practice. In discussing our collaboration, we began creating a visual representation of how our professional journeys came together (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Visual representation of our professional journey

In looking at the picture, the square box represents the field of deaf education. The pictures covering the box and the poem at the top of the lid stand for the conflicting ideological forces influencing the field—the clinical and sociocultural perspectives:

I have a body
I have a face
I have arms
I have legs
I have fingers
I have toes
I have eyes
I have a mouth

I have ears … or tjaa
I do have ears
but I do not hear
so do I have ears or what?

The table stand is Karen's journey becoming a teacher researcher within the field of deaf education, where she had to learn to tune her senses to the surroundings and make sense of incidents taking place from different angles. The rock stands for Karen's students. By looking closely at it, you might be able to see a face. This is to highlight how Karen came to experience, through the study, that students within the classroom are not just students but individuals who need to be responded to. The rounded stacking boxes in the picture represent how Hafdís unpacked her multiple resources as a critical friend through this collaboration. The yellow, red, and green boxes indicate her movement from action research in a compulsory school to self-study of teacher education practices in higher education. The purple box situates Hafdís within the study as a critical friend. The blue box indicates the formal position of academic advisor Hafdís received in Karen's project half way through the study, a position she never felt she really took on during the research process. The weaving together of the items symbolises the individual processes of Hafdís and Karen, showing how their professional journeys intersected and influenced their understanding of the context under study. The mirror indicates the reflection between the two that arose as they embarked on their collaboration.

The Context of the Study

This study was conducted in Árdagsskóli, a public school in Reykjavík serving approximately 550 students. Since 2002, Árdagsskóli has housed the district's elementary program for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. The program offers classes for students from first through 10th grade who need additional educational support due to hearing impairment or deafness, ranging from moderately severe to profound. Árdagsskóli is a bilingual school that emphasises Icelandic and Icelandic Sign Language equally. By the end of tenth grade, students should be bilingual in Icelandic and Icelandic Sign Language. At the time of the study, 22 students were enrolled in the program.

Participants

While Karen was enacting research of her practice, four students at the lower secondary level were enrolled in the program; they became the participants of the study. Once Karen had formed a relationship as a teacher with students and their parents, she sought students' and their parents' permission for students to participate in the study. All agreed to participate. The names of students and places are pseudonyms.

Data Collection

Prior to entering the classroom, Karen developed a research plan and applied for Internal Review Board approval for human subject research in the United States of America and Iceland. From August 2006 to May 2009, Karen collected data in the form of field texts which are experiential, intersubjective texts created by participants and researchers to represent various aspects of field experience (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). These included participant observations, a teacher research journal, formal and informal interviews with parents and students, students' literacy work, and memos from monthly conversations with a critical friend. In her journal, Karen described the aim of her literacy instruction, paying closer attention to literacy activities that seemed filled with tension. Further, she observed and wrote notes about students' behaviour and interactions during school-based literacy learning, noting questions about students' use of literacy strategies or literacy behaviour to raise later, either with individual students or during informal classroom discussion. Finally, she included literacy-related stories from the classroom, from her students, and from her students' parents. To complement this journaling, Karen interviewed parents about students' literacy-related activities outside of school, and collected and examined students' literacy work and artefacts to understand the process and progress of students' literacy learning. Throughout her fieldwork, Karen chronicled events within her classroom and the development of her students as literacy learners, as well as her development as a literacy instructor. Through this process, Karen met with Hafdís once a month to critically reflect on what was happening in the classroom. These conversations were audio recorded, and both authors wrote down private memos from the meetings, which we drew on in our discussion in ongoing meetings.

Data Analysis

In analysing the data, Karen employed the concepts of literacy events and literacy practices (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Street, 1995, 2000, 2001a) which intertwine and create an observable unit while differing in significant ways. Literacy events are observable activities centring on written texts or talk around texts. Literacy events were identified as moments when Karen was implementing literacy activities intended to increase students' learning of Icelandic: spelling and grammar lessons, literature discussions, read alouds, writing and reading workshops, and writing in reading journals. As Karen studied these literacy events, she was able to identify their ideological aspects—the literacy practices underlying them. For instance, when she examined the writing workshop, she identified the associated literacy practices as brainstorming ideas, communicating ideas in Sign Language, translating ideas from Sign Language to written Icelandic, using various resources to communicate and write down developing thoughts, sharing drafts, and editing one's own texts. Examining the literacy event together with associated literacy practices, Karen could

focus on a specific situation and determine what was happening while exploring the values, attitudes, and social relationships saturating the event (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Street, 1995). In coding the field texts, Karen developed three analytic categories:

- Events filled with tension or resistance:
  Students sending explicit messages about Karen's educational practices; Karen's inner tension in relation to the school environment, students' behaviour, her social position as a teacher, and the ways in which she was presenting her research findings.
- Puzzling events:
  Students' questions about spelling, vocabulary, and capturing their meaning in written language.
- Events highlighting students' engagement:
  Students' writings; students using various resources to communicate the meaning they want to convey in writing.

These categories allowed Karen to describe the interaction between participants and the literacy practices emerging within the literacy events. She returned to the field texts to select salient instances of each category. Then she created vignettes that enabled her to explore, through the NLS lens, the multiple experiences she had lived with her students within the classroom (Clandinin, 2013). An example of a salient instance is Karen's reading into her experiences and interaction with students, wondering whether she was building on students' ways of being in the world.

In the final phase of the analytical process, Karen contextualised these specific events within the larger context of the study, looking across field texts. Guiding this level of analysis were the notions of the competing clinical and sociocultural discourses shaping the field of deaf education. By employing the concepts of literacy events and literacy practices, Karen examined how the discursive struggle within the setting was influenced by different ways of being in the world. An example of this is an event that made Karen reexamine her data, wondering whether the role of the teacher she embodies and enacts is creating and sustaining the dominant deficit image of deaf students as literacy learners. Focusing on the power dynamics underlying social interaction over a literacy event and the role of participants in making it work, Karen highlights how knowledge creation within the classroom is a dynamic, negotiated process, with the ever present danger of more dominant literacy practices and discourses governing less dominant ones. Thus, Karen's analysis highlights the importance of teachers taking responsibility for understanding and transforming their assumptions about teaching and learning from the inside out, with the goal of including the multiple discourses students bring to school.

Throughout the research process, Karen met regularly with Hafdís to discuss various aspects of her study. In looking at the critical friend's role in the process, we made use of retrospective data. That is, we reviewed and used the data resources and data analysis at hand to reflect on how our collaboration opened a space for

pedagogical dialogue in which we could critically reflect on Karen's practice. In so doing, we illuminate the processes that characterise the transformation of our professional learning. Using retrospective data analysis provides insights into the thoughts, beliefs, and actions surrounding events that have already occurred (Ahouanmènou-Agueh, 2002; Glewwe, Kremer, Moulin, & Zitzewitz, 2004; McMillan Culp, Honey, & Mandinach, 2005).

LIVING THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS: A DIALOGIC UNDERSTANDING

Karen

When I entered this study I was idealistic and a bit naïve about the complexities of teacher research. Prior to returning to the classroom, I had developed a research focus, a research question, and a clear idea of what data I was going to collect. Despite this preparation, it was not until I faced the daily work of teaching that I could really begin to confront, negotiate, and redefine my position as a hearing teacher researcher.

Initially, my greatest challenge was to tune my senses to my new surroundings. This included noticing what I saw, listening carefully to what I heard, and paying attention to how I felt in everyday situations. I wrote constantly in my teacher journal. I described my teaching experiences, what I was trying to accomplish in my teaching, and how it went in practice. I also wrote down all the thoughts, considerations, and questions that arose during my teaching.

I expected to see my journal fill up with descriptions of my students' literacy practices; I was confused when, instead, they filled up with painful descriptions of the great resistance I was meeting from students. I was an inexperienced teacher, and these moments inevitably made me doubt my capabilities. I wondered whether I could be a teacher and a researcher at the same time, or if I had to develop a stronger teacher identity before I could add research to my agenda. Further, I wondered if the researcher identity was distracting me from what should be my main concern—students' learning—or if it would grant me a deeper understanding of their learning and the complex nature of the classroom. At this moment in my study, I looked for a critical friend for support. Hafdís was one of the people I sought out for this purpose.

Hafdís

I met Karen for the first time at a special interest group of self-study and teacher education practices at the American Educational Research Association in San Diego, 2004. We had an enjoyable conversation, but I went back to my work in Iceland and Karen went back to graduate school studies in Madison, Wisconsin. Two years later, when she returned to Iceland to do her teacher research, she contacted me. She was looking for someone familiar with teacher research, with the intention of creating a

learning community around her study. She came to me after she had tried and failed to establish this kind of community within her elementary school.

As teachers often do, Karen began telling stories from her classroom. I listened to these stories through the multiple layers I brought to the research process. I found these stories interesting, but was concerned that she saw her actions mostly as mistakes. I also heard something else in those stories: a teacher who cared for her students and wanted to respond to them individually according to their strengths, while at the same time trying to coordinate the goals from the national curriculum with her pedagogical knowledge. The teacher in me saw hope in what she was trying to do. I saw a teacher who resisted assimilation into a system that appeared unresponsive to students' needs, and had the courage to search for answers by reflecting on her experiences. This was something with which I could identify. Therefore, I tried to get her out of this self-critical mode and to help her explore her stories from different angles.

Karen

It was important for me to discuss the challenges I was experiencing in the classroom. Although I had set out to research my practice, it was hard to interpret the conflicts I was having with students. Talking to Hafdís inspired me to continue my work. I took these conversations into the classroom, and they increased my awareness that there was more in my practice than appeared in the living moment. From that point, I began to grow into my role and identity as a teacher researcher, and before I knew it, the researcher in me began to identify incidents to explore in more depth.

In trying to gain a different perspective on my practice, I was reading sociocultural theories of language and literacy learning and teaching, working mainly with the NLS idea of multiliteracies. I also kept in mind the sociocultural literature on language and literacy education of children who are deaf, in which the hearing professionals are blamed for consciously and unconsciously imposing their worldview upon deaf students. Reflecting upon concrete classroom experiences from the NLS perspective, helped me make connections between theory and my classroom reality. The following vignette describes a confrontation with one of my students that played a significant role in that process.

> I bring in a self-assessment form for students to assess their work ethics. They do not give me an opportunity to explain the instructions written on the form. Melkorka stares at the form on her table, claiming that she is paying attention. She completes the first part of the assessment. I am about to explain the written instructions for the last part of it when she says, obviously offended, "I am deaf, not illiterate." (Research journal, October 23, 2006)

Melkorka's words represented one of the most puzzling moments in my research process; they kept echoing in my head. I kept returning to this incident over and over again with Hafdís, not sure what to make of it.

Hafdís

Again I experienced an enthusiastic teacher wanting to do her best for her students, but not able to understand students' capabilities within the complex reality of the classroom. Instead of allowing students to begin the task according to their abilities, she struggled with this need to be in control. This is common for teachers, especially those who want to do a good job. They are unaware of how their concern for students' learning can sometimes limit students' opportunities to flourish and bring their resources to bear. This is even more common with teachers working with students with impairment, and the outcome is often learned helplessness for students. However, in this incident, Melkorka had the strength to make the teacher aware by pointing out her capabilities. From my perspective, Melkorka was able to do so because she trusted Karen. I saw that Karen got the message and was ready to think over her actions, but she had a hard time analysing them, relating them to her readings, and figuring out how to respond—and how to create literacy instruction that responded to what students brought into class.

Karen

I kept wondering what Melkorka's words implied; whether something about the role of the teacher that I embodied and enacted was creating and sustaining the dominant deficit image of deaf students as literacy learners that I had set out to deconstruct. Through extensive reflection on Melkorka's words and other incidents describing conflicts with students, I began to experience a change in my understanding of the theoretical work I was reading. These were no longer theories to be supported or opposed. Rather, from then on, my academic reading described the reality found within my classroom. In other words, this incident forced me to confront the reflections of the oppressive hearing teacher as these emerged in my practice, and in turn caused my students to act in the role of the oppressed deaf student.

This was a critical moment in my study. I realised that being aware of the oppressive history of deaf education is not enough to make the ideological changes needed to alter this reality. Additionally, I realised that using one set of theoretical perspectives to help me see students' literacy practices emerge within the classroom would not get me very far. To be successful in changing my literacy instruction, I needed to systematically deconstruct instructional practices that marginalised students' resources, and create a communicative space that encouraged students to build their learning on their existing resources.

After Christmas break, I returned with a plan. I asked students to return the books I had handed out in the beginning of the school year. I knew I was doing the right thing when Viktoría returned her books with the words "Good! 100% children's books!" (Research journal, January 4, 2007). Instead of having students work on predetermined spelling and grammar exercises and read books I had prepared for them, I decided to emphasise independent reading and creative writing. I asked

the assistant principal, who was deaf herself, to sit in on my classes while I was transforming my practice. Despite my plan, I was undeniably anxious about making these changes. I wondered what would happen if students did not take on the responsibility that I expected of them.

Hafdís

I admired Karen's courage. After almost 30 years of teaching, I understood the difficulties and the courage required to completely change your practice. In my journal I wrote:

> This could go both ways. She could lose her authority as a teacher. Her students might feel that she doesn't know what she is doing and therefore she cannot make up her mind for how she is going to teach them. Or they might feel that she is listening to them and planning her teaching according to their comments. Whatever happens, I support this way of teaching. (Research journal, January 27, 2007)

Karen

Soon I began to observe some significant changes in students' attitudes toward their learning. In creative writing, students would immediately ask me whether it was time for writing. Often, they would be ready to begin working before I arrived. Slowly, the classroom began to fill up with their questions. These ranged from simply how to write words they needed, such as *hringja* [call] or *rafmagnsinnstunga* [electric outlet], to acting out whole scenarios of what they wanted help in expressing in writing.

As my practice developed, I began to notice how students' agency was an ever-evolving force that took on various forms within the space of writing. It appeared most noticeable in students' increased responsibility in identifying and verbalising grammatical components of the Icelandic language that were confusing to them. Verbalising their challenges gave me additional opportunities to understand them through their perspectives as deaf students in the process of learning Icelandic. In so doing, I was able to account for their challenges in a more nuanced way than any fill-in-the-blank grammar exercises could do. Just as the modifications I made to my writing instruction increased students' opportunities to identify and articulate confusing components of the Icelandic language, so they provided me with more opportunities to intervene in students' learning processes by addressing, in a more direct way, the aspects of Icelandic that I knew that students were either working on or ready to begin learning, as the incident below illustrates.

> Viktoría and Melkorka were working on their writings. Viktoría was writing about her family. When I walked around I see her write "*Ég á tveir*[1] *systur*" [I have two sisters], I made eye contact with her and pointed to the word, *tveir*.

> We just learned about the different genders of the numerals 1, 2, 3, and 4," I reminded her. "Can you recall the rule for these words?
>
> "I know, I remember," she told me. "This is right."
>
> "Is it?" I asked her. "You need to look at the word following the numeral 2, the word *systur* [sisters], to determine the gender of the numeral. What gender is that?"
>
> "It is feminine, and that is why it is right to say it like this," she replied, and pointed to the word *tveir* in her text.
>
> I am not sure that's right," I told her. "What are the three forms for the numeral two? Bring your grammar book here and look it up. Just keep the book here, and then you can use it if you need information like this.
>
> "No, I'm not going to keep my grammar book here. That's stupid," signed Viktoría, and she began to spell the word with her fingers: "*T-V-Ö* [the neutral form], *T-V-E-I-R* [the masculine form]." She pointed to her third finger, thought for a moment, spelled "*T-*," and stopped. Melkorka joined the conversation. They considered it together, and Viktoría spelled again, "*T-V-Ö, T-V-E-I-R*." Melkorka kept going: "*T-Æ-V*." She stopped, began again: "*T-V-Æ-R*," and looked at me. I confirmed her answer. She spelled it to Viktoría, who changed it accordingly in her writing and continued with her work. (Research journal, January 29, 2007)

Reflecting upon this and similar incidents, it became evident that, although students were aware of the existence of different grammatical rules, they were having difficulty applying them. Consequently, students' creative writing not only provided a meaningful context for addressing grammatical aspects of the Icelandic language, but also served to increase students' awareness of how they could use additional resources, such as grammar books, Web-based declension programs, and dictionaries to enhance their writing.

As is evident in Viktoría's comment, "No, I am not going to keep my grammar book here. That's stupid." Students did not always recognise the usefulness of these additional resources. The social context surrounding the writing block seemed much more important to them. They preferred to use each other as resources during the writing process, frequently intervening in each other's work, as Melkorka did. Further, they often sought my assistance in the process of getting their ideas into words.

Hafdís

Karen and I discussed the changes in her practice, and I began to see her transformation. I realised that the two roles of teacher and researcher were beginning to inform each other. I noticed the interplay between her research journal and her practice: how

reflection was helping her understand how she could change her practice. Karen was not just trying different ideas but analysing her teaching and her actions, relating the findings to theories and knowledge, and then making decisions to change her practice.

Karen

The final phase in becoming a teacher researcher was to write about my study. This process was more important to my becoming a teacher of children who are deaf than I had imagined. In spring 2009, all the students I met at the beginning of the study had graduated from our school. I knew this was the right time for me to sit down and write about my study. I immediately began to notice a slight feeling of discomfort as I wrote. "Not again," I thought to myself, mindful of how I had had to live with "little feelings" like this throughout the research process, tracking their barely noticeable shifts for quite a long time before I could begin to express them in a way that made sense within the context of my work. "If I am ever going to be able to finish my dissertation, I need to continue writing for the sake of writing." Consequently, I tried to suppress this feeling of discomfort. Then, on a cold winter morning in February 2010, as I sat in my office, staring out the window, thinking about how I should continue with my writing, this feeling reemerged, seemingly from out of nowhere. However, this time it emerged as a multitude of questions. How am I representing my students through my writing? Why is it so difficult address the issue of literacy learning of children who are deaf without drawing attention to their low literacy achievement? Why do I have to draw attention to their "limitations" when it comes to literacy learning instead of focusing wholly on what they are actually doing? Was it possible that through my writing I would, contrary to my intentions, perpetuate the same portrayal of students who are deaf that I was trying to deconstruct?

Upon entering the research field, I set out to identify and deconstruct those deficit images of children who are deaf, which I might unconsciously have held as a hearing person. This was an essential step in the process of reconstructing the image of this student population on the basis of students' preexisting literacy practices. As a teacher, I felt I had made some progress toward that goal through my stay within the field. As I began to examine the reasons underlying the discomfort that I felt during the writing process, I came to realise that, despite what I had accomplished as a teacher, I was still trapped by the powerful deficit images of students who are deaf as literacy learners—as portrayed in the literature on deaf education.

Hafdís

I listened to this struggle from my experience as an inclusive educator. Again and again, I see this happen: We say we want to build on students' interests and strengths, but the discourse and our surroundings are so focused on deficit images of children who are disabled or have difficulties in learning or behaviour that we are trapped

there. Since I am also always struggling with this perspective, I could relate to what Karen was experiencing.

> We need to begin within ourselves and realise our strengths. To work against the predominant beliefs and traditions, you need to be very strong. To be able to activate your strengths, beliefs, and ethos you need to be aware of them. For someone who is becoming a teacher and new in the school it can be challenging. (Recordings, March 2010)

At this time, I was wondering how to support Karen to realise her strength and activate it within her writing, and to learn from her experience and not become defensive, instead seeing what was hidden underneath the surface supporting students' success.

Karen

In reflecting upon the discomfort I felt, I began to experience the invisible power of writing. It was as if the ideology of the clinical perspective, emphasising students' lack of literacy, had nested itself in the words I was using in my writing to represent my findings. This realisation brought my attention to the enormous risks we run by creating deficit images based on hearing extrapolations of what it means to be deaf. First, we run the risk that educators working with this student population will subscribe to these images and join the clinical movement, which sets out to "fix" the problem without attempting to understand the students' perspectives. Second, hearing-based representations created by well-intentioned researchers who see themselves as trying to fix the problem are the ones that deaf individuals encounter as they try to make sense of their experiences. These expressions, which begin to tie the deaf individual's inner life together, in turn inhibit the deaf experience and deaf knowledge from emerging and gaining a more definite and lasting expression.

From the moment I could name my discomfort, I realised that I did not want to reproduce deficit images of who my students were as literacy learners. In my research, I wanted to give insight into another reality, without ignoring the challenges students confront on a daily basis as they learn Icelandic as a second language. I wanted my readers to experience the everyday heroes I worked with, to share our victories and defeats within the classroom. These were the theoretical forces that I wanted to influence my writing, and that I wanted to capture in it. After I understood that this was my responsibility as a researcher, my struggle with the writing process centred on developing ways to use words that would allow me to portray my students in a way that emphasises the literacy practices they brought to the classroom.

DISCUSSION

In revisiting our collaboration, we have come to identify the power and potential of engaging in a dialogue with a critical friend through the research process. One of the major insights emerging from our collaboration involves creating relationships

built on trust. In self-study, relationships provide the foundation that supports the understanding emerging from such research (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2010; Samaras, 2011). Our relationship was formed upon a mutual interest in creating learning spaces that build on students' resources and experiences. Through the study, our collaboration developed into a critical dialogue in which Karen could bring in nascent ideas about her work and who she was becoming as a teacher. Halfway through the study, Hafdís became one of Karen's doctoral advisors. In reflecting on how Hafdís' changed position affected our collaboration, we discovered it did not. Throughout Karen's study Hafdís remained in the role of a critical friend. She entered the process when Karen needed someone to talk to, nurturing and providing an alternative perspective to explore the experiences Karen brought into the discussions.

Hafdís experienced this dialogue as a space for pedagogical discussion surrounding evolving classroom events, highlighting the complex reality teachers face on a daily basis within the classroom. Because her passion has been in teacher professionalism, this dialogue gave her new insights that expanded her understanding of teachers' practices. Hafdís enjoyed being a critical friend having the opportunity to reflect upon the practices through the stance of a teacher researcher and different theoretical perspectives. The dialogue that developed within the study, where Karen experienced agency over the research process and trust to divulge and explore emergent vulnerable issues, played an important role in Karen's professional development. First, it gave her a space to share her concerns and victories from the classroom. Second, the discussions nested in her subconscious, continuing to transform her understanding of her educational practices and who she was becoming as a teacher and researcher. Engaging in a dialogue with Hafdís helped Karen develop from tuning her senses to her surroundings, to exploring the ideological model underneath the literacy practices emerging within her classroom. Then, she could begin to create a learning space that encouraged students to draw on their literacy practices in negotiating their identities as readers and writers (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Gee, 2008; Street, 2001b). While writing played an important role throughout the study, exploring the tension Karen experienced in writing her findings for publication made us aware of how important it is to carefully monitor our writing to avoid representing or constructing our research participants in ways that invalidate their experiences and resources.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we gave an example of how a critical friend provides a literacy teacher from a classroom of children who are deaf an opportunity to explore her practice through self-study. This collaboration provided a forum for Karen to critically examine the ways in which her beliefs and assumptions shaped the instructional practices implemented into the classroom. For Hafdís, this was an opportunity to explore teachers' practices through the experiences of a practicing teacher. When the collaboration is built on mutual interest in teaching and learning in which all

participants experience a professional growth, the conversation within self-study provides a foundation for daily recreation of our understanding and work (Bodone et al., 2004).

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NOTES

[1] In Icelandic, the words for the numerals 1–4 have different forms by gender—masculine, feminine and neuter—and each of these genders has four declensions.

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CLAUDIA MITCHELL AND FATIMA S. KHAN

5. JACKIE AND ME, JACKIE AND US

Productive Entanglements and Learning Conversations in the Supervision Process

INTRODUCTION

> Do you remember the question that was asked at the tribute to Jackie Kirk conference session? The one about Jackie as a trailblazer?
>
> Oh yes, I do. Someone in the audience commented that it seems as though Jackie Kirk was one of those rare people who left an impression on everyone she met in her work in humanitarian aid—a real trailblazer. And then this same person asked each of the panellists if she saw herself as a trailblazer. It sounded accusatory at first, and she did apologise if it came across that way, but then I realised that it was meant for us to think about what trailblazing really is. (Excerpt: Conversation between Claudia and Fatima, October 2014)

The short excerpt of dialogue between the two authors serves to signal the place of conversation in relation to learning. How and what do we come to know through conversations, particularly in the supervision process, and how can the process contribute to deepening an understanding of learning? This chapter comes from the growing recognition of the importance of a starting-with-ourselves stance in relation to study and critique regarding research and professional practice (Van Manen, 1990). In particular, it seeks to investigate the use of cultural biography and biographical techniques, as well as dialogue in relation to self-study and professional practice in the area of humanitarian aid and global adversity—a field made up of researchers and practitioners working across such areas as disaster relief in the time of natural disasters, conflict and postconflict settings, and in the context of international development. While there is strong support for self-study in teacher education and even into broader disciplinary areas (see, for example, Pithouse, Mitchell, & Moletsane, 2009; Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell, & Pillay, 2014), it is relatively new in international development contexts—even though there is a long history of reflexivity and critique in relation to what might be described as inner searching in international development contexts.

Focusing on the use of educational biography practice (Goodson, 2006; Kridel, 1998), and dialogue as applied to self-study (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2014), the chapter explores the ways in which the authors, Fatima, a doctoral student

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 75–91.

at McGill University working in the area of childhood and global adversity in relation to natural disasters in Pakistan, and Claudia, her doctoral supervisor, engage in dialogue as method in itself. In particular, the work is carried out through reference to the work of Jackie Kirk, regarded as a trailblazer figure in international development, who was tragically killed in Afghanistan in 2008 as part of an International Rescue Committee (IRC, 2008)[1] mission. Six years after her death, Jackie's work in humanitarian aid and in the area of education in emergencies remains prominent in the literature, as can be seen in such publications as the issue of *Girlhood Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (Mitchell & Reid-Walsh, 2010) dedicated to her work, and an edited book *Educating Children in Conflict Zones: Research, Policy, and Practice for Systemic Change—A Tribute to Jackie Kirk* (Mundy & Dryden-Petersen, 2011). Our reflexive study illustrates that the impact of her work is ongoing, and also seeks to ensure that her legacy of advocating for peace building in postdisaster societies continues through researchers who share her vision and who have been inspired by her work.

We call the chapter "Jackie and Me, Jackie and Us" in recognition of the pivotal role of Jackie in the lives of the two authors. Claudia was supervisor of Jackie Kirk's doctoral research at McGill University where Jackie completed a dissertation on women teachers in Pakistan (Kirk, 2004). Fatima, a decade later, drew extensively on Jackie's work in her own master's (Khan, 2013a), and now in her doctoral work in the area of humanitarian aid and global adversity. This chapter looks at the ways in which learning conversations—in this case between a supervisor and a doctoral supervisee in the area of professional practice related to humanitarian aid and children in global adversity—can enhance an understanding of learning itself, as well as be preparation for practice. In the chapter, we put forward an idea of polyvocality that is organised around what we term "productive entanglement" and hence, the idea—Jackie and me, Jackie and us. We draw on Sarah Nuttall's (2009) notion of entanglement as "a condition of being twisted together or entwined, involved with; it speaks of an intimacy gained, even if it was resisted, or ignored, or uninvited" (p. 1). In our case, the relationship is not resisted, ignored or explicitly uninvited, but it is entwined and in ways that, we propose, are productive and generative.

AIMS OF THE STUDY AND ORGANISATION OF THE CHAPTER

The aim of this chapter is to investigate self-study and professional practice in the area of humanitarian aid and global adversity through the use of biography and biographical techniques framed by the idea of productive entanglement. How can such techniques and tools contribute to dialogue and to learning conversations that facilitate self-study through reflexive engagement? How can this work contribute to the overarching focus on polyvocality in transdisciplinary research? The chapter is divided into four main sections. In the first section, we offer a context for the area of humanitarian aid and global adversity as a way to situate the study. In the

second section, we map out the methodology for the chapter, highlighting the use of textual tools in cultural biography and dialogue. The third section, on our polyvocal analysis, includes first, a series of reflections by Fatima as she engages in a preliminary, Jackie and me, self-study in relation to her doctoral research as she embarks upon refining the questions and issues. In the second part of this section, Jackie and us, we revisit the work through the use of dialogue as a way to deepen an understanding of the process and product. In the last section of the article, we return to what might be described as the "so what?" of this research.

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The study is located within the broad area of research and professional practice in international development, focusing specifically on humanitarian aid and global adversity. Research and professional practice in this context can relate to university-based fieldwork in such areas as education in emergencies, and also in areas such as peacekeeping and peace building, disaster relief, and health aid as well as work carried out by various international nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) such as UNESCO,[2] UNICEF,[3] UNHCR,[4] Save the Children, and smaller and more local NGOs and other organisations. While much of the publishing in relation to this work can be found in the gray literature of texts in the form of commissioned reports, situational analyses, and toolkits, there is at the same time a body of literature that is more academic in nature. While few argue in this literature against the idea of humanitarian aid, particularly in the context of natural disasters or seeking to help to address, for example, the Ebola outbreaks in Liberia and Sierra Leone in 2014, the particular practices and professional training required in relation to positionality are of concern. How does social positioning in relation to such factors as gender, race, class, and privilege influence the relationships between researchers and others working in humanitarian aid, and the populations with whom they work? When it comes to such areas as peacekeeping and the actions of peacekeepers in the host country, there is a need for an even greater sense of positionality. In some contexts, humanitarian aid, global adversity, and peacekeeping interventions intersect.[5]

At the same time there is an emerging body of literature that seeks to reimagine research and practice that is more reflexive in nature in the area of humanitarian aid (see for example Heron, 2007). Crewe and Harrison's (1998) groundbreaking work on international development calls for an orientation that questions the very idea of development in relation to "whose development?" Jackie Kirk (2005) herself highlighted this in her work with women teachers in Pakistan. Alessandra Dentice (2010), whose research was influenced by Jackie's extended the idea of self-study and autoethnography into her work with an international NGO working in development aid in relation to child protection. At the heart of this emergent body of work is a critical awareness of the power dynamics extant in Global North and Global South conversations, or what has often been termed, the West and the rest.

METHODS

Methodologically, the chapter builds on two approaches. One approach is to work with what Gelya Frank (2000) referred to as "cultural biography"—that is, "a cultural analysis focusing on a biographical subject that makes use of ethnographic methods, along with life history and life story, and that critically reflects on its methodology in action as a source of primary data" (Frank, p. 22, cited in Colyar, 2013, p. 379). In her book *Venus on Wheels*, Frank engaged with her subject, Diane DeVriesa, a woman with disabilities, through public records, newspaper stories, and photographs. At the same time Frank herself was very present and entangled in the written text about DeVriesa. The second approach is dialogue itself as a tool of self-study, something that is highlighted by Pithouse, Mitchell, and Moletsane (2009). Our study, as a cultural biography of Jackie Kirk, illuminates aspects of her work as a trailblazer in relation to education in emergencies but in so doing, we each are entangled with Jackie's life and, through dialogue, with each other. In the next section, we engage in two different types of reflection and conversation that came out of our considerations of how best to present ourselves and our work. These were informed by a number of practical questions: How might we most effectively represent our selves (individual and collaborative)? What should we include? What should we leave out?

In the first our entanglements, Jackie and me, Fatima offers a section based on her own reflexive readings of three key cultural moments that span from her completed masters work to her current doctoral research. She does this through the use of photographs, access to various productions (books, reports, videos, the development of a website), and through participation in a conference in which other academics talk about Jackie Kirk's work. First, she reflects on the starting point of her academic development by uncovering a number of texts written by Jackie Kirk in the area of education in emergencies, and which served as a catalyst for her master's project. Second, she reflects on a cultural production project in which she created a web page tribute for *Girlhood Studies* that highlighted Jackie's diverse and interdisciplinary work in the field of international development. Then she explores how the two previous cultural episodes led to her participation at the 2014 Annual Conference of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) that included a session to commemorate the fifth anniversary of Jackie's death. These reflections offer insight into various conversations: Fatima with herself, reflections and conversations between Fatima and Claudia, and conversations at the conference.

In the second of our entanglements, we go on to consider Jackie and us, offering an analysis of a digitally recorded conversation in which we discuss our individual relationships to Jackie's work, and to what this might mean—both in relation to supervising and being supervised. Finally, we return to Jackie and me, this time with Claudia engaging in a reflexive piece on the digitally recorded conversation.

SELF-STUDY RESEARCHER REFLECTIONS

Entanglement 1— Fatima: Jackie and Me

In the fall of 2011, I began my master's studies at McGill University, having graduated the year before with a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Ottawa. My initial research began with an examination of the difficulties young immigrants face in Canadian schools and society. Disconcertingly, I began to realise I was constantly reassuring myself that this was my research passion. This is what I would contribute to the academic field, yet I felt uncomfortable and uneasy about my decision. According to Jackie (2005),

> the praxis of reflexivity in the field includes a sustained attention to the positions in which I place myself and am placed by others, a listening to and acknowledging of inner voices, doubts, and concerns as well as pleasures and pride, and a sensing of what my body is feeling. (p. 233)

Doubts about the direction I was going in began to fester in my mind to such an extent that they physically manifested themselves through anxiety at the mere thought of engaging with my research "interests." I slowly recognised and accepted these doubts, concerns, and feelings of uneasiness and, in response, initiated a lengthy reflective process. I was determined to find the aha moment. Unbeknown to me at the time, it began with a trip back to my place of birth, Azad Kashmir, Pakistan in the summer of 2012. During this period, and after returning to McGill in the fall, I was increasingly engaged in a "constant questioning of what I am doing and why" (Kirk, 2005, p. 233). The cultural moments below illustrate how my discovery of, and further inquiry into Jackie's work was pivotal in developing my research passion.

Reflection one: discovering Jackie's work in doing my master's project. In 2005, a 7.6 magnitude earthquake struck Azad Kashmir, killing over 75,000 people and displacing more than 2.8 million (Kirk, 2008). Some members of my extended family perished in this disaster and others faced extremely difficult living conditions, which were exacerbated by harsh weather and slow relief efforts. When I went back to Kashmir in 2008 for the first time since I came to Canada, the effects of the earthquake were still visible—in some areas, children were forced to study outside in tents because of unrepaired schools. Young family members spoke to me about their experiences, but never elaborated beyond their initial shock, fear, and chaos at what took place during the first few days (i.e., the thousands of strong aftershocks). Only a few older family members hauntingly recalled the death and devastation. During my 2012 trip, I saw that significant improvements had been made in the region. One of the schools in my village that had been completely destroyed, was rebuilt with strong structures, albeit with limited resources. Despite the visible progress, I had lingering concerns over the extent to which the trauma children faced following the earthquake were discussed both inside and outside their homes. Within my culture,

open and candid dialogue about the psychological impact of emergencies is rare, as evidenced by my earlier recollections. Addressing and expressing such experiences in a community that is attempting to return normalcy to their lives is a difficult feat. Thus, I was particularly interested in how girls, whose voices are often marginalised and silenced in these contexts, fared. However, it was not until I returned to Montréal that I critically examined the questions I had raised.

What I did not realise then, was that I had set in motion the work I am engaged in today. Through course work for a curriculum class, I began writing a series of journal entries that responded to themes of social consciousness, pragmatism, experiencing ethnicity, and action research. Rather than integrating such concepts into my reflections on young immigrant experiences, I found myself progressively engrossed in discussions of trauma and curriculum, rebuilding societies following disasters, teacher education in postconflict zones, and psychosocial interventions for children.

It was precisely during this time that Jackie's name repeatedly came up in my review of the literature. Her article, "Education and Fragile States", provided a deeply informative starting point for me in the field of education in emergencies (Kirk, 2007). Her insights, critical analyses, gender perspectives, and compelling arguments regarding education as a stabilising force in times of conflict and fragility left a lasting impression. My main interests—women teachers as influential role models, children's psychosocial well-being, girls' empowerment, women's education—were already reflected in Jackie's publications.

I firmly decided, subsequent to my discovery of Jackie's work, that my master's project would concentrate on researching the effects of natural and human-induced disasters on the education of girls and women in Pakistan. Simultaneously, my curriculum instructor—in response to the trends she saw in my journal entries—referred me to her colleague, Claudia Mitchell.

Meeting Claudia was a defining moment in my life. Not only did we share similar research interests, but I also learned to my surprise that she had been Jackie's doctoral supervisor. Although we initially spoke of education in emergencies from a gendered perspective, we quickly and naturally turned to a lengthy, emotional, and insightful discussion on Jackie's influence and lasting legacy in the field. At the end of our first meeting, Claudia kindly gave me the inaugural issue of *Girlhood Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (Mitchell, Reid-Walsh, & Kirk, 2008), a journal that she, Kirk, and Jacqueline Reid-Walsh had cofounded. Although I was not able to meet Jackie, it was touching to see her "speak" in the opening pages of the journal. This gift would be the first object added to my Jackie Collection (Figure 5.2). Our initial meeting reflected the dialogic process highlighted in Jackie's own doctoral work where she stated that "the insight gained into [my experiences] can then be used as a starting point for engaging with others, and for starting to develop shared understandings of educational issues and strategies to address them" (2005, pp. 239–240).

After further discussion and engagement, Claudia agreed to supervise my master's project, which was increasingly incorporating Jackie's values and scholarship. It seemed fitting, therefore, for me to find tributes from those who knew her and those who knew of her to include in my completed work. Quotes from researchers and aid workers who admired her optimism, compassion, enthusiasm, and ethics were not difficult to find.

Discovering Jackie's work was that elusive aha moment I had been searching for in the past year and a half. Her knowledge, which spanned many different disciplines, contributed to the development of my own research interests and passion. Using her work and collaborating with Claudia eliminated the uncertainties I felt at the onset of my graduate studies, and instilled greater meaning in the work I am currently doing.

Figure 5.1. Tribute for Girlhood Studies website

Reflection two: Creating a tribute to honour Jackie's work at the fifth anniversary of her death. "I think you could do an entire project around Jackie Kirk's work" (C. Mitchell, personal communication, January, 2013). Claudia later clarified she

was only half joking, but her remark began a self-reflective process where both of us began to consider ways to pay homage to Jackie's life and work. We were approaching the fifth anniversary of her death in August 2013, and a memorial bench was being installed on the lower campus of McGill University alongside a tree that had been planted in her honour several years earlier. However, we wanted her research contributions to reach a wider audience in the form of a web page hosted by Berghahn Books, publisher of *Girlhood Studies*. In the spring of 2013, Claudia introduced me to her coeditor, Jacqui Reid-Walsh, who was visiting from Pennsylvania State University.

During our meeting, Jacqui and Claudia recalled (for my benefit) how they had collaborated with Jackie to establish *Girlhood Studies*, and spoke fondly of their determination and the numerous suitcases they had worn out jetting from one place to another to turn their vision into a reality. Subsequently, we brainstormed material that could be contributed to the website tribute, such as publications, research interests, history of *Girlhood Studies*, a list of Jackie Kirk Fellowship recipients, and so forth.

