

“Many Stories Matter”: Taking a Polyvocal Stance in Learning About Teaching of Self-Study



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With contributions from Lynne Scott Constantine, Chris de Beer, Lee Scott, and Lesley Smith

Introduction

This chapter concludes the fourth and final section in the edited book *Teaching, Learning, and Enacting of Self-Study Methodology: Unraveling a Complex Interplay*. The book section has examined how self-study of teaching and teacher education practices have been extended to teaching, learning, and enacting of self-study methodology in *polyvocal professional learning communities*. In thinking about polyvocality, we (Kathleen and Anastasia) are drawing on philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin’s (1984) exploration of polyvocality (which he referred to as polyphony) as a narrative mode in the novels of Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky. Bakhtin described this polyvocality as follows:

A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices ... with equal rights and each with its own world, combine but are not merged in the unity of the event. (p. 6)

In musical terms, polyphony designates compositions in which two or more distinctive sounds or voices weave in and out of, and harmonise with, each other and yet remain independent (Devoto 2007). For Bakhtin, polyphony as a defining characteristic of Dostoevsky’s novels was indicative of a significant development in human

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313

capacity for artistic expression and perception, with wider sociocultural ramifications:

We consider the creation of the polyphonic novel a huge step forward not only in the development of novelistic prose, that is, of all genres developing within the orbit of the novel, but also in the development of the *artistic thinking* of humankind. It seems to us that one could speak directly of a special *polyphonic artistic thinking* extending beyond the bounds of the novel as a genre. This mode of thinking makes available those sides of a human being, and above all the *thinking human consciousness and the dialogic sphere of its existence*, which are not subject to *artistic* assimilation from *monologic positions*. (Bakhtin 1984, p. 270)

Such polyphonic artistic thinking is evident in the work of contemporary writers such as American novelist Toni Morrison (1992) and Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2006), who interplay different voices and perspectives in their novels. For example, in Adichie's novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006):

The novel's narrative arrangement represents a bold attempt at enabling a wide spectrum of perspectives including, but not limited to, that of the younger generation (Ugwu), the expatriate (Richard), the intellectual (Odenigbo) and the middle class. These multiple voices are unified into a coherent narrative thread by an inventive narrative architecture in which the focalising characters are bonded in a nexus of passionate and close-knit interpersonal relationships transcending racial, class, gender and generational divides. (Akpome 2013, p. 34)

Through our focus on polyvocality in our scholarly work, we are exploring the potential contribution and impact of the interplay of plurality and commonality in teaching, learning, and enacting of self-study methodology (Pithouse-Morgan and Samaras 2015). That is to say, we see ourselves as "complementary colleagues ... who have different concerns, expertise ... and frames of reference" but who share a common purpose (Eckert and Stacey 2000, p. 535).

The common purpose that bonds us as self-study researchers and teacher educators involves reimagining our own professional practice to contribute to the wellbeing and growth of others, within and beyond teacher education. To this end, we have each worked with colleagues outside our disciplines and across continents to study our practice in facilitating and enacting transdisciplinary self-study. This transcontinental, transcultural research collaboration has generated multiple stories and new insights that might not have been readily generated by culturally homogeneous research teams or individual researchers (Sleeter 2014). Here, we are reminded of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's powerful words on "the danger of a single story":

Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize... . When we reject the single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, we gain a kind of paradise. (Adichie 2009)

Our transcontinental dialogue is enhanced by understandings of the intersections of individual and collective cognition in professional learning and within a community of engaged scholarship (Lave and Wenger 1991). Vygotsky (1960/1981) asserted that learning arises through collaboration and reappropriating feedback from others. Our work is premised on understanding that professional learning is extended through dialogue (Wegerif 2006) and openness to others' points of view. Actions and thinking are culturally mediated, "indirectly shaped by forces that originate in the dynamics of communication" (Wertsch 1985, p. 81).

Hence, in this book section, we have aimed to present a plurality of stories about the growth of teaching, learning, and enacting of self-study methodology in polyvocal professional learning communities. Collectively, the book section on *Teaching, Learning, and Enacting of Self-Study Methodology in Polyvocal Professional Communities* complements the growing body of knowledge of transdisciplinary and polyvocal self-study research. In addition, it contributes to understandings of how and why self-study research can bring into dialogue multiple ways of seeing and knowing as a vital part of authentic and generative professional learning. As illustrations, we have included exemplars and voices from transdisciplinary self-study learning communities in the USA (George Mason University self-study of teaching projects) and South Africa (the trans-university Transformative Education/al Studies [TES] project).