The tribute page I eventually created, in collaboration with Claudia and Jacqui, is depicted in Figure 5.1 (Khan, 2013b). It highlights eight key areas that Jackie worked in: education in emergencies, women teachers, policy development, peace building, gender and conflict, girls' lives, home-based schools, and visual methodologies. Rather than providing a long list of Jackie's academic publications, I wanted to focus primarily on what she advocated for, her creativity, her innovative problem–solutions, and the bold strategies she proposed and implemented for girls and women.

Our intention in creating the tribute was to highlight the extraordinary knowledge she generated in a number of different areas, and that can be used as inspiration for researchers like me. This tribute constitutes parts of my field notes, which as Jackie stated, "serve as the critical, practical tool of reflexivity; they are the place in which to capture fleeting thoughts, questions, images and ideas, and the place from which to start when engaging in a longer analysis and theorising of them" (2005, p. 233). Jackie's research, essentially, was a starting point in my academic development, and has helped form and shape my ideas.

Reflection three: Attending a conference—encountering Jackie sessions at the CIES conference in Toronto, March 2014. After I had been admitted as a doctoral student at McGill, Claudia suggested I submit a proposal for the annual CIES conference taking place in Toronto the following March. I was excited at the prospect because I had never participated or presented in an academic conference. The theme, *Re-Visioning Education for All* perfectly reflected many of the messages in Jackie Kirk's writing.

For the conference, I joined doctoral colleagues from McGill's Department of Integrated Studies in Education to present a panel session[6] that explored themes related to what impact the inclusion of participatory arts-based methodologies

had on recognising and including girls' voices in policy dialogues (a topic about which Jackie was particularly passionate). My paper (Khan, 2014) examined the appropriateness of participatory arts-based methodologies to explore and critique Education for All (EFA) policy as it relates to girls' access to education in postdisaster Pakistan.

Every section of my presentation, from the impact of disasters on girls' education to their participation in policy development, highlighted and built on Jackie's research. To illustrate this, in an article on girls in policy, Jackie Kirk and Stephanie Garrow observed:

> In the context of girls' education policy, working with girls as 'knowers' implies acknowledging the centrality of their lived experiences of education, understanding their diverse perceptions of the barriers to equity in education, and committing to work with their various proposed strategies and processes. (2003, p. 6)

I had examined the potential use of drawings and photovoice—a visual participatory approach whereby people can "identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique" (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 369)—to illustrate Jackie's concept of girls as knowers and agents of social change in policy dialogue. Claudia's impact is particularly notable here. As a first year doctoral student attending my first conference, I needed reassurance that my work served a purpose beyond that of adding to my academic credentials. Fortunately, Claudia's feedback and encouragement that my paper was not only meaningful to the field of education in emergencies, but also in furthering Jackie's legacy, was enough to put me at ease.

Two other moments at the CIES conference were memorable. The first was attending a panel session chaired by Claudia, entitled "Gender and the Jackie Kirk Legacy—Five Years On". It was illuminating to see how the chair and panellists, all of whom had worked with Jackie and who could be regarded as critical friends (Marni Sommer,[7] Catherine Magno,[8] Sandra Stacki[9]), expanded on her diverse legacy. Their areas of focus included work on images of girls in media and challenges menstruating girls face in educational settings in low income countries. A most poignant moment came when the question we highlighted at the beginning of this article was posed. Panellists were asked whether any of them were trailblazers. This was a profound and challenging question for the panellists to answer, and it has remained with me and, I know, with Claudia as well because we have discussed it several times. It is a question I am currently asking myself and, I do not doubt, one that I will still ask 5, 10, or maybe 15 years from now.

The second memorable moment was meeting a researcher who was familiar with Claudia's work and who had worked with Jackie in the field. I learned in speaking with her that she had shared many research interests with Jackie, particularly women in teaching, gender in development, and school improvement, and had worked with her after the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan. It was captivating to hear her reminisce

about how energetic and relentless Jackie had been in pursuing issues of significant concern to her.

Attending the CIES conference was significant not only in shaping my research interests, but also in helping me appreciate that much of my work has been influenced by Jackie and Claudia. This multilayered relationship has enabled me to present my work in a meaningful way, has shaped my professional and academic development, and has introduced me to new scholars, researchers, and avenues of exploration.

Figure 5.2. Fatima's Jackie collection: Objects and artefacts in relation to Jackie that Fatima has gathered over the past two years

Entanglement 2—Claudia and Fatima: Jackie and Us

In developing this section, we drew inspiration from several sources: first, from Lorraine Singh's self-interview article where she wrote "to know yourself and to make that knowing visible" (2012, p. 90) is key; second, from Meskin, Singh, and van der Walt's (2014) reciprocal self-interview, which is "a way of seeing reflexivity in action" (p. 11). While our interview is not quite a self-interview as these were, it has a similar intent. To carry out the interview, we sat across from each other in Claudia's office, passing a cell phone back and forth as we recorded (with both visual and audio) the conversation. One of the initial purposes of the meeting was to look at a set of photographs that Fatima had taken of the Jackie Kirk bench memorial, and to choose one for a photographic exhibition. We include the photograph of the memorial bench below (Figure 5.3) in this Jackie and us section because one of our first meetings was actually around the installation, as Fatima recalls in Reflection Two.

Figure 5.3. Jackie Kirk memorial bench, McGill University

The following is the transcript of the conversation (slightly edited for coherence) that took place in October 2014 where both supervisee and supervisor posed a number of self-reflexive questions.

Claudia: What are the advantages of interviewing each other? What are the kinds of things we'd talk about, probably?

Fatima: One of the advantages is that I think we have been having conversations back and forth, but I sometimes feel as if it might be some type of—so I do my thing and you do your thing—and we come together and talk about it … we do this at different times and then come together. So I think that's a difference. I think interviewing each other fills that gap.

Claudia: Yes, I think you're right. I think what's happening is … you write something and I respond, and I write something and you respond. But we're not really interacting except saying, "Oh yeah, that's great, go for it, or that works … whatever."

Fatima: That's right.

Claudia: So, for example, I'm trying to think about a question I would ask you … As a doctoral student, how much do you feel the weight of having to put this together in the context of Jackie Kirk? Because you've kind of committed to it. Well maybe not committed to it, but said you're interested and then I was, "Oh yes! Great—you could really make a whole project out of this." Does that set up expectations in a way that confine you in some way? That you're carrying Jackie Kirk on your shoulders because I was her supervisor and I am a champion of her work?

Fatima: Throughout my research, starting from the latter half of my master's after I met you to the point in time right now, I think there's been another disconnect. There was a portion in the beginning that was focused a lot on Jackie and it culminated in the CIES event. But then, there was a period when I was just off on my own doing something, and I think that made me feel uncomfortable. And that's something I talk about in my reflection. I was back at that anxious moment, where it physically manifested itself. So I was having difficulty even coming to campus to work on my doctoral interests because it had moved away from what I thought was my aha moment—finding Jackie's work and discovering it and working with you on it. But, I think through these reflections, I'm coming back to it. And I think it's making me much more comfortable now. And continuing that work is also much more helpful and it's grounding me. Right now, or before a couple of weeks ago, I felt as if I was floating around everywhere. But right now I think … because of the work with you and because I'm doing these self-reflections, process of reflexivity … I'm getting at a better place in terms of my doctoral interests. And it makes more sense to continue Jackie's work, not because there was a pressure to do so but it was what I wanted to do when I discovered it's what I wanted to do. And I'm back to continuing it, really.

Claudia: If you were to ask me a question, what would you ask me?

Fatima: I probably want to ask if you've also identified some of the concerns that I'm identifying. Whether there're some similarities between my concerns and some questions you might have.

Claudia: Well, my concern was that Jackie Kirk is and was in some ways a larger than life person. You saw that at CIES, she had an amazing reach of people; she was an amazing networker. And she was so good at it. And so as we saw at CIES that conversation: "Well, she was a trailblazer. What about you guys?" So, I'm just aware of the fact that I've only maybe worked with a couple of doctoral students who've really picked up on Jackie's work particularly in relation to peace building with teachers. I'm also aware of the fact that a lot of people in the department now might not have heard of Jackie Kirk. It's only people working very specifically in development and a particular type of development in terms of humanitarian aid like you, who have. I guess I'm not really answering your questions except the idea that it can be very weighty to have somebody who was in the very same position as you are now—10 or 11 or 12 years ago, working on her doctoral research—and who is now this superstar (trailblazer). What does that mean for somebody who's coming along? Is that a burden? And do I contribute to that burden: "Oh, come along, let's do the website, let's do CIES, and let's go to those things." Does that create some sort of burden?

Fatima: I think, in the beginning, I remember something that you said that still stayed with me: "You're going to be a superstar in this field." And that almost

> felt as if there was so much pressure. "Oh no, I'm not a superstar in the field right now. How am I going to be a superstar?" Then when I started moving away from it, I failed. I failed in my quest to become, or to even be, a fraction of what Jackie Kirk is.
>
> *Claudia*: Or whatever this trailblazing is. "No, we're not trailblazers." We're just working away and maybe there's a different kind of trailblazing in there.
>
> *Fatima*: That's true. And I think, honestly speaking, the pressure might have gotten to me. But that's not something I blame you for. It's work that I want to do and in order to do it you just have to take these risks. You have to be out there; you're not really dealing with subject matter. This transcends a lot of different societies and concepts and themes. So … yeah … the pressure was there.

What might we take away from this conversation and how does it contribute to the idea of productive entanglement? First, we think it represents the type of conversation that not only needs to happen in the supervisory process, but also needs to be made visible, and especially when reflexivity itself is central to the work as it is at this early point in Fatima's doctoral study. As we look at it now, we can see that many of the threads that appear in her earlier reflections reappear. Second, dialogue within the supervisor–supervisee relationship contributes to an exploration of researcher identity, particularly for Fatima, who through this reflexive process, attempts to ground herself and resolves to find her own voice (Johnston & Strong, 2008). Identity, within this context, as Starr (2010) observed, "demands a process of infinite interpretation, reinterpretation of experiences, circumstances and conditions emphasising the interconnectedness of past and present, lived and living" (p. 4). Third, the conversation addresses the idea of learning as multidirectional, and the significance of the flow of ideas that are so key in reflexivity and self-study. It is clear, we think, that our own self-doubts and our affirmations of a certain direction for the work are entangled, and that by acknowledging and working with these entanglements there is much to be gained. The section below, "Entanglement 3—Claudia: Jackie and Me", reveals some of the self-doubts that are also characteristic of supervisors, where Claudia offers her own reflections that examine the dialogic process within the supervisory relationship.

Entanglement 3—Claudia: Jackie and Me

Am I doing the right thing? When do I intervene? When should I explicitly point a doctoral student in a certain direction or just let things evolve? What are the responsibilities of supervising or directing a doctoral project? After Fatima and I had the conversation above, I went away with all these questions. They were questions that I had entertained many times before, of course. One of my other doctoral students, not so many weeks earlier, had reminded me of what an influence

my e-mails had on him. In my quick responses, I might accidentally use capital letters, for example, and even though he knew I was probably just being sloppy, he still worried that I might be displeased with his work. I have learned to not fire off e-mails so quickly to him, and to realise that he might be stuck with a miscommunicated e-mail comment made on Friday afternoon and left with it for a whole weekend. But the Jackie and us aspect of working with Fatima added a dimension that I had never quite experienced before. It is curious though that when I think of my own doctoral supervisor and her supervisory practices, the one that stands out most is that all of her doctoral students were obliged to read (at strategic times) the doctoral studies of her former doctoral students who had long since graduated. Sometimes it would even be a point of comment amongst those in my cohort: "Have you been told to read X yet?" I think we might have even worried that if someone else had received this recommendation first, the others of us were lagging. Obviously the situation with Fatima and Jackie, because of the circumstances of the latter's death, the trail-blazing discourse, and the explicit Jackie project (the website, the books, the conference), was somewhat different. Or is it? The doctoral student who has already graduated takes on a somewhat mythical status both to the supervisor and the new doctoral student. This person has gone through the whole process, and the thesis is the shining example. It is hard, if you are at the beginning or middle stages, to ever imagine that your thesis is going to look like that, and that someday your thesis is going to be talked about in this way. As Fatima and I spoke, I realised how much more I can and should do with this awareness. For example, I can be much more explicit in my feedback and comments, acknowledging in a more up front way some of the challenges and decision points that were necessary for a previous student, recognising that the structures now look seamless. But for no thesis is there ever a straightforward recipe and one can never know, until one gets to a full draft, what the best pathway is. More than that is the recognition of the fragility of the space of the doctoral student—that it is never just about the thesis but about everything else: Where is this thesis leading the student in relation to funding, publications, and employment? Perhaps these seem to go far beyond accidentally leaving caps on in an e-mail response to a doctoral student, but now I am seeing them as part of the supervisory package. And although as MacAlpine and McKinnon (2013) and others writing about the supervisory process highlighted, the supervisor is just one person in a line up of actors, I can see my role more clearly.

CONCLUSIONS: THE SO WHAT?

What kind of "so what?" can we apply to this study? For Fatima, this exercise has clearly contributed to affirming her decision to pursue a doctoral degree in which she could study and potentially contribute to how children can be engaged in meaningful and effective processes of dialogue and creative expression on the challenges they face in adverse settings. We are both of reminded of Jackie's observation:

> The self is a starting point for professional and academic development, the place from which to identify what it is I want and need to do, and the place from where I can start to do that better. (Kirk, 2005, p. 240)

Jackie has undoubtedly left an indelible mark in the field of humanitarian aid and education in emergencies that continues to resonate today. Her research has illustrated that creating child-friendly spaces in order to address their psychosocial concerns is vital (Kirk, 2007; Kirk & Cassity, 2007). For a beginning researcher, Jackie's work is not only a source of inspiration, but also a strong starting point from which to move forward from. As Fatima reflected:

> The further I delve into my own ideas, I increasingly find myself asking, what would Jackie do? How can I incorporate the work she conducted 7 years ago into postdisaster contexts that I examine today? As I reflect on the future, I want to carve out for myself as a researcher, Jackie's creative perspectives, and progressive strategies remain prominent and influential.

Can educational biography be applied to other trailblazers or to other key figures in social research? We would argue that cultural biography and dialogue offers a framework for deepening an understanding of ourselves and our professional practices through studying the influence of others on our work. Here, we worked with a trailblazer in humanitarian aid and education in emergencies. In Fatima's case, this is not someone she has ever met, but she is nonetheless entangled with Jackie through her reading, her own cultural work of producing the website, and through academic conversations. What this preliminary self-study work illustrates, is that its outcome is not finite. It is an ongoing process that centres on giving back to Jackie what she has given to the academic community. And ensuring that her legacy of advocating for peace education and "educational reconstruction and transformation" (Kirk, 2004, p. 53) in postdisaster societies continues through researchers who share her vision, and who have been inspired by her work to give forward. For us this is the promise of productive entanglements.

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NOTES

1 On August 13, 2008, Jackie Kirk and three of her IRC colleagues (Mohammad Aimal, Shirley Case, and Nicole Dial) were ambushed and killed by the Taliban in Paktia, Afghanistan. At the time of her death, Jackie was active in the field of education in emergencies, with a particular focus on girls' education in post-conflict situations.

2 The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

3 The United Nations Children's Fund.

4 The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

[5] While there is sometimes a mindset that this work is entirely about the Global South and Global North, increasingly the work of peacekeeping is often a South-South interaction (for example, the South African army carrying out peacekeeping in the DR Congo).
[6] "Girls' participation in policy: Critical reflections on the use of participatory arts-based methodologies to improve girls' experiences of education."
[7] Marni Sommer is Associate Professor, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University.
[8] Catherine Magno is Associate Professor, Columbia Teachers' College.
[9] Sandra Stacki is Associate Professor, Hofstra University.

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6. A TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED SELF-STUDY OF REVERSIBLE MENTORSHIP IN A MODERN LANGUAGE PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs or TAs) in modern language programmes are frequently required to teach language courses at the basic level as part of their contracts with a university. As novice teachers, they are in need of training and support during their first teaching assignments, as Siskin and Davis (2001) pointed out. Departments of modern languages throughout the United States employ different strategies to train their TAs including mandatory workshops or courses in methodology at the beginning or throughout the semester, support circles for TAs led by a more experienced language coordinator, class observations and mentoring, and individualised help from senior faculty. One of the least explored strategies is the notion of reversible mentorship through which both experienced and novice teachers benefit from the mentorship (Leh, 2005).

Nevertheless, the effects of any kind of mentorship can be difficult to document, measure, and evaluate because they appear not only during the specific time frame of the mentorship but also throughout the development of the teaching careers of both mentees and mentors. In addition, many mentorship experiences are generally based on face-to-face interactions during which no records are kept.

This chapter discusses how the authors, the mentor (Esperanza) and the mentee (Cristina), engaged in a collaborative self-study enhanced by technology with the purpose of discovering the effects of mentorship to both of them. Following the theoretical framework, the chapter describes the project and its findings, which resulted in a new method to (1) document mentorship initiatives by means of technological tools, and (2) assess their reciprocal effects by using the collective or collaborative self-study method as described in Samaras and Freese (2009) and Samaras (2011). Lastly, the chapter concludes with the limitations of the study and the implications to other mentors and mentees who can act as critical friends by commenting and supporting each other's work and, as a result, grow as scholars and teachers together.

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 93–109.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Mentoring

Different definitions of mentoring in education have emerged over the years. For the purpose of this study, Anderson and Shannon's definition, taken from an unpublished manuscript by Anderson (1987), seems to be very appropriate because it describes the concept of mentoring for those who want to develop new programmes for novice instructors.

> [Mentoring is] a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and protégé. (Anderson & Shannon, 1988, p. 40)

Nevertheless, mentoring initiatives at university level have not been as widespread as one could expect, except for teaching programmes in graduate schools of education. In the foreign languages field, the need for support for teaching assistants was documented as early as the 1950s (Siskin & Davis, 2001). Siskin and Davis (2001) mentioned a report written by MacAllister (1964) about a survey that was conducted in 1963 in 39 universities offering doctoral studies in modern foreign languages in the United States. Results showed that departments did not generally provide any methodology courses, supervision, or observation visits to TA classes (MacAllister, 1964).

Over time, different teaching assistant training programmes began to emerge in higher education institutions like University of Virginia and Marquette University (Russo, 1982; Szymanski, 1978). Later, Rava (1991), a senior lecturer of French at Washington University, created the first systematic model of mentoring for novice teachers of foreign languages (Siskin & Davis, 2001). The model's main goal was to have professors work alongside senior teaching assistants to prepare them to teach advanced language classes (Rava, 1991).

Key elements of mentoring mentioned by Rava (1991) are also acknowledged by other authors. These elements include motivation (Adams, Morehead, & Sledge, 2008; Anderson & Shannon, 1988, Kahn, 2001), feedback (Adams, et al., 2008; Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Brandl, 2000; Henderson, 2010; Olsher & Kantor, 2012; Silva, Macián, & Mejía-Gómez, 2006), good working relationship (Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Brandl, 2000; Kahn, 2001), and individual reflection (Adams, et al., 2008; Henderson, 2010; Olsher & Kantor, 2012). In addition, it is important to take into consideration the relevance of dedicating time to work with the novice (Brandl, 2000; Kahn, 2001; MacAllister, 1964; Silva, Macián, & Mejía-Gómez, 2006), as well as university support received by instructors (Adams, et al., 2008; Kahn, 2001; Leh, 2005).

A sound mentoring programme that takes all of these aspects into account can benefit not only the mentee but also the mentor, as is experienced with reversible mentoring. Leh (2005) conducted a study with 35 university professors who participated in a programme with graduate students and served as mentors on how to integrate technology into their teaching. This mentoring programme was positive for both the mentees and the mentors because it helped the mentees increase their self-esteem and provided them with additional training experience. For graduate students, it also provided opportunities for new contacts and jobs. Adams, Morehead, and Sledge (2008), Henderson (2010), Kahn (2010), Silva, Macián and Mejía-Gómez (2006) and Szymanski (1978) also agreed that mentors can benefit from a mentor–mentee relationship.

Collaborative Self-Study and Technology

The goal of self-study in education is to help teachers analyse their teaching practices in order to improve them and to enrich their students' education (Samaras, 2011). The instructor needs one or more critical friends who are colleagues who can be trusted to share individual work and take on the role of providing constructive criticism (Samaras, 2011). Critical friendship can be applied to mentorship. For example, Henderson (2010) from San Francisco State University served as a mentor to TAs who worked with her to teach a graduate seminar, and decided to use self-study to examine her development as a teacher educator. The students were her critical friends, and their collaborative work stimulated the intellectual discussion of the seminar components and future teachers' role, aided novices to develop their learning about teaching adults, and helped the professor to improve her mentoring practices in person and by e-mail.

Henderson (2010) and other scholars such as Olsher and Kantor (2012) studied their mentorship; Ritter (2009) and Schuck and Russell (2005) integrated technology in their self-studies but did not perform any in-depth research of the reciprocal benefits of its use to enable individual study. Nonetheless, there are investigations that mention how the advantages of using blogs as an asynchronous tool can benefit both mentors and mentees. Hramiak, Boulton, and Irwin (2009) studied how the use of private blogs as personal diaries was perceived by two groups of post-graduate trainee teachers from Sheffield Hallam University and Nottingham Trent University in the UK. Blogs were mandatory for only the first of the two groups and the researchers concluded that, as a result of the restriction, this group participated more frequently in adding entries. The authors also noticed that the resource enabled the support and feedback provided by the trainees' tutors; it also helped both groups to organise and track their progress and allowed their own reflection about their practice (Hramiak, Boulton, & Irwin, 2009). This last benefit was also mentioned in the MentorBlog Project, which focused on how blogs could improve communication between mentors and protégés separated by geography (Wheeler & Lambert-Heggs,

2009). Allen and Negueruela-Azarola (2010) suggested that more studies be done on how blogs and other technologies provide teaching assistants with opportunities for self-reflection. This is of particular relevance because the literature has also identified several factors that can negatively affect mentorship initiatives including time constraints, incompatible personality traits, lack of programme structure (Adams, et al., 2008, Brandl, 2000; Kahn, 2001), as well as inadequate engagement in technology-enhanced interactions (Wheeler & Lambert-Heggs, 2009).

AIMS OF THE STUDY

Although the literature indicates that the combination of self-study methodology and technology can enhance any mentorship effort, there has been, to date, no study that analysed to what extent a reversible mentorship initiative is more likely to succeed if mentor and mentee approach their relationship as critical friends and use digital communication tools to document and reflect on their mutual growth as professionals.

When Cristina approached Esperanza in the fall of 2011 to discuss possible topics for her Master of Arts thesis, the idea of establishing a mentor–mentee relationship and studying it collaboratively through technology and the application of the self-study methodology seemed a perfect project because both were scheduled to teach the same course, SPAN 210, in the spring of 2012. In addition, there was the possibility of coteaching the same course again during the summer of 2012, which in fact did materialise. Using a blog, Gmail chat, face-to-face meetings, and interviews, our major goal was to improve our teaching of face-to-face and online courses by discussing our challenges and supporting each other's teaching on a regular basis.

In this study,[1] we examined (1) self-study as a methodology in exploring mentorship and training programmes for TAs, (2) self-study as a tool for reciprocal mentorship and professional development of mentees and mentors, and (3) technology for facilitating and promoting collaborative reflection of the mentor–mentee relationship—all in an effort to, ultimately, improve our teaching practices and students' learning.

METHODOLOGY

Context

The study took place at the Department of Modern and Classical Languages (MCL) of George Mason University (GMU), the largest public university in Virginia, USA. GMU consists of 11 colleges and academic units. MCL is housed in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and offers basic and intermediate courses in 14 languages, which can be applied to fulfill the language requirement for most College of Humanities and Social Sciences majors. In addition, MCL offers a Bachelor of Arts in foreign languages with concentrations in Chinese, French, or Spanish, and

a Master's of Arts in foreign languages with concentrations in French, Spanish, or Spanish/Bilingual-Multicultural Education.

MCL typically employs three to six graduate students per year from its master's programme in foreign languages. TAs are required to teach one or two 3–6 credit courses in the basic language programme, which consists of courses at the 100 and 200 levels. TAs follow the standardised programme syllabi and have to meet the same expectations as adjuncts and senior faculty who teach at those levels. The department neither provides TAs with formal instruction in teaching nor requires them to take a course in foreign language instruction methodology. It does not have a formal mentoring programme either. In order to compensate for this shortcoming, the Spanish programme director, a term instructor who was not involved in this research, meets with TAs individually as needed during the semester, observes their classes, and helps them with pedagogical and organisational issues on an individual basis.

Participants

We, the authors of this chapter, served as the participants in the study. At the time of the project, Cristina was a graduate teaching assistant from Puerto Rico, and Esperanza, an experienced associate professor of Spanish from Spain. Both of us had moved to the United States in our 20s—Cristina to obtain a master's degree and Esperanza to work as an assistant professor at GMU. We knew each other from a graduate course that Cristina had previously taken with Esperanza, and from having worked together on the department's graduate academic journal.

Cristina's teaching experience before being contracted as a TA was limited to jobs as a substitute teacher in the area's public schools. During each of her first two semesters as a TA, she was assigned one face-to-face section of SPAN 210, a 3-credit intermediate Spanish course. She was in charge of preparing lesson plans following the standardised programme syllabus provided by MCL, grading assignments, exams, and oral projects, holding office hours, and attending workshops and meetings. Her teaching was observed and evaluated by the department chair and by her students through mandatory course evaluations.

Esperanza, a specialist in e-learning and distance education, had longtime experience teaching Spanish at all levels offered by MCL but had never formally mentored a graduate student in the programme. In addition, in the fall of 2011, she had embarked on developing and teaching two Spanish online courses at the basic and intermediate levels. She had also participated in a university-wide transdisciplinary faculty self-study research group led by Professor Anastasia Samaras, called Scholars of Studying Teaching Collaborative (SOSTC), that focused on the implementation of the self-study methodology in university teaching research (see Samaras et al., 2014). Additionally, she had served as cofacilitator of a second transdisciplinary faculty self-study group with a focus on participants' inquiries related to e-learning.

A third participant, Marina Andrawis, an undergraduate student who had received an undergraduate research scholarship from GMU's Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research (OSCAR) to assist us with this project, helped with some technical aspects of data collection and interview transcription. Unfortunately, she could not fully participate as a third critical friend because of logistical problems.

OUR REVERSIBLE MENTORSHIP: THE DATA

The period of this collaborative self-study extended throughout the spring and summer semesters of 2012. During the first phase, we taught two sections of the same intermediate level Spanish course, SPAN 210, but while Cristina was teaching a face-to-face section, Esperanza was teaching the course completely online. It was the first time that MCL was offering SPAN 210 as an online course. The textbook *Dos mundos* (Two worlds; Terrell, Andrade, Egasse, & Muñoz, 2010) and McGraw-Hill's online activities platform, Centro (www.mhcentro.com/books), were the same for both courses, and assignments and exams were very similar. Both courses were taught in the target language. The face-to-face course met three times a week for 50 minutes, and enrolled 23 students. The online course, with 25 students registered, used the course management platform Blackboard (www.blackboard.com)—with its content modules, discussion forums, blogs, and an integrated collaboration tool—to provide students with feedback and oral interaction. Blackboard was also employed in the face-to-face course but only to upload course content and review materials for the exams.

During this phase of the project, we shared a private blog on the free platform Posterous (www.posterous.com; no longer available, since April 2013), in which we recorded our reflections about our teaching on a weekly basis. We also engaged in online dialogues via the comment tool included in the blog and the Gmail chat tool; e-mail was used to communicate about classes. Additionally, we met every two weeks to discuss our teaching and logistical aspects of Cristina's thesis. All these interactions were conducted in Spanish, the native language of both of us.

During the summer semester of 2012, we cotaught SPAN 210 in its online format, sharing teaching and administrative responsibilities. Twenty-seven students registered for the class, which had a similar format to the spring course except for the length (8 weeks instead of 15), the number of required discussions (nine instead of 14), and compositions (two instead of three). We continued writing in our blog, using e-mail and having meetings to discuss the class and the project. The number of face-to-face meetings was limited to two during this phase because of Esperanza's absence from Virginia during the months of July and August.

In the fall, Professor Lesley Smith from GMU's New Century College accepted our invitation to participate in the project as exit interviewer to help capture our experiences as self-study practitioners researching our reversible mentorship project. Smith, a scholar well versed in the self-study methodology who, like Esperanza had

cofacilitated a transdisciplinary faculty self-study group on e-learning, met separately with mentee and mentor for over an hour to discuss the experience. Cristina prepared a preliminary list of questions for both her and Esperanza's interviews, and Esperanza refined the questions (see Tables 4 and 5 in the Appendix). The interviews, conducted in English, were recorded and later transcribed by Marina.

All blog entries and e-mails written between January and August were collected, labelled, and analysed using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software. Data was first categorised by author, month, and platform of origin (blog vs. e-mail). Then both of us coded separately all blog entries, comments, and e-mails using two sets of categories. The first set referred to the data's content, and included three codes: instructional; organisational; personal. The second described our speech acts, simplified into three categories: statement; question; answer. The exit interviews were coded with the first set of categories, which was expanded by adding a few more terms related to the self-study methodology and the subject of study: achievements; blog; critical friend; disadvantages; e-mail; self-study; reversible. Esperanza's interview was coded by Cristina and vice versa.

We were very prolific in our written communications, which came to a total of 34,564 words. Blog activity hit its maximum in March, although Cristina was more active in February. January, May, and August were months with less activity for both participants. On the contrary, e-mail reached its peak in July and lowest activity in January and February. In terms of the total number of items in each platform, Cristina was more prolific than Esperanza, as shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1. Data distribution by platform

	TA	Professor	Total
Blog entries	30	16	46
Blog comments	11	10	21
E-mails	175	175	350

With respect to content, there were some discrepancies between us regarding how to code some utterances—understood here as a chain of meaningful content—within the items, as shown in Table 6.2. Utterances with an agreed code were analysed separately from those that we did not agree on.

Table 6.2. Differences and similarities in coding

	Same coding	Different coding
Instructional	126	51
Organisational	467	157
Personal	77	16

Topics coded as *instructional* included interaction with students, student responsibility and participation, the importance of speaking students' native language, student learning needs, study skills, teaching methods efficacy, and teaching materials. Most of these topics were more frequent in the blog entries than in the e-mails, particularly at the beginning of the experiment. As the semester passed, these topics began to appear also in the e-mails. During the summer course, e-mail was the preferred method of communication and, consequently, instructional topics were also discussed in this medium.

Topics coded as *organisational* dealt with issues related to time-consuming tasks such as class preparation and organisation. We commented on how long grading took, student grades, course deadlines, placement issues, coursework load, and student services, among others. During the second phase of the project, topics related to student problems with technology were also very common. Furthermore, we discussed matters related to Cristina's master's thesis. Organisational topics were more frequent in e-mails than in the blog, and increased in number throughout the semester.

Topics coded as *personal* included feelings such as frustration, worries, student motivation, lack of enthusiasm, satisfaction, sadness, joy, confidence, self-confidence, and character. We also shared jokes and even personal matters not related to the course. We each wrote about the same amount of words in this category, and occurrences labelled as personal were equally distributed between the blog and e-mail.

Coding was not an easy and straightforward task because the content of many fragments could be interpreted as organisational or instructional. For example, Cristina coded as instructional, all occurrences referring to her wish to modify any aspect of her course because she thought these instances showed her growth and care for pedagogical issues. Esperanza, on the contrary, coded these items as organisational because she interpreted the content as predominantly logistical. The least number of discrepancies in coding between participants was in the category, personal.

In order to assess whether specific topics were more important to one or the other of us, a word frequency analysis was performed for the texts in each of the three categories mentioned above. For instructional occurrences, the most frequent words used by Cristina were *estudiante* [student, 51 occurrences] and *alumno* [pupil, 29]. For Esperanza, the most frequent term was *clase* [class, 13]. For organisational occurrences, *examen* [exam, 79], *estudiantes* [students, 61], *Centro* (56), and *nota* [grade, 46] were the most frequent words written by Cristina. The words *exam, Centro,* and *grade* belong to course logistics and were used mostly in July's e-mails. Esperanza also used extensively, *examen* (12 times) and *nota* (15), but her most frequent words in this category were *tiempo* [time, 29] and *corregir* [to correct, 20]. Regarding the category, personal, the list of most frequent words is smaller because there were fewer occurrences in this category than in the previous ones. Words

used by Cristina included *me preocupa* [it worries me that, 5], *me alegra* [I am glad to, 2], y *contenta* [happy, 2].

In addition to the previous coding, we labelled the corpus according to the writer's speech act, that is, the writer's intentions and the effects on the reader. Three simplified speech acts were used in order to track how our mentor–mentee relationship was unfolding in time: statement, question, and answer. Under *question*, participants included both direct and rhetorical questions. Most question and answer interactions occurred through e-mail, particularly during the last four months of the experiment, with a steady increase as the experiment progressed. Blog comments were frequently used by Esperanza at the beginning of the experiment to provide feedback and answers to Cristina's questions. The word frequency analysis applied to these occurrences identified three most common terms: *nota* (9); *examen* (8); *estudiante* (5), which corresponded to logistical matters related to both face-to-face and online classes. The rhetorical questions, which were mainly used by Esperanza, included words such as *si quieres* [if you want, 13], *puedes* [you can, 12], and *favor* [please, 10].

The exit interviews, a total of 5,984 words (1,682 for Cristina; 4,302 for Esperanza), were also labelled and coded as shown in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3. Topics discussed in the exit interviews by number of occurrences

	TA	Professor
Instructional	6	11
Organisational	1	1
Personal	5	5
Critical friend	4	16
Self-study	3	10
Blog	2	3
E-mail	1	2
Disadvantages	2	5
Achievements	11	11
Reversible	1	4

RESULTS AND IMPACT OF OUR COLLABORATION

We have found that self-study combined with the use of technology is a very powerful methodology for mentorship initiatives between graduate students and experienced professors who want to benefit from establishing a critical friendship. Furthermore, technology-enhanced self-study allows instructors to track and analyse improvements in teaching, as well as in the development of their mentor–mentee relationships.

Data collected in this study demonstrated that self-study not only helps a novice teacher but is also a valuable tool for a mentor to reflect on her teaching practices, thus allowing for a productive reversible mentorship. The most prominent benefit from this experiment is the critical friendship established between mentor and mentee, which has a manifold impact as evidenced in this study's corpus. For instance, the first outcome that came to Cristina's mind during her exit interview was an increase in self-confidence:

> short-term, at first, I will say confidence. Because at first when I started my GTA work, I didn't have a mentor, and I didn't have someone who could help me, support me, give me feedback, and she's my mentor but also she's my critical friend in my self-study … So confidence, I will say at first, confidence. (Cristina, Exit interview, September 2012)

Particularly important was the way this critical friendship influenced both participants' teaching practices, as evidenced in the two excerpts from the exit interviews below:

> About the compositions, for example, the way I changed the method of correcting. I saw the improvement in their [my students'] writing . …She [mentor] told me, okay, first you can correct the student's paper, but you should circle the error … give it to the student without grading, and he will independently correct and review that composition … They [my students] are working now independently and teaching themselves how to do their grammar, … so that helped a lot with that. (Cristina, Exit interview, September 2012)

> I directed two master's theses many years ago and it was more about how I could help them with the language, with picking resources, writing a question and then doing the research and defending the thesis. Now it [this project] has changed the way I see that relationship between TA and professor, but also how much I can learn from a dialogue with somebody who is also struggling to become a teacher or better teacher or different teacher. (Esperanza, Exit interview, September 2012)

In Cristina's view, it also positively affected her teaching evaluation scores for her class in the spring semester:

> Well, for example the evaluations that I had during the first semester, compared to the second semester, are way better because of the feedback that she [professor] has given me. For example, I had some questions about how I could correct some compositions and she gave me ideas on how to improve that, and I will see that in my evaluations that I got better ratings in general. (Cristina, Exit interview, September 2012)

A very important finding of this study is how the relationship between mentee and mentor changed through the experiment thanks to the shift from a supervisor–student relationship to an authentic critical friends relationship, as reflected in these comments made by Esperanza:

> [Cristina] began to jump in, "Oh profesora," very politely at the beginning, "you could do this" and now it's more open like "Okay, don't do that." … she still feels, I guess, that she's the student—but it's another way of getting feedback without really expecting [anything] back. (Esperanza, Exit interview, September 2012)

> I didn't feel like I could tell her [about everything] at the beginning. I didn't want to write in our blog [about] all my struggles with keeping up with deadlines and things… But now it's like, it's the topic every time we get together. (Esperanza, Exit interview, September 2012)

This important change in the nature of the relationship did not happen from one day to the next, and it is not known to what extent it was facilitated by the following three circumstances: we had previously worked together on an edition of the department's graduate academic journal, Cristina had taken a class with Esperanza, and we got along well. Also, we are aware that the fact that we could use our native language to communicate with each other was very beneficial for the development of our relationship. Nonetheless, the shift is well documented in the blog entries and comments, and in the e-mail exchanges. Cristina began slowly to take initiative in proposing changes in the curriculum and advising Esperanza when she deemed it necessary. At first, advice from Cristina was prompted by a request made by Esperanza. These requests were subtle at first, like the one in this blog entry:

> Y precisamente porque este curso online es un poco un experimento, resulta muy importante llevar a cabo una encuesta anónima para ver qué están pensando en realidad mis alumnos sobre él. Ya he hecho un borrador de la encuesta, y si Cristina y Marina me dieran feedback sería genial.[2] (Esperanza, Blog entry, March 2012)

Particularly relevant was how Cristina began to interpret signs such as smiley faces and other emoticons used by Esperanza in her e-mails as an open door for a more relaxed relationship. Little by little, all technology-mediated exchanges between both participants became more informal and began to include jokes and funny comments. Cristina also found it very engaging that Esperanza used a subtle way to ask for her input or to request her to do something. In fact, Esperanza never imposed her opinion but rather suggested ways for Cristina to improve her teaching practice.

Cristina also changed the way she formulated her questions. At first, she did not feel like asking directly, and embedded her questions in long paragraphs in her blog entries, like in the following example:

> De hecho, una de mis alumnas escribió que desea aprender a utilizar acentos. El año pasado algunos estudiantes también me expresaron la misma inquietud. Pero, ¿cuál es la mejor manera de enseñarle el uso de la acentuación a un estudiante de lengua extranjera? Las reglas que conozco son las que aprendí como hablante nativa, pero entiendo que son difíciles de entender para

> un alumno de lengua extranjera. Además, el libro de texto de la clase *Dos mundos* no ofrece una amplia explicación sobre el tema.[3] (Cristina, Blog entry, January 2012)

Furthermore, both of us acknowledged during our exit interviews that this shift was also evident in our face-to-face meetings. During these meetings, we both talked about personal matters not related to the research project per se. As a result, for Cristina it began to feel difficult to use the formal *usted* [you] to address Esperanza and began to address her unconsciously with the informal *tú*, as Cristina explains in the excerpt below. We both agreed that this mentorship project's success is partially because both of us shared similar personalities and were of the same opinion on what education and learning should mean, particularly in terms of student empowerment and decentralisation of the teacher's role in all learning environments.

> Well [Esperanza] has given me the support that I needed; she has given me a lot of feedback that I needed also, and we have improved our, not improved our relationship but strengthened our relationship, because at first I saw her like my supervisor, my professor . In Spanish we use the "you" in a formal and informal way, right? So I have always used the formal way, but sometimes in this last semester, I have changed to the informal. (Cristina, Exit interview, September 2012)

The importance of technology for this project was also recognised by us both. We were able to reflect on our teaching practices from the perspective of the "I" thanks to the blog and, to a lesser extent, to the e-mail exchange. Cristina was more constant in writing about her teaching, and used her blog entries to reflect on her students' feedback and her own performance in the classroom. She also consulted with Esperanza about specific lesson plans and content, as well as student behavior problems within the classroom. For Esperanza, the realisation that Cristina was going to read and comment on her entries helped her to set aside time to reflect on her own teaching. Her online students benefited from this collaborative self-reflection, both in the spring and in the summer, as she introduced changes in her syllabus and her teaching as suggested by Cristina. Esperanza also gained valuable experience in mentoring TAs using a new approach and, as a result, embarked on the planning of future mentoring projects within the department. She also felt supported on a personal level and very proud of her student's achievements and efforts, who, thanks to this mentorship project and related work, had in fact become her colleague. Cristina expressed the same idea with the following words:

> I have respect for her like my mentor and all that, but I see her now more like a colleague, so there's more trust; the relationship is different. (Cristina, Exit interview, September 2012)

CONCLUSION

While looking back at the project, it is evident that some things could have been done differently. The training of the OSCAR undergraduate student in the self-study methodology was not as successful as expected and consequently, she could not act as the third critical friend in this research as originally planned. For that reason, additional data and feedback for this study could not be collected and analysed. For instance, we wish that all, or at least a significant number of face-to-face meetings, had been recorded and used for the study. We also realise that results may have been even more enlightening if the final interview had been conducted in Spanish, the language we both feel more comfortable speaking. Moreover, it would have been favorable for our critical friendship to do a peer observation of each other's teaching, and reflect about our experience. Finally, yet importantly, a preliminary interview with both of us could have also been very beneficial to trace how the mentor–mentee relationship had changed from the beginning, as well as the possible effects of the previous TA–professor relationship.

These limitations notwithstanding, the qualitative and quantitative analysis performed for this study shows how the relationship between us slowly became more personal, friendly, and open. In addition, it is evident that Cristina became more confident about her teaching skills throughout the research period and more proactive when facing teaching challenges. Esperanza's role gradually developed from being the provider of all answers to also being the one who sought advice from Cristina and, therefore, her own teaching practice also underwent a significant transformation. Technology played a significant part in the evolution of us both, and of our respective roles in this mentoring project, because it provided for a safe, democratic, and always accessible environment to share and reflect on our learning experiences and teaching practices. It also offers other self-study practitioners an excellent tool to document and explore how mentor–mentee relationships develop over time. Hopefully, future researchers will take this study's outcomes and suggestions into account and will provide new evidence of how self-study, combined with the sound use of technology, can help foreign- or second-language programme development and improvement when used to establish solid mentorship relations at university level.

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NOTES

[1] This study is based on the unpublished master's thesis by Cristina Hernández Gil de Lamadrid (2012).

[2] And precisely because this online course is a bit like an experiment, it is very important that an anonymous survey is conducted to find out what my students are really thinking about the course. I have already written a draft of the survey, and if Cristina and Marina [undergraduate student who assisted with the project] could provide me with feedback, it would be great.

[3] In fact, one of my students wrote that she wants to learn how to use the accent marks. Last year, some students expressed the same concern. But which is the best way to teach non-native speakers of Spanish how to place accent marks? I know the rules I learned as a native speaker, but I am aware that those rules are not easy to understand for non-native speakers. In addition, our textbook for this course, *Dos mundos*, does not provide a detailed explanation on this topic.

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APPENDIX

Table 6.4. Final interview questions: Teaching assistant

1.	How has the self-study helped and contributed to improving your teaching practice?
2.	What are some of the short-term and some of the long-term changes you have experienced in your practice through your work in this project?
3.	Are you getting any response from seeing these changes from your students?
4.	How are the changes related? Are they related just to your professional development or to your personal development too?
5.	How has your exposure to this methodology, and your practice of it, impacted your students?
6.	What sort of changes have you seen in your student's work?
7.	How has your critical friend contributed to your self-study, to your progress and your understanding, and to the completion of your project, your self-study?
8.	One of the things you mentioned before, was that there was some sort of reciprocity about learning from each other. Can you tell me a little bit about that?
9.	Did you think beforehand, that working with a critical friend would work as well as it seems to have done?
10.	How do you know the collaboration in this project strengthened your relationship with your critical friend?
11.	What are the advantages or disadvantages of having a critical friend as a mentor or as a GTA?
12.	What ideas would you have about modifying this project you have both been involved in?
13.	One of the things that you mentioned before was the e-mail; do you want to tell us a little bit about that?
14.	Is there anything else you want to add?

Table 6.5. Final interview questions: Professor

1.	Can I ask you just a little about how the practice and knowledge of self-study has changed your teaching practice?
2.	Could you give me some idea of what might be some of the short-term changes you've noticed, or you've designed in your practice?
3.	Are there any other longer-term changes that you see emerging in practice?
4.	You have talked about yourself and your graduate student. How has your exposure and your application of this methodology really impacted your students?
5.	Could you give me a sense of the impact and contribution of your critical friend to your study in this emerging knowledge?
6.	Did you know that reversible mentoring was going to be a benefit from this self-study project?
7.	How has this project strengthened your relationship with your critical friend? Has it? How?
8.	What would you think are the advantages and disadvantages of having your GTA as your critical friend or, vice versa, for the GTA having your professor, the supervisor as a critical friend?
9.	Do you think that looking at self-study, being exposed to methodology, and then applying it, has raised your level of engagement with your students, with the process, with your teaching?
10.	If you were going to do this again, how would you modify this project—would you modify it?
11.	One of the phrases that you have used over and again in the interview is "learning with." Has that become important or was that always important? How is that related to the project?

DELIA E. RACINES AND ANASTASIA P. SAMARAS

7. DUALITY IN PRACTICE AND MENTORSHIP OF AN ENGLISH LEARNER INSTRUCTIONAL COACH

INTRODUCTION

This chapter stories the learning in, and discoveries of, an English learner (EL) instructional coach (iCoach) with mentorship from a scholar of self-study—both with a unique and deep commitment to improving their professional practices. The self-study designed by Delia began in a doctoral advanced research methods course taught by Anastasia who served as her critical mentor. The chapter exemplifies how self-study research improved understanding of Delia and Anastasia's individual professional practices within a realm of reciprocity of learning, while ultimately contributing to the knowledge base of their respective practices.

The chapter highlights the work of Delia, an EL iCoach, who shares her self-study research examining how her personal experiences as an EL and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) teacher influenced her professional understanding of her practice as an iCoach. Anastasia's mentorship plays a critical role throughout this process, and highlights the nature of the reciprocity of the teaching and learning in self-study research, for both researcher and mentor, that extended beyond the scope of this study. Anastasia closes the chapter as she reflects on the role that critical mentorship serves in self-study research and the generativity of that work, which transcends beyond the immediate sphere of influence to other professionals.

DELIA'S SELF-STUDY AS AN EL INSTRUCTIONAL COACH

Context

The research for this self-study took place in 2011 in a culturally and linguistically diverse middle school in Northern Virginia, USA, serving Grades 6, 7, and 8, where approximately 35% of students were identified as ELs. Three years before the study was conducted, the school faced sanctions for not meeting the scores required for their adequate yearly progress (AYP); the status of the school was still inadequate during the year the study was conducted (Fairfax County Public Schools [FCPS], 2011).

In this self-study, I examined how my personal experiences as an EL and ESOL teacher influenced my professional experiences and work with teachers as an iCoach. In my role as an on-site teacher educator, I have worked diligently and passionately

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 111–125.

toward the goal of narrowing the EL achievement gap. This self-study is set within the educational reform context of high-stakes student and teacher accountability and the importance of better addressing the needs of all learners, and especially with shifting population changes of ELs in the United States (US).

The demographics of the US's school-age population continue to shift dramatically. Between 1992 and 2002, while the total kindergarten through twelfth grade population grew by 12%, ELs increased by 95% (National Clearinghouse of English Language Acquisition [NCELA], 2003). The percentage of public school students in the US who were ELs was also higher in school year 2011–12 (9.1%) than in 2002–03 (8.7%; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2014). Simultaneous to these changing demographics has been continued pressure from the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act to meet AYP, which has pressured teachers to more effectively close the achievement gap (Villegas & Lucas, 2006). Although NCLB was a huge step forward in federal policy, fostering the inclusion and accountability for ELs, teachers continue to face difficulty fulfilling their roles without much knowledge of the social or educational culture of ELs (Duckworth, Walker Levy, & Levy, 2005). Additionally, while the focus continues to be on the persistent achievement gaps and one-shot professional development (PD) solutions for teachers, little emphasis has been on learning from teachers or from on-site teacher educators, referred to as iCoaches, including EL iCoaches.

To note, as the population of ELs has evolved, so have the acronyms used to classify ELs, along with the programs and services provided to ELs. ESL or EFL, respectively English as a second language or English as a foreign language, refer to intensive instructional programs of techniques, methodology, and special curriculum and services provided to teach ELs (United States Department of Education, 2012). ELs also often speak three or four languages and English is most often not the only second language. Several terms, limited English proficient (LEP), ESL, ELP, and English-language learner (ELL), are often used interchangeably, while the most recent and simplified term used to identify students learning English is ELs (Adams, Robelen, & Shah, 2012).

Aims of the Study

The purpose of this self-study was to examine how my personal experiences as a former EL and then an EL teacher influenced my effectiveness as an iCoach. As an iCoach, it was not only important for me to gain insight from the experiences of the teachers I coached, but also to gain a better understanding of how such insights from personal experiences influence teaching and coaching. The core research question from this self-study evolved from my personal and educational experiences as an EL. I know firsthand what it is like to live in two worlds—I spoke only Spanish at home, and was surrounded by only English in school. I remember what it was like not being able to understand English, and the various reactions from my teachers and peers as I struggled to learn the dominant language. I remember constantly

being told that in order to be successful, I had to learn the English language. As an ESOL teacher and iCoach, I felt a strong sense of responsibility to debunk myths and advocate on behalf of ELs to give them a voice. However, I also felt a strong need to balance my lens as an iCoach with my EL experiences to ensure I was effective at supporting teachers, particularly after being introduced to the staff by the principal because of my expertise in teaching ELs.

Self-Study Methodology

LaBoskey (2004) noted that self-study scholars employ multiple methods and use whatever methods help to best inform the researcher's personal situated inquiry. I collected multiple self-study methods and data sources during a semester-long doctoral level course in advanced research methods in self-study, taught by Anastasia, to help me better understand how my EL experiences influenced my effectiveness as an iCoach. My research goals were to improve my practice and to help close the achievement gap for ELs. The self-study methods I utilised included personal history (Samaras, Hicks, & Berger, 2004), memory-work (Mitchell & Weber, 1999), and arts-based methods including photography (Mitchell, Weber, & Pithouse, 2009) and self-portraits (Hamilton, 2003; Samaras & Freese, 2006). A series of photographs were cast as self-portraits that were useful to my analysis of the duality of my personal and professional identities and where those identities intersected and improved or disrupted my practice.

Personal history was the method primarily used for this self-study to express what I wanted to better understand about myself. Using an alternative arts-based data collection technique, photographs as self-portraits were taken to invoke memory work to uncover how my dual identity was constructed[1] (Samaras, 2011). Using self-portraits in self-study served as a way to artistically inquire into, and more deeply examine, my practice with a reflexive stance (Hamilton, 2003; Kirk, 2009).

Participants

The three participants for this study included: myself, a Hispanic first-year iCoach who was an EL and ESOL teacher for 7 years; a White math teacher with 5 years of teaching experience (who also worked in the school where the study took place); and a former iCoach who was also an EL for 3 years (the only other one in FCPS) and is Asian American, with 15 years of experience as a teacher in both elementary and middle school.

Data Collection

Data were collected on two levels: data about my personal experiences and data about teachers' experiences with ELs, including the experiences of a former EL iCoach (the third participant in this study). Data about my personal experiences were

collected using an arts-based self-study method and specifically using a series of self-portraits entitled Duality. The participant who had been an EL and an iCoach was also asked to look at the self-portraits and share in writing what connections, if any, she had with them (see Figure 7.1).

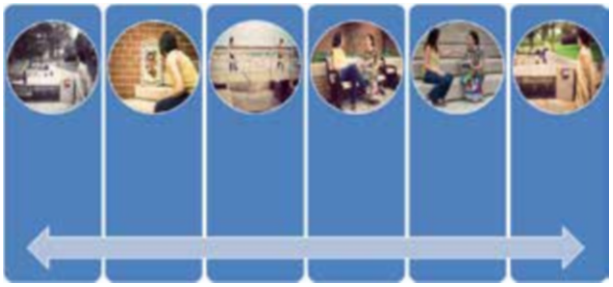

Figure 7.1. Duality self-portraits

Inspired by the work of Brandenburg (2008), the following data sources were utilised to collect data about teachers' experiences and a former EL iCoach's experiences: a freewrite, an ethnographic tool entitled the critical incident questionnaire (CIQ), and a reflection tool entitled the multiple perspectives task (MPT). Each freewrite or drawing, CIQ, and MPT were audio recorded, while descriptive and reflective field notes were taken in the margins of a paper copy for each session.

A freewrite was used in an effort to provide a space where participants could openly share their perspective to ultimately inform me about their experiences of teaching ELs and how they perceived the role of an iCoach. The participants were provided an opportunity to reflect in a structured but open-ended manner. The freewrite specifically asked for a snapshot response regarding their experiences of learning and teaching, specifically with, and, or as an EL. In lieu of writing a freewrite, however, a blank sheet of paper was offered so the participants could either draw, write, or include a combination of writing and drawing in their response. The math teacher chose this option and explained her picture using the MPT. The CIQ's questions captured snapshots about specific professional learning community (PLC) experiences according to their roles as math teacher or iCoach, and both were asked how the role of iCoach was perceived to support EL teachers. To clarify, in this county the term PLC refers to a group of educators (who teach the same content and, often, grade level) who meet regularly to continually share instructional strategies and analyse data to more effectively and collectively improve teaching and learning to improve student learning. During the data collection process, I discovered that Brandenburg's (2009) MPT provided space to encourage participants' deeper insights into the ways in which reflective practice was being experienced. This space was useful while participants responded to each question and created an opportunity

to add or edit their response. The MPT process is similar to a second-tiered interview because the process provided an opportunity for both participants to read over and add to, or clarify, their written responses from the written CIQ.

In addition to this data, I employed cataloguing, a data-gathering technique unique to self-study (Samaras, 2011). I documented and wrote memos in my research journal about each of the aforementioned data sources within a data matrix detailing specific dates and the purpose behind the data gathered (see Figure 7.2 for a sample).

Data Techniques	Purpose	Timeline
9. Freewrite, Critical Incident Questionnaire & MPT conducted with previous iCOACH who was also an EL	To gain the perspective from an iCOACH who was also an EL	10/14/2011
10. Freewrite given to general education Math teacher and chose to draw a picture instead	To gain the perspective from a general education math teacher who has ELs in her classroom about her educational experiences.	10/14/2011
11. Freewrite MPT, Critical Incident Questionnaire & MPT conducted with general education math teacher	To gain an understanding from the general education math teacher about the school's history with an iCOACH, ELs, and PLCs	10/17/2011
12. Listened to audio for CIQ.	To provide an opportunity for	10/20/2011, 10/21/2011

Figure 7.2. Data matrix

Data Analysis

The constant comparative method was used to analyse for codes and initial categories (Glesne, 2011; Wolcott, 2009). The written data matrix helped to organise and identify 42 categories through axial coding, where axial coding included two columns: one column included an abbreviation of the code and the second, the word representing the particular code (Creswell, 2013). The data matrix provided coherence during the process of analysing, and was extremely helpful in creating a more organised sense of all the data collected from participants. Additionally, each of the six self-portraits served as memory work prompts for my research journal entries. The photos elicited my thinking about my professional identity and helped to describe my progression as an EL from childhood to today. They also served as a visual reminder to focus on the research question as I moved into the final stages of data analysis (see Figure 7.3).

During the process of coding each self-portrait's journal entry, I kept thinking after writing each memo in my journal, "What does this say about my research question? How do these experiences influence my effectiveness as an iCoach? How does my self-study matter to others, and to whom?" The overall process of transcribing, analysing, and theming data was extremely informative.

Composing my self-portraits served way beyond a mere data collection tool. Each of the six self-portraits was thought out very carefully to tell a key moment or stage of change of my life story and how I had evolved from EL to EL iCoach and educator. For example, I chose to include the flags from my parents' countries,

Ecuador and Guatemala. I also chose a mirror to show my EL self looking at my American self wearing a piece of my grandmother's clothing (Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3. Self-portrait: EL and American selves

Feedback from Critical Others

However, it was in sharing these self-portraits publicly, beyond only sharing my memos, that allowed me to gain various interpretations and encouraged my deeper reflection and meaning making. Essentially, it is what Brandenburg (2009, p. 196) stated—to "see ourselves as agents for our student teachers: motivating them, informing them, guiding them, and preparing them, it ultimately enriches us"—that stuck with me the most. It was the self-portraits and insights from participants of the study, classmates, a critical friend, and my critical mentor that allowed this to happen. Self-study calls for collaboration and openness, and both critical friends and mentors are considered critical because they help you gain insight about your research in a trusting and supportive manner (Samaras, 2011). Insight also comes from making research public and helps you gain an alternative perspective. One insight, in particular, came from the former EL iCoach who wrote to me, "your experiences are valuable to share with staff, students, and administrators … you have to remain a tenacious advocate."

Ongoing throughout the semester, Anastasia was walking our class through the steps of self-study, ensuring we were documenting our methodology and our insights gained along this unknown territory. She was also simultaneously explaining the process through a large-scale self-study she was conducting with colleagues as a part of her professional practice (Samaras, Guðjónsdóttir, McMurrer, & Dalmau, 2012). This modelled how critical collaborative inquiries support our articulation of purpose and research questions, and our transparency and documentation of the research process through dialogue and critique (Samaras, 2011).

Throughout this entire process, I received feedback from both my critical friend and my critical mentor. Critical collaborative inquiry with my critical friend and my mentor was apparent throughout my work, and utilised throughout this study to help crystallise my thoughts to my larger audience. Consulting with my critical friend and mentor helped me rethink my questions, develop stronger strategies for data collection, and define my understanding of the research focus I selected— which in turn provided confidence and a recommitment to the study and became my strength as a researcher throughout the study (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2010).

While various inquiries, letters, and even haiku served as data sources and informed the self-study, it was the sounding board of Anastasia that validated each step and allowed me the courage to continue. Each critical collaborative inquiry contributed to the validation of my findings as each analysis extended beyond my own view. Anastasia encouraged me to constantly refine my thinking with the guidance of mediative questioning and asking me to articulate an answer to the "so what?" question to ensure my passionate, invested interest also had purposeful meaning for the knowledge base of EL coaches. It was the articulation of my reasoning and doubts to Anastasia, however, that allowed me a space to listen to a different perspective, defamiliarise myself from my overly familiar data, and let go of my own assumptions (Brandenburg, 2009). Assumptions were challenged and ultimately led to new knowledge and allowed me to actually live up to my mantra of assuming positive intentions in working with teachers who work with ELs.

Outcomes

The process of an iterative data analysis allowed me to discover how my multiple selves influenced my effectiveness as an iCoach and efforts to narrow the EL achievement gap. While seeking to understand how my experiences as an EL influenced my effectiveness as an iCoach, I became aware of how my experiences, while my greatest strength, were also my greatest weakness, and were actually lending to my misassumptions of practice. I realised that while others could not invalidate my experiences as an EL, I could also not invalidate the experiences or lack of experiences of others; meanings in life have no meaning apart from our own interpretations of our own and other people's stereotypes.

Anastasia's mentorship pushed me to articulate more crisply how my experiences were actually a strength and a weakness, and to further see how I could use them to coach more effectively. It was then that the words of the participants answered my research question and the seven themes emerged clearly with evidence from the data analysis process: (1) awareness and balance, (2) NCLB challenges, (3) experiences, (4) iCoach role, (5) PLCs and relationships, (6) teacher education, and (7) emotions. Each of these themes played a significant role in not only how my experiences as an EL influenced my role as an iCoach, but also served as recommendations to improve my practice to ultimately contribute in some small, yet very significant,

way to narrow the achievement gap for ELs. The following is my initial attempt to use each of the seven themes to answer the research question in one sentence:

> My *awareness* is raised regarding my own *experiences* as an EL, while also validating the experiences or lack of experiences of teachers and carefully *balancing* my assumptions (based on experiences) in order to build *relationships*, often *emotional* in *PLCs*, and honor all *teachers as educated* individuals to increase my effectiveness as an *iCoach*—for my position exists because of the *challenges NCLB* poses for teachers.

Whereas in traditional research, researchers study someone else's practice, in self-study research, the key is that researchers make themselves vulnerable with "the willingness to review existing frames of reference . as a criterion of quality in self-study" (Loughran & Northfield, 1998, p. 12). Such openness and vulnerability allowed honest critical exchanges to move from learning about the process of self-study to my learning about teaching and coaching; such learning continually moved back and forth throughout my study in a helix fashion. Each critical exchange with my critical mentor encouraged me to become comfortable with the initial discomfort of making my work public—although difficult. As Samaras (2011) stated, "it is in making your work public that allows it to be open to review and critique" (p. 77). It is this transparent process that not only allows for the most learning and accumulation of knowledge, it is also this intense and iterative work that builds validation and ensures the integrity of self-study research (Cole & Knowles, 1998).

Five foci of self-study served as guideposts in conducting my self-study teacher research and included personal situated inquiry, critical collaborative inquiry, improved learning, transparent and systematic research process, and knowledge generation and presentation (Samaras, 2011). The foci were met with fidelity throughout this research and were documented and, ultimately, reviewed by Anastasia. In self-study, researchers are encouraged to push through the research process, and embrace what matters most to them and their students because it is your passion and purpose that will carry you through the challenges you may face (Samaras & Freese, 2006). Ultimately, the purpose of my self-study did make a difference for me because I recognised the change as significant in informing my practice and the work of others.

I am aware now how my EL experiences can help teachers, ultimately, to help ELs achieve. I have more balance and am a better listener. After the completion of this self-study research course, I became a mentor alongside Anastasia, coteaching a self-study research course in an academy course for FCPS teacher leaders. Our professional experience as coteachers is emblematic of the powerful multiplier effect self-study innately offers in improving practice across disciplines.

Implications

Implications of this research inform how a combination of self-study methods, that is bricolage self-study method (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2014), can be used

to improve professional practice and, in this case, the practice of EL instructional coaching and ultimately teaching and student learning. Using multiple self-study methods enabled me to gain knowledge about the learning and experiences of teachers I coached, as well as insights from previous iCoaches. However, this self-study also created a deeper understanding about my practice and how to improve it. Positioning my self in the self-study research allowed me to operate from an insider perspective as a researcher to better understand the impact and conflict of my multiple roles as an EL and ESOL teacher, on my effectiveness as an iCoach (Brandenburg, 2009). The self-study forced me to be comfortable with the discomfort of uncertainty of not being able to predetermine the outcomes of the study, which actually allowed me to examine my practice and my EL experiences in much deeper ways than I thought were possible. Self-study research brings a keen attention to the importance of vulnerability in self-study.

I was constantly challenged with trying to balance all my roles without truly understanding how my experiences impacted my iCoach role. Self-study impacted my understanding about my practice by raising awareness of my misassumptions, but then also by giving myself permission to recognise the authority of my experience (Munby & Russell, 1994). My firsthand knowledge as an EL can help bridge the learning gap for ELs (Villegas & Lucas, 2006). I realised I did not know what it was like to be anyone else but me, and had to look inside to see what others saw outside. I have a better understanding about the ways in which others construct and view the world, which has been the greatest impact from this research (Brandenburg, 2008).

My critical mentor, Anastasia, helped me to reframe my research in that she encouraged me to look beyond what I was looking for—beyond what I wanted to find. In essence, my self-portraits depicted my self throughout each stage as I developed as a self-study rookie researcher through the study, which allowed me to re-examine my research approach. Anastasia reminded me that I had to be willing to be open to discovery, and it was at that point that I could actually look at and value my personal experiences for what they were and use them in a positive manner to improve my practice as an iCoach.

Using self-study as a research methodology, and having my critical mentor's guidance, allowed me to gain deeper knowledge about teachers' experiences which served as evidence for ways to improve my professional practice as an iCoach. Self-study can build teacher efficacy and allows teachers to be agents of their own learning. For me and for other iCoaches, self-study is the bridge that needs to be crossed to go from teacher to iCoach in order to be able to, more authentically, work in our roles as iCoaches—as portrayed in Figure 7.4.

We can work towards understanding and supporting the whole teacher, and help teachers see beyond their limited experiences and ways of knowing. But how is this possible if iCoaches do not actually walk this talk themselves? Traditional PD assumes that teachers and iCoaches come in with certain types of knowledge. Self-study breaks down these walls of assumptions, and acknowledges that what both teachers and iCoaches really need depends on the context of their own experiences

Figure 7.4. Self-study as the bridge to understanding the self

in schools and classrooms (Hayler, 2010; Knight, 2007; Musanti & Pence, 2010; Tudball, 2007). Employing self-study research with other iCoaches can have a multiplier effect across a school district. It also has implications for improving the practices of other coaches and professionals.

Throughout the self-study research process, Anastasia validated my research. Although the name self-study might suggest that research is conducted alone, it requires critical collaborative inquiry. We continue to work together in writings such as this as we work to add other voices, such as those teacher leaders we worked with in the academy course, to join us in our ongoing efforts to improve education for all children, their teachers, and coaches.

ANASTASIA'S ANALYSIS AS MENTOR AND LEARNER

I began teaching the Advanced Research Methods in Self-Study course in 2006. Over the years, I have observed students making sense of what was a relatively new paradigm and my successes and struggles in making it clear and useful to students who came from various disciplines (Samaras et al., 2007). This has been particularly problematic because of the very limited resources for self-study outside the field of teacher education. Mentorship, like critical friendship work, also entails reciprocal learning. And I would argue this especially in self-study research where self-study scholars have to learn how to articulate and frame their personal situated inquiry to themselves, and to others, and also employ critical collaborative inquiry. It is this polyvocality with the "I" and the "we" that most distinguishes self-study from other qualitative methodologies.

Delia taught me a great deal about the freedom necessary for emerging self-study scholars to explore multiple methods in a bricolage fashion. Largely, the "so what?" of her study emerged from this multiple method exploration that afforded her an

opportunity to re-story her understandings of professional practice as a former EL learner, EL teacher, and then EL iCoach. I witnessed the impact of Delia's letting go of her frustrations in her work with resistant teachers working with ELs, and then realising that the change had to begin with her. Her courage and confidence to be vulnerable, to experiment with various self-study methods, and to be transparent about her misassumptions improved not only her professional practice, but with serious implications to the work of other iCoaches.

I had observed Delia's serious commitment to her practice as an EL iCoach in a research project she completed in a course I taught in qualitative methods in educational research, years before the self-study course. I noted there were clear indications of her nascent self-study in her project. I later shared that observation with Delia in a comment on her final self-study research project:

> This was easy for you because you have lived this and have been called to study this for some time since I've known you in the first course I taught you. Passionate, and set within the context of educational reform—beyond the self.

In the Qualitative Methods in Educational Research course, the I of Delia's role was removed into a researcher identity memo as she discussed what her personal experiences brought to the research, as well as how those experiences might bias and invalidate her study. In the Advanced Research Methods in Self-Study course, rather than remove that bias, it was a central for Delia to examine her role and what she wanted to better understand and re-understand about her professional practice using critical collaborative inquiry. In essence, the public and dialogic validity is not a snapshot but a continuous process in self-study research (Samaras, 2011). Whereas in qualitative research I teach participants to collect and interpret how their participants understand a phenomenon or issue, in self-study I open the door for my students to explore that issue first hand. In that regard, they see and explore their research topic in new ways, and in the first person, and are better prepared to ask similar questions of their participants.

In Delia's qualitative research study, she asked teachers of ELs about their viewpoints about teaching ELs. As a former EL and then EL teacher coach, she was disappointed with teachers' lack of knowledge related to ELs. In her self-study, however, she questioned her assumptions in working with teachers who depended on her assistance which in turn allowed her to rediscover where she was from and what that meant to her practice. Her awareness was raised regarding the value of her own experiences as once an EL, which she learned could not be invalidated. However she also discovered that she could not invalidate the experiences or lack of experiences of the teachers she coached. This newly learned knowledge helped her carefully balance assumptions to build relationships and ultimately increased her effectiveness as an iCoach. Assessing her final self-study paper, I wrote Delia:

> You took a leap into this self-study world although the sirens called you away. Your work with your critical friend was exemplar and your differing talents

> pushed you to both grow and be stronger. Yes, you know self-study now Delia and have breathed it fully—in ways it took you and you took it. What fine qualities you have as a human being to seek to better listen and "see" the"other" in your professional and personal life. By doing that, you found yourself and ways to improve your practice. So much of what we learn is difficult to describe, but here you capture what you know better about your research and possibilities for reform.

Delia was drawn towards taking the self-study course, even against the recommendations of her doctoral committee advisor. She felt strongly that self-study aligned with her deep commitment in supporting EL students left behind. Our work together in the self-study course was not a mere exchange as teacher and student, but instead entailed a depth and seriousness of professional development as mentor-coach and learner for each of us. Delia embraced the scholarship of self-study and the methodological component of critical collaborative inquiry in ways that allowed me to witness the role of reciprocity for instructors and their students that I had not fully understood. As Delia noted, we went on to coteach self-study research to a group of teacher leaders in a school district in a year-long professional development course. Delia easily brought her story and learning into that course and into her mentorship of EL teachers.

ANASTASIA'S CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Self-study researchers learned to embrace vulnerability over time as a companion to learning (Loughran & Northfield, 1998) and with an awareness that "vulnerability as a source of authority, in relation to teaching and learning, liberated us to discard old notions" (Samaras et al., 2014, p. 11). Delia, as an emerging self-study scholar, embraced her misunderstandings and was open and courageous to learning from and with her peers and mentor. She experimented with a confidence and vulnerability necessary in self-study (Loughran, 2004) as she emerged herself in a foreign methodology. She jumped in with both feet knowing and trusting me as a mentor—but more importantly, trusting herself. She observed me also experimenting in how to teach self-study to students who were not teachers, and studying that practice in a double helix fashion (Lunenberg & Samaras, 2011).

I see my learning alongside those I mentor because I have always learned the most about my teaching from my students. I am in awe of the level at which Delia continuously pushed the boundaries of not only self-study methods, but what it means to dive deeply into self-study research. Her research reminded me that it was important to offer a book about self-study as transdisciplinary, not limited to teachers but for other practitioners such as instructional coaches, so that others might be encouraged to learn about both self-study methods and the role of critical mentorship from others outside one's discipline.

Delia designed and enacted a diverse set of self-study methods to inform her professional practice. Her study contributes to the literature of bricolage self-study method where researchers see their self-study questions as components of their

intellectual pursuits, and not bound by traditional or singular self-study methods. Her work further highlights how the field of self-study continues to develop and address practical concerns for practitioners, and with advanced and scholarly research. Our former relationship in a course as teacher and student, then as coteachers, and now in the writing of this chapter as coauthors, gives credence to the power and need for polyvocal professional development as learning because each of us is always in development. I am humbled and grateful to have worked with Delia as a point of light radiating my path and my ongoing professional learning as a self-study scholar.

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NOTE

[1] See http://ptaylorimages.zenfolio.com/duality, photography by Pete Taylor.

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ANN MARIE STANLEY AND COLLEEN M. CONWAY

8. CREATING A CULTURE OF INQUIRY IN MUSIC TEACHER EDUCATION

Collaborative Self-Study Approaches in Music

INTRODUCTION

We are two music education professors with a long history of multilayered professional collaborations: first, Colleen as advisor to Ann Marie as a doctoral student, followed by a mentor and new professor relationship, and now as coresearchers, coauthors, and critical friends. Throughout our 10-year relationship—beginning with Ann Marie's entry into the doctoral degree programme in music education at University of Michigan in 2005, a programme of study that Colleen directed—common goals have connected us. We are both primarily interested in improving music teaching practice and to that end, working together within a teaching and research agenda that promotes reflective inquiry, questioning, and deep thinking about established music teacher traditions. We have both worked at our own universities to establish a view of the teacher-self as something that can be studied deeply, meaningfully, and collaboratively across the miles between our universities: Colleen at the University of Michigan and Ann Marie at Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester, New York. We have repeatedly connected through coauthored papers, joint conference presentations, and mutual students and friends to create a community—a culture of inquiry that defines our work.

Creating a shared culture of inquiry in music teacher education has required us to make an important change in the way we think about developing and disseminating new knowledge. Rather than concentrating on our own independent research agendas, carried out mostly alone at our respective institutions, we have begun to prioritise community, collaboration, and conversation with people who help us reflect on the thorny, difficult questions about our music teacher preparation practices.

This shift is not an easy one. The relative isolation of traditional university positions tends to perpetuate and reinforce entrenched practices; when peers who value risk taking and a critical interrogation of traditional teacher preparation methods are scattered among far-flung institutions, undertaking a thorough and reflective examination of one's practices, alone, can seem daunting. Admitting doubt increases one's vulnerability and opens the door to criticism or hard questioning from others.

Researchers investigating communities of P-12 teacher inquiry, including Ann Marie (Stanley, 2012), have pointed out the value of allowing teachers protected

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 127–143.

places to vent uncertainties and formulate questions about teaching. Ann Marie investigated the role of the collaborative teacher study group as professional development for elementary music teachers. She found that teachers who came together regularly over a semester to study teaching practice via video of classroom music instruction, encountered a profoundly important experience. Her three participants in the collaborative teacher study group (CTSG) found the structure to be one that remedied isolation, supported teacher learning, and provided an environment for nonthreatening analysis of personal, situated views of the participants' music teaching. This confirmed other researchers' views of the importance of safe communities of questioning and learning, as in this study about developing a culture of inquiry among veteran teachers in one elementary school:

> Undoubtedly, there is a benefit to conducting inquiry in a professional learning community that supports uncertainty and dialogue. The findings in this study support shifts away from traditions of isolation and certainty.…Teachers need to have safe communities to ask questions, and access to people and focused dialogue in order to pursue those questions. (Snow-Gerono, 2005, p. 253)

If teachers need such safe communities in which to engage in serious inquiry and questioning, it follows that their education professors do as well. However, establishing and deepening such a culture is not an instant undertaking. It requires creating and maintaining relationships, handling conflict in measured ways, and carving out space for meaningful, not superficial, collaboration. Above all, working within a culture of inquiry requires a research methodology that honours reflective, introspective thinking and analysis of teacher education practice—alone and in collaboration with others. For us, in our culture of inquiry, that methodology has been self-study.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore our journey into developing a culture of inquiry within music teacher education including our personal contexts and connections, and how we have worked to establish a collaborative self-study culture within our own universities and in the music education profession at large. Self-study work has required us to think differently about music teacher education research and practice. For both of us, this difference in thinking was encouraged by relationships we have been able to foster between ourselves and other music teacher education researchers. We will examine our challenges and successes in strengthening our profession's orientation toward the benefits of self-study, and point to future work that needs to be done in order to firmly establish self-study within music education as a powerful, legitimate methodology.

CONTEXT AND ORIENTATION TO THE CHAPTER

About Us

Ann Marie. Colleen has been my mentor for nearly 10 years, ever since I began doctoral studies in music education at the University of Michigan where she was

the director of graduate studies and, later, my dissertation advisor. Colleen opened my eyes to the capacity of qualitative research to illuminate difficult issues in music teaching, and empowered me to advance my interest in meaningful collaborative teacher preparation and in-service teacher professional development. One long dissertation, three coauthored studies, three book chapter projects, a published book review, and five national conference paper presentations later, we have become the best of friends and collaborators as I enter my eighth year as a music education faculty member at the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester.

Colleen. The word *self-study* does not appear in my own published work until 2010 (Conway, Eros, Pellegrino, & West). However, all of my scholarly work from 2000 to 2010 focused on pushing the music education profession towards greater acceptance of qualitative research. I published over 20 qualitative studies in that 10-year period in all of the major music education journals. This is important because my output and publishing record matches the growing acceptance of qualitative inquiry, which, in general, paved the way for designs like action research, teacher research, practitioner inquiry, and self-study.

Because I reflect on my personal journey with self-study, I presented at the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) Special Interest Group (SIG) at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) in New Orleans for the first time in 2000. The paper was titled, "Perceptions of Beginning Teachers, Mentors, and Administrators Regarding Preservice Music Teacher Preparation," and was later published in the *Journal of Research in Music Education* (Conway, 2002). The 2000 AERA was only the second AERA event I had ever attended, and the first time I connected with the S-STEP SIG. At the 2000 roundtable, I distinctly remember the discussant for the session saying something like, "Although your study does not fully represent a self-study approach, we accepted it because we felt it represented the sort of reflection on teaching practice that the SIG wishes to encourage." I attended several S-STEP sessions at the conference, and again in Chicago in 2003 and San Diego in 2004 because I was curious to learn more about this methodological approach.

Ann Marie entered the doctoral programme at the University of Michigan in 2005 and we began to consider how self-study, with its accompanying disposition toward reflection and personal improvement of practice, might play an important role in music education research and music teacher preparation. As our multilayered relationship extended to involve close colleagues from both Colleen's doctoral students at Michigan as well as Ann Marie's graduate students at Eastman, we sought to understand more about ourselves vis-à-vis our identity as teacher educators. We became a larger group of close-knit colleagues, each seeking to question, change, and make a difference in the way music teachers are prepared, and practicing teachers learn. Many in this group, with ties to both Colleen and Ann Marie, had a strong bent toward action research, teacher research, and other endeavours that focus on empowering teachers to systematically study their practice—so self-study

methodologies were a natural fit for the sorts of research we were all doing in music teacher preparation and music teaching practice.