In this chapter, we highlight how and what we are learning from co-facilitating self-study groups at our universities and from dialoguing with each other. We bring in the voices of our co-facilitators and other colleagues in the self-study research community as we consider our ongoing learning about teaching self-study. Including these multiple voices validates and extends our argument of how the polyvocal informs each of us and our work. Overall, the chapter shows how we learned from each other and the impact of our work together and with our colleagues and participants: the multiplier effect of self-study in action.

What’s It *Really* Like to Teach Self-Study? Multiple Voices, Many Stories

We have been examining our work in leading and learning through co-facilitating transdisciplinary self-study research since 2012 when Kathleen invited Anastasia to facilitate a Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) project workshop in South Africa. During that period, we have worked to bring together multiple stories in the voices of others who have taught self-study research. Earlier work included audiotaped conversations with co-facilitators in South Africa and the USA, as well as conference participants at the 10th International Conference on Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) in England in 2014 (see Samaras et al. 2015, 2016).

Voices from the International Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) Community

Anastasia has been working with engineers and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) faculty as a coprincipal investigator on two grants funded by the US National Science Foundation, both with a focus on interactive teaching and

self-study research. As she shared at the 11th International Conference on Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices:

At an engineering conference, I walked into the book exhibit and found this question posted on a large board, “What’s it really like to be an engineer?” And I thought, “What is it really like to be a self-study scholar and teach self-study research?” I’ve just been continually enriched by my experiences in moving out of my lens. For example, when I say *reflect*, maybe for an engineer I need to say *design*. And so they’ll say, “Oh, I get it! I’m the data!” So, our language, we just assume everybody is from our world, don’t we? And it really limits our understanding. So that’s been where I’ve been able to really grow and be inspired by transdisciplinary polyvocal experiences. (Anastasia, audio transcription, August 2, 2016)

We went on to ask this very question as part of our collaborative research, “What’s it *really* like to teach self-study?” with 21 conference participants during our presentation in August 2016 at the 11th International Conference on Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP). Participants noted their individual thinking on sticky notes and then worked in one of three groups in a collaborative process of collectively arranging the randomly distributed sticky notes thematically on the three group posters that served as mood boards (visual canvases that designers use to develop, demonstrate, and discuss their design concepts [Eckert and Stacey 2000]). This was followed by a 25-minute audio recorded plenary conversation in which we asked participants to reflect and share their responses. We gave a series of possible conversation prompts: “What did you discover from this process?” “What did you talk about?” “Was there anything that surprised you?” “What were the tensions that came up?” “What was challenging about this?” and “What are the larger issues it raises for us as a self-study community?”

Participants drew our attention to the plurality of perspectives and experiences expressed within each group, as well as to how such heterogeneity can contribute to the complexity and adventure of teaching self-study. To illustrate:

Our group pointed to the diversity of understandings of self-study and research (Marie Huxtable, United Kingdom).

Self-study of teacher education practices is so complicated to explain because it’s about everything at once. It’s about the content, it’s about the practice, it’s about the self, it’s about understanding your students. It’s difficult even when we practise it. So, it’s very hard to pin down. Which is one of the things that make it wonderful. (Julian Kitchen, Canada)

It’s never the same. You always have a new group of people and it’s a process of getting to know people in the very beginning and what they are doing. (Karen Rut Gísladóttir, Iceland)

It’s complex, isn’t it? It is more than messy. Not that it has to have any definitiveness. But it does raise some important questions for us because the diversity of just three posters here show that we’re all thinking about it in some similar ways, but also in some very different ways. We probably wouldn’t have even had this conversation ten years ago because we weren’t really teaching it, we were trying to figure it out for ourselves. So, we’re growing I think. (Anastasia)

There was also enthusiasm for continuing the dialogues that had begun in the groups and extended into the plenary conversation, conceivably through the use of digital technologies such as Internet telephony services and video:

It's not only transdisciplinary, but it's also cross culturally. This idea that we could dialogue about our co-facilitation—that sense of Skype and the visual. The people here were all very excited about what we were doing. In that sense you could be helping to stimulate these dialogues. (Jack Whitehead, UK)

Carrying with us insights offered by the conference participants, we returned to our home countries and posed the same question of “What’s it *really* like to teach self-study?” to our colleagues who had co-facilitated self-study research groups. Below are cameos of this work from our home institutions with background of the projects in South Africa and the USA—again highlighting how the self-study methodology is validated across disciplines, nations, and cultures (also see the introductory chapter of this book section).