Self-Study's Role in Our Lives

Ann Marie. While my group of doctoral study colleagues and I were able to establish ourselves nicely in the land of qualitative research conducted in music teacher education, we found fewer outlets for understanding ourselves as we moved from doctoral student to music teacher educator roles—and still fewer mechanisms or methodologies enabling us to study self-reflective change in our teacher educator methods and philosophies over time. It was difficult to establish a culture of inquiry around our own professorial practice, that is, until Colleen introduced us to the body of self-study literature. Self-study methodology became especially powerful for us because of the following elements of self-study (Samaras & Freese, 2009, p. 5), and how they intersected with our needs—a particular pair of music teacher educators—plus the needs of our other self-study collaborators:

- A focus on professional- and self-improvement:
  This is particularly meaningful for Colleen and Ann Marie as wives, mothers, tenure-track professors, and musicians. We are busy, goal-oriented people seeking to become better academics. We also seek to meaningfully integrate and balance all aspects of personal and professional life; we are trying to learn to work not harder, but smarter, and more ethically and spiritually as well.
- Reflection and inquiry are made public:
  We want to uncover unconscious habits and assumptions that may do harm to ourselves, our university students, and our friends and families; self-study enables us to pull our process of reflection out of the closet and into the open. The saying goes, "sunshine disinfects," and having a systematic way to enlighten and share our own practice—and to help our collaborators do the same—is freeing. Because much of our collaborative research is done in conjunction with others on different places on the scholarly ladder of hierarchy (i.e., doctoral advisor and students, university professor and practitioners, master's advisor and advisee), we have had to traverse delicate interpersonal relationships and learn new ways of communicating.
- Self-study requires collaboration for validation of findings and new understandings:
  Music teachers come from a strong history of isolation; many of us in our schoolteacher days were the only music teachers in our building and had few or no close colleagues with whom to share and plan lessons. Music teaching has an ingrained tradition of autonomy—music educators talk about "their programme" with a great sense of ownership and pride—but this autonomy can breed unhealthy privacy as well. The habit of "doing our own thing" came with us to doctoral studies and extended into our positions as professors. Through self-study, we

have learned to work with each other to examine our research questions, methods, and findings; no more can we just shut the door and make music in solitude.

- Self-study requires openness and vulnerability:
  In a culture where university professors are expected to be vaunted experts and the ultimate authorities of their field, it is a big relief to be able to let down one's guard with self-study collaborators and ask questions, admit uncertainty. University music students often misinterpret the questioning professor to be uninformed or musically weak (an awkward position, especially for untenured junior faculty). Self-study provides an avenue for us to be candid and honest about our teaching journey.
- Self-study leads to a reconceptualised role of the teacher:
  The biggest payoff in our culture of shared inquiry around self-study has been our increased confidence in creating constructivist, democratic college classrooms that enable student choice and personal growth along individual continuums. We have reframed our professor role as music teacher educators away from transmitting information—such as, the "best" way to teach children a song, or the "right" way to introduce a band to the new piece. We have moved toward inducting music students into a creative, flexible music teaching profession where they may do ambitious, reform-oriented teaching that is ultimately musical and satisfying, as opposed to rife with opportunities to teach something wrong, out of sequence, or unmusically.

OUTGROWTH OF SELF-STUDY IN MUSIC TEACHER EDUCATION RESEARCH

In this section, Colleen will trace the history of self-study's emergence in music education from the action and teacher research tradition in music education. She will explain how the growth and interest in this methodology parallels her own experience, as a leader and senior researcher in our profession, with gradually helping to expand music education researchers' outlook on this branch of inquiry.

Colleen

The field of music teacher education is quite young, with the *Journal of Music Teacher Education* beginning in 1990 and the regular meeting of the Society for Music Teacher Education not beginning until 2005. Research on music teacher education of any sort has appeared in the field just within the last 10 to 20 years. With positivistic approaches to research as primary music education research paradigm previous to the early 90s (Conway & West, 2014), it is no wonder that a self-study approach to examining music teacher education is still in its infancy.

In a 2014 chapter on the history of qualitative research in music teacher education (Conway & West), West and I suggested there is an emerging trend towards more qualitative research. However, in the *Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research in*

American Music Education, Matsunobu and Bresler (2014) suggested: "In music education research, case study and ethnography methods are most often employed, while other forms of qualitative research, such as autoethnography (Ellis, 2004), self-study (Conway et al., 2010), portraiture, and performance ethnography (Denzin, 2003) are largely unexplored" (p. 33).

In her chapter on practitioner inquiry in the same handbook, Robbins (2014) suggested: "Although the term 'self-study' is rarely used in music education, it is worth noting that some research in music teacher education is moving in the direction of self-study" (p. 197). She described four projects: her own investigation of general music methods class students' "in flight" decision making (Robbins, 1999, p. 26), a study of a music course for elementary education majors which included a strong autobiographical voice (Mills, 2001), Cooper and Berger's description of themselves as learners through negotiated thought (2004), and a study of a graduate class in which the author describes her pedagogical moves during the course (Barrett, 2007). Many of these projects labelled themselves action research or teacher research studies, but all were inquiries into teacher education practices. Robbins suggested: "Many self-study researchers 'moved into the area of self-study through [their] involvement in action research' (Samaras & Freese, 2009, p. 5) and began doing research rather than simply teaching students to engage in research" (p. 191). We do not consider action research synonymous with self-study but view action research as an historical starting point for researchers in music education to consider studying their own practices.

The following chain of events suggests a certain pay it forward approach; one that introduced the notions of self-study in such a way that participants were encouraged to bring it into their own future scholarship. First, the article, "Action Research in Music Education" (Conway & Borst, 2001), is a frequently cited publication that introduced and described the notion of music teachers studying their own students. I followed a few years later in the same journal with an article titled "Teacher Research in Beginning Instrumental Music" (Conway & Jeffers, 2004), which also described the process of inquiry as the goal of the article. For me, beginning to understand the notion of studying one's own practice by working with P-12 teachers led logically to self-study of my own work.

A colleague asked me to collaborate on a study of her elementary methods class in 2001. She asked me to work with her because her research background until then had been exclusively quantitative and she was curious about how to use qualitative approaches in studying her own students. The study was published in the *Bulletin of the Council of Research in Music Education* (Reynolds & Conway, 2003), and we labelled the design as a "collaborative action research interview design" (p. 2). Had I known then about self-study, we may have more correctly conceptualised our work as a collaborative self-study.

My first paper using the word *self-study* was presented at the S-STEP SIG in San Francisco in 2009 (Conway, Eros, Pelegrino, & West, 2009), and later published in

the *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* (Conway et al., 2010). I was on sabbatical at the time and not in the country so one of my coauthors, Kristen Pellegrino, attended AERA on our behalf. She returned with new insights regarding ways we might further develop our use of self-study in music teacher education. I recently returned to the notion of self-study with a new group of graduate students, and presented for the SIG in San Francisco in 2013 (Conway, Palmer, Edgar, & Hansen, 2013) and later published that work as well (Conway et al., 2014). Coauthors from both those past studies went on to conduct their own self-study work (Edgar, 2014; Pellegrino, Sweet, Kastner, Russell, & Reese, 2014).

SELF-STUDY IN HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION

Some recent work has begun to explore the use of the self-study approach in contexts other than preservice teacher education (Conway & Hodgman, 2009; Conway et al., 2014). Samaras (2013) also used self-study approaches to facilitate reflection on teaching throughout her campus. Within music education there is a growing interest in studying doctoral education programmes (Robinson & Taggart, 2011; Rukowski, Hewitt, Taggart, & Weaver, 2007; Rukowski, Webster, & Gossett, 2012, 2013) and although none of these researchers has yet utilised a self-study approach to that work, the questions these scholars are asking about the education of future music teacher education professors could be well served by a self-study approach.

In the Conway and Hodgman (2009) text, *Teaching Music in Higher Education,* we suggested:

> Scholars in higher education in recent years have begun to examine what they call the 'Scholarship of Teaching' (Shulman, 2008). One of the specific ways to study teaching and improve teaching and learning is through what is called action research, teacher researcher, or practitioner research.…We encourage music professors to learn about action research as a strategy for personal growth, professional development and scholarship. (p. 226)

We have been invited to prepare a second edition of this text and intend to considerably expand the chapter on "Navigating a Career in Higher Education" to introduce self-study practices to reflect on and improve teaching and learning in all types of music classes in higher education.

As stated in the opening of this chapter, self-study has fostered a habit of looking differently at many types of music education practice. This introspection extends to our university teaching as well. As professors of music education, we both strive to be continuous, active learners in all that we do. In turn, we try to set up a culture in our classes that makes it clear that we are all learners—instructor and students alike. This effort at a more democratic classroom has led to many powerful learning opportunities that may not have occurred had we maintained a more traditional

teacher–student power structure with our students. We have both conducted self-studies with students, former students, and colleagues, thus, breaking some traditional power boundaries in the field.

OUR CONTRIBUTIONS: SELF-STUDY INQUIRY IN MUSIC EDUCATION

In this section, we present some of our self-study research contributions that have individually and collectively helped us to begin to establish a culture of inquiry within music teacher education.

Colleen's Contributions

Although I had been interested in self-study work for many years, it was not until a group of like-minded doctoral students were willing to devote their time to collaborative inquiries that I really learned how to use self-study to improve my teacher education practice. Conway, Eros, Pellegrino, and West (2010) sought to understand music teacher and music teacher educator development through the formal and informal interactions between undergraduate and graduate students within an instrumental music education community. Data collected included questionnaires from 34 undergraduate students, journals from the doctoral researchers and me (the faculty member), individual interviews with 12 undergraduate students, a focus group with one of the researchers and a group of six students, and, most importantly, six meetings referred to in the paper as "self-study team focus group meetings" (p. 49).

The findings in this inquiry helped us to understand the nature of undergraduate and graduate student interactions. We learned that although interactions were positive it was sometimes difficult for both parties to navigate them. Undergraduate students valued the stories of recent teaching practice that the graduate students could provide. It seemed that the undergraduate students changed their views of the graduate students as they, the undergraduate students, matured as teachers. We adjusted our interactions with the undergraduates and with one another as we worked through this study. Much of what I learned in this investigation is with me each day as I continue to work to facilitate interactions between undergraduate and graduate students in our programme.

In Conway, Palmer, Edgar, and Hansen, (2014) we examined graduate students' perceived potential as teachers of graduate students. We framed the design within Loughran (2004, 2007), Russell and Loughran (2007), and Samaras (2011). Interactions to support the inquiry included individual interviews between each graduate student and myself, as well as three focus group self-study meetings. Individual self-study journals also were included as a place for reflection and documentation. We discovered that the graduate students' views towards graduate teaching changed with increased experience and that their confidence improved

over time. The most useful activities were those that went beyond a "one shot" presentation to graduate classes. Our conclusions encourage all those working in music teacher education to be intentional about providing experiences for graduate students to learn to teach graduate students. Although we learned a great deal from these collaborations, collaboration is not always easy. I often found it difficult in relation to both these self-studies, to navigate communication with other faculty in my department regarding suggestions for consideration of changes in both undergraduate and graduate programmes. Because other faculty were not involved in the self-studies, there was not a sense of ownership by other stakeholders, nor even interest in the lessons learned.

Ann Marie's Contributions

Lynn Grossman and I—an elementary music teacher and a university professor—conducted a collaborative self-study of our experiences coinstructing an elementary music education methods course (Stanley & Grossman, 2014). The collaborative inquiry involved the two personal, unique self-studies we each undertook to examine our teaching practices, and our purposeful researcher interaction and shared reflection as we cooperatively studied the same course. We taught the same undergraduate students in 2011, 2012, and 2013, and we analysed several overlapping data sets: class e-mails, student and instructor posts to the course management site (BlackBoard), student reflections, assignments, syllabi, and journals.

As professor, my portion of the self-study was to explore elements of the methods course that seemed to yield movement toward a deeper reflective practice by undergraduates. I used a theoretical framework of transmission versus enculturation (Tishman, Jay, & Perkins, 1993) to better understand the purpose and results of various course activities and assignments. I closely read and analysed my course objectives and feedback to and from students on various written assignments and teaching practice sessions for the years 2011 and 2012.

I found that closer attention to lesson planning, explicit modelling of reflective discussion and the behaviours of reflective practitioners, and helping the undergraduates to view themselves as entrants to a journey toward reflective teaching definitely improved the course in terms of students' growing professionalism. In 2011, I was disheartened by my university students' collective view that music teaching was a matter of mastering discrete skills that were transmitted to them by me. In 2012 students' final projects and course evaluations indicated an overall shared view that this course had propelled them into a culture of reflection and a disposition toward individual growth.

Lynn's music teacher self-study was intended to examine how her interactions with the undergraduates differed between students. She investigated how her feedback to them could be categorised in terms of tone and content, and how her mentorship of preservice teachers reflected her own developing teaching

practice and professionalism. She found that categorising her feedback into six types of responses—validating, suggesting, questioning, relating, recounting, and cautioning—helped her be attuned to the words she uses with others.

Lynn reported that self-study helped her become more aware of the purpose, intent, and objectivity of her words as she composes feedback to preservice teachers. Analysing the types of feedback she gave to specific teachers helped her become more mindful of interactions with preservice teachers who are not independently self-reflective or self-motivated, and to be more aware of her choice of words and their implicit category of response. The undergraduates who did not exhibit a high degree of reflection were a valuable component of both our self-studies. These particular students have taught us the most about our own practices, enabling us to highlight aspects of our instruction that were inconsistent and previously obscure.

Self-study allowed me to consider the differences of individual preservice teachers—how their practice is different from my own—and to question how I might promote their reflective thinking. The methods of self-reflection that have proven to be valuable for me will inevitably be a poor fit for others. Because I have become more aware of the impact of reflective thinking on professional practice, I am mindful of opportunities where individual and group reflection may take place. Of particular interest to my future growth is how I can encourage preservice teachers to validate their observations with examples of how they came to discover particular knowledge or opinions (Stanley & Grossman, 2014).

CHALLENGES, TENSIONS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Colleen's Experiences

Qualitative research in music education is still marginalised as compared to quantitative research (Robinson, 2014). Pembrook and Craig (2002) provided rich examples of studies done in general teacher education in which the teachers and the teaching contexts were central components of the research. They discussed the study of teachers' personal–practical knowledge, teachers' professional knowledge landscapes, teachers' knowledge communities, teacher identity, professional development, and the development of teaching practices as areas of important study. They were unable to share any examples from music education literature because, that that time, there were no examples. Early music teacher education researchers often measured teacher behaviours such as the use of eye contact, or teacher-directed instruction versus student interaction, but these positivistic questions did not seem to lead us to a better understanding of teaching and learning for music teachers (Conway, 2003).

However, there now seems to be a growing acceptance of research designs in music education such as case study, ethnography, and phenomenology (Matsunobu & Bresler, 2014). One of the challenges regarding self-study is that

it requires collaboration often leading to coauthored work. Both Ann Marie and I have experienced challenges in the tenure and promotion system with regard to collaboration on projects. In my case, after attaining tenure in 2004, I devoted much of my research to approaches such as action research, teacher research, narrative inquiry, and self-study, which led to a large number of coauthored works, many with students and former students. I continued to publish single-author works but had a comparatively large (compared to other music education professors) number of coauthored works as well as the single-authored ones.

Years later when submitting materials for promotion to full professor, a concern was brought forth at the School of Music level that "many of [Colleen's] projects are coauthored with students or former students. We would like to see more single-author studies." I was able to respond to this concern to highlight that there were more single-author works in my materials than in any other faculty in the department and I was promoted. However, in the process I was asked to restructure my promotion paperwork to highlight the single-author because the original submission listed all publications (single- and coauthored) in the same section. I felt clearly that the message from my colleagues and administrators was that the coauthored publications were considered less scholarly than the others.

We anticipate Ann Marie may face similar challenges as she moves toward associate professor with tenure; her close collaboration with me, her doctoral advisor, to some may indicate her failure to "cut the cord" with graduate school. Additionally, she finds herself explaining self-study to colleagues who have not heard of it. However, building a culture of inquiry within our field can only help others perceive the benefits of collaborative self-studies.

We are trying to make a case that will guide other researchers and professors to understand how a lineage that draws a straight line from doctoral advisor to her students, to their students, is a benefit in terms of shared inquiry and building upon one another's research agendas—while still developing one's own signature research identity. Rather than a group of isolated researchers pondering teacher education research problems alone in our individual offices, we have an ever-growing group of collaborators who can be the critical friends (Berry & Crowe, 2006) who push us to ask the tough questions and do the serious reflection necessary for self-study.

Ann Marie's Experiences

For us the opportunities for mentoring and peer collaboration outweigh the challenges of self-study work. Colleen was my dissertation chair 6 years ago, and although Colleen was not directly involved in the self-study project that I presented in 2014, we have our own professional collaboration by way of very early morning commuter phone calls at least three to five times a month. These calls are our lifeline in some ways; we are able to discuss important matters of university teaching, academic politics, music teacher education, as well as parenting and work–life balancing issues.

A group of Colleen's former Michigan doctoral students and self-study collaborators, including me and about eight others, have a tradition of group text messages via an online text network—one message automatically goes to all. While, to be honest, this group is the most active during Michigan sporting events and other social times, having instant communication with former doctoral colleagues is a powerful reminder that we are not alone in our journeys as junior faculty.

Other coauthors from the self-study projects described here have gone on in their own research agendas to examine their own settings and practices (for example, see Edgar, 2014; Pellegrino et al., 2014). Although these studies were not labelled *self-study,* we believe that they contribute to the notion of a culture of inquiry towards teaching practice that will propel the music education profession forward towards more self-study work.

IMPACT OF SHARED INQUIRY

In this section, two people we have led to self-study research explain their journey in their own words: how they have connected with others in a culture of inquiry around self-study of music education.

Lynn Grossman, Helendale Road Primary School Music Teacher (East Irondequoit, NY, USA) and Ann Marie's Former Master's Advisee and Self-Study Collaborator

Before Ann Marie was my graduate studies advisor at Eastman, I knew her through the context of our university–school fieldwork partnership. When I started my graduate work, I was aware that I was learning about and articulating my own knowledge of practice through my work with Eastman undergraduates, but I did not know any way to measure what I was gaining from the experience, nor did I realise that I could use my reflections about personal practice as the source for my graduate research. When Ann Marie asked me to do a collaborative self-study of our respective practice within her General Music Methods course, I was honoured but also puzzled at how I would begin to use this methodology that I had never heard of before.

While conducting my own self-study research, I had opportunities to talk with a new class of fieldwork students about my work. By sharing with them my own research questions and reflections about teaching, I felt that my connection to the class grew. I was able to convey the level of my investment in our work together, and had evidence to support the notion that by mentoring the undergraduates, I was learning too. I felt that this helped create a community of learning within the classroom, where the input of professor, teacher, and fieldwork student was valued. I hoped that one day, the preservice teachers would consider the opportunity to mentor others and learn by teaching about teaching—or even investigate their teaching practice through self-study.

After completing my graduate work, I attended the 2013 Society for Music Teacher Educators (SMTE) conference and later the AERA 2014 conference with Ann Marie.

It was here that I met, for the first time, a community of music teacher educators who were curious about their own reflective practice while also hoping to help their students be mindful of their own evolving practice. By making connections with other professionals engaging in self-study, I was able to gain some clarity about how my work fit into the larger context of self-study in music education. I felt supported in my inquiries and, for the first time, a part of a larger academic community outside of my small school–university bubble.

Kristen Pellegrino, Assistant Professor of Music Education at University of Texas at San Antonio. Ann Marie's Doctoral Studies Colleague from University of Michigan, and Colleen's Self-Study Collaborator

The notion of self-study is appealing to me for three reasons: I am constantly reflecting on my own practice; I love discussing issues with close friends and colleagues; and I love trying new things as a result of these new thoughts, ideas, and discussions. It seems as if this has always been part of my life because my mother was my public school string teacher and we spent hours upon hours discussing her teaching practices and dilemmas and then, when I began teaching, we also discussed my teaching practices and dilemmas. In addition, I invited her to observe me working with my students and asked her to work with my students so that she could offer feedback. Learning and growing has always outweighed my concern with feeling vulnerable.

As a researcher and music teacher educator, Colleen fostered these inclinations throughout my time in the doctoral programme, as she shared her thought process and dilemmas and encouraged us to share ours with her and our peers. I felt so fortunate to have her as a mentor and collaborator! When we engaged in our self-study research project, I felt grateful to have time to reflect on topics ranging from teaching, to interactions (between us doctoral students and faculty as well as us and undergraduates), to our own identity development, to the identity development of undergraduate music education majors. In this way, we carved out time to reflect and discuss what mattered to us most and this became part of our research! She modelled how we could combine our teaching, research, personal concerns, and professional development and this seemed fantastic to me.

Now, I prefer collaborative work. All of these collaborative projects involve: reflecting on my teaching, identity, research, and interactions with others; discussing issues with coresearchers; and bringing these insights with me into my teaching, understanding of myself, research, and interactions with others. In this way, I feel as if I have three established communities of inquiry (CoI).

The first CoI is continued work with Colleen and members of my doctoral cohort. The second is with a group of five women music teacher educators (Pellegrino, Kastner, Russell, & Reese, 2015) and the third is with multiple music education and music theory professors within my institution (Davis & Pellegrino, 2015; Dill, Pellegrino, & Beavers, 2015; Millican & Pellegrino, 2015; Pellegrino, Dill, &

Beavers, 2015; Pellegrino & Millican, in press). A music theory professor, a music education professor, and I are engaged in a year-long self-study examining what our students think and feel about engaging in improvisation and composition, and how we can better our practices to enhance their experiences. By sharing experiences throughout this year and next, we are connecting around our higher education teaching in meaningful ways, thanks to self-study.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Music teacher education is a comparatively recent field for research, and self-study as a subcategory, newer yet. We are conscious that in our quest to form a culture of inquiry around self-study methodology in music education, we need to attend closely to issues of quality and rigor. As Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) wrote,

> scholarly integrity requires that where methods are borrowed, established research practices be respected. Although the label "self-study" makes evident the centrality of the researcher self in the article and in the methodology, the standards of scholarship of the embraced tradition still must be met. A claim to be studying oneself does not bring with it a lack of rigor. Nevertheless, hybridization of methods and the subjectivity introduced by the acknowledgment of the researcher "self" may sometimes cause difficulty in evaluating quality. (p. 15)

We agree that while this particular group of individual persons' meaningful personal communication, collaboration, and shared history have forwarded the notion of self-study in music teacher education, we have great responsibility in our role as ground breakers. We look forward to continuing to refine our ideas of what constitutes self-study in music teacher education; as future research brings meaningful illumination to various issues in music teacher preparation, it needs also to "move the research conversation forward" (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001, p. 20). This forward progress is necessary and needed in music teacher education scholarship. We do not have all the answers as to how to do self-study. However, we have learned that self-study work must be connected through mutual respect and trust of coinvestigators and all those involved must be prepared to be transparent and forthcoming with their thoughts and views regarding the work.

We look forward to many years of personal fulfilment and growth because of our discovery of our shared affinity for self-study. As Russell (2007) wrote:

> Only by significant effort over several years am I able to fully understand the potential benefits and personal consequences of a change recommended by research, and only through self-study research am I able to achieve that understanding. (p. 182)

These benefits and consequences have great meaning for us. We recognise that our colleagues in the self-study research arena can help us take further steps personally and collectively toward a greater understanding of music teacher education practice—understandings that we ourselves own personally, and understandings we are able to offer our profession. We hope that the strides we have been able to take within the music education profession might also encourage teacher educators in other content areas to think about building a culture of inquiry germane to their particular contexts. Within each discipline, those who take the time to reflect on practice, share with their colleagues, and initiate the next steps to improve the self-study of teaching and learning will no doubt deepen and strengthen the practice of self-study methodology.

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9. LEARNING ABOUT CO-FLEXIVITY IN A TRANSDISCIPLINARY SELF-STUDY RESEARCH SUPERVISION COMMUNITY

In that field of possibility we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom. (bell hooks, 1994, p. 207)

A POETIC PROLOGUE

Moving, Stepping, Not Up or Down

People and lives
Coming together
Care at the centre
Care emerges
Is it worth saying?
Emotional pedagogy
Entangled ideas
"I"s "eyes" converge
Interrogate the unknown
Is it worth saying?
Moving, stepping, not up or down
Beginning, end, and middle
Zizag to a spiral
Having fun
Is it worth saying?
Space of productive tension
Space of uncertainty
Scaffolding, selecting and shaping
Fluidity of ideas

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 145–171.

Is it worth saying?

Multiple perspectives
More meaningful
Rigour and reflection
Rather than solving it

Is it worth saying?

Open up the mystery

CONTEXT

In South Africa, every postgraduate (master's or doctoral) student is usually assigned one academic advisor, known as a supervisor. "The traditional model is the apprenticeship model of individual mentoring. This model is usually supplemented by informal and ad hoc support programmes" (Academy of Science of South Africa [ASSAf], 2010, p. 64). The South African National Development Plan (National Planning Commission, 2012) emphasised the need for a significant increase in the percentage of doctorally qualified staff in the higher education sector, and the need to devote more resources to supporting research capacity development in the higher education sector. Correspondingly, the recent ASSAf (2010) report on doctoral education in South African higher education institutions highlighted the quandary of not enough qualified and experienced research supervisors. Moreover, it was noted in the report that beginner supervisors are often not receiving adequate support to develop their supervisory capacity. The report also emphasises an increasing consciousness that the "traditional apprenticeship model" of one-to-one supervision might not always be the most effective mode for supporting postgraduate research (ASSAf, 2010, p. 64).

We (the authors of this chapter) are a group of 10 postgraduate research supervisors from the Durban University of Technology, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and Walter Sisulu University who contribute to the Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) project in South Africa. TES is a research-intervention project that aims to study and enhance the development of self-study research and supervision capacity within a transdisciplinary,[1] multi-institutional research learning community located across a range of university contexts in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces of South Africa. The TES project began in 2011 and was, in part, a response to the critical need to enhance research supervision capacity building in the higher education sector in South Africa, as highlighted in the ASSAf report (2010).

The student participants who we supervise in the TES project are university educators registered for master's and doctoral degrees and all are using self-study methodologies to research their own educational practice. These "staff-students" teach in diverse academic and professional disciplines, including communication, clothing, business studies, education, drama, English education, jewellery design, and mathematics education. A variety of academic and professional disciplines is also represented within our group of self-study research supervisors: drama education (Lorraine); educational leadership and management (Inbanathan);

educational psychology (Nithi); English language studies (Theresa); English and media education (Jean); gender studies (Thenjiwe); mathematics education (Linda); rural education (Relebohile); teacher development studies (Daisy and Kathleen).

Under the auspices of the TES project, we have, throughout our 6-year relationship, been working together in a collaborative self-study supervision community. We have been driven by the imperative to have critically constructive conversations about our own supervisory practices and selves, with the aim of providing enhanced support for our students' individual self-study research projects. Flowing out of regular research support meetings at the individual institutions, quarterly supervisors' meetings, and other TES project activities, we have given joint conference presentations (e.g., Pithouse-Morgan, Rawlinson, Pillay, Chisanga, & Timm, 2012; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2014d) and co-published papers (e.g., Harrison, Pithouse-Morgan, Conolly, & Meyiwa, 2012; Van Laren et al., 2014).

CO-FLEXIVITY

One of the core principles or guideposts for self-study research is its insistence on collaboration with others during the research process (Bodone, Gudjónsdóttir, & Dalmau, 2004; Samaras & Freese, 2009). Thus, self-study requires sustained attention to relationships between self and "others" in research. Others can include published work that has influenced the researcher's thinking, coresearchers, research participants, and critical friends—peers who work with the researcher to offer alternative perspectives and feedback (e.g., Samaras & Sell, 2013; Schuck, & Russell, 2005). Staff-student and supervisor participants in the TES research learning community serve as critical friends for each other's research. Thus, in TES, there are three layers of critical friends working together—with ongoing learning conversations that move across these layers: supervisors with supervisors; staff-student with staff-students; supervisors with staff-students. In this chapter, we are focusing on our learning conversations as supervisors with supervisors.

From the beginning of the TES project in 2011, we (the TES supervisors) have been meeting regularly to discuss our supervisory experiences and practices. Early on in these discussions, we identified a need to "walk our talk" by studying our selves as self-study supervisors (Lunenberg & Samaras, 2011). In an earlier publication, we collectively explored our understandings and experiences as self-study supervisors using the visual arts-based research practice of metaphor drawings (Van Laren et al., 2014). The metaphor drawings we prepared served as visual data for our collective inquiry into how we thought self-study supervision ought to occur. In this chapter, we are seeking to be increasingly reflexive in our quest to "become more mindful of how our selves, positionings, understandings, and beliefs as researchers [and research supervisors] interact with research processes and influence the educational representations and explanations we [and our students] produce" (Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell, & Pillay, 2014a, p. 1). Significantly, we recognise our quest for enhanced reflexivity as a relational process. As Simon (2012) highlighted:

> While reflexivity has become part of good practice in qualitative research, it often appears to mean 'self-reflection' or aims to offer the reader some transparency about researcher bias or their relationship with the research focus.…Relational reflexivity…extends the idea of reflexivity beyond that of individual experience and into a relational context. (para. 36)

In our view, therefore, research reflexivity requires us to confront and make public our inquiry into our selves as researchers (and research supervisors) and how those selves interact with other selves within particular research contexts. For us, this involves a recognition of the value of engaging with a plurality of views, perspectives, and responses (Vickers, 2010)—thereby allowing us to find our voices in relation to the voices of others. Relational research reflexivity requires not only self-awareness, but also self-exposure, which in turn requires a fair measure of emotional self-knowledge and self-care (Rager, 2005). In our experience, it is less frightening to reveal and reexamine our relational selves in the presence of colleagues who we know well and trust. Increasingly, we have also become aware of how being reflexive together through thinking deeply about and questioning our professional practice and selves in dialogue with significant others—what we have come to call, co-flexivity—can deepen and extend our learning, being, and becoming as self-study supervisors and researchers (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2014d).

In this chapter, we make visible our learning about co-flexivity (collective reflexivity) through a shared research process of composing poems and reflexive dialogues. In representing our polyvocal professional learning, we aim to communicate our diverse voices and to demonstrate how these voices came together to make meaning of the complexities, challenges, and value of co-flexivity. We conclude by sharing our thoughts on possible implications that our thinking about co-flexivity might have for others.

METHODS

As self-study researchers, we can use any appropriate method to help us respond to our research puzzles (Loughran, 2004). Furthermore, in self-study we are required to use multiple methods to gain diverse perspectives on the same phenomenon (LaBoskey, 2004). In our work as self-study researchers and supervisors, we have found that less conventional visual and literary arts-based self-study research practices—such as poetry writing, working with artefacts, and drawing—can be of particular value in facilitating the enhanced subjectivity and reflexivity that we are seeking (e.g., Chisanga, Rawlinson, Madi, & Sotshangane, 2014; Pithouse-Morgan & Van Laren, 2012; Van Laren et al., 2014). As Weber (2014) explained, "arts-based approaches . help make self-study *iterative*. This type of research tends to be contagious and takes on meanings that go beyond its original parameters" (p. 16).

Common questions that we encounter from peer reviewers or conference audiences in terms of our unconventional research approach selections are: "What

about objectivity?" and "What about generalisability?" A positive outcome of such criticisms is that we as individual researchers and as a collective are encouraged to be transparent and reflexive about, and to extend our theorising to, our selections for research initiatives. In this regard, we have found it helpful to draw on Eisner's explanation of how alternative or arts-based research practices can allow for "productive ambiguity," which he described in this way:

> the material presented is more evocative than denotative, and in its evocation, it generates insight and invites attention to complexity. Unlike the traditional ideal of conventional research, some alternative forms…result in less closure and more plausible interpretations of the meaning of the situation.…the open texture of the form increases the probability that multiple perspectives will emerge. Multiple perspectives make our engagement with the phenomena more complex. (1997, p. 8)

In our quest for more complex engagement and multiple perspectives, we have used two alternative research practices to enact our inquiry into co-flexivity: collective poetic inquiry (Chisanga et al., 2014; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2014c) and reflexive dialogue (Van Laren et al., 2014; Pithouse-Morgan & Van Laren, 2012). In taking a dialogic approach, we build on the work of self-study researchers who argued for the use of dialogue as a method to critically analyse their self-study process and content (e.g., East, Fitzgerald, & Heston, 2009; Guilfoyle, Hamilton, Pinnegar, & Placier, 2004). East et al. further contended that reflexive dialogue as an analysis tool is useful "to focus on [our] insights-in-the moment as they arise spontaneously in the actual dialogue process" (2009, p. 58). Wells in his book, *Dialogic Inquiry*, went on to state that:

> by contributing to the joint meaning making with and for others, one also makes meaning for oneself and, in the process, extends one's own understanding. At the same time, the 'utterance' viewed from the perspective of what is said, is a knowledge artefact that potentially contributes to the collaborative knowledge building of all those who are co-participants in the activity. (1999, p. 108)

Drawing from Wells, collective poetic inquiry is our collective utterance and a knowledge artefact that is crucial for our knowledge building as coresearchers. The poems and dialogues that follow demonstrate and articulate our thinking about the concept of co-flexivity and about what we are learning through working together as self-study research supervisors. Through our poems and dialogues, we aim to respond to the following research questions:

- How do we understand our co-flexive experiences and enactments?
- What difference does co-flexivity make to us as transdisciplinary self-study research supervisors?
- What are we learning about the complexities, challenges, and value of co-flexivity?

CO-FLEXIVITY: A POETIC REENACTMENT

A Collective Poetic Inquiry Process

Working together in a poetic inquiry process conducted during four one-day workshops and continuing e-mail correspondence over a period of 10 months, we collaboratively composed a series of poems to articulate and gain further understanding of the nature and value of our co-flexive experience as self-study research supervisors within the TES group. These TES supervisor workshops were organised by Kathleen in her capacity as the current lead investigator on the TES project, but the focus and poetic inquiry method of each workshop emerged quite spontaneously through our interaction. Each workshop built on and extended the collective poetic procedures and products of the previous workshop. For the first workshop, we met at a conference venue and for the other three workshops, we met at one of our universities. Our intended focus for the first workshop was to delve further into our understandings and experiences of critical friendship in self-study. However, it was during our discussions at this workshop that Linda coined the term, co-flexivity, which started us off on a collective poetic exploration of this concept.

Not all of us were able to be present at all four workshops and so our e-mail correspondence, along with audio recordings of our workshop conversations that we shared online via Dropbox (https://www.dropbox.com), and the poems that we composed in each workshop, allowed those who were not physically present to "relive" the collective workshop experience.

The collective process of poetry making assisted us in developing the concept of co-flexivity that we have identified as being characteristic of, and central to, our collaborative practice as supervisors of transdisciplinary self-study research. The poems show the meanings we are making of our ongoing collective inquiry, and offer entry points for thinking about the concept and praxis of co-flexivity.

Composing Our Initial Found Poem: "Co-Flexivity: What Difference Does This Make?"

The first poem that we composed together, "Co-flexivity: What difference does this make?" emerged as a response to our desire to begin to make some shared sense of the idea of co-flexivity that we had begun to talk about together. Our collective process of poetry making emerged as we went along and we decided together on each new step to take in creating the poems. We began composing our first poem by each writing a tweet (a social media message of not more than 140 characters) in response to a question: "Co-flexivity: What difference does this make?" (See Figure 9.1). As a self-study data generation technique, the written tweet format helped us each to express our initial thoughts about co-flexivity in a concise, yet conversational way (see Chisanga et al., 2014).

Figure 9.1. An example of a written tweet

We then gathered the written tweets and typed them out together in a Word document that was projected on a screen via a data projector. We decided to enter the collected tweets into Wordle (http://www.wordle.net/). Wordle is an online tool for generating "word clouds" from text. The clouds make more prominent those words that recur most often in the source text. The word cloud that we generated (see Figure 9.2) helped us to gain a sense of the ideas that were most common across our tweets. It also helped us to look at our tweets as a whole "tweet cloud" rather than as individual tweets.

Figure 9.2. Our Wordle tweet cloud

The word cloud helped us then, jointly, to identify and highlight words and phrases from our tweets that we considered most significant in response to our question: "Co-flexivity: What difference does this make?" (see Figure 9.3).

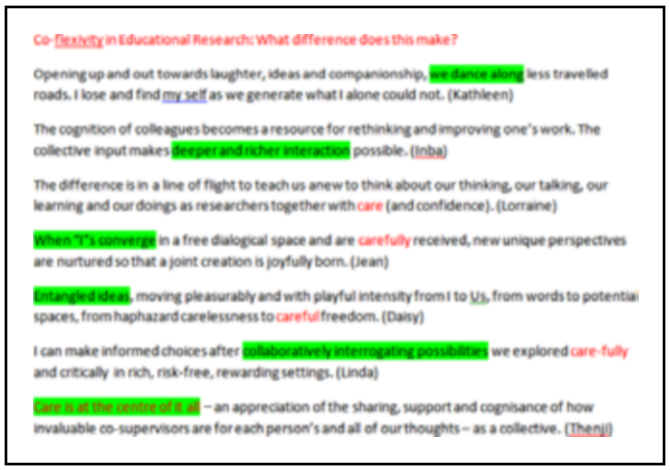


Figure 9.3. Our selection of significant words and phrases from the tweets

We then used the selected words and phrases from the tweets to cocreate a found poem. Found poems are used in research to represent extracts from field texts or data sources in poetic form (Butler-Kisber, 2002). These extracts can be combined in any way to form a poem, but no new words can be added. As Butler-Kisber (2002, p. 233) explained, "found poetry…brings the researcher closer to the data in different and sometimes unusual ways that can yield new and important insights." Recomposing our individual ideas about co-flexivity into a coauthored found poem, allowed us to see a process of mutual thinking unfolding. Both the process and product of the poem making offered insights into our understandings and experiences of co-flexivity:

Co-flexivity: What difference does this make?

Care is at the centre of it all
When "I"s converge
We dance along
Care is at the centre of it all
Entangled ideas
Deeper and richer interaction
Collaboratively interrogating possibilities
Care is at the centre of it all

A Collective Exploration of Our Initial Found Poem

In a subsequent workshop some months later, we decided that it would be helpful in moving our thinking forward if we were to begin by revisiting the poem we had cocomposed. Jean, a lecturer in the field of English and media education, introduced us to three prompts that she uses with her students to elicit their responses to poetry:

- *What* does the poem say?
- *How* does it say it?
- Is it *worth* saying?

Jean gave us some examples of what we might look for when considering each of the prompts. For instance, for the first prompt, she advised us to think about the title and key message of the poem. We then each wrote down individual notes in response to the prompts. Next, we shared our responses to each prompt in turn and typed our responses onto a Word document that was projected via a data projector (see Figure 9.4).

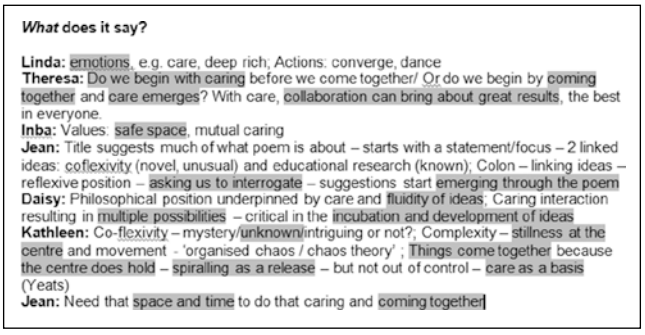
Poetic Analysis:
Co-flexivity in Educational Research: What difference does this make?

***What* does it say?**
Linda: emotions, e.g. care, deep rich; Actions: converge, dance
Theresa: Do we begin with caring before we come together/Or do we begin by coming together and care emerges? With care, collaboration can bring about great results, the best in everyone.
Inba: Values: safe space, mutual caring
Jean: Title suggests much of what poem is about – starts with a statement/focus – 2 linked ideas: coflexivity (novel, unusual) and educational research (known)
Colon – linking ideas – reflexive position – asking us to interrogate – suggestions start emerging through the poem
Daisy: Philosophical position underpinned by care and fluidity of ideas
Caring interaction resulting in multiple possibilities – critical in the incubation and development of ideas
Kathleen: Co-flexivity – mystery/unknown/intriguing or not? Complexity – stillness at the centre and movement - 'organised chaos / chaos theory' Things come together because the centre does hold – spiralling as a release – but not out of control – care as a basis (Yeats)
Jean: Need that space and time to do that caring and coming together

***How* does it say it?**
Linda: Soft sounds: care, centre; step-by-step structure/process – like a stairway. Maybe "care" line should be centred?
Theresa: To what end? Repetition of "care...." Use of "converge" – arriving together at the same point; "dance" – having fun, joy; Acknowledging richness of different perspectives "entangles ideas". Poem sounds like a song. Looks like a dance.
Inba: repetition of words; Shape – staircase – through sharing of ideas – climbing to reach a higher level of thinking – reminded of Vygotsky's scaffolding / ZPD – the group provides the scaffolding. When "I"s "eyes" converge
Jean: Repetition – beginning, end and middle - like a chorus – very strong point; Words that suggest action: converge, entanglement, interaction, collaboration – all about collective and coming together in different ways; Emerging from this converging - the ideas and possibilities and joy
Daisy: Use of words like: converge, dance, entangled – multiple; Zigzag / diagonal - metaphor of dance – stepping (not up or down) – shifting - not hierarchical – spiral – multiple shifts in different directions, not a linear shift – engagement and multiple shifts that have to made together. Moving from a cycle of ideas to a spiral of ideas – hermeneutic cycle to hermeneutic spiral
Kathleen: stillness – movement – productive tension; Care – as the anchor, root; 4 Cs – co-flexivity, care, centre, collaboratively (soft sound)
Jean: No punctuation – can stop and linger wherever you want – that allows for the stillness – very unstructured – yet it's got a structure

Figure 9.4. Some of our responses to Jean's prompts

We wondered about how best to communicate our collective exploration of our found poem and decided to use the words and phrases we had written to create a series of three additional found poems—one per prompt. Again, we collaboratively identified and highlighted those words and phrases that we found most significant in response to each prompt (see Figure 9.5).


***What* does it say?**

Linda: emotions, e.g. care, deep rich; Actions: converge, dance
Theresa: Do we begin with caring before we come together/ Or do we begin by coming together and care emerges? With care, collaboration can bring about great results, the best in everyone.
Inba: Values: safe space, mutual caring
Jean: Title suggests much of what poem is about – starts with a statement/focus – 2 linked ideas: coflexivity (novel, unusual) and educational research (known); Colon – linking ideas – reflexive position – asking us to interrogate – suggestions start emerging through the poem
Daisy: Philosophical position underpinned by care and fluidity of ideas; Caring interaction resulting in multiple possibilities – critical in the incubation and development of ideas
Kathleen: Co-flexivity – mystery/unknown/intriguing or not?; Complexity – stillness at the centre and movement - 'organised chaos / chaos theory' ; Things come together because the centre does hold – spiralling as a release – but not out of control – care as a basis (Yeats)
Jean: Need that space and time to do that caring and coming together

Figure 9.5. Our selection of significant words and phrases from our responses to the prompt: What does it say?

We then used the highlighted words and phrases to compose a found poem in response to each prompt. These poems are presented below. The first poem, "Co-flexivity", responds to "*What* does it say?":

Co-flexivity

Coming together
safe space and time
the centre does hold

Coming together
to interrogate
the unknown

Do we begin with caring?
Care emerges
as a basis
the centre does hold

Collaboration
can bring
emotions
incubation

fluidity of ideas
multiple possibilities

Stillness at the centre
spiralling as a release

Things come together

The centre does hold

The next poem, "When 'I's 'eyes' converge", responds to "*How* does it say it?":

When 'I's 'eyes' converge

Soft sounds
like a chorus
like a song

Zigzag
to a spiral
like a dance

Having fun

Moving
stepping
not up or down

Scaffolding
climbing
beginning, end and middle

Stillness—movement
productive

The third poem, "Open up the mystery", responds to "Is it *worth* saying?":

Open up the mystery

This time
research is lived
more meaningful
interactive

Not hard and fast
not "one size fits all"

Context—linked
people and lives
what this country needs
indigenous knowledge
our *Ubuntu*[2]

Possible meanings
missing from educational research

Open up the mystery
rather than solving it

Critical for openness
critical for multiple possibilities

Own opinions
ideas of others
an inclusive space

Offers a safe space
an invitational space
to just wander around in

Is it *worth* saying?
Yes!

We concluded the workshop by sending an e-mail to the four members of our group—Relebohile, Lorraine, Nithi, and Thenjiwe—who had not been able to attend, asking them to read and respond to the four poems that we had now cocomposed.

These four group members then e-mailed their responses. Three wrote reflections on the poems and one member, Lorraine, composed this poem as her response:

My response

Light and effortless
It seems to be
Yet we
Know otherwise

Like all we strive, work, yearn
This does not come lightly
Not without
Doubt and despair
Seeking and finding,
Selecting and shaping
Rigour and reflection
Like all we strive, work, learn

Light and effortless
It seems to be
Made so
By co…
flexivity

Developing a Summative Found Poem

At the next workshop, we chose to try to gain an overview of our evolving collective meaning making of co-flexivity by developing a summative found poem composed of extracts from our existing four poems and the responses e-mailed by Relebohile, Lorraine, Nithi, and Thenjiwe. Again, we followed a process of projecting our field texts (the poems and e-mailed responses) in a Word document and then highlighting noteworthy words and phrases. The result is the poem that we offer as the prologue to this chapter, "Moving, stepping, not up or down".

CO-FLEXIVITY—A DIALOGIC RE-ENACTMENT

Through face-to-face and e-mail interactions in which we shared our responses to our poems and our poetic inquiry process, we have been able to deepen and extend our understandings of the characteristics and possible implications of co-flexivity in our work together as self-study research supervisors, as well as what relevance this might have for others. The reflexive dialogues that follow are composed of excerpts from transcripts of our audio-recorded conversations as well as our e-mail correspondence, in which we have been working through our thinking about the concept and praxis of co-flexivity.

Kathleen began the process of developing the dialogues by listening again to the audio recordings of the workshops and transcribing sections of our conversations that seemed to offer insights into our evolving co-thinking about co-flexivity. She added in some relevant excerpts from our e-mail correspondence and also did a preliminary round of editing to facilitate flow and coherence. Linda then read what Kathleen had produced and clustered it into initial thematic dialogues. Linda began the process of writing interpretive portrayals (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of each dialogue, drawing in some earlier interpretive writing that Nithi and Daisy had produced. Next, Kathleen edited the clustered sections to make them more concise and gave each section a heading to convey its central message. She then circulated these first draft dialogues via e-mail to the group and asked each person in turn to use the tracked changes function in Word to add, delete, and rearrange in order to produce a series of dialogues and interpretive portrayals that would best represent our collective, evolving, sense making of co-flexivity. In other words, as a group of supervisors and self-study researchers, we were participating and dialoguing in praxis collectively, and attempting to account for and make public how we experienced praxis, akin to Roth and Tobin's (2004) notion of "co-generative dialoguing" (p. 2).

Each dialogue is followed by our shared interpretive portrayal of what we are understanding and learning about co-flexivity's complexity, and its value to us as self-study research supervisors. Through these interpretive portrayals, we respond to our guiding research questions:

- How do we understand our co-flexive experiences and enactments?
- What difference does co-flexivity make to us as transdisciplinary self-study research supervisors?
- What are we learning about the complexities, challenges, and value of co-flexivity?

Dialogue One: Authoring Our Own Research Scripts

Thenjiwe: James Scott (1990) talked of domination and the arts of resistance: hidden transcripts. When people are dominated, they can get pushed to be very generative. In a context where there is domination, like in academia where there is so much positivisim, I regard the kind of work that we're doing as something of that nature where, within the framework and prescripts of a dominating system, the marginal gets pushed to come up with scripts that transgress…and more importantly generate knowledge.

Theresa: Like protest literature?

Thenjiwe: I am just reminded of that in terms of how, with our students and us as individuals, the kind of work that we do and are pushed to produce, is an exemplar of what Scott (1990) defined as a transcript that is birthed because of the dominating framework within which the scribe finds herself.

Linda: So, if we get pushed into a corner, we've got to find creative ways of getting out?

Daisy: Authoring our own scripts.

Kathleen: I know for me, as a supervisor and researcher, what happens in our group makes me a lot more confident in being creative and thinking outside the usual. When you're able to discuss it with a group of like-minded people, then you can see that there is some merit in this idea that might be considered completely "off the wall" by other people.

Thenjiwe: But most important is how one becomes creative about it. How you react and how it becomes useful. How you work with that is actually a kind of performance, a kind of an art.

Daisy: So, is this also a form of our identity, how we want to be identified? This performance of being alternate? Do we want to, as a group, perform

ourselves as particular kinds of supervisors and researchers? I'm thinking of performance and Butler's (2004) notion of performative.

As academics, we have emerged from a common history of exposure to traditional research paradigms (which usually emphasise positivism) and epistemologies. In the TES project, we have been questioning and interrogating our supervision and research practices and have placed under scrutiny, grand narratives about the nature of knowledge, truth, and social reality. As a grouping of self-study researchers and supervisors, we have chosen to engage in collective inquiry to learn about and develop greater awareness and consciousness for new possibilities for research practices. We draw support from Fox (2003) who described this kind of collaborative inquiry as "ethically and politically engaged research practice" (p. 81).

In addition, through co-flexivity, we collaboratively extend our research initiatives using creative approaches. In our work, we can be performers or even the participants in the audience as we explore generative research strategies, bearing in mind our understanding that "generativity connotes creativity and a calling to contribute to the well-being of others" (Pithouse-Morgan & Van Laren, 2012, p. 417). The co-flexive actions that we select also often result in making use of some form of arts-based product, such as poetry or drawing. These products, in turn allow for further co-flexivity whilst we interrogate our involvement in self-study supervision and research.

Dialogue Two: Providing a Critical Space for Border Crossing

Kathleen: One of my doctoral students has been writing something that's like a memoir, but it's got methodology and literature and theory woven into it. Initially, she was worried about whether she was working on the methodology chapter or something else. I said, "Well, just do it and then we'll see … "

Thenjiwe: [Laughing] Our students get very irritated when we say, "Could you just write?" They want to name the chapter.

Kathleen: Yes, and it was interesting that a question that came from other students in our self-study research support meeting was, "Is this the methodology chapter? Or is it … ?" And Nithi was suggesting that maybe it could be an integrated research text, rather than divided into separate chapters.

Linda: So, we're crossing borders again?

Theresa: It eventually becomes like a movement, not necessarily for change, but for something that can at least be parallel and accommodate people who can't always fit into a box.

Daisy: So, is the whole issue of being co-flexive then … blurring the traditional boundaries?

Nithi: I think that Kathleen as a supervisor is providing a critical space for border crossing.

Kathleen: I'm a lot more confident in doing that when I have other people who listen to my student's work and say, "Well that makes sense." I'm able to be more open as a supervisor, just to say, "Well, go and explore that… Let's see what you come up with." With our group, you've got that sense of a space where those ideas can be taken and shared and explored.

Inbanathan: Yes. There's no blueprint. Every self-study is unique and each one takes a different direction.

Kathleen: But it can make the students anxious. Because they say, "But how will it turn out?" And I say, "I don't know …"

[Laughter]

Inbanathan: Self-study has got a life of its own. It develops organically. Students ask, "I am doing the right thing?" And I say, "I don't know. We'll have to work through it together."

Participating in a community of self-study supervisors gives us courage and support in engaging with the challenges of unsettling and disrupting conventional boundaries, and with possibilities for becoming border intellectuals (hooks, 1994; Said, 1994). Like hooks (1994) and Giroux (1992), we view the transgressive process of crossing borders as a collective endeavour of shared dialogue, critical reflections, reflexive thought, and debate. We see our learning community as offering fertile participatory spaces for mobilising agency and for collective critique and disrupting more conventional ways of knowing and doing research.

In our collective inquiry, we engage reflexively in border spaces—such spaces engage us in the risky process of exploring a new richness of data—its production, analysis, and representation through innovative and creative techniques. We want to reinvent how we conceptualise, receive, write, and read research—to move beyond conventional eyes or lenses. As a collaborative transdisciplinary team of research supervisors, we can challenge each other's understanding of self-study methodologies and use the knowledge offered in unexpected, creative ways. Although we come from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, as we have worked together over the years, we have been developing a common language through centring our dialogue on our shared exploration of the research genre of self-study.

During our collective meetings, and through co-flexivity, we feel encouraged to take on "risky" research processes bravely and in sustainable ways. Furthermore, working creatively and collectively affords opportunities to produce new knowledge that we as participants find playful and enjoyable because we often become participants in creative activities where we take ourselves out of our ordinary roles by moving across boundaries. The experiences then result in shifting our thinking and perceptions through our participation in unusual and unexpected creative

activities. For example, through a participatory metaphor drawing activity, we were able collectively to rethink our experiences and understandings of becoming and being supervisors of postgraduate self-study students (Van Laren et al., 2014).

When working with postgraduate students, generativity (Ball, 2012) involves us as self-study supervisors encouraging the students to take a leading role in deciding on the shape and size of their research initiatives. The supervisor needs to stand back and let go of regulating the generative processes. However, when the self-study supervisor is no longer "in charge" of the supervision process, then there is an equilibrium disturbance in the traditional power and knowledge possession relations. This imbalance can be disquieting for both the student and the supervisor. It requires that "both student and supervisor…acknowledge that that their forms of knowing are moving and that there is no stable or static centre or periphery, no linearity in their meaning making" (Rawlinson & Pillay, 2014, p. 300).

Dialogue Three: Producing Knowledge Differently and Producing Different Knowledge

Nithi: So what has co-flexivity done for us as supervisors and researchers?

Thenjiwe: It leads to making a much more growing, developing contribution towards knowledge.

Inbanathan: In working in this co-flexive way, each one's cognition becomes a resource for the others and we build on that. And we also challenge each other's cognition as well.

Kathleen: It also illustrates the Bakhtinian idea of the "inter-animation" of thinking (Holquist, 1981, pp. 429–430). When we are in a co-flexive group, our ideas inter-animate to create new ideas that are group ideas. The concept of co-flexivity itself emerged from the inter-animation of our thinking. In self-study, Guilefoyle et al. (2002) talked about the "brain in the middle of the table"—that there's a new idea that belongs to all of us.

Jean: That would be a challenging poem to write, about the brain in the middle of the table and the action on it or from it.

Lorraine: There's a lot of healing that happens that way. For example, network therapy (http://www.networktherapy.com/). It's a form of chiropractic treatment. You never go for a session on your own. You must be there with someone else. Because the breathing and energy that you release, helps the next person.

Kathleen: And I also think that as we bring our diverse disciplinary knowledges in, we offer ideas that we weren't all necessarily exposed to before.

Jean: I think it's related to the openness of our collaboration. There's no resistance against an idea coming in.

Lorraine: And it's not about egos. So, there's a lot more room for this type of engagement. Ego can be very destructive to collaboration and it's very powerful in the academic world.

Daisy: When you get rid of the ego—"I am this and I know this"—then there's a oneness and a connection.

Relebohile: I recently heard Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Adichie speak on "the dangers of a single story" (2009)—that it is always better to know different stories or perspectives on a context or an issue. Informed by this, I think the idea of co-flexivity has the potential to ensure that our analysis of issues and the claims we make are not based on a single story or perspective. Our multiple perspectives, debated and sometimes agreed upon and at other times diverging, have the potential to enable us to arrive at more "trustworthy" claims.

Daisy: I'm reminded of St Pierre's (1997) famous phrase, "producing knowledge differently and producing different knowledge." I think that's what happens, because each of us responds with our knowledge and when we put it together, we produce different knowledges and the way we come to produce it is changing as well.

Dialogue Four: Changing What We Do Here is Changing Us as People .

Theresa: For me, at the beginning I was just feeling completely lost. At our first meeting of self-study supervisors, I was wondering, "But what's going on here?"

[Laughter]

Thenjiwe: For me, having been schooled in feminist research, I had got accustomed, in my personal work and that of my students, to reflecting but not really being reflexive. What self-study has done for me is that, actually, the scales have fallen off in terms of seeing the stark difference. It has really shifted me.

Daisy: I think I've become so aware of my role in the supervisory relationship. It was always something that I was interested in, the relationship between supervisor and student, but I think, for so long, I just did what I did, you know?

Theresa: You did your job.

Daisy: Yes, but ever since getting involved with self-study, I've become so aware of my role in the supervisory relationship. Before, I focused more on the student. Now I focus more on, "What am I saying? What am I doing?" I can

see now how my students have become confident because I have pulled back. Before, I was too scared to pull back.

Thenjiwe: I can relate to that.

Daisy: Sometimes, having a supervision meeting is a struggle. You've got to think: "Who is this student? What's the best way to be setting this person free to become creative?"

Nithi: I think the other thing is that most of our students come from exposure to very traditional, linear kinds of research. But what I have found is that they just lap up creative ways of doing research.

Daisy: I think parallel to student learning is our learning. The one can't work without the other.

Thenjiwe: As a feminist researcher and supervisor, I have been thinking I am allowing students to generate information but, in retrospect, I have been taking the lead. And, as one gets self-study students to take the lead, I see how confidence in students builds up. So, that's the difference for me.

Daisy: I think that changing what we do here is changing us as people.

Lorraine: Yes. It's about improving your practice and so, in doing that, you are changing the self. You change the self so that the situation around you changes.

We have realised that critical introspection and shared vulnerability are key elements for us because the collective self-study process allows us to become less certain as supervisors and researchers. That uncertainty or "productive unknowing" allows us to explore new ways of looking at things, to step back from our habitual expert roles and to acknowledge that we can learn from our students and from each other (Mitchell & Pithouse-Morgan, 2014, pp. 92–94). We have also realised that what we are doing falls into the understanding of research as ongoing personal development (Backhouse, 2011; Harrison et al., 2012). Our experiences as self-study supervisors and researchers are offering personally meaningful ways for us to question and change the ways in which we understand our selves and our work. Together, we can encounter new ideas and learn about our selves in new ways.

Co-flexivity affords us opportunities to decide when and where we want to actively transform our practices and also, the manner in which we deem appropriate to move for our generative performances. These potentially transforming moments are typically nonlinear, complex, layered, and polyvocal (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2014c). They are different from the mechanised production line model where there are predetermined recipes to generate guaranteed success. Transformation often includes moving across disciplinary as well as traditional research paradigm borders. The crossing over movements and moments occur because of our need to explore our positions differently and these positions are often best expressed through creative media, such as poems or drawings.

We view our reflexive collaboration in self-study research as essentially transgressive as we unlearn and unknow, question, and open ourselves to new ways of thinking; challenging in the process, oppressive aspects of more conventional educational research (Kincheloe & Tobin, 2009). Lather (1993, p. 676) put forward the notion of "transgressive validity" in research, and suggested that validity in research could be seen as its capacity to transgress, contest, disrupt existing conceptions and search for new possibilities. Thus research is seen as a political endeavour—and in our research group, collective inquiry offers us the space for such risk taking and to resist dominant research paradigms and epistemologies we encounter daily in our work.

Dialogue Five: You're Turning Your Inside Out, How Easy Can That Be?

Relebohile: Most of our students have to deal with emotions in their self-study research. Is it because most of our students and us are faced with troubling contexts or troubling knowledge and our research focuses on this?

Kathleen: I find that self-study is a very emotional process.

Inbanathan: Yes.

Kathleen: And you shouldn't enter into it to lightly. You have to have a certain amount of …

Daisy: Courage …

Kathleen: And resilience. So, it's not for everybody.

Daisy: For some people, it's just too scary.

Theresa: But also, I think that when you have a student who is not forthcoming with much, that becomes more frustrating because, as the supervisor, you are encouraging, you are trying to get them to write something that you can work with. And then you just get stuck. You can't do it for them.

Inbanathan: That is the challenge and that's what calls for the supervisor to be self-reflexive—as to how you're going to change that situation.

Kathleen: But I don't think you can always necessarily change it. I guess there are times when the self-study process just doesn't flow. So, I think it's important to acknowledge that it's always going to be hard work, for the student and the supervisor.

Daisy: And yet, the perception is that self-study is so easy. But you're turning your inside out, how easy can that be?

Lorraine: It seems to be light and effortless. Yet we know otherwise.

In self-study, reflecting on lived experiences and events is often accompanied by emotional connections. In South Africa, where high levels of traumatic stress are

an unfortunate part of everyday life across communities (Collins, 2013; Kaminer & Eagle, 2010), inquiry into lived experiences can be emotionally risky for students and supervisors. While emotional care is essential for student resilience, we acknowledge that as supervisors we also need to cultivate emotional self-care (Rager, 2005). Working in a co-flexive space can provide support for development of courage, resilience, and growth of the researcher and supervisor, whilst concurrently developing new contributions for generative research. Through collective inquiry in selected border spaces, body, mind, and heart come into play and critical engagement (hooks 1994).

We come back from our time together inspired, invigorated, ready to face multiple challenges. To return to the core message of our initial poem—Care is at the centre of it all—what we have realised is that capacity building for self-study supervisors and researchers very much depends on relational caring and interacting with each other.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In concluding the chapter and considering possible implications for ourselves and others, we return to the three prompts we used to elicit responses to our first cocomposed poem. Thus, we ask:

- What does the chapter say?
- How does it say it?
- Is it worth saying?

What Does the Chapter Say?

In this chapter, we have made visible how we used collective found poems and reflexive dialogues to represent and make meaning of our emergent notion of co-flexivity, and the difference it makes to us as self-study supervisors. We have shown that in order to extend our research supervision to knowledge creating, we used collective poetic inquiry and reflexive dialogue as co-flexive research methods to enhance our polyvocal professional learning. The poem making and dialogues allowed us to be co-flexive about our border-crossing experiences as self-study supervisors and researchers, and uncovered embedded tensions and complexities of supervising self-study research.

There were diverse voices at play in our process of knowledge generation, and we were cautious not to integrate them into one all-encompassing account. Our collaborative, multi-voice process reflects the power of polyvocality in professional learning and development. As a group of self-study supervisors from diverse disciplines and subject positions, we were able to engage in dialogic praxis, bringing a multiplicity of standpoints, interpretations, and agencies to bear on our collective engagement. We journeyed in and out of the uncertainties, tensions, and complexities of self-study research supervision, raising complex epistemological and theoretical questions in the process.

How Does It Say It?

Through the creative media of poems and dialogues, we were able to condense and articulate significant aspects of a complex, polyvocal conversation that took place among the 10 of us over a 10-month period. The use of poems and dialogues assisted us in our quest to offer an evocative and multifaceted account of our experiences of learning through and about co-flexivity. We also see the poems and dialogues as portals through which readers can enter into the particularity and complexity of our experiences (Pithouse, 2007). Thus, the poems and dialogues served as a means for us to invite readers into the human interaction and relationships that are at the heart of our co-flexive experiences.

As described by Blair et al. (2011), coauthoring this chapter required us to move between "stepping up and stepping back to ensure polyvocality" (p. 150). Stepping up can be seen in the poems and dialogues and stepping back is evident in our demonstration of how we worked together to compose the series of poems, as well as in the interpretive portrayal that follows each dialogue.

Is It Worth Saying?

Certainly, this collaborative inquiry has had benefits for us as self-study supervisors in the TES project. Informed by the work of Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy, and Stackman (2003), first, we see how our collective self-study has enhanced our analyses of issues and helped to bring depth and complexity into our work. Second, our exploration and articulation of co-flexivity as a key principle of our collective work has made us more mindful of the value of listening to and valuing multiple voices and perspectives. We have become more aware of how our collective self-study research across diverse higher education institutions and disciplines can provide us with opportunities to build a more holistic and deeper understanding of our practice as self-study supervisors. Third, as our discussion above suggests, self-study is emotive because it exposes the researcher to introspection and self-critique as well as criticism by other scholars and peers. Furthermore, it involves negotiating the complexities of a multiplicity of voices in a process of dialogic engagement between self and other, and the tensions and dilemmas within the self. Additionally, for us and for our students, it often brings to the fore strongly emotive issues from our teaching and social relationships. Thus, a significant realisation for us has been the social and emotional support that working together has provided us as collaborators over a number of years. Mutual trust, respect, and an ethic of care that has deepened and strengthened over the years of working together has helped to ameliorate possible power differentials amongst the collaborators that could potentially silence some of us. In essence, like Gerbic and Maher (2008, p. 321), we believe that our collective self-study has encouraged "wider participation, ensure[d] increased commitment to [a] project, produce[d] more rigorous analysis and evaluation and better support[ed] [our] professional development."

But, we also need to consider potential implications beyond the TES project and our own work as self-study supervisors. As Mitchell and Weber remind us, "looking inward can lead to a more intelligent and useful *outward gaze*" (2005, p. 4). How might this account of our collective inquiry into co-flexivity in a transdisciplinary self-study research supervision community potentially benefit others? Methodologically, we have attempted to write this chapter in a transparent and demonstrative way so that it shows rather than just tells about our co-flexive praxis. We hope that it will serve as an accessible resource for others who are interested in polyvocal and creative approaches in self-study research. Conceptually, we offer our learning about co-flexivity in self-study supervision as a contribution to continuing scholarly conversations about the significance of collaboration in self-study. While collaboration is well established as a core principal of self-study research (LaBoskey, 2004), our collective self-study draws attention to the value of co-flexivity (collective reflexivity) for those who supervise or facilitate others' self-study research.

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NOTES

[1] The following definition of transdisciplinary research aptly captures our understanding of the transdisciplinary nature of the TES project: "research efforts conducted by investigators from different disciplines working jointly to create new conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and translational innovations that integrate and move beyond discipline-specific approaches to address a common problem" (http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/trec/about-us/definitions/).

[2] The southern African concepts of *Ubuntu* (in the Nguni languages) and *botho* (in the Sotho and Tswana languages) recognise self as ongoing, and relational processes of becoming (Mkhize 2004).

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ARVINDER KAUR JOHRI

10. MULTIPLE NARRATORS

Using Double Voice Poems to Examine Writing Personas

INTRODUCTION

how can *I* write ask my students
it is poetry month I remind them
it is **not** writing
that drives you to a pit of despair

writing poems opens up their closed fists

we stack one
poem after another
and take-home **bulky** portfolios of writings

how words attach themselves
wordsmithing, wordacrobating, wordstringing
non-genetic metamorphosis of a culture

My relationship with self-study started in the summer of 2007 when I enrolled in the self-study qualitative research methodology course during my doctoral journey. This course gave me an opportunity to reflect on the concept of the "self" within the context of a practitioner and to bridge the gap between theory and practice, to fully understand the situated knowledge of practice, and to explore and extend these new understandings in public ways (Loughran, 2007). I later utilised the self-study methodology in my doctoral dissertation to examine the culture of a writing class in an alternative high school with a multicultural student population in the state of Virginia, USA (Johri, 2011). In that study I examined how writing personas of students are crafted and how teachers' beliefs, assumptions, and practices intersect and influence these personas. The study also investigated how I influence the learning of my students and my role in the formation of their writing personas. The self-study component of my doctoral study was a deliberative endeavour to examine my practice within the space of teacher practice and students' experiences explored in the first two research questions. Examining my own practice and the assumptions embedded in my practice as a creative writing teacher in an alternative high school, I explored my understanding of my students' writing personas and my beliefs, actions,

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and understandings related to teaching writing. In this self-study I harnessed the power of poetic inquiry as a "powerful agent to assist in the revitalization" of the educational profession with the objective of retrieving "the intuitive, an all-too-often ignored sensibility that many years of formal schooling and adult living may have dulled, or even dismissed altogether" (Dobson, 2010, p. 132).

In this chapter, I offer a focused discussion on the self-study component of my doctoral dissertation. First, I present the contextual, conceptual, and theoretical frameworks of my self-study. Next, my exploration of how I influence the learning of my students and my role in the formation of their writing personas is reported in five double voice poems. The poems also capture the experiential narratives of my students. The final section considers potential future directions for teachers, school, and teacher education in relation to creating academic settings that promote the development of students' writing personas.

AIMS AND CONTEXT OF MY SELF- STUDY

Designing a study is similar to art; it is "the art of the possible" which reflects "some imperfect interplay of resources, capabilities, purposes, possibilities, creativity, and personal judgments by the people involved" (Patton, 2002, p. 12). Weaving a collage of different voices, different perspectives, and different contexts, the qualitative researcher "may be seen as a bricoleur, as a maker of quilts, or, as in filmmaking, a person who assembles images into montages" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 4). Interweaving voices of my students with my own narratives, the focus of my study was to investigate how my practices influence the formation of students' writing personas. The self-study of my writing instructor persona was conducted with the objectives of understanding my writing assumptions and practice, and transforming my teaching and writing practices if they were found grounded in inequities. The study was also conducted with the objective of understanding how my personal writing identity influenced my pedagogic practices. The following research question guided my investigation: What defines my writing teacher persona?

a. What are my beliefs and practices as a writing teacher?
b. How are my practices contributing to the development of my students' writing personas?

My research site, an alternative high school, serves the countywide school district, which has a student population of approximately 86 000 students. My student participants' ages ranged from 16 to 18 years and they ethnically represented an accurate snapshot of the multicultural population at the research site with 36% African-American, 35% Hispanic, 20% Caucasian, and 9% other racial or ethnic groups. Alternative schools are intended to provide supportive learning environments for students who are unsuccessful in the traditional public school system (Guerin & Denti, 1999). Alternative schools offer at-risk students options to traditional school. Students at my school site enrol on a continual basis. Students can be referred to

my school in a number of ways; a predominant entry point is when a student is involved in disciplinary or attendance actions in their base school and is referred to the central office. In addition, students leave school for various reasons including but not limited to moving, incarceration, programme changes, and dropouts.

Kindsvatter, Willen, and Ishler (1988) stated that teachers' beliefs are related to (1) their own experience as language learners, (2) experience of what works best, (3) established practice, (4) personality factors, (5) educationally-based or research-based principles, and (6) principles derived from an approach or method (pp. 30–31). Classroom teachers possess theoretical orientations that influence and trigger their instructional behaviours (Duffy & Anderson, 1984). Since I was in elementary school, I have been an enthusiastic, creative writer, maintaining a journal of my original writings and an anthology of inspirational writings. Being bilingual, my language of choice for my writings was English because it was perceived as a "language of the educated" in India during the 1970s. Being a middle, female child in a patriarchal family, I used my writing talent as bait to get attention from my parents. Interestingly, this strategy of mine worked for years and I enjoyed the status of a poet who was requested often to share her poems in public settings for most of my elementary school years. The public sharing ended, but my passion for writing never abated.

Teaching language arts to middle grades in an inner city parochial school for nine years and English and creative writing at my current school has reaffirmed my passion for writing and teaching writing to my students. I believe that writing is an idiosyncratic process and that a standard or a formulaic process cannot serve all students. Writers need opportunities to experiment with genres and need to write from different perspectives, for different audiences, and for different purposes to develop their writing voices. I also believe that the writing process is recursive and on many occasions cannot be limited to the framework of brainstorming, prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. It is an interactive, recursive process containing a plethora of sub processes in the background and the foreground.

This study is situated within a critical sociocultural and interactionist view of the classroom as providing the sociopolitical milieu in which writing skills are socially negotiated. According to Pollard and Filler (1999), self is regarded as essentially social, consisting of a subjective "I", which is "able to reflect on an objectified sense of the 'me'" (p. 4). Students' writing personas involve how they perceive themselves in relation to others within a community of literacy practices. This "development of self-awareness and construction of meaning through interpersonal relationships" (Pollard & Filler, 1999, p. 293) is contextual and related to the students' writing experiences as they engage in social interactions with peers and adults and also attempt to understand the demands of the academic writing realm.

Somers (1994) and White (1992) defined identity as being grounded in a social context and location which enables the formation of cultural repertoires or systems of meaning that characterise various symbolic communities. The self is a three-dimensional dialogue between I, you, and me, and the semiotic self based on the

concepts of reflexivity and solidarity is vital for reinforcing democratic frameworks (Wiley, 1995). Within the context of a classroom, children don't hold static positions but take up different and shifting positions within different discursive practices; and can initiate the process of shifting the discourse from a less powerful position to one that empowers them (Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn, & Walkerdine, 1998). The positional view of identity (Moje, Luke, Davies, & Street, 2009) is context specific and is actively positioned and maintained by the individual:

> subjectivities and identities are produced in and through not only activity and movement in and across spaces, but also in the ways people are cast in or called to particular positions in interaction, time and spaces and how they take up or resist those positions. (Moje et al., 2009, p. 430)

Hairston (2003) conjectured that a culturally inclusive curriculum in the classroom is possible by focusing on the experiences of our students. When the students begin to share their narratives they become "our greatest multicultural resource, one that is authentic, rich, and truly diverse" (p. 710). Interestingly when students are given the space and authority to be the authors of their narratives and to reclaim their authority over their stories they initially may resist it. As Reeves (1997) noted, "In itself, the novelty of writing without authority puts students on shaky ground at first because so many of our students have been taught never to use 'I' in the perennial 'research paper'" (p. 39). According to Hall (1996), literacy identity is a process that is "never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured, never singular … constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions" (p. 4). Ivanic (1998) stated that "writing is an act of identity in which people align themselves with socio-culturally shaped possibilities for self-hood, playing their part in reproducing or challenging dominant practices and discourses, and the values, beliefs, and interests which they embody" (p. 33). The sociocultural perspective of writing views writing as a multidimensional and multilayered activity. Gaining insights into teachers' perceptions on written texts as social-interactive products or as autonomous entities are key to understanding how writing personas of students are formed and sustained in an academic setting. The writing persona in this study is defined as a consolidation of the writer's personal experiences, cultural voice, personal vision as a writer, social demands of writing etiquettes and dominant writing practices, and understanding of the writing process and is not limited to the development of writing skills.

METHODOLOGY

Self-study is a fulcrum–moment of teaching, learning, theory, and practice. Self-study scholars inquire thoughtfully and deliberatively into their often taken-for-granted practice and the assumptions embedded in their practice. The methodology requires specific dispositions, that is, openness, reflection, collaboration and validation with critical friends, transparent data analysis process, and improvement-

aimed work which contributes to professional knowledge (Barnes, 1998; LaBoskey, 2004). Researchers may recognise a disparity in what they believe and what they actually do in practice (Whitehead, 1989) and this realisation can lead to practice-informed research.

I have presented my way of knowing and learning using an arts-based self-study methodological process as outlined by Samaras and Freese (2006). I have explored my teaching practices, assumptions, and beliefs pertaining to the teaching of writing. Holzman (1997) suggested that learning and development are inseparably intertwined and emergent, that is, who we are and simultaneously who we are becoming. Arts-based educational research creates an understanding of a general situation through a descriptive analysis of that specific situation or process while, at the same time, encouraging an audience or readers to question their biases and examine their own experiences concerning that situation (Eisner, 1995). Self-study methodology has challenged me to critically evaluate and understand my practice while examining the transformation of the self during the research process. Fecho (2001) emphasised that "rather than a comfort zone, meaning making seems to flourish in zones where the current sense of self might feel threatened" (p. 13). My pedagogical and ontological understandings of teaching writing are scrutinised from the stance of "discomfort, uncertainty, [and] restless inquiry" (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 44).

Drawing from works of self-study scholars (Barnes, 1998; Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001; LaBoskey, 2004; Loughran & Northfield, 1998; Samaras & Freese, 2006), Samaras (2011) has designed a five-foci framework that includes the following components: personal situated inquiry, critical collaborative inquiry, improved learning, transparent and systematic research process, and knowledge generation and presentation. Personal situated inquiry "is a self-initiated inquiry of practice" demanding contextual questioning about one's own practice and also considering the "role culture plays in their theories and practices to access its impact of their teaching" (Samaras, 2011, p. 72). Critical collaborative inquiry proposes that "learning does not occur in isolation and is dependent upon interactions with critical friends" (p. 75). This constructive questioning and dialogic critiquing leads to new understandings, different findings, alternative perspectives and "validation through the construction, testing, sharing, and re-testing of exemplars of teaching practice" (LaBoskey, 2004, p. 180). Improved learning requires deliberate questioning by teachers of "the status quo of their teaching and the politics of schooling in order to improve and impact learning for themselves, their students, and the education field" (Samaras, 2011, p. 78). Improved learning focuses on student learning, a critical scrutiny of one's beliefs and practice, and an understanding of how one's own beliefs, assumptions, biases, experiences, and culture impacts practice. A transparent and systematic research process "requires a transparent research process that clearly and accurately documents the research process through dialogue and critique" (p. 80). Transparency in self-study denotes rigor in data collection and data analysis processes and conducting "a self-assessment and critical friend assessment of the methodological components of self-study" (p. 80). Knowledge generation

and presentation requires generating "knowledge for investigating and developing new knowledge about teaching with evidence that is immediate and personal and with significance to others" (p. 82). Self-study research is embedded in the tenets of social justice and raises "issues of moral, ethical, and political reform" (p. 82). The five-foci framework is used as a tool to assess my self-study. This self-assessment is voiced in the "The Self-Study Assessment" poem as a means to understand my practice within this five-foci framework advocating collaborative and critical domains of multidimensional application.

Samaras (2011) proposed that during the process of conducting a self-study it is helpful to "design a visual and/or narrative representation of your current classroom situation and your practice capturing the academic, social, and cultural theatre of your classroom, as well as your role within that context" (p. 119). Adopting the format of double poems, derived from the two voice technique made popular by Paul Fleischman (1988) in his poetry anthology titled *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices*, I deconstruct and reconstruct my class landscape in narratives that reflect on the actions, events, experiences, observations, possibilities, assumptions, perceptions, lenses, voices, and issues being played out within the classroom. In my self-study I use poetry to tell experiential stories of both my students and myself. These stories are interspersed with autobiographical vignettes, reflective digressions, and points of tension and harmony between the narratives of my students and me, in the role of their writing instructor. The classroom is regarded "as a place where students and teachers tell stories to one another to make sense of where they have been and help them grow and develop the future" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. xvi).