Stories from the Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) Project in South Africa

Since 2011, the Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) project team has worked across diverse South African universities to explore and cultivate the collaborative development of self-study research methodology among university educators who have chosen self-study as a means to transform their practice. This transformation has a dual focus on being responsive to the diverse needs and interests of students and to the pressing need for a socially just reimagining of South African higher education (Harrison et al. 2012; Meyiwa et al. 2014). TES project participants are university educators engaged in graduate self-study research and their research advisors (termed research supervisors, in South Africa). These participants teach and research across a wide variety of academic and professional disciplines, including fashion design, English language studies, gender studies, jewellery design, mathematics education, teacher development, and theatre and performance studies. The TES community is also diverse with regard to age, gender, language, and race and comprises both senior and early career academics. The diverse, trans-institutional and transdisciplinary makeup of the TES community has exposed participants to multiple possibilities for enacting their common purpose of education/al transformation through self-study methodology (Harrison et al. 2012). Because of the contributions of participants who are professional artists, and others who are fascinated by learning from and through the arts, TES activities have been characterised by co-creativity (Pithouse-Morgan et al. 2015; Samaras et al. 2008). This co-creativity has developed through collective exploration and development of arts-informed self-study research methods that are infused with “the languages, processes, and forms of literary, visual, and performing arts” (Cole and Knowles 2008, p. 59).

Lee Scott and Chris de Beer are two of the participating artists who have assisted the TES project leaders with facilitating arts-informed self-study methodology workshops and outputs. Chris de Beer is a practising jewellery designer and artist who teaches in the Department of Fine Art and Jewellery Design at a university of technology. Lee Scott is a creative artist who teaches in the Department of Fashion and Textiles at the same university. In this section, through the medium of drawing, Lee and Chris offer two visual stories of teaching self-study methodology. These drawings were done very quickly and spontaneously at a TES workshop held in December 2016, when Kathleen asked workshop participants to individually create drawings in response to the prompt: “What’s it *really* like to teach self-study?” Kathleen explained that teaching in this case could include both formal and informal teaching, as well as incidental teaching that might occur, for example, when explaining a self-study research project to a colleague. After the drawings were done, each participant was asked to write on a sticky note a short artist’s statement about their drawing (Figs. 1 and 2).