The temporality and context of these experiences are captured in the back-and-forth dialogic conversations that lead to the discovery of tension points (or lack of) between my students and me. The technique of crafting double voice poems serves to document my progression as a writing instructor including: my interactions with my students; my students' reflections on their writing personas; my understanding of their writer's personas; and my beliefs, actions, and understandings related to teaching writing. The double voice poem is a dialogic exchange between two entities, presenting two different perspectives on a single topic. These poems are composed in two columns and are written to be performed. The discourses threaded across writing genres, purposes, attitudes, and assumptions capture defining moments from the past, the present, and the future. The present moments or "nows" foreground the past leading to reinterpretations and new understandings. Stern (2004) defined these present moments as "a kind of dialogic equilibrium between the past and the future" (p. 28). The reflections in the poem expose my vulnerability as I "self-reflect[s] upon self" to facilitate understanding (Olesen, 1992, p. 205). In the role of a writing teacher I have experienced that my instructional decisions, ontological beliefs, and instructional practices impact the writing outcomes of students, distancing some from realising their potential as writers and transforming some to embrace writing. These poems explicate how my assumptions, experiences, and beliefs as a writing instructor interplayed with individual students and the collective class.

Poem I: Donna and Me

This double voice poem speaks about the culture of my creative writing class and how I, in the role of a writing instructor perceive my creative writing class from the point of view of Donna, the main character of the left narrative, and me, the main character of the right narrative. Donna, 17-year-old senior, having completed her English 9 and English 10 coursework in the last two semesters in my class, finds much to her chagrin that she is enrolled in my creative writing class for another consecutive semester. The poem is written from the third and first person point of view revealing two distinct voices: one of Donna and the other students who are curious and mystified by her actions and the other of me as a creative writing instructor. The purpose of writing this poem is to reflect on my understanding of the class dynamics from the perspectives of a student as well as an instructor.

11 of them

1 of me

They come with trepidation
Having heard a student announce
"This is my third year with her"

I enter my room with only one looming fear
What if they find an excuse not to write

The refrain rings back
"How can you?"

The refrain rings back
"How will I?"

She shares a whimsical smile
Not revealing how or why
She lands herself in my class
Three classes in a row

I smile at my fear
Knowing that its presence narrates
An absence of lethargy in my instruction

This time it's creative writing

I want them to think
Think about their writings
Absence of writing
Intolerance for writing

Each stringed thought
In her head is
Stretched like a band
About to be targeted
Missed

Found

Wasted

Re-looped

Abandoned

Reinstated

Poem II: Multiple Narrators

This double voice poem is written from the omniscient point of view, with multiple narrators describing why they write, where writing takes place, how writing happens, and what are the compelling factors behind the act of writing or not writing. The omniscient point of view is a pedagogical strategy employed within this meta study of writing personas to deliberate on parallel and counter narratives. The left column is a mosaic of phrases selected from students' responses to the prompt: "Why I write or why I don't write" and the right column describes my ontological beliefs about writing. Both the columns are interspersed with autobiographical episodes of critical writing moments. The purpose of this poem is to give voice to my students to defend their nonwriter status or to celebrate their writing personas and to acknowledge points of connections and divergences in my trajectory as a writer with the narratives of my students.

On my left there is a pile of crumpled paper balls
Looks like a mini mountain from a distance

On my desk there is a pile of journals
Waiting to be judged

On my seventh birthday my grandmother gave me my first diary

I bought a journal when I was 10 years old
And wrote about a clown hysterical with the torment
Of being the face of comic relief

I have to write to make it through a part of life
I just write to make it by when I'm asked to
Whether I want to write or not
Depends on the topic though

I write to thread my stories
Into panels of defragmented thoughts
Retaliating against cohesiveness
And a logical transmission of facts
Whether I want to write or not
Depends on the availability of a blank paper
Or the Word document on my laptop

Some subjects I just can't connect to or work with
It's hard for me to start an introduction

Writing about what isn't real has absolutely no limits
Introductions are extensions of closures
Or are they the core of the middle
They exist only when a middle and closing is drafted
Writing fables gives me the liberty to introduce
The characters at the end

I like writing on my own time
I write better when I want to write
Not when somebody commands me to write
Mostly on Facebook I will write about things that I have thought of
Letters, notes, research papers, essays, important dates
Writing down things for my mom to remind her
Journal writing is what I do the most
I'd rather just be given a scenario to make up myself
Or write about life

I like writing on my own time
I recall writing notes to my daughter when she was 10
Leaving them by her bedside
To squash any doubts about not being loved
I write greeting card messages, e-mails,
A grocery list, a to-do-list
Comments on essays, assignments on the board
And herald myself a writer

I dislike anyone telling me
I have to write a certain way
Or have limited writing time
There are so many rules
So many grammar conventions in writing
Honestly I don't like to follow them
It's just not fun to be constantly reviewing and revising
Someday, sometime I will write
And mull over the sunlight
Falling on an isolated ringlet
Of my 10 month old son
I will revise and review it
And rewrite it for an eternity

When I write I like to write with time to think
To write until I think I can bring it to closure
When I write I like to write with time to think
To write until I can think

Mistakes are made
But soon they are erased and deleted
When I freewrite there are no errors in my paper
Mistakes are made
Myriad in nature
When I freewrite I loop and reloop my thoughts
Crossing and recrossing
Till thoughts grow into apes
And demand their due

I write for myself because I fight for myself
I also write so I can get over with school
Get all my credits to graduate
I write for myself
I write to be published
I write to teach creative writing

To most reading my writing is a hassle
I read my writing to any attentive mind

Poems are the best way of showing affection for any person
You might write a simple poem
But it can end up in a published book
Precision in abundance
Complex thoughts simply woven
Poems expose the unsaid
In dwarfed stanzas of deliberations

There are many reasons I write
But can't think of any right at this moment
There are many reasons I write
But they don't count anymore

My writing is powerful and I can control it
There are endless possibilities to what you can create
And how your thoughts come to mind
There are endless possibilities to what one can think
How does one define knowledge?
Is it the intuitive antenna that is triggered at a supernatural level
Is it the systematic accumulation of learned concepts
Is it wisdom accumulated over years of experiential transactions
Is it the glory that comes with the title of a prodigy
Is it the survival tactics one needs to master for

supremacy in our hierarchical framework
Is it the tranquil state of equilibrium initiated by not wanting to control others
Is it the newborn's eyes ready to seep in the marvel of life

If there were no words in the world it would be a quiet world
Here I get attached, there I remain detached
Here I seek the self, there hide others eavesdropping
If there were no words it would be a quiet world

Writing is another language
Writing has been around since the beginning of time
Whenever I write it changes the way the world sees me
Writing is another language
Writing has been around since the beginning of time
Whenever I write I look at the world from different tangents

Writing to me is like a tornado
It ends either with a lot of damage
Or little damage done
Writing is the magician's act of hypnotism
It ends with hypnotising the self
In believing in the power of writing

We have cell phones, Internet and even chat rooms
Video conferencing too
Then why write anything
We have cell phones, Internet and even chat rooms
We write to capture our environment in slow motion

I like to tell myself I hate writing and don't enjoy it but … that's not true
I like to tell myself that I am a writer and it begins to sound true

Poem III: Two Paradigms of Action

In this poem I have employed the dialogic monologue technique to write about how I perceive my students' actions within the landscape of a writing class. The left column describes my perspective of how my students perceive my class and the right column is a documentation of my responses to their actions and thoughts from the perspective of a writing instructor. The left column is a compilation of my observations, students' journals, and reflections pertaining to their experiences in the creative writing class. The purpose of this poem is to simultaneously create

two paradigms of actions: one populated by students and the other belonging to the writing instructor. The two paradigms are not exclusive territories manned by two separate ideological cohorts, but take on the character of collaborative and intersecting domains of causal acts.

They quietly watch my moves
Seeming to be zoned out
I make a deal
We talk about the prompt before we write
A circle of thoughts are dispersed
I risk being told
"This is stupid"

They use words sparingly
Saving them to tell me
"Did you come up with this prompt at the crack of dawn?"
I write with them
I share and demand critiquing

They have no scorn
No disgust, not even the mood to disagree
Different ones watch me
At different points
Monitoring if my instructions or discussions
Are coated in scorn
I read their writings
Smile and circle the most significant
Writing trait
Vivid imagery, a twist in the plot, an extended metaphor
The talent to make the familiar strange
The light-footed entry of complex vocabulary
The candid portrayal of reality
An ending with a tease
A complex-compound sentence breaking the monotone
Of tens of simple sentences
A conversation among characters
Zipped expertly in the use of ellipses

Then they wait for my "what is not" preaching
I re-read their writings
And smile and circle the most significant
Writing error
Lack of elaboration
An aborted thought
Narration of the obvious

The run-ons with no pauses
The jumbled-up thoughts
Lacking a centre of gravity

I watch them discuss their grades
Without any shame or pride
Letters that help them appear
Redemptive in front of their parole officers
I get requests to print their progress reports
On the day of their meetings with their parole officers

They celebrate their realities
I celebrate their realities

Never a comment on my narrative feedback
A cursory look to ensure
I read every word that they crafted
I read nearly all their writings
Their daily journal responses
Their wiki posts
Their collaborative stories
Their incomplete thoughts
Their barely dated page with no response
Their four-page reiteration of a point

Poem IV: Major and Minor Characters

The left column of this poem documents students' evaluation of the creative writing class while the right column is a narrative of my responses to their voices or afterthoughts on their writing assignments and creative writing projects. This technique, which reverses the power equation between the instructor and the students, leads to a recalibration of understandings in a classroom domain. Listening to the voices of the students and their narratives about their writing identities is critical to negating homogeneity, hierarchical structures, and censorship, which can lead to stifling of students' writing voices. My students are the major characters, the protagonists of this narrative while I am the minor character, the antagonist, who is reflecting on her imperfections and strengths based on the narratives of her students. This technique of adopting the emic approach compels me to reflect on my practice and to evaluate the effectiveness of my teaching strategies with the purpose of transforming practices that are perceived as inane, irrelevant, or ineffective and reinforcing the ones which positively impact or promote my students' writing personas.

I ask for their comments
On my instructional strategies and projects
Mid-year and year-end

The journal prompts
Always something new
Kept my creative juices flowing
My favourite: “Write from the point-of-view of an
All-knowing God watching over our class, knowing
Your thoughts and motives and those of
Your peers, your teacher, the inanimate objects… ”

Warm-ups
Most likely all of them were perplexing and frustrating
Sometimes you got carried away
I come up with odd topics
To strain their train of thoughts
Or their established understanding of themes
Topics that never could be broken with a
“Break the code” formula

Discussing it with the class is a nice way to get the day going
Everyone involved and comfortable with one another
To share my tentative think alouds
Play the “devil’s advocate”
Loop their thoughts into thinking about the prompt
From different tangents, different perspectives
Also feeding in to giving a scripted narrative
To my students who still believe that I am correct

My mind before I came to this class
Was not open to all things
I had a limit to what I could do
Now, I think more about the thought
I want to put down on a sheet of paper
If I can make them think and write
And write while thinking
And think while writing
I would celebrate each instructional minute
But I must not forget that these words are spoken
By one student

Some of us don’t get it
Or know how to come up with a poem
That meets your standards
I demand perfection in chaos
Thoughts myriad

Sculpted a million times
I call it rigor
Some of my students call it “an out-of-reach-project”

When you grade our work
Write in handwriting we could read
If you didn’t notice
Nobody can read your writing
I try to analyse my handwriting
A print-cursive hybrid
My handwriting symbolizes my appreciation
Of clutter, dissonance, and imperfections
My students are right
They need to read what I write
To know if my comments are worth
Being read the second time

Peer editing
One on one
I think that working with people is fun
In this class I got to do plenty of that
I am a strong proponent of collaborative writings
Distancing my students
From a narcissistic hold over their writings
To focus on the text
Being drafted by many
I see them delve into the text
With a spirited attitude
Of humouring each other
Yet revising fiercely to create a uniform voice
Even asking for permission from their peers
To reshape their narrative

The way you think is delightful
I want to use big words one day
Even my colleagues tease me about my big words
Words have always fascinated me
Being a trilingual my choice of words are
Deliberate
Three languages echo a thought
In three different translations
I pick words like beads

Demanding attention if threaded well
My students listen to me
And sometimes demand “an easy English translation”
The deconstruction leads
To getting their attention twice in a row

I believe that you explain things very well
You let us know exactly what is expected from us
I repeat my instructions
For the zoned-outs who listen but only later
For the hyper-focused who listen too acutely to details
And sometimes miss out on the options
For the obdurate ones who will listen
Only when I approach them individually
And break the assignment into chunks
Of bearable burden

When you approach things
You come off a little too strong
When I approach things
I come off a little too strong

Even though it was my first class of the day
I was always looking forward to it
Since I’ve been here I have found out that I enjoy writing
They complete writings
Revise writings
Ponder over why we don’t want to write
Laugh over writings that are brazenly ridiculous
Laugh over writings that are loaded with scorn
Write with a partner or independently
Demand a conference with me when ready
Even though it was my first class of the day
I enjoyed the chaotic staging of a writers workshop

My mind is always all over the place
Now I’ve learned how entertaining it is to see
What my mind can come up with
My mind is intent on taking their minds
To spectacles of deliberate spontaneity
I’ve known how gratifying it is to watch
What their clever minds can come up with

I’m a new writer, thinker and reader
I’m a new writer, thinker and reader

Enjoyed making advertisements
This class also refreshed my memory of advertising techniques
Got to use the laptop to make my unique designs for the ads
That was pretty fun for me
I got to work with Moses
Our ad for the lynx was impeccable too

Media messages are analysed
The bias, the stock character revealed
The stereotype substituted
What's not said is brought into the frame
My students read the biographies
Of all the CNN Hero nominees
And create an advertising campaign
For their hero's organization
Some profound, some creative, some a plea

We wrote a script and performed it
My personal best was writing about the Dream Act
Even though the class had a whole new lesson plan
The class went by so quick
Everyone was debating on the subject

The warm-up had yet to start
One of my Hispanic students
Started an animated conversation about the Dream Act
Stories poured from all over
I shelved my lesson plan and became a spectator
To the unfolding of a stage
With players of different affiliations
I mediated, playing the devil's advocate
Forty-five minutes of tossing an idea
Then a sudden lull
I asked them to research a topic of passion
Related to immigration
Independently or with a partner
Not one of them asked about the agenda for the day

The project I had the most fun with was the persuasive essay
I got to write about something that interests me

Persuasion is an art
Crafted over a span of a lifetime
I am still trying to convince my students
That there is writing beyond the five-paragraph essay

I least liked the CNN Heroes project

I felt there was some unneeded work in that one
Trails of notes
Collected over three days
To vote for their hero
I should had made the process more individualized
Without making it any less robust

Once in a while we should have a break
Once in a while we should write beyond the chiming of the school bell

Poem V: Self-Study Assessment

This poem is grounded in analysing the components of my study based on the five-foci methodological components of self-study research explicated by Samaras (2011) and defined in the introduction to this chapter. The left column summarises the essential elements of the five-foci components while the right column is a self-assessment of my enactment of the self-study research methodology based on this framework which emphasises the recursive and multiple nature of self-study.

Personal situated inquiry
Driven from contextual questions
Reflections and actions
New possibilities
Cultural influences
Researcher's lens
Factored into the analysis
Questioning my role as a writing instructor
With a multicultural student population
In an alternative high school
Listening to their writing voices
Reflecting on their reflections on their writing narratives
And mine
Pausing to analyse how writing is perceived by my students
How I perceive their perspectives on writings
How they perceive my position as a writing instructor
Researcher's positionality
Participant's lens
A dialogic conversation
Initiated to know what is
Being enacted

Critical collaborative inquiry

Dialogic interactions
Examining of data through another lens
New understandings
Different findings
Alternative perspectives
Learning zones extended
Critical friends
Advocating for my success
Kavita, who never stopped asking me
Questions related to rigor
Kathleen, who asked me to explain the "whys"
Of my choices
Erin, my teaching colleague who assessed the bias
In my contextual understandings
Studying my study with their cultural lens
Asking for explanations
Pointing to redundancies
Nudging me to critique content
And question the validity of a double poem format
Exploring the political milieu of my study
And potential biases
Tacit understanding
The text is the "conversation"
Reframed in chunks of collective understandings

Improved learning
Of the self and the students
Deliberate questioning
Of the status quo
To improve practice
For improved student learning
Exploring students' writing personas
In experiential vignettes
Demanding student assessment
Of my instructional modalities
What's working is articulated
Units, peer interactions, discussions
Electronic portfolio, group narratives, conferencing
What's not working is listed
Illegible handwriting, murky structure,
Selective scaffolding, strong opinions,
Aligning rigor with multi-step units
Zone of possibility

Acknowledged
Extended
And metacognitively controlled
By my students
Transparency
Detailed documentation of data
Reflective accounts shared
Self-assessment
Critical friend assessment
Data-analysis
Made public knowledge
Mosaic of events
Enacted in the classroom
Interactions between the teacher and students
And amongst students
Threaded in stories
Thought processes of the teacher and students
Points of dissonance
Captured in experiential narratives
Monologue, dialogue, soliloquy, refrain
Multiple tiers of thoughts
Perspectives, reflections
Revealed in dual voices
Knowledge generation
And presentation
Personal yet significant to others
An activist stance
Socio-political-cultural milieu
Of a classroom
Of a school
Of a county
Imbalances, variables, contradictions
Targeted
For practicing equity
In a writing class
In an alternative school
With a multicultural student population

CONCLUSION

The decision to conduct a self-study was a deliberate attempt to understand my own writing dispositions and assumptions and how these influenced my practice as a

writing instructor. To understand how my teaching practices mediate with students' learning I explored not only my practice but also the development of my students' writing personas and what contributed to its development. This involved "going meta" by systematically investigating "questions related to student learning—the conditions under which it occurs, what it looks like, how to deepen it" (Hutchings & Shulman, 1999, p. 3). Self-study opened another paradigm of questioning related to the relationship between what is taught and how it is taught, and how this teaching influences the learner. This process of situated inquiry initiated the process of learning about the self, learning about my learning, and learning about my students' learning leading to critical insights and self-critical questioning. The self-study also revealed that my writer's trajectory intersected with my students' writing experiences and that these refrains in our writing persona narratives highlighted that writers are diverse in terms of their writing dispositions, interests, and abilities and, yet, enjoy some common connecting themes. This poetic inquiry gave me a platform to celebrate my students' perspectives and observe myself as another character in the narrative of writers.

IMPLICATIONS

Integration of diverse genres and allowing students to have a voice in what they prefer to write about may bring about an attitudinal shift in how students approach writing. Schools may want to consider implementing after-school writing programmes or writing centres facilitated by students and teacher volunteers to demystify academic writing. Bruning and Horn (2000) emphasised that promoting students' positive beliefs about writing, establishing a positive emotional classroom culture, and giving students opportunities for authentic writing in a supportive context determine students' motivation to write. The students need to have a voice in drafting the writing protocol of the class because this will give them an opportunity to articulate what they desire to accomplish in a writing class. Taking into account the role that standardised tests play in the instructional approaches, choices, and strategies of the teachers, it is imperative to first know what our students know about writing not just in terms of their technical skills but also in term of their macro understandings of the role of writing and its objective. Integrating students' writings into the curriculum can "develop a critically affirmative language that works both with and on the experiences that students bring to the classroom" and this recovery of students' "own voices" (Giroux, 1990, pp. 16–17) can mobilise a movement toward situated practice. Teachers can also undertake a self-study project to question "the status quo of their teaching and the politics of schooling" (Samaras, 2011, p. 78) which can involve discussions related to the political, cultural, and ethical contexts of a writing classroom and the development of a writing curriculum that is contextually relevant to their student population.

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11. INTERWEAVINGS, INTERFACES AND INTERSECTIONS

A Co/Autoethnographic Self-Study

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we—Delysia and Joan—set out to demonstrate our learning through studying, thinking deeply about, and questioning our professional practice in dialogue with significant others through co/autoethnographic self-study. Our understanding of co/autoethnographic self-study is that it is both collaborative (Chang, 2012; Coia & Taylor, 2009) and relational (Simon, 2013). Simon (2013, p. 1) emphasised that relational ethnography is a "form of enquiry which emphasises the reflexive dialogical aspects of research relationships," which provides opportunities for the "description of reflexive inner dialogues to readers and participants in research relationships" so that the "voices of inner dialogue, the voices of outer dialogue—and between the two increase the opportunities for transparent communication and collaboration in these relationships." In keeping with the notion of "reflexive Ubuntu" (Harrison, Pithouse-Morgan, Conolly, & Meyiwa, 2012, pp. 16–18), we understand that our intrapersonal awareness is enhanced by our interpersonal relationships (Coia & Taylor, 2009, pp. 3–4; Goleman, 2005), and the ways in which we relate our lived experiences and those of others (Coia & Taylor, 2009, p. 4; Whitehead, 2009, p. 173). These relational, collaborative, and contextual revelations constitute continuous and dynamic research into our individual self-awareness (Coia & Taylor, 2009, p. 7; Jousse, 2000, p. 26).

Who Are the Authors and What Are Their Personal, Professional, and Spiritual Roles and Relationships and Context?

Socioculturally, we are two South African women, sharing English as our mother tongue, and committed to the vision of a free and fair South Africa for all, informed by "equity and social justice" (LaBoskey, 2009, p. 73).

Apartheid was 13 years old when Delysia was born. Joan was two years old when apartheid was born. Delysia lived the first 33 years of her life personally, politically, economically, socially, and educationally disadvantaged by apartheid legislation as a "coloured" person. Joan lived the entire 48-year life of apartheid advantaged by her racial classification as a "white person." We speak openly and frankly about issues

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of race and politics, sharing insights and understandings from our different "lived experiences" (Whitehead, 2009, p. 173) of South Africa under the apartheid regime, and since the first democratic elections in 1994.

Although we are only two people, our every conversation is polyvocal—rather than a dialogue—with our many voices sharing knowledge and feelings, insights, reflections, and opinions (Simon, 2013). Even when alone, each of us experience polyvocal conversations between our various inner voices, informing and expressing what we are doing, thinking, and feeling. It is these polyvocal conversations that provide, inter alia, individual and group insights into our spiritual, professional, and research beings and practices.

Like Coia and Taylor (2009, p. 8), our collaborative relationship has developed over time. In our case, we have worked in higher education and in the same institution, collectively, for over four decades, and in higher education academic staff development collectively for 30 years—15 each. We believe that higher education academic staff development, like self-study, is a process of reflecting on our practice and responding in innovative ways to become improved and more effective higher education practitioners. We also both believe that academic staff development is critical to change and transformation in higher education, and that change and transformation are critical to the good health of scholarship, citizenship, and society. To this end, we have used co/autoethnographic self-study to examine how academic staff development and social, educational, and professional lived experiences interact, interweave, and interface (Mitchell, Weber, & Pithouse, 2009, p. 131; Whitehead, 2009, p. 173).

In 1993, we both worked at the ML Sultan Technikon, which was then a tertiary educational institution reserved for Indian learners (in terms of the apartheid dispensation). Delysia was the first so-called coloured person to be appointed at ML Sultan Technikon. In 2002, eight years after the first democratic elections in South Africa, ML Sultan Technikon and Technikon Natal (reserved for white learners in terms of the apartheid dispensation until 1994) merged[1] to become the Durban Institute of Technology. In 2004, the Durban Institute of Technology became the Durban University of Technology (DUT).

Mergers require thorough planning and preparation because they have to accommodate the values, feelings, attitudes, expectations, and mindsets of the people within each of the merging institutions. Even when institutions are structurally similar, merging two culturally different institutions can result in conflict in the newly merged institution. When changes cannot be constructively resolved, the consequences can result in anger, anxiety, mistrust, communication problems, insecurity, disillusion, disinterest, depression, racial tension, and refusal to accommodate new cultures or traditions. The impact of these changes is immediately felt in matters relating to staff and such as the downgrading and freezing of posts, key staff members resigning, disparities in salaries, cronyism or nepotism, and poor human relations in general (Chetty, 2010). In addition to the challenges of the merger, Durban University of Technology simultaneously experienced a change of identity, not only once but

twice, which further exacerbated the challenges noted above. In short, mergers and identity changes of this kind can be destructive. We—Delysia and Joan—attribute the survival of our collaborative relationship, and our productivity in spite of the changes, in significant part to our mutual support.

Although we have worked in the same professional space for some years, we come from different disciplinary origins: Delysia from analytical chemistry, education, and theology; Joan from drama, literature, linguistics, and orality-literacy studies. Delysia comes from the research world of quantitative measurement, while Joan is rooted in qualitative interpretations, but we are both explorers by nature and enjoy questing beyond our comfort zones.

What Is the Research Question We Asked Ourselves, and Why and How Have We Used Co/Autoethnography to Address Our Research Question?

Our research question is, "What evidence do we have of how our relational collaboration contributes to self-study research including the how, the why, and the impact on our learning through context-specific practitioner-led critical co/autoethnographic conversations?"

We have found ourselves, as self-study co/autoethnographic researchers, uniquely placed at the centre of the investigation, "asking difficult questions" (Mitchell et al., 2009, p. 120) as both subject and object of the study. The relational (Simon, 2013) and collaborative (Chang, 2011) nature of co/autoethnography allows us to make sense, for ourselves, of the interweavings, interfaces, and interactions of our polyvocal conversations (Hamilton, Smith, & Worthington, 2008; Kincheloe, 2001) from an insider perspective (Coia & Taylor, 2009, p. 6; Stoller, 1997). We reflect on, analyse, and interpret our "journey of awareness" (Jousse, 2000, p. 26) together from 2005 to the present. We reflect on, present, and share what self-study has revealed to us about our relationship, our practice, our challenges, our living contradictions, and our achievements within a specific context (Whitehead, 2009). We have been encouraged to approach our study in the spirit of bricolage by Kincheloe (2001) and Claudia Mitchell's statement: "Self-study is a broad church."[2] We have intentionally embraced two broad approaches. To inform our co/autoethnographic conversation, we have drawn on personal memory, self-observation, self-reflection, and self-analysis to collect autobiographic data (Chang, 2011, p. 15). In the writing of our chapter, we have used the action research protocol of asking questions to frame our writing and to engage our readers in an ongoing conversation (McNiff, 2008; Whitehead, 2008).

We have used co/autoethnography because it is "an excellent vehicle through which researchers come to understand themselves and others" (Chang, 2008, p. 52) and what they have learned and achieved through its use. These learnings and achievements are enabled by researchers reflecting critically (Schon, 1983) on their lived experiences (Brandenberg, 2009, p. 208; Coia & Taylor, 2009, p. 11). During such critically reflective journeys of awareness (Chang, 2008, p. 52; Jousse, 2000,

p. 26), researchers can learn about how they respond, relate, and influence their social, professional, and personal contexts (Chang, 2011, p. 13). We have also explored what self-critical contemplative (Zajonc, 2006) self-study can reveal to us about our spiritual orientations, and how spirituality can impact on improvement in our practice. Further, encouraged by Chang's (2011, p. 19), conviction that autoethnography can inform the role of spirituality in a wide variety of sociocultural, academic, and research practices, we have engaged with the GIIC factor. The GIIC factor is the acronym for God Is In Charge. We engage with the GIIC factor as a result of our individual lived experiences of God's intervention in rationally inexplicable ways in numerous different contexts and on many disparate occasions.

Throughout we reflect critically (Schon, 1983) on what we are thinking, feeling and recording, and evaluate our lived experiences (Coia & Taylor, 2009; Whitehead, 2009) in relation to our values and convictions, and identify the relevant instances of our "living contradiction" (Whitehead, 1989, p. 1) in our practice. We appreciate the importance of the uniqueness of each individual's living educational theory (Whitehead, 1989) and the methodological inventiveness (Dadds & Hart, 2001) in asking, researching, and answering questions (Whitehead, 2009, p. 173).

We have emphasised and described our use of various forms of text, including visual, written, and spoken texts, as the central prompt for the self-study. We have used both self-generated written texts and those from published sources (Tidwell, Heston, & Fitzgerald, 2009, p. xiv). We have also referred to a significant photograph, and a YouTube recording, and found these useful—albeit "quite messy"—as a critical lens through which we have problematised our practice (Tidwell et al., 2009, p. xix).

What Is the Purpose of Our Study?

In this chapter we have used co/autoethnography to account for and illustrate our research relationship in two periods of our relationship. In Period One, we focus on the values and beliefs which underpin our relationship, prompted by a question we were once asked. In Period Two, we provide an account of an event that could have compromised our relationship. We believe that our underpinning beliefs and values ameliorated the possible damage to our relationship.

The conversations below are constructed by the authors from our co/autoethnographic conversations, drawing on our memories of these two periods. We started the research process together agreeing that we would each write an independent response to aspects of our relationship. Like Coia and Taylor (2009, p. 9), we wrote our stories down but unlike Coia and Taylor, we wrote in longhand. We agreed that we would meet and read our writing to each other for comment and then write again in response to the first meeting. Our intentions survived three meetings but by that time we had generated more than enough data, which we "mined for evidence" (Timm, 2013, p. 31) to inform our writing.

PERIOD ONE: 2006–2009

Delysia Was Acting-Director of Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED) at Durban University of Technology, and Joan was Her Staff Member.

Delysia: My director's office was on the ground floor, facing north-west and the sunset.

Joan: Delysia's director's office was small and cramped. Delysia is always intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually in multiple places and spaces at the same time. Delysia does not regard space as a measure of worth, status, and power, but is preoccupied with ideas and ideals, plans and projects, and getting things done. This is a trait of a transformational servant leader (Hays, 2008; McClennan, 2007).

Delysia: Joan shared her knowledge and understandings freely with us during meetings and workshops. As my staff member, she would not hesitate to let me know when she had something to share even though she would at times be seen to be very controversial. She would always make it known when she was in disagreement but would give a full explanation to support her view.

Joan: I appreciated that Delysia "heard" me. Delysia is deeply committed to listening intently to others, and seeks to identify and clarify the will of a group by listening receptively to what is being said and not said (Spears, n.d.). Delysia strives "to understand and empathize with others" (Spears, n.d., p. 1). She accepts and recognises people "for their special and unique spirit [and assumes their] good intentions" (Spears, n.d., p. 1), both of which are characteristics of a transformational servant leader.

Delysia: Of all my responsibilities as the director of CHED, I particularly enjoyed being part of innovative, justifiable challenges to outdated, unproductive norms. Joan showed me professional development possibilities by bringing in visiting professors and programmes that were interestingly different. Even though I was still answerable in my role as director of CHED, I was in a position to deal with the tardiness of financial and administrative support, the mundane, technical management issues, and act as a buffer to the petty and untransformed bureaucracies that hampered what the CHED staff were trying to achieve.

Joan: Delysia took her responsibilities of "stewardship" and being "committed to growth" and "community" (Hays, 2008, p. 113) in the role of director of CHED very seriously. Stewardship, commitment to growth and community are three core traits of the servant leader (Hays, 2008). Stewardship is described as "doing the right thing in the long term rather than doing what is easiest or most attractive today" (Hays, 2008, p. 117).

> Commitment to growth and community focuses on learning, growth, and improvement in a shared culture and environment for the greatest learning for the greatest good (Hays, 2008). Delysia demonstrated the core trait of stewardship when she made my Holistic Learning and Integrated Teaching (HoLIT)[3] and Holistic Learning and Integrated Teaching and Assessment (HoLITA) programmes possible in 2006 and 2007, respectively.

In late 2006, Delysia encouraged me to apply for a teaching development grant to fund the HoLITA programme. Once it was granted, Delysia fought for continued funding to keep HoLITA going through 2007. I believe her support for HoLITA influenced its development into the Self-study for Transformative Higher Education (SeStuTHE) project in 2008, and the Self-study for Transformative Higher Education and Social Action project (SeStuTHESA) in 2009. The 2008/9 initiatives informed the DUT contribution to the multi-institutional Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) project proposal (Harrison et al., 2012), which was awarded South African National Research Foundation funding from 2010 to 2013.

In short, Delysia was my professional senior to whom I was accountable, and who acknowledged and appreciated my efforts. Delysia encouraged me by giving me time to talk things through, to solve problems, and offered support and advice where her office was able. This notwithstanding, none of the above was automatic. In every interaction, she would question and critique thoroughly what I was doing, wanted to do, and how I was doing it and why. Frequently her questions and suggestions improved what I intended. Delysia as director was helpful, supportive, and encouraging. But I was never in any doubt that were I to default in any way, she would censure me without hesitation, as she did everyone else. Simply put, I believe that leaders and managers inspire when they serve their followers (Hays, 2008; Spears, n.d.), and Delysia is one such.

What I have come to realise as a result of this co/autoethnographic self-study is that Delysia adopts, as a matter of principle, a values-driven position consciously and consistently as a transformational servant practitioner in all her roles (Hays, 2008; McClennan, 2007). We were once asked: "How do you two manage your relationship with Delysia as Joan's professional manager as Director of CHED, at the same time that Joan is Delysia's doctoral supervisor?" We had never experienced any difficulties or tensions, so we were astonished to be asked this question. We conclude that the roles of director and supervisor, in and of themselves, are complementary not conflictual when they are perceived through the lens of transformational servant leadership where the base criterion is to serve the idea, the dream, the purpose of the higher education process, rather than to serve power (Hays, 2008; Spears, n.d.).

PERIOD TWO: 2005–2013

Delysia and Joan on the Doctoral Journey—Delysia as Student and Joan as Supervisor

Delysia: One day during a supervision session, I was cold and needed a warm covering because I had no jersey or jacket. Joan had a beautiful blanket over one of her chairs, which I draped over my shoulders for warmth.

Figure 11.1. Delysia with the blanket on during a supervision session

Joan: I found it uncannily serendipitous that Delysia remembered and chose to write about this "blanket," which is actually—as an artefact—a floor rug. The rug is intricately double-sided and interwoven, with two distinctly different designs on each side, as can be seen in the photograph.[4] The design of the rug is a work of mathematical and aesthetic sophistication, and the actual construction of the rug demonstrates equally sophisticated and complex cognitive and physical capacity. Yet this rug was hand loomed in a remote village in India. The evidence of the hand looming is clear in the many hand-tied knots, and like so many Persian carpets of great beauty, the rug is far from technically perfect and yet aesthetically very pleasing. The people who wove this rug had little if any experience of education, and drew their considerable knowledge and skill from their oral tradition.

The applied science and mathematics of the oral tradition of (indigenous) knowledge on every continent worldwide is manifest in what I believe is erroneously and dismissively referred to as "craft". Such "craft" is very often

> made by people who have no formal education, speak little of the dominant political language(s) of their regions, and are frequently not scribally literate to any significant degree, if at all. Yet the "craft" made by such people displays significant characteristics of complex and sophisticated thinking. This is evident in material products such as beadwork, grasswork and basketry, carvings and sculpture, and building, but also in animal husbandry, crop cultivation, home making, child rearing, care of the aged, sport and recreation, mores, ethics, and spiritual belief systems—in fact all aspects of life which constitute being civilized and living in ordered and mutually supportive ways that make the survival of our species possible. (Conolly, 2008, p. 28)

Such evidence of sophisticated and complex thinking and capacity among people labelled *uneducated* and *illiterate* (Conolly, 2008; Sienaert, 1988), has increasingly influenced me in my understanding of human learning as "an emergent phenomenon" and education as "a self-organizing system" (Mitra, 2008). Also I find that the rug which Delysia draped over her shoulders that day is an interesting visual metaphor (Tidwell & Manke, 2009, p. 135) of our individual capacities, and of our relationship as a whole. Delysia and I are very different personalities but we interweave, interface, and intersect in significant, complementary ways.

Delysia: Supervised by Joan, I completed my doctorate in 2012 and graduated in April 2013. Simultaneously, Joan mentored me through my Bachelor of Theology degree (BTh).

Joan: Delysia was a most rewarding student in every way—but one. Because Delysia is so multi-talented, curious, caring, energetic, and intelligent, she was frequently distracted by a multitude of other interests, none of which I could fault, except that her studies slowed at every distraction. I learned as her supervisor that any hint of heavy-handedness on my part would have been counterproductive. I remember very clearly when, with 13 weeks left in which to complete her doctoral thesis, Delysia announced at a supervision meeting that she needed to complete an assignment for her BTh degree urgently in order to graduate. I found a win-win solution. We worked on the BTh assignment and it became a chapter in the doctorate with a change to the sequence of the chapters—all to the good. In April 2013, Reverend Delysia Timm, (BSc, BSc Honours, MSc) graduated with her BTh degree six days before she graduated with her DTech Education to become Reverend Dr Delysia Timm (BSc, BSc Honours, MSc, BTh, DTech Ed) in one week. But the doctoral journey was significant in other ways as well, such as Delysia's discovery of her JNGE voice, which repeatedly told her that she was "Just Not Good Enough." It is important to note that at our first meeting for our co/autoethnography, I enthusiastically suggested that we include the story

of JNGE. We agreed that we would each write our account of "Meeting JNGE."

Delysia: JNGE emerged in July 2011, during the first three-day TES mini-symposium, designed for extended curriculum programme (ECP) lecturers to share their teaching and learning practices with Jack and Joan Whitehead as respondents. I woke the first morning of the symposium with laryngitis. This was worrying because I was to present the keynote the following day. That day I listened. I heard Jack talk about being challenged by one of his postgraduate students who just did not believe that she or he was good enough! I identified with the student. I recall clearly that Jack believed the student was capable, and he had made the student aware of this. Later, driving home, I reflected critically on the day's events in conversation with my polyvocal inner voices.

"Why did you have no voice today?" "What did you need to listen for?" "What should you be saying that you are not saying?" "Was it something you needed to say for your doctorate?" "You have to write." "Yes, but I cannot write. I hated writing at school. I hated writing all these stories. I had no imagination or creativity. I have no story to tell. I am a chemist. I use symbols and equations, not words and long sentences." But at the same time I wondered, "Do I have a story to tell?"

Driving slowly in congested traffic, I thought about Jack's student again, saying "I am just not good enough." Suddenly, I really needed to shout out "I am just not good enough," but had no voice to do it, which reminded me that I needed to use fresh ginger in hot milk to get my voice back to deliver my keynote address the next day. "Ginger is a very strong spice, so strong that it changes flavours dramatically, yet it grows underground, out of sight," said another voice inside my head, prophetically. As I said "Ginger" out aloud to myself, I heard the first letters of Just Not Good Enough—J-N-G-E–aha pronounced Ginger! "That is it! Listen!" I heard it again "J-N-G-E–Just Not Good Enough! That is the connection." I knew that JNGE was the story I had to write! When I got home, I pulled out my journaling book. As I put the pen to the page, the words flowed. "What was your experience of life?" "What did you learn during your life thus far?" "Where did you live?" "Where did you learn?" "Where did you go?" "What did you do?" There were so many questions. I had answers to all of them. I had a story to tell. "Your story makes you somebody," said an inner voice. After what seemed like hours, I stopped writing and read the story. "Wow, I did it! I wrote my story! I can write." I realised that I had taken the first step in believing in myself. Instead of JNGE, I was Joy— a happy person!

After writing the JNGE story, I tried to focus on preparing my keynote talk. But I was conflicted. An inner voice said, "Now you have your precious story of JNGE, you know yourself a bit more. Why not include your JNGE story as part of your keynote?" My conflict was resolved for me the following morning; my voice was only a raspy whisper. "You cannot speak. Get someone else to read your story. You are far too emotional to read your story, anyway." "But I am proud of my achievement

of writing my story." "Yes, but it is full of hurt and pain." "I have not shared this story with Joan, yet!" "Well then why not get Joan to read it?" "Yes, she needs to be the first to read the story. After all, she has been telling me this story all along—it's just that I only heard it now for myself. I want her to tell the world my story. I want her to be the first to share who I am with others."

So I asked Joan to read my story. I did not like the "Joy" ending, but thought that the group could sort that out. "I was so amazed when as I listened, I heard Joan add an ending to it that was so appropriate. I was so delighted because it just fit so well. Once again, Joan showed she knew me as her student and believed in me. I like the ending because it neatly ended the story—showing a shift or recognition of change from JNGE to AGE—Absolutely Good Enough—AGE pronounced Aggy.

Joan: I remembered Delysia's story of JNGE, and wrote about my first meeting with JNGE for this collaborative co/autoethnographic self-study—confidently and enthusiastically—because I believed that my memory of the event was reliable. I "remembered" that I had read it sitting down and that I had made editorial changes extemporaneously as I read it—sitting down. After the first meeting, I wrote, "Yesterday, as agreed, Delysia and I read our individual accounts of discovering JNGE to each other. When I had completed reading my writing about meeting JNGE, Delysia said, "Can I show you something?" She then showed me the video of me reading the JNGE story, standing up and reading with a fair amount of expression. I wondered how I could have remembered it so wrong. I was also very surprised when Delysia showed me her original handwritten notes, which I had edited before reading it. I was, and am still, unnerved about the "selectivity" of my memory. Chang (2011, p. 16) wrote of the danger in self-study of "overrelying on personal memory instead of collecting a wide range of data." In the case of the story of JNGE, the video and handwritten notes that Delysia had kept of the event demonstrated the unreliability of my memory.

In a later response, I wrote, "When I reflect with the benefit of evidence—the video and the original text with changes in my handwriting—I do remember. I remember hearing an inner conversation: "You need to discuss this with Delysia." "But there isn't any time." "I know, but I can't leave it like this." "Why not?" "I am distressed that she sees herself as Just Not Good Enough. Because Delysia is excellent at what she does. She is absolutely good enough. She is AGE, not JNGE." "So what are you going to do?" I am going to change Joy to AGE." "Should you do that?" "I am so conflicted that I am not sure. But I can't leave it." So I changed Joy to AGE. Then I wrote, "How did I feel when Delysia showed me the evidence?" I realised I had contradicted one of my own committed values—that the learner's authentic voice must be defended against the "danger of impinging one's view on another" (Whitehead, 2009, p. 190). I felt deeply troubled, but even more so when I read Delysia's response to this intrusion. I

continue to be amazed and humbled by Delysia's positive response. Three months later, I continue to reflect on this revelation. I have read Delysia's writing about the event of writing the story of JNGE, and with each reading I understand more. Delysia writes as competently and evocatively about JNGE and the emergence of AGE as she did the original JNGE story. She writes about how easy it was to write about JNGE—that it was her first experience of being able to write freely, and without difficulty—with Joy.

What Did We Learn from This Critical Incident about Self-Study?

This critical incident was multiply instructive:

> I continue to reflect on how shocked I was to meet JNGE, and I wonder how I could not have known about JNGE given our long, multifaceted, close relationship. I continue to be deeply self-critical that I did not understand that her claiming the name Joy to replace JNGE was about the joy of discovering her writing voice, of finding a voice that could write freely and articulately instead of in chemical equations and symbols, and so was a fully appropriate response to JNGE. And, actually, how inappropriate AGE was, not only as a foil to JNGE, but because it silenced Joy, the writer's voice. (Joan)

This event also demonstrated to us that reliance on personal memory in self-study without other supporting records is potentially flawed. Chang (2008, p. 55) reminded us that our memory selects and shapes – and can, in some instances, even censor – our lived experience, possibly giving the erroneous impression of lying. Joan takes particular note that memory can be censoring, and wonders whether her memory was selectively censoring her contradictory intrusive action, or whether some other process was challenging her selective memory. It actually does not matter which. The important issue here is that in this instance the current co/autoethnography moved Joan's memory closer to the truth, and exemplifies the caveat that when data was collected from a single tool without other measures for checks and balances, the validity of the data can be questioned. When the single tool is the researcher self, multiple sources of data provide bases for triangulation that will help enhance the content of the autoethnographic writing (Chang, 2008).

Finally, we learned how much we learn from self-study is hidden and invisible to ourselves and others until it is under the microscope of a co/autoethnographic study such as this one. We recorded that, as a result of Delysia identifying her JNGE, we—Delysia, Joan and others in our polyvocal self-study discussions—have been at pains to identify JNGEs and AGEs in ourselves and each other. Our JNGEs and AGEs have become part of our individual and collaborative self-study research journeys and have made, and are making, a significant contribution to our self-study insights. We now need to celebrate our Joys, our learning accomplishments, and add them to our polyvocal self-study discussions.

WHAT IS OUR LEARNING THROUGH AND ABOUT CO/AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC SELF-STUDY?

Co/Autoethnography

We quickly discovered that a very little goes a very long way in self-study. And even less goes even further in a co/auto-ethnographic self-study. Our data very quickly became "messy and complicated and took extreme time" (Coia & Taylor, 2009, p. 11) to organise and structure to become reader-friendly. Consequently, we have been spoiled for choice and undoubtedly the most difficult aspect of this chapter has been restricting ourselves to the word limit without losing the essence of what we wanted to convey.

Context

As a result of our collaboration we identify with the notion that

> an important function of autoethnography is to expose 'the elephants in the room' of cultural context: social and organisational practices which beg robust scrutiny and critique but which are taken for granted as unquestioned, normative 'business as usual.' (Grant, Short, & Turner, 2013, p. 5)

We found that we could not see ourselves in a vacuum. Instead we examined our relationship (Simon, 2013)—individually and collaboratively—and the context, which included a number of other people. We examined the role of the context in shaping us as we reacted to this context and tried to transform it (Chang, 2011, p. 17). We found that this process enhanced our understanding of the context and ourselves in relation to the context. Furthermore, we have found collaborating to create an autoethnographic account useful in that it provided us with an opportunity to collect our autobiographical materials and to analyse and interpret our data collaboratively to achieve an enhanced understanding of what happens within us, between us, and around us (Chang, 2012, pp. 23–24). We have found that this has yielded valuable and useful insights about our actions, attitudes, relationships, and practices.

Leadership

We concluded that neither of us consistently leads the other in the writing of this chapter or in our other interactions. We both often felt the urge to say something or do something that we could claim as our own. We agree that we attribute these unbidden thoughts to the God Is In Charge (GIIC) factor, so we included the GIIC factor as another leader in our study. We found that leadership moved around from one energy to another including the GIIC factor, not only externally but internally as well. We gratefully enjoy the fluidity, the surprises, the challenges, the delights, and the blessings of this process, and acknowledge that the clarity we have reached in this regard is the product of self-study reflections and processes (Pithouse,

Mitchell, & Weber, 2009; Samaras, 2013) and contemplative engagement (Zajonc, 2006) over a period of time.

Memory

Like Chang (2008, p. 55), we found that "personal memory is a marvellous and unique source of information for autoethnographers. It taps into the reservoir of data to which other ethnographers have no access." We concur with Chang (2011, p. 18) that

> no matter how many researchers participate in the co-construction process and which model of collaboration they adopt, their interactions draw out rich perspectives beyond those of anyone researcher. One researcher's story stirs another researcher's memory; one's probing questions unsettles another's assumptions; one's action demands another's reaction. All autoethnographers as participant–researchers not only make decisions about their research process but also keep each other accountable. Although not without challenges, these methodological strengths have made such collaboration worthwhile.

We believe that writing about our individual perceptions and perspectives about our role relationships has enriched and enhanced our interactions, and taken them to a new level of confidence and trust, which has manifest in a greater degree of understanding, forthrightness, and frankness in our conversations. In researching our practice, autobiography is valuable. It enhances our understanding of how our past shapes our present (Coia & Taylor, 2009, p. 5) and our future.

Voice and Writing

We bore in mind that "voice cannot be considered an innocent and straight forward way to account for 'self', and that power, subjectivity and desire shape the ways in which individuals speak of their present situation and of their lives" (Grant et al., 2013, p. 7). In the writing, editing and reviewing process, we have discarded and adopted ideas and content repeatedly, and finally found that writing about our spirituality, and our professional and scholarly roles—which included our meeting with JNGE, Joy, and AGE—were the most appropriate topics for our study. We found, like Grant, Short, and Turner (2013, p. 2) that the story changed and grew as we, the authors authored and re-authored our writing. We also found that when we deliberately delayed resolving our dilemma, we provided an opportunity for us to talk about all sides of the argument before making a final decision (East, Fitzgerald, & Heston, 2009, p. 62).

We found that "the act of writing opens the writer to becoming what is not yet known and what can never be contained in words" (Grant et al., 2013, p. 7), and this contributed to an irresolvable frustration. We agree with Coia and Taylor (2009, p. 15) who pointed out that "there is an important sense in which no co/

autoethnography is ever complete although the findings of each co/autoethnography can be valid."

When we reflected on the many aspects of the experience of co/autoethnography, we found that narrating and reflecting flowed easily, but making it relevant to the research question was more challenging. We had to remove and detach ourselves and adopt a helicopter view so that we were not beguiled by the minutiae of our stories. The detached view enabled us to see connections, commonalities, and patterns, to become aware of the indivisible, holistic, self-organising energetic capacities (in) forming our learning, our experiences and our expression (Capra, 1996; Smuts, 1987). We found that our understanding of the relationship between our physical efforts, our intellectual endeavours, our emotional engagement, and our spiritual preoccupations were all mutually inseparable (Ng, 2005; Palmer, 1999). We believe that we benefited from a "zone of reflective capacity" (Samaras, 2013, p. 522) from our co/autoethnographic self-study that helped us to achieve deeper idiosyncratic and collective insights into ourselves and our practice spiritually, professionally, and socially. But, accounting for an event in response to a question was only a beginning, because the writing only started to make sense when it was contextualised, and then we could see how our written responses contributed significantly to the generation of more writing and a sense of community. We found that writing reflectively was comparatively simple because it was the expression of our lived experience, but that our growing understanding of the nature of the lived experience (Sacks, 1984; Whitehead, 2009) and its expression was at the very least two fold: (1) our inner "gestual" reality (Conolly, 2000, vol. 3, p. 126; Jousse, 2000, p. 574, inter alia) emerging out of a molecular (Pert, 1996) and biochemical (Timm, 2013) "intussusception" (Conolly, 2000, vol. 3, p. 143; Jousse, 2000, p. 576, inter alia) and "register" (Conolly, 2000, vol. 3, p. 289; Jousse, 2000, p. 91, inter alia) into conscious awareness, and (2) "ex-pressing" (Conolly, 2000, p. 110; Jousse, 2000, p. 20, inter alia) into recognisable experiences and understandings in our writing.

From our perspective as writers we found that the co/autoethnographic writing style freed us from abstract impersonal writings and allowed us to use a reader-friendly "personally engaging writing style" that we hoped would reflect the unique voices of the co/autoethnographers (Chang, 2008, p. 52). All of the above notwithstanding, we found that our co/autoethnographic self-study was not comprehensive and exhaustive; telling the whole story, putting the whole event on the page, was simply not possible (Chamberlin, 1997).

Vulnerability and Discomfort

Lunenberg and Samaras (2011, p. 846) reminded us that "because self-study requires one to look inside oneself and one's practice, participants have to be willing to accept occasional discomfort." Participants have to be willing to trust the process and take time to figure things out or take another path and admit that they do not know something, or as in Joan's case, that she had contradicted her own values

and principles. The accrual of highly reflexive, culturally-related self-knowledge can result in a process that is disconcerting and disturbing for the autoethnographer. This relates to the fact that undertaking and publishing autoethnography necessitates a "high level of risk taking in relation to personal disclosure and reader reception" (Grant et al., 2013, p. 11).

There was a point in this self-study that the emerging self-knowledge led to extreme self-doubt and anxiety (Pithouse et al., 2009) for Joan. Delysia's support as a "caring, sensitive and interested critical friend [made] it easier to remain open to further learning and professional development" (Pithouse et al., 2009, p. 47).

Rigour

Our co/autoethnography has demanded high rigorous, courageous, and challenging levels of personal, relational, cultural, and theoretical reflexivity (Grant et al., 2013, p. 5). Co/autoethnography can indeed be daunting (Coia & Taylor, 2009, p. 16), which guards against self-indulgence. Because we were, simultaneously, the persons being written about and the persons writing (Coia & Taylor, 2009, p. 5), we have exercised "unusually rigorous multi-layered levels of researcher reflexivity" (Grant et al., 2013, p. 1) to evidence self-study as a legitimate research undertaking (Gartner, Latham, & Merritt, 1996). To avoid our subjectivity being "confused with solipsism or self-indulgence" (Grant et al., 2013, p. 4), and to address "the danger of the unbridled subjectivity of autoethnographies" (Chang, 2008, p. 55), we found that it was necessary to use each other, a video recording, and handwritten notes as multiple sources of data to provide bases for triangulation that enhanced the content of the co/autoethnographic writing.

We found that when researching the self, there is no place to hide. While "genuine vulnerability is also essential in dialogue-based self-study" (East et al., 2009, p. 67), the self-data we established as a result of this co/autoethnographic self-study process has provided us with learning opportunities which we analyse and interpret for our future use and for the use of others should they find them relevant.

FINAL COMMENTS

We believe that what we have individually and collectively brought to the research process is the result of who we, the collaborators are, what we do, and how we do it (McNiff, 2008). We believe that we are now less naïve about our practice because of the space created by the "I writing and the I being written about" (Coia & Taylor, 2009, p. 5). We found that "self-study as 'inquiry-guided' research demands a great deal from its participants" (Tidwell et al., 2009, p. v). This notwithstanding, we have tried to show that if self-study is to be effective, it can, and must, focus on others, as well as the individual (Tidwell et al., 2009, p. v). We understand that, when done with a critical gaze, "self-study facilitates professional growth in ways that not only

end up changing oneself, but also serve as impetus for tackling the wider social problems that contextualise our individual lives" (Mitchell et al., 2009, p. 119).

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NOTES

1 http://www.saqa.org.za/docs/legislation/2010/act101.pdf

2 In August 2009, Claudia Mitchell opened, memorably, a crucially important workshop to promote self-study at Durban University of Technology with a wide, welcoming and embracing gesture, and the words: "Self-study is a broad church."

3 I was encouraged to create HoLIT in 2006 by the late Liz Harrison.

4 The rug is woven in purple, gold, yellow, green and white, and fringed to match.

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JOAN WALTON AND NIGEL HARRISSON

12. INTEGRATING FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD PERSON RESEARCH TO LEAD THE CREATION OF A LEARNING ORGANISATION

A Self-Study Dialogue between Doctoral Supervisor and Student

INTRODUCTION

We, Nigel and Joan, have been working together for four years in our respective roles as doctoral student and supervisor. In his position as leader within children's services in a United Kingdom local authority, Nigel was interested in researching how he could influence others to create a learning organisation that increased the inclusion of children in schools. Inclusion in this context refers to children and young people with disabilities or special educational needs, or those who are at risk of exclusion from the education system, which is focused primarily on academic attainment. He did not find that third person research into either leadership or learning organisations was useful on its own in helping him improve his leadership practice, and was attracted to a form of first person research that would allow him to inquire into his own values-based practice in his unique professional environment.

Joan was working in an academic context that did not value first person self-study research, and privileged traditional methodologies that perceived the researcher as investigating a reality that existed independently of herself or himself. She was engaged in a critical re-questioning of the relationship between research, knowledge, and professional practice. Drawing on action research literature, Joan was exploring the ways in which first, second, and third person approaches to research could be integrated to allow knowledge contributing to the public good to be grounded in researching personal and collaborative practice. Bradbury and Reason (2003) explained the integration of first, second, and third person forms of inquiry as follows:

> In the course of our work we have come to believe that first person inquiry is the foundation for all good action research; however, second person inquiry is the arena where the most energy and practical opportunity for really impacting practice occurs—while third person work is, finally, the most important, as it affects the conditions which ultimately shape the future context in which first and second person work can occur. Keeping an eye to integrating the three

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 215–230.

> modes, and always being concerned with working in at least two modes, is especially important. (pp. 169–170)

In this context, it is important to differentiate between the grammatical usage of *second person*, which applies when addressing another, from its meaning within the action research literature. In action research, it commonly means *me with you*, as in a cooperative inquiry, which often in practice becomes simplified to *we*. However, focusing on the idea of second person rather than first person plural, emphasises the inclusion of the other as a conscious choice. In making this choice, attention is paid to the quality of relationship between *me* and *you*, where each of us makes ourself open and vulnerable to the other.

This chapter tells the story, in the form of a dialogue, of a self-study of the evolving supervisory relationship between Nigel and Joan as they shared each other's ideas and experiences. The aim was to enable Nigel to make an original contribution to knowledge based on his own individual and collaborative practice, which others could use and build on in their professional settings.

SETTING THE CONTEXT

We met at a British Educational Research Association (BERA) conference in Manchester, United Kingdom (UK), in 2009. Joan's early career was as a social worker, followed by many years in the education and development of adults working in education, health, and social care settings. She had recently been appointed as an academic in the Faculty of Education at a UK University, with a remit to set up the Centre for the Child, Family and Society. Nigel, having started his professional life as a science teacher, became a qualified educational psychologist, gaining extensive experience of working with children excluded from schools. He was then Education Inclusion Manager within Children's Services in a local authority in the south west of England. We were introduced by Dr Jack Whitehead,[1] who had been Joan's doctoral supervisor (Walton, 2008) and who attended Nigel's "conversation café", a small group of about 10 people who met on a weekly basis to discuss issues of mutual professional interest.

At the time of meeting, we had a considerable amount in common. We were both in our mid-50s; we had had interesting and successful careers; we were generally more motivated to engage in action that was meaningful and of social value, than that which led to higher income or improved employment status; and a shared aim was to improve the well-being and life chances of children and young people. In addition, we had both come to the same view that there was more to understanding the world than traditional research methodologies permitted.

Nigel was attracted to the idea of undertaking doctoral study—not for the qualification in itself, but because he considered he was creating useful knowledge in his work as a leader of children's services. He was interested in exploring how to articulate this and make a valid contribution to relevant academic literature.

Although in his role he was five steps removed from children and young people, Nigel was committed to influencing the practice of the staff he managed, with the ultimate goal of improving the inclusion of children in schools. He had for many years been reading about theories on leadership (Adair, 1983; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Kouzes & Posner, 2002) and learning organisations (Argyris, 1999; Senge, 1990), and his aim was to play a leadership role in recreating the service he managed as a learning organisation.

Joan had made the decision to enter the academic world because she considered there were many professionals, like Nigel, who were generating valuable professional knowledge in their work with children and families as they engaged in dialogue and critical reflection in the course of their working lives. But this knowledge, deeply embedded within them, was often lost when they retired because they had not had either the time or the encouragement to articulate it in a form that was seen as a credible addition to knowledge within the academic world. Indeed her experience was that the academic world tended to be critical of such forms of research and knowledge creation. In the meantime, much research undertaken within universities was generally not relevant or practically useful to professionals in their daily lives.

Both of us had come to the conclusion that there was a significant gap between the knowledge produced by academic research, which generally valued third person research methodologies, and the application of that knowledge in day-to-day practice. Joan's interest was to supervise professionals interested in grounding their doctoral research in their own practice, and to generate knowledge that would be of value to other practitioners as well as to academics.

This, of course, had major implications for the choice of research methodology selected by the researcher; and demonstrated the great divide between the academic and the professional worlds. Universities are still dominated by the idea that the world exists independently of the observer, and that a researcher can only gain valid knowledge if investigating from a third person perspective. Such a view remains firmly grounded despite considerable evidence that challenges it from, for example, research findings in quantum physics, which suggests a participatory universe where everything is interconnected rather than separate (Wallace, 2007; Wheeler, 1994).

The university where Joan was appointed supported third-person research, showing little interest in developing research undertaken from a first person perspective. However, when given permission to start the Centre for the Child, Family and Society as a research centre specialising in action research, Joan requested that Jack Whitehead be appointed for a period of time as an adjunct professor to help her with the development of the centre. The request was approved, and Whitehead fulfilled this role for 3 years.

Whitehead has developed an approach to research that he terms, living educational theory (1989). This approach focuses on a self-study of researchers' own practice. Their aim is to hold their lives to account by producing explanations of the educational influences in their own learning in enquiries of the kind, "How can I improve what I

am doing?" Evidence of an original contribution to knowledge is usually through the researcher creating a personal standard of judgement against which their claims to an improvement in their practice will be judged and evaluated. In living educational theory, the researcher is encouraged to include an explanation of "the educational influences of individuals …. in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which we live and work" (Whitehead, 2008, p. 105). However, little attention is placed on methods for inquiring together with others, nor in ensuring that their research results in findings that have social value that can be built on. The focus is on the first person experience of researchers and the knowledge that emerges in the course of their practice, which leads to an improvement in their practice.

In this chapter, we are focusing on a topic that was part of an ongoing discussion in supervision—that is, the place of first, second, and third person perspectives in research, and the relative value of each. The role of researcher was a key issue for Nigel from the outset, given his early experience as a science teacher privileging third person methodologies, and his current situation in a weekly group that approached research from a living educational theory perspective, which is undertaken from an "I" perspective. Our joint aim in this self-study dialogue is to present some of the questions, challenges, tensions, and resolutions that arose in the process of Nigel pursuing his doctoral study.

THE USE OF DIALOGUE

In this chapter, we are using dialogue as a literary device that enabled us to present the essence of each of our perspectives, and our influence on each other's thinking, as our ideas evolved over time in a mutually informing way.

Dialogue has been used extensively as a literary device in fictional literature, allowing the actual voices of each character in a story to be heard in a way that is congruent with their individual personalities. The to-and-fro of the exchange of information, ideas, and thoughts that exist within the minds of the characters can be presented in an animated and conversational way. By emphasising the human interaction, dialogue prevents literature from becoming an extended list of descriptions, analyses, and actions. We believe it has a comparable role to play in communicating research.

When conversing, we have not been aiming to achieve final and absolute conclusions. Lyotard (1979) contended there has been an abandonment of any attempt to find a "grand narrative" that allows for the accurate prediction of human behaviour. We welcome such an abandonment because the participatory worldview that informs our research challenges it as a possibility. We are, though, in accord with Rorty's response to Lyotard, when he said, "we want to drop meta-narratives, but keep on recounting first-order narratives" (1992, p. 60). However, although narrative has been widely used as a method of presenting research (Clough, 2002; Czarniawska-Joerges, 2004), the use of dialogue as a means of representing an exchange of narratives has not been as commonly adopted.

We have found that what is often missing from textbooks on research methodologies are the values, assumptions, and worldviews that inform different approaches. As the conversation progressed, we realised how choices of methodology are greatly influenced by the worldview of the researcher. The more implicit the values, assumptions, and worldview, the more it can be taken for granted that a particular approach to research is the "right" one. It was our experience that these elements need to be clarified and made explicit.

In discussing key issues such as these, the nature of the supervisory relationship was influenced by values shared by both of us, and which included mutual respect and inclusiveness. In reflecting how we could express these in our cowriting, we thought that rather than just talk about our values, we would use dialogue as a means of demonstrating our commitment throughout our supervisory relationship to truly listen and be responsive to each other's contributions. We hope that you, the reader, reach the end of the chapter feeling that we have achieved this.

Nigel

I have a background in the physical sciences, and grew up with the positivist assumptions of the physical sciences, that is, that the world is made up of the building blocks of matter, and that we generate knowledge through what we can observe and measure; indeed, even now in my work on education inclusion, I live in a world that values measures, SMART[2] targets, and psychometrics. Throughout my educational experience, I have been taught, and have taken for granted, the belief that only third person research will provide the objective and impartial evidence required to discover the "truth" about the world.

However, in the regular conversation café conversations with Jack Whitehead, and talking with others who were engaged in living educational theory approaches to research, I became attracted to first person research, and believe there are grounds for challenging the supremacy of third person research. It was not that I was hearing about this for the first time; what we discussed was resonating with an unease I had felt for a number of years. That unease derived from a belief that there were different ways of knowing; but if I mentioned these in the past, they were quickly dismissed as not being objective or scientific, and therefore of little worth.

One particular influence was reading work by Wolff-Michael Roth (2012), a mathematician steeped in third person thinking, who came to embrace the praxis of first person research, and apply it to his understanding of the world of mathematics and how mathematics is taught.

I began my doctoral studies feeling a tension between a belief in how knowledge was acquired that I had learned about throughout my early education, which was, and continues to be, sanctioned academically and socially, and a growing belief that, in fact, such research does not recognise the uniqueness of the life experiences, values, and work context of the committed professional wishing to make a positive difference in the world—which is what I strive to do.

Joan

Yes, I can see the tension this creates for you, Nigel. But cannot you do both third person and first person research? And indeed, whilst we are looking at this, how about considering where second person research fits in?

When I was developing the Centre for the Child, Family and Society, I was supporting research that was grounded in a person's own practice because I too, had a strong belief in the value of subjective experience. However, I am in accord with Bradbury and Reason (2003) who considered that good action research should integrate first, second, and third person forms of inquiry.

My commitment to the integration of first, second, and third person forms of research began with the writing of my doctoral thesis. As part of my doctoral inquiry, I initiated a cooperative inquiry (Heron, 1996) where I coresearched with others about what could be done to create positive change in the world at a time of many local and global crises. At an early stage of the enquiry, group members concurred that the only person one could change was oneself; so was born the phrase, transform the world through transforming self.

Consequently, it was agreed that for any researchers wishing to make a positive difference in the world, it was important they start with researching their own lives and professional practice (first person). Then in dialogue with others, and through sharing experiences, reflections, and learning, a form of collaboratively created knowledge emerges (second person), which may be worthwhile presenting in a form which is of value and relevance to others (third person). This can then be used as a resource by individuals engaging in their own subjective inquiries, and so a circular process is created whereby the I, we, and them are engaged in a mutually informing and growing body of embodied, tacit, and explicit knowledge.

Nigel

I can see the attraction of that, Joan. I need to think through, however, how I enable that integration. Although I am critical about the dominance of third person research, I am not saying I don't accept its value. It has served me well over the years in my work as an analytical chemist and science teacher.

However, it does not feel appropriate for me in my current situation where I am dealing with people who live by their values, who are serving people vulnerable to failure in the education system, and where positive, meaningful relationships are paramount to effective practice. Most of my initial reading on leadership and learning organisations was on traditional research, which usually takes an outsider perspective from which the focus of investigation is other people, phenomena, or events. Traditional researchers often offer explanations for how others are behaving, but aim to do so from a detached, objective perspective. They are reflecting the positivist scientific perspective, where the belief is that they will be able to produce theories that have a generalisable application.

It is in this context that I think first person research needs to be considered. Human beings are not replicable, mechanical objects; we are not machines, to be observed, manipulated, and controlled. Each one of us is unique, and there are things that are vitally important to us in everyday practice, which are not easily measured. For example, how can the love and care I have for my children, and the children for whom I have responsibility, be measured? An obvious example of our uniqueness would be in recognising the different values we each hold, which inspire us to live and work in a particular kind of way. Mine happen to include fairness, caring, compassion, and inclusion. These influence my decisions and actions every day and in everything I do on a moment-by-moment basis. This is not to say I get it right all the time, but the way I am in the world, and the actions I take, are influenced by the values that are meaningful to me.

Other people live by different values, and will make different choices in similar situations. Traditional social science research does not allow for this, as some researchers recognise. For example, Argyris (1999) in his extensive work on learning organisations, questioned its effectiveness when studying how organisations learn. Indeed, he went so far as to suggest that new forms of research are required:

> the criteria for (objectivity, precision and completeness) should take into account the features of the way the human mind works when human beings try to use the knowledge that social scientists produce. (p. 428)

In addition, Argyris (1999, p. 429) explicitly addressed the issue of values, which he said are "often recognised but rarely discussed" and the constraints traditional social science research places on researchers—not on what to study but on how to study, which indirectly may influence the choice of what is studied:

> less attention may be paid to the possibility of developing normative views, views that not only question the status quo but produce knowledge about how to alter it. Further, less attention might be paid to the possibility that research designed to produce understanding on an issue may be designed quite differently than research on the same issue designed to produce understanding for the purposes of action.
>
> It is not true, I believe, that social scientists are neutral about the kind of society in which they live. Even the most 'anti' applied researchers value a society in which they are free to conduct research. Such societies would have to value experimentation and learning, which, if truly unfettered, would also require the valuing of risk taking and trust. Such a society, in turn, is unlikely to come to exist without human beings who are willing to accept personal responsibility for their actions. (p. 429)

So I can see that both first and third person research play an important role in different kinds of knowledge generation, and it seems to me that there are traditional scientists who understand the value of the subjective perspective. However in my

experience, it has tended to be an either/or, with no integration—nor indeed does it include the second person.

Joan

Actually, Nigel, I think you are doing yourself a discredit here. Or perhaps your perspective is slightly different to mine.

In your research, you are engaging with your colleagues in order to learn how to create a learning organisation. Now you may just see that as focusing on yourself, on first person research, because you are improving your practice through living your values in your relationships with others. However, my understanding is that you are focusing on others in addition to yourself; in other words, you are inquiring with them in relation to how you can work collaboratively to improve the inclusion of children with whom you work. It may be the I who is thinking about how to improve your practice in relation to engaging others, but once the I has been successful in that, it becomes the we who are inquiring into what you can do together. The attention then is placed on issues such as improving teamwork and making better use of meetings.

So in writing your thesis, I would suggest you pay attention to the collective dynamic of your work. Don't just see this as, I seeking to put my values into practice and providing evidence of my influence in relation to others. In the kind of research you are doing, I would see this as necessary but not sufficient. In addition, ask yourself questions such as, "what needs to happen for the we to work together as a team?" What are you asking of other people, and what are the key elements of your collaborative practice that you believe are contributing to the creation of the learning organisation? There is a saying, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and you are aiming to facilitate a process whereby everyone takes responsibility for the creation of the whole—where everyone involved is approaching what they do as a we as well as an I.

This may seem a subtle distinction, but that is why I talk about integration—because when both the I and the we are seen as equally important, a different kind of theory emerges than when either is given predominance. For example, conventional theories of teamwork are qualitatively different to any theory that focuses on an individual skill such as counselling. In your work, you will be aiming to create a theory of practice that explains and improves the connection between individual and collaborative practice.

If an integration of research that includes both the I and the we can be achieved, you can provide evidence of how effective this approach is to the creation of a learning organisation in which the inclusion of children is demonstrably increased. The third person dimension is introduced by writing up your research in a way that enables others to understand how they too can create learning organisations using this methodological approach. There is currently no research that has been undertaken into creating learning organisations that use this methodology; consequently you

will be making an original contribution to knowledge, which is a requirement of your doctoral thesis. Given that there is considerable interest across many sectors as to how to create a learning organisation, you will be offering research that has substantial social value, which others can use and build on.

Nigel

I am beginning to understand what you mean by integrating first, second, and third person perspectives, and how this can be achieved through my own research. But this whole dialogue is making me question even more radically the forms of research we privilege in our western society. The more I explore the nature of research, the more I become puzzled about the apparent dichotomy between first person and third person approaches; and in the meantime, second person seems even more neglected and marginalised than first person. Surely, it makes more sense to engage in research that assumes the circular and dynamic interconnection between the individual, family, local community, and planetary community.

Joan

Part of the problem, Nigel, is the worldview that informs the way research is currently practiced in mainstream western academia. Traditional research, even in education, is informed by classical Newtonian science, that is, the world is perceived to operate as a machine. It is believed that reality can be broken down into separate, discrete parts, and manipulated into different, predetermined forms. There is a conviction that the behaviour of the different parts, which make up the whole (with each individual human being constituting a part), can be observed, measured, predicted, and controlled.

The assumption here is that there are laws built into the universe, which regulate what can happen. The aim of research is to discover what those laws are, so that all behaviour can be anticipated and managed. This forms the basis of much educational research that is undertaken, even in our classrooms; for example, the belief that if we set educational targets for children, we can then discover the methods that will enable those targets to be achieved, as though the children themselves are little machines that can be observed, analysed, and controlled.

However, although most researchers in universities have not realised or acknowledged it, the Newtonian worldview can and has been challenged, even from within science itself. For example, quantum theory has revealed that the observer, the observed, and the act of observation are intricately interrelated. John Wheeler, a theoretical physicist who was a colleague of both Albert Einstein and Niels Bohr, stated: "Useful as it is under everyday circumstances to say that the world exists 'out there' independent of us, that view can no longer be upheld. There is a strange sense in which this is a 'participatory universe'" (1994, p. 126). Wheeler suggested that, rather than being passive bystanders in the world, we are instead active participants,

who create rather than discover the universe with which we are interacting: "Directly opposite to the concept of universe as machine built on law, is the vision of a world self-synthesized" (1999, p. 314).

If we accept this participatory worldview, as educational researchers such as Reason and Bradbury (2007) and Heron (1996) have done, the nature of research is transformed. There is a recognition of the interconnection between all living things, and the impossibility of observing one part of the universe, including human beings, as though each exists independently of all else. Researching from a participatory worldview suggests that the question should not be: "What methods can we use to discover the 'truth' about the universe?" but rather, "What kind of world do we want to live in, and what research methods will help us generate the knowledge we need to create that world?"

It is in such a context that the kind of research that you are doing, and other research that is grounded in first person practice, will prove not just valid, but hugely significant in enabling us to learn how to create a world where all people can live in peace and harmony, and can flourish, individually and collectively.

Nigel

This all makes a lot of sense, Joan. I have had two experiences that I think are relevant to this conversation. The first was an incident in my late teens, the impact of which has, I believe, had an influence on all that I have been and done since then. It was in 1972, at the time of the Vietnam War, and I saw what has now become an iconic photograph, of a young naked girl running down the centre of the road, in horrendous pain because her clothes had just been burnt off her after a napalm bomb had exploded in her village. It was not just the anguish of the child that struck me; it was the fact that in the photo, there were also several soldiers, who were not doing anything to help her. My immediate response was: "I'm buggered if I am going to be a bystander and watch children get hurt!!"

Since that time, my passion has been to improve the life chances of children, and to ease any suffering they may be experiencing. This has often led me into conflict with people who have different sets of values. I think this next incident, although seemingly simple, highlights the kind of issues involved.

I was driving my car through a busy urban street in the middle of the day. The traffic came to a standstill due to temporary traffic lights at road works. As I waited for the lights to change, I saw a woman on the opposite side of the road struggling with a wheelchair that had a child sitting in it. She crossed the road in front of me, then attempted to get the wheelchair up the steep kerb onto the pavement. Aware that the lights might change, and I might generate the wrath of other drivers by holding up the traffic, I nevertheless jumped out of the car. I lifted up the wheelchair on to the pavement, made sure the young person was okay, empathised briefly with the woman about the difficult situation she had been in, and returned to my car. In that brief episode, I felt I created a connection with the woman and child, where they

experienced being recognised and valued. In that moment, I felt I was sharing my humanity—and for me, it was an important thing to do.

I am seeing my research as an autoethnographic self-study, and this incident, which has remained a highly significant one for me, has helped me reflect on personal thoughts, feelings, and values that have motivated my actions on a moment-by-moment basis, in the context of the values and attitudes of mainstream society. Immediately before jumping out of the car, I was aware that there were risks of going to the woman's help in terms of the responses of other people held up in the queue. You have been talking of a mechanistic worldview; and yes, most people around me would be seeing the situation in somewhat mechanical terms—traffic lights turn to red, cars stop, drivers focus on when lights will go green, so that cars can start moving again. Any event that delayed that process would be seen in negative terms—the machine was failing to work. There would be a search for the cause of that failure (in this situation, the driver who had left his car), and when they identified that cause, they would probably engage in action to remedy the situation—for example, press their horns, or open the window and shout at him—actions which would have the aim of pressurising him to return to the car.

This envisaged response reflects the mechanistic paradigm that you have just been talking about, and which dominates our western scientific culture, where reality exists independently of the observer, and self is separate from other. One of the reasons why I am attracted to autoethnography is because, according to Ellingson and Ellis (2008), it rejects these deep-rooted binary oppositions. In this narrative, I am showing how I am challenging them. Even as my rational mind was registering the possible thoughts of those who saw me as other, I was moving towards the woman and child. Driving me was my impassioned mantra, "I'm not going to be a bystander and watch children get hurt." My values of inclusion, fairness, caring, and compassion led me to see the two people and the wheelchair as an inclusive part of the immediate environment, where they had as much right as anyone else to continue their journey, and I was in a position to help them do so.

Joan

That is an interesting event, Nigel. In acting in this way, you were being a role model for the worldview and values that you live by. Leadership is one of the key concepts and practices you are exploring in your inquiry; although this incident happened within your personal space, you were demonstrating your belief in the fluidity and dynamic interconnection of all aspects of life by playing a leadership role, in that you were modelling the way, which is the first practice of exemplary leadership according to Kouzes and Pozner (2002). You are also reflecting Robert Greenleaf's idea of servant leadership, in which the focus is primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. Robert Greenleaf wrote: "This is my thesis: caring for persons …. is the rock upon which a good society is built" (1977, p. 49).

In this brief moment in time, it seems you clearly saw two different kinds of worlds: one in which inhabitants identify as separate players in a context where each player prioritises her or his own interests, and is governed by laws and measureable standards of behaviour; the other where individuals see themselves as interconnected within an ultimate unity, and act in ways that are in the best interests of all.

Nigel

There is a critical difference between those two very different perceptions: one that reflects the mechanistic worldview, the other reflecting a participatory one. Is one "true" and the other not? If so, how do we discover which is more valid than the other? Or, as you were suggesting in your analysis of different worldviews, rather than reality defining whether the universe is mechanistic or participatory, is it in fact we who have the power to decide which kind of universe we want to live in, and then make choices which help create that kind of universe?

I agree with you: I believe it is the second. So the question I was asking myself as I continued with my journey was: "What needs to happen to get to a point where I could be comfortable going to the help of the woman and child, knowing that all other participants in the situation would take the time to understand the total situation, would recognise and appreciate that I was caring for another human being's welfare, and would be prepared to act themselves in the service of others if they could see a way to do so?" What approach to the creation of knowledge do we need if we are to learn how to craft that kind of world? Is this not the kind of knowledge that urgently needs creating?