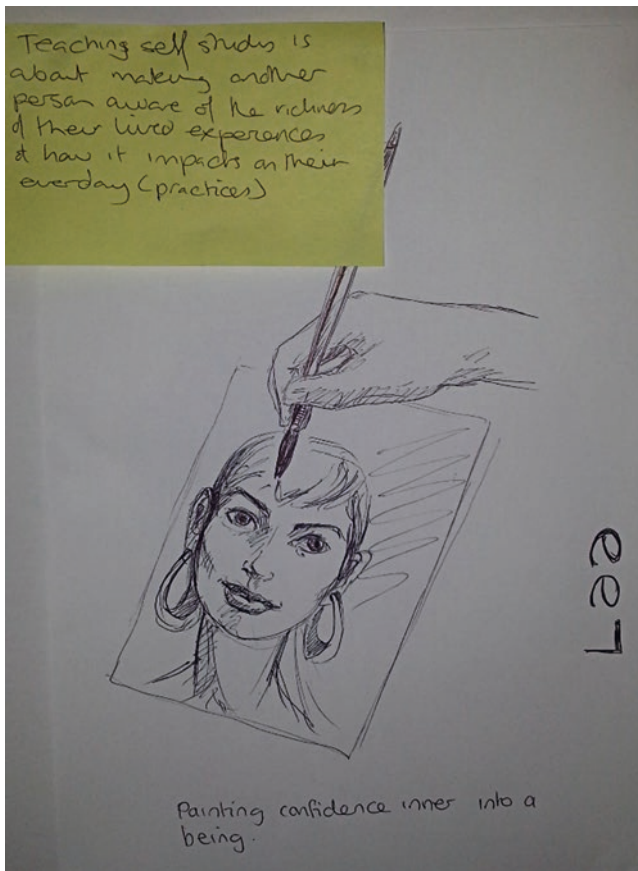


Fig. 1 Teaching the self (Not Just a Pretty Face). Pen sketch by Lee Scott

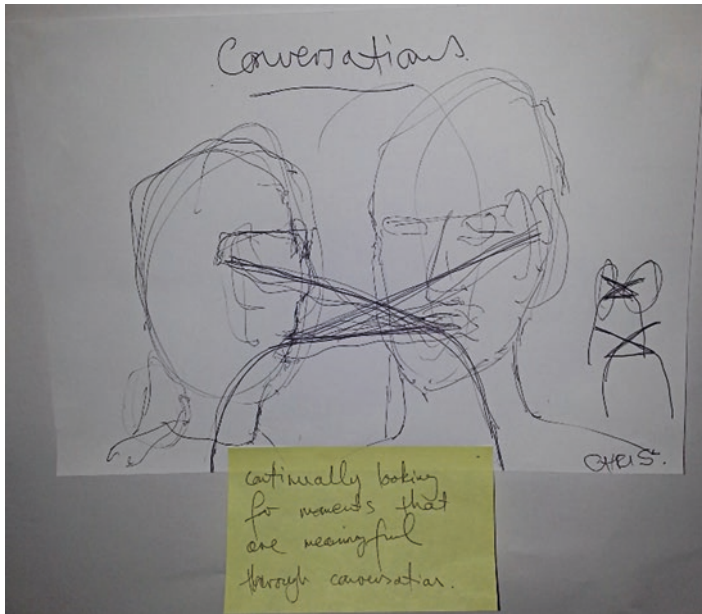


Fig. 2 *Wat die Hart van Vol Is Loop die Mond oor* [What Fills the Heart Spills out the Mouth]. Pen sketch by Chris de Beer

Artist’s Statement by Lee Scott

Teaching self-study is about making another person aware of the richness of their lived experiences and how it impacts on their everyday (practices).

Lee Later Went on to Reflect Further on Her Drawing Self-study allows my students at BTech (graduate) level to feel what they are producing as artefact and research in their written reports is something beyond meaning, beyond research, beyond *just* improving their practice as young designers. I believe their voice is allowed to come through, and they feel they have something to contribute to the world that has relevance. They can link their research to the development of their product. So teaching self-study from a creative arts-based/informed perspective allows me to say “Hey, you have the power. You are not just a fashion designer” (which sometimes can be perceived as a frivolous industry). Teaching self-study permits me to make it known that, as social beings, the students have much to contribute and that they can draw on their experiences and learn how to unpack their lived experiences. They are enabled to find ways to channel their new awareness and explorations through to a finished product. The students’ research becomes a form of social activism where a dress is not just a dress, but a symbol of their values and a metaphor for personal growth.

Artist's Statement by Chris de Beer

Continually looking for moments that are meaningful through conversation.

Chris Subsequently Commented Further on His Drawing In looking at the drawing, it dawns on me that self-study results in increased communication with others. In trying to tell your own story, you open up and want to make sure that the other person gets you. So you enter into a dialogue, which has at its centre a search for connections. In searching for these connections, I take little feelings deep inside and present them to the (critical) friend who I am sharing with. They, in turn, scrutinise what I present and give something—their perspective—in return, which is then reacted to by me. The drawing tries to capture this dialogue, which starts deep inside (the thin line from the bottom), then exits via the mouth and is perceived by the eye and/or ear, and then returns via the mouth. The richest connection is between the mouths, but the link to the inside, though delicate, is crucial. I wonder whether this drawing does not confirm my exaggerated emphasis on the talking part, as I am now increasingly aware of the gentle flowing curve from the eye/ear to the heart. This implies that I should pay more attention to the link to the inside of what is being said—that the loud, more obvious, talking part of the conversation actually has a gentle line directly to my heart and the heart of the other person.

In Thinking About Her Own Learning with and from Artists Such As Lee and Chris and Their Contributions to the TES Project, Kathleen Mused In the TES group, Chris is one of my doctoral students, who is studying his own practice as a jewellery designer and a jewellery design educator. I know nothing about jewellery design, and so, as his research supervisor, I cannot help him in that way. The only thing I can do is pose questions and try to help him articulate his jewellery design making and teaching in words and language. But I have learnt so much from him that I now bring into my work as a teacher educator. If I were not working beyond teacher education in the TES self-study community, my teacher education practice would be much poorer, much less interesting. For me, that has been one of the greatest gifts of working within this transdisciplinary project (Audiotape transcription, August 2, 2016).

Stories from the George Mason University Self-Study of Teaching Projects in the USA

Anastasia was inspired by the goal of first introducing self-study research to faculty at George Mason University, inside and outside of teacher education, who could work within a community to reimagine and make public their new pedagogies in multiple faculty self-study groups. From 2010 to 2012, 11 participants from 11 specialisations and 4 colleges were competitively selected to participate monthly in Scholars of Studying Teaching Collaborative (SoSTC), a transdisciplinary faculty self-study learning community sponsored by George Mason University's Centre for

Teaching and Faculty Excellence (see Samaras et al. 2014 for details). Subsequent to the first learning community, in 2012, Scholars of Studying Teaching Collaborative on e-Learning was launched. This year-long transdisciplinary project was co-facilitated by three participants from the first group and with a new group of participants. Unlike faculty development 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.

In 2014–2016, Anastasia, with co-facilitators Lynne Scott Constantine from the School of Art and Lesley Smith from Higher Education and Digital Literacy, launched Self-Study Scholars’ Collaborative (S³C) on the Visually Rich Digital Learning Environment, a third transdisciplinary faculty self-study learning community. Anastasia reflected on this at the 11th International Conference on Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP):

I have been working with two other women, co-facilitating self-study at George Mason. They’re not from teacher education. One is from the School of Art and one is from Digital Literacies and Higher Education. They were both members of the first cohort that I started in 2010. And each time I teach it some of the participants then become the facilitators along with me and I am slowly moving towards the rear, which is great for sustainability. I continued to work with people outside of teacher education, as Kathleen says so beautifully, because they actually teach us to be better teacher educators. (Anastasia, audiotape transcription, August 2, 2016)

The goal of this initiative was to support and build research capacity using self-study research methodology in a visually rich digital learning community. This focus on art as symbol aligns with the Vygotsky (1978), Vygotsky (1981) tenet of symbolic mediators (Kozulin 2003) and underpins the design of each of the faculty self-study groups. Lynne captured this connection in her reflection to the community at an S³C gathering:

Our interest was in getting ourselves and other academics outside of the predominant ways of thinking, learning, and communicating that academics are trained in: the word, the book, and cerebration. We wanted to see whether the visual could be a means not just to collect or represent data, but also to force ourselves into unaccustomed ways of experiencing our questions, unaccustomed ways of deciding what constitutes data, and unaccustomed ways of relating to our teaching and our research. What good might come, we thought, when we develop our questions and look for evidence through sensuous experience and through attentiveness to metaphoric and metonymic processes and to abstraction, not just through collection, classification, and inference? (Lynne, audiotape transcription, December 5, 2015)

During Anastasia’s second invited visit to South Africa in 2014, she had the opportunity to learn from TES participants who are theatre instructors and directors about the self-study method of reciprocal self-interviewing (RSI; Meskin et al. 2014). Returning to George Mason University, she excitedly shared the RSI exercise with Lynne and Lesley, co-facilitators of S³C, to ask the question again: “What is it like to teach self-study and with a focus on using visually rich tools to do so?” They asked 14 participants to complete the RSI about their individual self-study projects but first modelled it in a fishbowl fashion at one of the monthly meetings of S³C. Lesley and Anastasia sat in the middle of gathered participants, and Lynne

asked them about what it was like to teach and learn self-study in a visual and digital environment. Lynne served as the observer of the RSI and shared her reflections on the process with the entire community.