Reflecting on this apparently simple incident has led to me recognising a relationship with my professional work. I am employed in an organisation that reflects the mechanistic worldview, and where people are managed through a process of organisational rules, and measurable targets. However, I perceive the organisation and all those it serves as an interconnected unity, where everyone involved should be committed to improving the inclusion of children and young people in ways that enhance their well-being and life chances. I care deeply about the well-being of all participants involved in this process; through seeking to live my values of compassion, fairness, caring and inclusion in all aspects of work, there has emerged a form of practice that I term, caring leadership.

Joan

I can see how this incident with the woman, child, and wheelchair has served to clarify for you the two different worldviews that I am exploring in depth. They represent very different and mutually exclusive ways of responding to the same situation, and provide a living example that enables a discussion of the implications of each worldview. In reflecting on this situation, you have been able to articulate for

yourself what kind of world you believe in, why you believe in it, and how you can play your part in contributing to the creation of this kind of world.

Nigel

Further, in developing my idea of a caring leader, and telling the story of what this means for me in the development of myself, my staff, and my organisation, I am showing how my values have become so deeply embedded that they spontaneously influence my behaviour even whilst sitting in a traffic queue. In the writing of my thesis, I am also telling the story of how I have learned to live my values out in practice in ways that have contributed to the achievement of my guiding vision—that is, to enhance the inclusion of children in school, and in so doing, to lessen the level of hurt in children's lives. I hope that in the process, I am demonstrating the dynamic interconnection between my practice, the collaborative practice with others, and the emerging knowledge that is shared and developed in forms that enable others to learn and use for themselves if they wish.

Joan

Yes Nigel. And in the cowriting of this chapter, although it is portraying our work together through the medium of a brief conversation, it does in fact reflect a dialogue that has evolved over four years. In it, we have shown how my interest in bringing together first, second, and third person research has been enhanced through travelling with you on your journey to develop yourself as a leader of an organisation that is actively learning how to improve the inclusion of children. From your perspective, you have resolved the tension you felt existed between first and third person research, created by the belief that you had to choose between them.

However, there is a final point I would like to raise before we finally bring this dialogue to an end. The reviewers of our chapter have asked us to comment on the process that lead to this written piece, to include a consideration of how the institutional power imbalance and difference in our roles has influenced that process. I can respond to the first part of this request by explaining that I wrote the initial draft based on my understanding of both our perspectives, then sent it to you for your feedback regarding accuracy, and to make as many changes and additions as you felt appropriate. We continued that process of exchange over a period of about two months, which included two meetings where we were able to discuss the content in some depth. The completed draft was sent off; then, when comments were received from reviewers, this iterative process was reinstated and continued.

I know that in writing this chapter, I took a lead role, and readers might wonder if you felt pressurised to accept what I had written. I don't feel that was the case but we have agreed that, given the nature of the question, it is important that you take the lead role in responding to this point!

Nigel

Reflecting on the process Joan, I think we would agree that the relationship between us, built over a 4-year period, was an important factor. When we met in Manchester for the first time, you had just started work on the Centre for the Child, Family and Society and I was working in a local authority as Senior Leader for Inclusion. I felt there was a resonance of values between us and I immediately felt relaxed in the presence of a kindred spirit. That relationship continued to develop, not despite the fact that you were an academic and I was a practitioner, but because of it!

I also know that part of what we shared was the frustration that third person explanations did not always fit with our lived experiences as practitioners; somehow, we were driven to find explanations for our own thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that made sense to us, within our worldview. Importantly, although our job roles at the time were different and there was inevitably a built in tutor–tutee power relationship, I consider our relationship to be based primarily on shared values and principles—that is, doing the right thing for children and families.

To spell this out a little more, I think we both brought different, but equally valuable, perspectives to the relationship and the interactive dialogues, which meant, because of our backgrounds and shared understandings, we were able to challenge and counter challenge each other in a professional and meaningful way that enabled us to genuinely listen to each other (Rogers, 1967) and reflect on our practice (Schon, 1991).

Within our professional relationship I consider you, Joan, to be primarily an academic and coming from that first person perspective in our work together; but as you had been a practitioner for many years working with vulnerable children and families, you had an understanding of my worldview. For me, the situation was virtually reversed; my first person perspective is primarily as a practitioner, but I have experience of the academic role—for although I had not worked in any substantive academic post, my studies have been extensive, over a long period of time, and I have an insight into the world of academia.

In I-and-you working together in our complementary capacities, with our shared value base of fairness and inclusion, together we were able to support and challenge each other in a way that was able to create knowledge.

I know you wrote the first draft of this paper Joan (and I'm grateful for the time you committed to it), however, when I read the draft I was delighted, but not surprised, with your depth of understanding of my perspective. I'm sure that was only possible through a genuine shared, collaborative, and meaningful process that is fully accepting of different perspectives, and which has the potential to lead to new understandings.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

We think we can say little more at this stage, other than to suggest that if others are interested in engaging in a similar model of self-study through dialogue, there would

need to be a confidence in the nature of the creative relationship, and a recognition that agreeing and living out a shared value base would be an important factor in ensuring a good outcome. The main learning from this self-study and dialogue centres on the researchers' ability to reflect on their practice (supported by a supervisor as critical friend) in relation to their life experiences; this can generate not only theories in practice but influence actual practices. In Nigel's case his life experiences have created his worldview and a way of being in the world that has influenced the way he leads his organisation—a caring leadership. In studying self in this way, it is possible to create knowledge—a way of understanding the world which is likely to be more meaningful than attempting to understand the world through the theories created by others.

In writing the chapter for inclusion in this book, our hope is that we have provided an illustration of how, in each of us making our individual contributions in a dynamic exchange where we have each been responsive to the other, we are communicating the learning that has emerged from our collaboration in a form that others can learn and benefit from. We can therefore offer this as providing a further example of how it is possible to integrate the I, we, and them within a research context.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTES

[1] Formerly a lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of Bath.
[2] SMART is an acronym for specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-limited.

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13. BREATHING UNDER WATER

A Transcontinental Conversation about the "Why" of Co-Facilitating Transdisciplinary Self-Study Learning Communities

> I wondered about Delysia's remark of "breathing underwater" in the conversation . It captures that idea of the impossible being possible, but also the capacity to enter a seemingly dangerous and alien environment, and thrive there through letting go of preconceptions.
>
> —Lesley Smith, September 28, 2014

INTRODUCTION

What would happen if individuals from different higher education institutions on different continents gathered to dialogue about their collaborative work in facilitating transdisciplinary self-study learning communities? What could they learn from a transinstitutional and transcontinental conversation about why they enable faculty or university educators'[1] self-study research? Who would such a conversation matter to?

The preceding chapters in this book exemplify polyvocal professional learning through self-study research as phenomenon (what) and method (how). Overall, these transdisciplinary exemplars comprise a complex conversation about supporting and enacting professional learning, with self-study methodology at the centre. This chapter extends that conversation by bringing into dialogue multiple perspectives on the personal and professional impetus for working with others to enable self-study research. In other words, the chapter focuses on the *why* of co-facilitating transdisciplinary self-study learning communities.

In different places, and seemingly at the same time, the coauthors of this chapter have been working with colleagues to support university educators in originating and directing their own professional learning through self-study research. Our individual projects in facilitating self-study learning communities take place at our respective universities in the United States of America (USA) and South Africa. Lynne, Anastasia, and Lesley work as co-facilitators of a third transdisciplinary

K. Pithouse-Morgan & A. P. Samaras (Eds.), Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research, 231–252.

faculty self-study group at George Mason University (GMU) in the USA. Lynne and Lesley were participants in the first faculty self-study group at GMU, which was facilitated by Anastasia. Lesley and Anastasia also co-facilitated the second faculty self-study group. Kathleen, Theresa, Thenjiwe, Delysia, and Joan are the leaders[2] of a cross-university self-study research project hosted by three universities in South Africa: the Durban University of Technology (DUT), the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and Walter Sisulu University (WSU).

It is not a coincidence that we have found each other across an ocean because of our passion and curiosities surrounding the uniqueness and significance of our work. We have researched our practice as facilitators of transdisciplinary self-study, suggesting how institutions of higher education might rethink and support that growth (Harrison, Pithouse-Morgan, Conolly, & Meyiwa, 2012; Samaras, 2013, Samaras et al., 2014a; van Laren et al., 2014). Initial exchanges about our university-based projects suggested to us not only the pedagogic and academic value of our work as a unique avenue for professional learning, but also the importance of bringing into dialogue our diverse points of view from innovative and productive spaces in our programmes, colleges, and institutions in different continents and hemispheres.

Why could each of us identify with Delysia's comment that, as co-facilitators of self-study learning communities, we sometimes felt as if we were "breathing underwater?" We represent our discoveries made through "select[ing] different interpretive practices and methodological tools" (Badley, 2014, p. 664) in a bricolage self-study method (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2014). Kincheloe (2001) described methodological bricolage as "using any methods necessary to gain new perspectives on objects of inquiry" and explained that "as researchers draw together divergent forms of research, they gain the unique insight of multiple perspectives" (p. 687). The "multiperspectival" (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 682) dialogue we represent in this chapter is an invitation to others to extend the conversation about co-facilitating transdisciplinary self-study research for polyvocal professional learning.

AIMS OF OUR TRANSCONTINENTAL CONVERSATION

The purpose of our transcontinental exchange was to learn from each others' perspectives with a focus on our rationale for the why of our work. Each of our self-study projects was framed in our understandings of the intersections of individual and collective cognition in faculty development and within a learning community of engaged scholarship (Lave & Wenger, 1991). We understand the "self" in self-study as embedded in a web of relationships, but free to take purposeful action within it. Vygotsky (1960/1981) asserted that learning, thinking, and knowing arise through collaboration and reappropriating feedback from others, and a willingness to learn with and from each other. Our work is premised on the understanding that personal knowledge and knowing is extended through dialogue (Wegerif, 2006) and openness to others' points of view. Actions and thoughts are culturally mediated, "indirectly

shaped by forces that originate in the dynamics of communication" (Wertsch, 1985, p. 81). Hence, the polyvocal learning conversation that we exemplify here is as candid and nonlinear as possible.

In this conversation, we wanted to practise and model our learning as co-facilitators who move outside our institutional and cultural contexts to examine the impetus for what we do. Whereas faculty members historically work in an individualistic and segregated fashion reflecting the "different vocabularies" of their diverse disciplines (Smith, 1997, p. 7), our conversation across specialisations, institutions, and continents gave us an opportunity to generate new knowing and a new, shared language that was presented, negotiated, and reviewed through dialogue. Kitchen, Ciuffetelli-Parker, and Gallagher (2008) noted that "authentic conversations about practice encourage education professors to remain committed to teacher education while fulfilling their scholarly responsibilities" (p. 169), and here we add the importance of that work for all university educators.

Facilitating faculty self-study groups has been conducted by teacher educators (Grierson, Tessaro, Cantalini-Williams, Grant, & Denton, 2010; Hoban, 2007; Lunenberg, Zwart, & Korthagen, 2010). We contribute to and extend that knowledge base in this chapter in our research about facilitating transdisciplinary self-study learning communities. We also examine our conversation methodologically with the aim of contributing to, and extending, recent work on bricolage as a polyvocal self-study method in which a hybrid of research practices are brought together to generate new insights (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2014).

In this chapter, we focus on our face-to-face and virtual connections, which took place in and between South Africa, England, and the USA. We first describe the context of our work at our home institutions. Next, we explain how our transcontinental self-study research collaboration began. We go on to demonstrate our self-study bricolage research process and illustrate our mutual discoveries. To end, we consider the possible significance of our conversation—for ourselves and for others.

OUR DIVERSE PROJECTS AND CONTEXTS

USA: Scholars of Studying Teaching Collaborative (SoSTC), Scholars of Studying Teaching Collaborative on e-Learning (SoSTCe-L,), and Self-Study of Scholars' Collaborative (S^3C) on the Visually Rich Digital Learning Environment.

George Mason University (GMU), the largest public university in Virginia, is "an innovative and inclusive academic community committed to creating a more just, free, and prosperous world" (http://vision.gmu.edu/the-mason-vision/our-goal). GMU's mantra "where innovation is our tradition" is evident across its colleges and particularly in its commitment to supporting faculty teaching excellence combined with cutting edge research.

Anastasia was inspired by the goal of introducing self-study research to GMU faculty, outside of teacher education, who could work within a community to re-imagine and make public their new pedagogies (Samaras et al., 2014b). Although she had worked with colleagues to make self-study practical for teachers (Samaras & Freese, 2006) and teacher educators (Samaras, Kayler, Rigsby, Weller, & Wilcox, 2006), she recognised that self-study could also be beneficial to other practitioners (Samaras et al., 2007). In August 2010 through December 2011, 11 participants from 11 specialisations and four colleges were competitively selected to participate in what we called, Scholars of Studying Teaching Collaborative (SoSTC), a transdisciplinary faculty self-study learning community sponsored by the university's Centre for Faculty and Teaching Excellence. Every participant, including Anastasia, designed and enacted a self-study project grounded in practice while also engaging in a meta-study where the collaborative asked, "What is the nature of our progress and development as a faculty self-study of teaching collaborative invested in studying professional practice?" Like a Catherine wheel, the products generated from individual and collective inquiries were shared in multiple and diverse venues including conferences, publications, and blogs. The project also engaged graduate research assistants.

Subsequent to the first faculty self-study group, in 2012 Scholars of Studying Teaching Collaborative on e-Learning (SoSTCe-L) was launched. Anastasia co-facilitated this year-long transdisciplinary faculty self-study with three SoSTC participants: Lesley Smith from New Century College and Higher Education, Esperanza Roman Mendoza from Modern/Classical Languages, and Ryan Swanson from History and Art/History. Unlike groups who gather to learn how to use technology tools, the focus of the project was on the instructor's role in facilitating the *quality* of students' learning experiences in using and applying technologies—thus "walking the talk" they were asking of their students. They asked if and how technology improved their pedagogies instead of driving the change of merely using it.

In 2014, Lynne (from the School of Art), Lesley, and Anastasia launched a third transdisciplinary faculty self-study group of 17 participants: the Self-Study of Scholars' Collaborative (S^3C) on the Visually Rich Digital Learning Environment. The goal of this initiative is to support faculty development and a scholarship of professional practice, and to build research capacity using the self-study research methodology and tools of visually rich digital environments. It is cosponsored by GMU's Centre for Teaching and Faculty Excellence and 4-VA, a research consortium of the four largest public institutions in Virginia. S^3C links participants with a wide variety of visually oriented digital tools; activities are focused not on learning to use these tools but on broadening participants' understanding of what is possible in visually rich digital active learning environments. Participants selected were willing to embrace the dispositions of a beginner's mind and its comfort in uncertainty. As psychologist Keith Sawyer noted, one of the key preconditions for creativity lies in the ability to confront the unknown and trust the truth of process: "Before you can

arrive at the right questions, you often need to go ahead and make something, and then reinterpret it as something very different based on what happened when you made it" (2013, p. 32). Thus, the capacities of participants included the willingness to: explore their pedagogy and curriculum in "studios" of collaborative inquiry and exchange, embrace mistakes as part of the process of growth, cultivate openness to continuous learning and divergent thinking, experiment courageously, learn from others outside their discipline and instructional units, be vulnerable within the learning community, and share the knowledge generated. Project objectives include improving students' learning while enriching faculty development around pedagogy and curriculum, collaborating with faculty in a transdisciplinary fashion to "learn broadly" instead of only "know deeply," and exploring/discovering/making a common language for the common good (Poole, 2013, p. 139). Activities included a mid-semester creation and exchange of visual memos based on the prompt, "Coming From…Going To" (see Figure 13.1), which asked participants to visualise their journey as teachers, thus far, through the learning community and identify their goal, pro tem.

In each of the three GMU groups, a key element to individual projects was faculty work in transdisciplinary research subgroups within which individual projects were debated, analysed, and shaped. And yet, as Lesley noted, it was the group's commitment to discussing and researching the meta-study that gave the Catherine wheel the continued momentum that was needed.

Figure 13.1. In between two modes of teaching epidemiology (as S³C participant Laura Poms[3] envisages her transition between sage on the stage and guide on the side)

South Africa: The Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) Project

In South Africa, Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan (UKZN), Theresa Chisanga (WSU), Delysia Timm and Thenjiwe Meyiwa (DUT) are currently leading the Transformative

Education/al Studies (TES) project. Joan Conolly (now retired) and the late Liz Harrison (both of DUT) were former TES leaders. In 2010, Joan Conolly, Thenjiwe Meyiwa, and Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan submitted a grant application for funding for the TES project to South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF). An initial 3-year grant was awarded by the NRF for 2011–2013 (with Joan Conolly as lead investigator) and a second 3-year NRF grant was awarded for 2014–2016 (with Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan as lead investigator). The second NRF grant was awarded to support a meta-analysis of the TES project. The TES project has thus been running since 2011, with the NRF as the primary funder. The three host institutions (DUT, UKZN, and WSU) have also contributed to funding various TES project activities over the years.

TES project participants are university educators from diverse academic and professional disciplines who conduct self-study research in a range of university contexts in the KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape provinces of South Africa. The central TES self-study research question of, "How do I transform my educational practice?" is explored in relation to participants' particular contexts and also across the TES learning community, becoming, "How do *we* transform our educational practice?" The project aims to support and study the collaborative development of self-study research capacity as participants engage with these questions. This is aligned with one of the three main goals of the South African Council on Higher Education (CHE)'s recent Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement (2014): "Developing a higher education system that is improving continuously as members of the higher education community collaborate to share good practices and solve shared problems" (CHE, p. 21).

Through the collaborative work of TES, 30 to 40 university educators have been meeting at least twice a year since 2011 for interinstitutional self-study research workshops, and the participants also have regular virtual contact via the online social learning platform, Edmodo (www.edmodo.com). In addition, there are TES groups that meet weekly or monthly at each of the three host universities.

Universities in South Africa are categorised as comprehensive universities, universities of technology, or research-intensive universities. These various types of universities offer very different environments, facilities, and challenges for teaching, learning, and research. Walter Sisulu University, for instance, where Theresa coordinates the TES project, is an example of a disadvantaged formerly "black" university, located in underdeveloped rural Eastern Cape. The university is one of the most poorly resourced in the country; hence, research, learning, and teaching are a daily challenge for both staff and students (Meyiwa, Chisanga, Mokhele, Sotshangane, & Makhanye, 2014). TES project activities have done much to enable the initiation of self-study research projects at WSU, which though in their infant stages, are promising to develop into viable knowledge-generating endeavours in the near future. For universities of technology, such as DUT, excellence in practice has stood them in good stead, but the lack of research historically continues to be a challenge. Universities of technology strive to address the catch-22 of having to build, simultaneously, their credibility as research institutes and the fiscal resources

to fund their research. But when one considers the continued emphasis on excellence of practice, universities of technology lend themselves appropriately to self-study with the further improvement of that excellent practice in mind. At research-intensive universities, such as UKZN, all university educators are expected to excel at both research and teaching, which can bring challenges in terms of trying to negotiate these seemingly competing demands. The TES project offers much needed support for bringing teaching and research into dialogue through self-study methodology.

The conceptual underpinning of the TES project is that of reflexive *Ubuntu*,[4] which demands a consciousness of the selves of researchers and educators and of interrelationships with other people (see Harrison et al., 2012). This is particularly significant in the light of South Africa's divided and discriminatory past, where "the strategies of the apartheid state…locked doors between people and denied them access to each other's experience" (Haarhoff, 1998, p. 10). The legacies of apartheid South Africa have been carried to the present day and continue to impact South Africa's higher education sector, which "clearly [shows] the effects of the lingering inequities of the past" (CHE, 2014, p. 6). Despite sterling changes instituted through legislation, policy imperatives, and transformative programmes initiated by the state, at the coalface changes are slower than ideal.

TES aims to contribute towards mending the divides and damages of the past. TES forums, amongst other pursuits, are regarded by participants as healing processes and a safe space (Harrison et al., 2012). TES has constantly managed to bring together many university educators through discussions and research that seeks to bring about change at individual and institutional levels. In turn, the collaborations between and amongst colleagues across universities have resulted in multiple projects leading to creative works, publications, and presentations (e.g., Pithouse-Morgan, Rawlinson, Pillay, Chisanga, & Timm, 2012). To contribute to the generation of rich and evocative self-study data, TES workshops have often involved participants in hands-on arts-based research practices. For example, at an interinstitutional workshop in December 2014, teams of TES participants collectively created poems to express their reading of their fellow participants' written reflections on their experiences as self-study researchers (see Figure 13.2).

Overall, TES has created bridges between universities with diverse histories (according to race), varied geographical locations (rural and urban), different foci (non/research intensive), and those bearing unequal resources and administration support systems. TES has demonstrated that sharing, respect, love, and collaboration are possible despite all the differences that exist among its participants and their institutions (Harrison et al., 2012; van Laren et al., 2014).

Transformative Learning and Growth

In both the SoSTC and TES research groups, participants report on their transformative personal and professional learning and growth because of the collective exchange. In the case of GMU, collective activities, facilitated not only by

Figure 13.2. Reflective (Re)Search (a poem created to represent TES participants' response to the prompt: "What challenges / successes are you currently experiencing as a self-study researcher?")[5]

a leader but by participants, stretched faculty's singular and disciplinary lens. There was a "transformative synergy. transformative learning, about the very nature of pedagogy, and about our teaching purpose" (for a detailed discussion, see Samaras et al., 2014a, p. 375). In the case of TES, the project leaders and participants have drawn attention to "the transforming effect of people working in a 'safe space' populated with a circle of trusted critical friends…where personal and professional experiences, thoughts and practices are shared" (Harrison et al., 2012, pp. 27–28).

MAKING CONNECTIONS ACROSS CONTINENTS

In 2011, the TES project leaders invited Anastasia and her colleague Mieke Lunenberg to visit Durban, South Africa. The invitation was made on the strength of an article that Anastasia and Mieke had published: "Developing a Pedagogy for Teaching Self-Study Research: Lessons Learned Across the Atlantic" (Lunenberg & Samaras, 2011). In March 2012, Anastasia and Mieke, both international teacher education scholars with extensive repertoires of teaching and research activity in self-study scholarship, shared their expertise in facilitating self-study during a week-long schedule of activities aimed at supporting the development of self-study research capacity with TES participants.

Anastasia returned to Durban in July 2014 for another week of TES self-study research development activities at UKZN and DUT. And in November 2014, Mieke visited WSU in Mthatha as the guest speaker at a TES workshop. Thus, Anastasia and Mieke's initial visit to Durban in 2012 contributed to the growth of a network

of mutual professional learning across continents and countries that has resulted in *Polyvocal Professional Learning through Self-Study Research*, edited by Kathleen and Anastasia.

Bricolage as a Self-Study Method

Kathleen and Anastasia's interrelated experiences first brought them together to dialogue about facilitating self-study research with faculty from various disciplines (see Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2014). Using a bricolage self-study method provoked new insights for them about why they were drawn to this work. They then extended this dialogue to include their colleagues: Theresa, Joan, Thenjiwe, and Delysia from TES, and Lynne and Lesley from S^3C. In addition, during the presentation of a co-authored paper at the 10th International Conference on the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) in England (August 2014), Kathleen and Anastasia also engaged 21 conference participants to express their thoughts about the why of facilitating self-study for others.

A mutual goal of exploring the personal and professional impetus for facilitating transdisciplinary self-study learning communities provided intellectual fuel for a multifaceted conversation that evolved over 8 months in face-to-face and online data generation, using diverse research practices. The dialogic and arts-based poetry data sources that were generated included: (1) an audio-taped conversation with Kathleen, Theresa, Thenjiwe, Delysia, and Anastasia (DUT, South Africa, 23 July 2014); (2) S-STEP conference participants' poetry (Herstmonceux Castle, England, 4 August 2015); (3) an audio-taped conversation with Lynne and Lesley (GMU, USA, 4 September 2014); and (4) poetry from chapter authors (October 2014–February 2015).

Audio-Taped Conversation with Kathleen, Theresa, Thenjiwe, Delysia, and Anastasia

In the course of Anastasia's visit to Durban in July 2014, a morning was set aside for her to meet with the current TES project leaders (Kathleen, Theresa, Thenjiwe, and Delysia). In a 2-hour, audio recorded conversation, Anastasia and the TES leaders talked about why they facilitate self-study learning communities and what this might mean for others. The discussion highlighted how in South Africa, with its divided, painful history, and where high levels of traumatic stress are still pervasive, the self-reflexivity and co-flexivity[6] (collective reflexivity) required by self-study research have a significant part to play in personal and collective healing and resilience. There was also a focus on self-study research contributing to social change.

The audio recording was uploaded to Dropbox (www.dropbox.com) and shared with Anastasia and the TES leaders. Later, it was also shared with Emily Christopher, a graduate student working with Anastasia, and with the co-facilitators of S^3C, Lynne and Lesley.

S-STEP Conference Participants' Poetry

During Kathleen's and Anastasia's presentation of their coauthored paper at the 10th International Conference on S-STEP in England (August 2014), they engaged 21 conference participants who worked in five groups in a collaborative process of creating group mood boards to respond to this prompt: "Why do you, or would you, facilitate self-study for others?" Participants first noted their individual thinking on Post-it notes, which they collectively arranged on the five group posters that served as mood boards (see Figure 13.3). As Kathleen and Anastasia explained:

> A mood board is a visual canvas which designers use to develop, demonstrate and discuss their design concepts.…In the past, these boards have generally been pin boards on which, for example, clothing or textile designers have arranged images, colour swatches, fabric samples, and so on to communicate their ideas for new designs. (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2014, p. 167)

Figure 13.3. Transformation (an example of a mood board created by S-STEP conference participants)[7]

Each of the five groups was then asked to compose a found poem made up of words and phrases displayed on their mood board. Found poetry is a literary arts-based research practice that involves selecting words and phrases from data sources and rearranging them into poetic form (Butler-Kisber, 2005). As Furman, Lietz, and Langer clarified, found poems are composed "with the expressed purpose of presenting data that remain faithful to the essence of the text, experience, or phenomena being represented" (2006, p. 27). The found poems were written on posters (see Figure 13.4) and then performed by the groups.

Figure 13.4. Collective Agency (an example of a found poem composed by S-STEP conference participants)

Audio-Taped Conversation with Lynne and Lesley

As co-facilitators of self-study groups, Lesley and Lynne also met and discussed their experiences of participation and facilitation. They remarked how the process of iterative self-study, and especially the experiences of facilitation, reawakened the early idealism that drew them to enter higher education as educators. Their experiences in SoSTC renewed a sense of intellectual excitement and collaboration towards common goals and absent boundaries in improving their professional practice. Lesley and Lynne commented that faculty self-study groups such as SoSTC hold potential for remaking universities' cultures that only promote "my research" and instead also encourage individuals to support each other's research and aspirations. As Lynne argued, "[Self-study is] at the heart of what the university wants to be and what the university of the future has to be in order to solve wicked problems" within the tensions that may exist.

Collective Writing and Poetry from Chapter Authors

The data analysis began with an iterative process of listening and re-listening to each audio recording and memoing key ideas that emerged. Emily listened to each recording, with initial coding, and noted key categories using the constant comparative method (Creswell, 2013). She also located key quotations from each recording. Emily next analysed the posters of found poems generated as data at the S-STEP conference where Kathleen and Anastasia presented their earlier research (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2014). Emily then integrated, expanded, and refined the original categories using incoming data from the posters of found poetry from the S-STEP conference. Anastasia wrote a chapter draft integrating the analysis and offering a frame for collective writing and sent the draft to Kathleen.

Kathleen added significantly to the writing of the chapter and also initiated a draft found poem sequence using key themes and quotes from Emily's analysis. This poetry making was not planned at the outset of the collaborative inquiry. Rather, in keeping with the emergent nature of a bricolage self-study method (Badley, 2014), the idea for this found poetry came about because Kathleen saw latent poetry in Emily's compilation. Poetry provided a means to condense a multifaceted, complicated conversation that evolved over 8 months in diverse places, spaces, and ways (Furman & Dill, 2015). At the same time, the poetry preserved and communicated the emotionality that characterised this conversation: "Poetry allows the expression of the most intense feelings in the most intense form" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 70).

Kathleen's draft chapter edits and the poem sequence were sent in turn to each coauthor for her input and extension after she also examined the data set. Coauthors added to the working draft, including sections related to their experiences within their university contexts, and also to the found poem sequence. Additionally, Delysia invited Joan to join her in discussing their collaboration in TES, which resulted in a double voice poem[8] based on their extensive written reflections that were integrated into the chapter. Kathleen added a found poem that she composed using Theresa's written reflections (with Theresa's permission). And Lesley also wrote a poem, which serves to close the chapter.

The three supplementary poems captured the process of coauthors' thinking in response to the found poem sequence. Thus a poetic dialogue process evolved from composing found poetry to represent research data to creating interpretive poetry that "[allowed] for the subjective responses of the researchers" (Langer & Furman, 2004, para. 16). As Langer and Furman explained, "in this sense, the interpretative poem fuses the perspective of the subject and the insights of the researcher" (para. 19). Of course, in this case, the coauthors of this chapter are both the subjects and the researchers and so there is no clear line between the perspectives of the subjects and the insights of the researchers. In self-study, the subject and object of the study is the same person, the perspective of which is an insider account (Jousse, 2000; Stoller, 1997). In retracing our bricolage self-study method, we see the initial found poem sequence as a thematic portrayal of our multidimensional conversation, which

served to pull together significant threads that were woven through the diverse data sources. The interpretive poetry that follows illustrates a plurality of responses to those thematic threads and, in particular, returns to the idea of co-facilitating transdisciplinary self-study learning communities as breathing under water. What resulted from the collaborative writing process was a revised and final chapter in a multi-verse fashion with voices and characters coming into the collective story highlighting the polyvocality of our professional learning and writing. The poems capture the unfolding and fluid process of our work.

POEMS

Found Poem Sequence

The found poem sequence that follows offers a thematic portrayal of the why of co-facilitating transdisciplinary self-study learning communities.

Knowing and Becoming

The knower is actually me
Demystify the self
How do I read that knowledge?
Of what value is that knowledge?

Knowledge of
Who I am
What I do
What I'm meant to be
How do I read that knowledge?
Of what value is that knowledge?

Linked to knowledge is being
Knowing and becoming
Ethos and pathos
A way to be whole
A transformative self

A Learning Methodology

Slowing down
To be self-reflective
To practise active listening
To be witness to growth

Discover
Gather without constraining
Open space

For unintended consequences

Multi-sensory and multi-lingual
Configure and refigure
Try out ways of thinking
It's not a closed question
Go through the process
Capture the process as it moves
Openly and honestly
Confront different perspectives
Move out of the comfort zone

Not for the faint-hearted
The brave heart
Demands courage
Demands integrity

The Self-Study Movement

One life changed
What can it do?
To make a difference?
To impact and inspire?

We tell our stories
To develop an ethical position
To produce our best true selves
Not just our intellectual selves
A whole body experience
That feels real

Adding to others' learning
Breaking down the status quo
Living in that world
Where our research is

Being creators of social change
For the future university
For the public good

The Collaborative and the Self

Build a bridge
Open the door
Create the space
Be in community

Complexity
Many voices
Critical friends
Collective energy

Recognise value
Witness growth
Pay attention to dynamics
Navigate power relations

Forging a language
New perspectives
A learning ground
Interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity

Fun
Passion
Care
Love

The gospel of life

Interpretive Poems

The Dry Bones Have Come to Life
— Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan, inspired by the voice of Theresa Chisanga

Hard to find inspiration
Being trapped
Under the monovocal research tradition
Feeling like a pack of dry bones

The collaborative nature
The safe spaces
Ubuntu philosophy
Revitalised this fledgling academic life
And gave hope to others
Breathing under water
You survive down there
Enjoying the experience
Knowing you are not alone
The dry bones have come to life

Breathing Under Water[9]
—A double voice poem by Joan Conolly and Delysia Timm

Apartheid daily
Breathing under deep, dark, cold water
No way out, up, forward

Merger murder
Breathing under twisting stinging smashing blinding tossing choking water
Torn, bruised, bewildered, gasping
Self-Study
Breathing under coolly bubbling, gently swirling, brightly shining water
Lifting floating singing flying seeing knowing

Restoring

My Self
Breathing grasping
Searching under water

Rejected
Excluded
Alone

Our Selves
breathing bubbling
swallowing under water
…
ConnectedNetworkedTogether

SelfStudy
breathing deeper,
deeper,
deeper
Under water
Treasures, gems, beauty
…
Restored

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

While motivations specific to each institution and context determine research and facilitation processes, we have found that having mutual goals has led our various groups to achieve one crucial objective of all our projects, that is, to bring about transformation in our selves as educators and in our professional learning and growth. The value of self-study learning communities for professional learning within higher education emerges within the tensions and practical exigencies of contemporary university life. The transformative synergy of self-study research, and its facilitation

within groups, is not simply forging a new, polyvocal language of professional learning, but is also forging a resilient language to facilitate the reimagining of the university of the 21st century. The more individuals who participate in self-study research communities, the more scholar- and artist-teachers can assert their autonomy as constituent actors in determining what universities of the future might be, and should be. Our conversation illustrates our shared belief in self-study's capacity to restore (and support) autonomy to the individual in institutional and national contexts and provide ways for individuals to exercise that autonomy in contexts beyond the expected. They can also insist through the evidence of their work, and its ripple effects (Weber, 2014), that the future of higher education is neither fixed as is, nor determined by short-term, cost- and brand-driven institutional responses to the "next new thing," whether technological or philosophical.

Significantly, sharing our thoughts about why we facilitate faculty or university educators' self-study research at our universities provoked new understandings about the transformative potential of transdisciplinary self-study learning communities, which will be helpful to others interested in facilitating self-study groups. Communicating our insights with each other enabled those insights to deepen and mature. Furthermore, by discovering the why through bricolage self-study, we were walking our talk as advocates of transdisciplinary scholarship, which offers a diverse range of possibilities for learning from and with each other. We experienced the potential and value of bricolage self-study as a powerful method for dialogic meaning making across geographical, cultural, and disciplinary contexts. Our collective engagement with the emergent and responsive nature of bricolage self-study heightened our awareness that personal and professional learning is always possible and that it can happen in unexpected and enlivening ways. The demonstration of our use of bricolage self-study holds much potential for further collective self-studies on an extensive range of topics.

Our work suggests that as universities strive to improve student learning, it might be helpful to consider teaching and learning as a shared, mutually beneficial human experience to be cultivated and sustained. With this in mind, university leadership might contemplate supporting the growth of creative studio spaces (both physical and virtual) so that faculty can dialogue within and across institutions (and continents) about their professional learning in order to enhance their students' learning. As Francis Bacon urged all scholars in Aphorism 92, we have but to try: "by far the greatest obstacle to the advancement of the sciences, and the undertaking of any new attempt or department, is to be found in men's despair and the idea of impossibility" (Bacon, 1620/1902).

Breathing Fine
—Lesley Smith

I am the book to be read
I am the book already written
  Forging a language.

Where you are is your research
Living in the world
  Nothing's forbidden
    Nowhere to hide

    Studio, darkroom
    Ethos not logos
Discovery with no sense of fear
Drowning
  but we're breathing fine.

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NOTES

[1] In this chapter, we refer to participants in our self-study research learning communities as faculty and as university educators. The term *faculty* is commonly used in the USA context, and *university educators* is used in the South African context.

[2] Here, we would like to acknowledge the contribution of the late Liz Harrison who was also a TES project leader for 2012–2013.

[3] We thank S³C participant Laura Poms for kind permission to include her visual memo in this chapter. The image is an open source wikicommons picture, retrieved 16 March 2015 from http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CropCircleSwirl.jpg

[4] The Southern African concept of *Ubuntu* (in the Nguni languages) expresses personhood in terms of relational and dialogic processes of becoming (Mkhize, 2004).

[5] We thank TES participants, Lucinda Johns, Sizakele Makhanya, Lee Scott, and Lwandle Adonis Skomolo for kind permission to include their poem in this chapter.

[6] For a detailed discussion of the concept of co-flexivity, see the chapter "Learning about Co-Flexivity in a Transdisciplinary Self-Study Research Supervision Community" by Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan et al. in this volume.

[7] We thank participants from the 10th International Conference on the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices, East Sussex, England, 2014 for kind permission to include examples of their mood boards and poems in this chapter.

[8] For an explanation of the double voice poem, refer to Arvinder Kaur Johri's chapter, "Multiple Narrators: Using Double Voice Poems to Examine Writing Personas" in this volume.

[9] This poem is dedicated to our beloved Liz Harrison (the TES lead investigator for 2012– 2013) who once referred to university *merger* as a *murder* in an unfortunate, but ironically insightful, slip of the tongue. For a discussion of the post-apartheid university merger process, see the chapter, "Interweavings, Interfaces and Intersections: A Co/Autoethnographic Self-study," by Timm and Conolly in this volume.

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Ann Marie Stanley is Associate Professor of Music Education at the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, USA. She specialises in general music teaching and learning and music teacher professional development. Her work has been published in the *Bulletin for the Council for Research in Music Education*, *Arts Education Policy Review*, the *Michigan Music Educator*, and *Research Studies in Music Education*. She is the author of chapters in *Sociological Explorations* (2009), the *Handbook of Qualitative Research in American Music Education* (2014), and *Musicianship-Focused Curriculum and Assessment* (2015).

Jean Stuart is a former lecturer and now Senior Research Associate of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Her doctorate explored with preservice teachers, ways of working with visual arts-based approaches for addressing HIV and AIDS. She comes from a teaching base centred on media and multiliteracies. Her research interests include self-study, and participatory and collaborative arts-based approaches that position participants as cultural producers to address sociocultural aspects of education and health issues. These are reflected in her cofounding of the Centre for Visual Methodologies for Social Change and in her individual and collaborative work on projects and publications related to her interests.

Delysia Norelle Timm is employed as Advisor: Special Projects in the office of the DVC Academic at the Durban University of Technology. She currently advises on academic staff development projects using self-study action research approaches to integrate community engagement and general education into the DUT undergraduate curricula. Delysia was the final lead co-investigator of the National Research Foundation funded, multi-institutional Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) project (2011–2013). Delysia is a member of the Anglican Diocese of Natal Chapter advising the Bishop on educational matters, and the non-stipendiary Priest-in-Charge of the Bellair, All Saints and St Mark parish.

Linda Van Laren used self-study methodology for her doctoral research where she explored HIV and AIDS integration in mathematics education at a South African higher education institution. She is a secondary school mathematics teacher and an honorary lecturer in the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Her research interests lie in the teaching and learning of mathematics, integration of HIV and AIDS in teacher education, self-study methodology, and visual methodology.

Joan Walton Following many years in social work and adult education, Joan Walton entered the academic world at a late stage of her career. Having gained her own doctorate in 2008, she is now Senior Lecturer at York St John University and a doctoral supervisor at Liverpool Hope University in the UK. She is currently enquiring into the question: "What knowledge do we need to create a world in which all human beings can flourish, and what research methodologies will enable us to generate that knowledge?" A number of her doctoral students, and other practitioner researchers, are interested in working with her to pursue this question in relation to their own professional contexts.

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