Anastasia first explained RSI at the gathering and shared the article (Meskin et al. 2014) with participants:

Because it's spontaneous and not planned, it allows other things to emerge that you might not have scripted in your mind because you knew these were the questions that somebody was going to ask you. One person becomes an observer and the other two take turns interviewing each other. The observer, and that will be Lynne today, will offer feedback to Lesley and I—what she thought was going on and what emerged in terms of the data that came out of the interview.

Below are a few excerpts from the RSI:

Lesley (Interviewing Anastasia) The first thing I want to ask you is, could you give me kind of a sense of how the visual has really influenced your self-study of teaching?

Anastasia Responded I am a novice but one who seems to gravitate towards understanding the world in different mediums. Indeed, some people say I'm all over the place but I like to say that I'm multiversed (See Fig. 3), which was actually my artefact. I think that for me the visual allows me to turn the lens of the camera in ways that I wouldn't be able to necessarily understand because I always would see it from my own place ... it's really pushed me to see my teaching of self-study through the visual medium in ways that I would have never gotten to had I not



Fig. 3 Anastasia's visual: learning in *Multiverse* with unanticipated "Elements of Chance" in a transdisciplinary faculty self-study group from exhibit <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/exhibitions/permanent/multiverse.html>

opened that door ... in each of my courses, it sparks new ways of presenting the pedagogy to my students and the fact that they see me struggling and figuring out and being open is good. It feels like there is a bridge for me to the arts to feel like I’m with my students. I like that.

Anastasia (Interviewing Lesley) How have the visuals impacted you or helped you to understand your teaching?

Lesley Answered I am putting myself in the place that I put my students into, and therefore I’m building a greater understanding of why they sometimes look at me with that strange look in their eyes as if to say “this lady is crazy”. And you know I’m really getting a sense of what it is to be completely destabilised from what I’ve been trained to think is the correct form in a particular context. And then I realised that’s what I ask my students to do a lot. Not to do what they’ve done in high school or not to do what they’ve done in the first year in class and so it’s given me a greater appreciation for what Robert Hughes (Hughes and Richardson 1980) used to call “the shock of the new”—what kind of emotional impact it has on you when you have to do something that you don’t normally do. This was a big surprise for me because I spend much of my time with visuals. I review movies and TV; I’ve made documentaries; I’ve done a lot of like website design, back in other lives; and so I suddenly began to realise—it really brought back to me—how dependent the visual is on things beyond the visual and it’s really difficult to push and actually communicate simply with the visual, to trust the visual, or to trust that my intention with the visual may not actually be what’s received and just relax a bit more with that; so in a sense, it sort of complicated the sense of the visual but also pushed me to realise how often I put the visual with the verbal just in case people don’t quite get me (see Fig. 4).



Fig. 4 Lesley’s visual: learning through persistence

Lynne Offered Her Observations and Insights As the Observer of Lesley's and Anastasia's RSI

That power of the visual to lessen distance may be part of what Anastasia meant when she talked about the way that the arts serve as a bridge for her in the classroom, “allowing me to feel like I’m with my students”. When the students see her struggling with her own visual expression, the distance between the “teacher” and “real person” becomes smaller and profoundly influences the classroom experience for all.

Thinking about this aspect of visual communication, Lesley said, has taught her a great deal about how the visual can be a catalyst for interaction. In particular, she said, the visual research projects she assigns to her students have brought her back to thinking about the ethical responsibilities of the visual—the ways in which the visual can be used to disempower or to empower. In her visual research projects, she wants students to discover these ethical issues and the potential for the visual as a means of activism, social engagement, and redressing relationships of power. Above all, she said, she wants to communicate that enthusiasm to the students, so that they can truly think visually, not just take refuge in theory or in reductionist notions that all images are equal. “There is”, she said, “a sense of building cohesion in the self”.

Reflecting on what both Lesley and Anastasia said—the power of the visual to multiply vantages, to communicate across disciplinary boundaries, to facilitate authentic encounters with the “real self” in the classroom, to teach about the ethical dimensions of knowledge-making—I feel that we have validated our original idea for what might happen by marrying the visual as a lens with the rich possibilities of self-study methodology in this multidisciplinary, risk-taking research community.... The data we are collecting, and the studies we are producing in S³C and other self-study research communities, are like images in a photomosaic, where individual images are fitted together to create a larger image that only emerges from the proper arrangement of the small originals.

Our Voices Weave In and Out of, and Harmonise with, Each Other and Yet Remain Independent

In this final part of our presentation of multiple voices and stories on leading and learning through co-facilitating transdisciplinary self-study research, we (Anastasia and Kathleen) offer a dialogue piece that tenders insights into our learning across our diverse polyvocal professional communities. We composed this piece from a lightly edited transcription of a spontaneous duologue (a play or part of a play with speaking parts for two actors) that emerged during the plenary conversation in our presentation at the 11th International Conference on Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP). In listening to the audio recording of the plenary conversation, we were struck by the polyvocality of our impromptu duologue. We noted how our voices flowed in and out of each other quite seamlessly, showing at once the plurality and commonality of our stories, as well as the close connection that has developed through what we have called “thinking in space” (Pithouse-Morgan and Samaras 2014, 2017) in our, mostly online, transcontinental conversations.

Anastasia Kathleen and I wanted to share, because she’s also been co-facilitating with a group of colleagues. So, we came together and figured, “Well, we’re just going to sit down and talk and record this”. And there it is.

Kathleen When we got together with our co-facilitators to talk about our experiences in South Africa and America, we were very interested to see what would come out, what would be similar, and what would be different. We wanted to see what we would learn from this exchange.

Anastasia We started with thinking about “How do we go about it?” And then we ended up also talking more about why we do it. And, for me, as from the USA, I was so surprised that facilitating self-study in the TES project didn’t look like what I do; it wasn’t for the same purposes. In South Africa, there is largely the theme of healing and having a safe place. After apartheid, there’s a lot of anger and hurt and pain and those words came out. They were not the same kind of words that came up in the USA and so I thought, “Wow! I never thought of self-study research being used in ways that were out of my own context”. So, in terms of thinking about teaching self-study in different geographic locations, that was really a good experience for me. I thought, “We should all go to South Africa to learn about self-study!”

Kathleen I think for us in the TES project, self-study methodology really resonated, and it met a need in our South African higher education context. And one of our biggest problems now, which is a very fortunate problem, is that we constantly have people who are interested and want to join us. So, we’re constantly thinking of new ways in which we can reach more people and be more inclusive. And also I think that one of the connections that has been very strong between the work in South Africa and the work at George Mason University has been our focus on creativity and the arts. For me, that has been one of my strongest areas of learning, which has been enriched by working with the colleagues from George Mason. For example, with poetry, one of Anastasia’s colleagues, Lesley Smith, e-mailed recently to share information on renga poetry, which is a Japanese kind of collaborative poetry making. So, immediately, I said to my TES project colleagues, “We’ve got a workshop coming up. Let’s do renga poetry!” And we did renga poetry. It was fantastic and now we’ve written renga poems as part of an arts-informed, participatory analysis of the TES project. So, it’s because of that dynamic collaboration that we keep learning.

There Are Gifts in Giving

This chapter has illustrated how self-study research conversations across specialisations, institutions, and continents can generate transformative possibilities for university educators and leaders imagining pedagogies and collaboration in new ways. It has also demonstrated how collaboration and conversations among self-study

research facilitators can advance understandings of and possibilities for learning, teaching, and enacting of self-study methodology in a complex, pluralistic way.

As we have experienced, there are gifts in giving self-study research to other practitioners. There is a collaborative recognition by co-facilitators and participants that our work helps self-study research grow beyond our wall and perspectives. Like the castle wall that encapsulates our intimate community of self-study scholars at the biennial International Conference on the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (Barnes 1998), our work parachutes self-study research beyond the beautiful castle grounds to inform educators' practice.

We have watched self-study research grow over many years and in many ways—noting how academics around the globe are finding it useful in their specific contexts and disciplines. We share it with the world because we have witnessed its validity as a methodology in a global context as we have worked and learned from and with various professionals. The global self-study research community is thriving as it benefits from the new learning and innovations that occur through collaboration across multiple fields of professional expertise and multiple disciplinary and sociocultural contexts. And all the while, we hold dear and central that self-study research was founded and grows because of teacher educators, like us, willing to share this very special research we have experienced and which now helps us and others to grow professionally and especially in our teaching. We celebrate self-study methodology and its multiplier effect.

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