

Chapter 2

Methodological Considerations in this Thesis

2. 0 In this chapter I present my values, beliefs, philosophical stance, methodologies and methodological caveats and limitations. These represent the boundaries of my thinking and the thought forms that influence my perception. Thus begins the action research process as I am both the researcher and the researched.

I have incorporated several methodologies in this research. In order of usage or application these were: Self Study Action Research (Loughran *et al.* 2004), living action research (Whitehead 1989); heuristics (Moustakas 1990); the educational scholarship of Boyer (1991), which forms the basis of my approach to the disciplines of education; and narrative, which was used to present the written word (Marshall 1999; Reason and Bradbury 2000; Winter 2003). In my journey, represented through the presentation of this thesis, I use narrative to examine the multiple dimensions, realities and streams of consciousness that weave various elements together. A graphic representation of my framework methodologies is shown in Figure 5. Each of these will be discussed in this chapter.

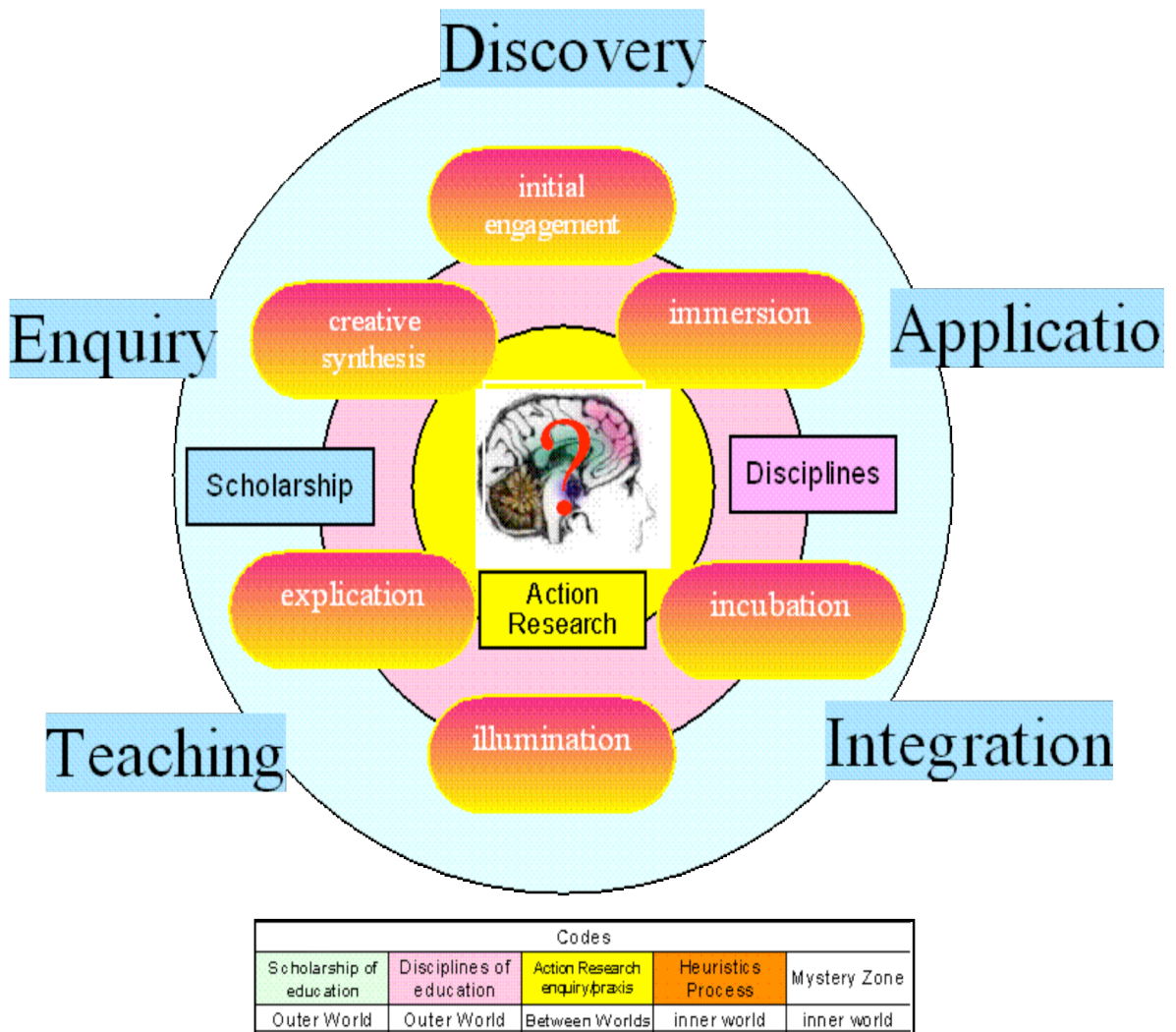


Figure 5. Conceptualising integrated methodologies

The above figure presents a snapshot of the model I am using in my thesis, one that is an emergent model over time. At this point I take another risk in the Lyotard (1984) sense of offering vulnerability to the account. For while the above figure includes the different methodologies, it fails to convey their synergy and how I synthesised their action in order to understand my own learning. Let me elucidate further. Orthodox approaches to the disciplines of education have formal structures and make use of

recognised bodies of knowledge such as history, philosophy, and the theory and sociology of education. Boyer's (1992) concept of scholarship comprises the:

Scholarship of Discovery

Scholarship of Teaching

Scholarship of Application/Engagement

Scholarship of Integration

This offered me a framework for the process of scholastic enquiry and I reviewed this framework for application to my outer world of formal state-approved education. In order to facilitate understanding of myself and my practice, I needed a basic model or framework that had to be able to handle the movement between the various methodologies used in my research. I needed a disciplined framework to act as a reference point which I could use for free association of thought, but which provided structure to enable me to return to the matter under question when my enquiry ebbed and flowed.

What I offer next is in many senses what Frank (2006) refers to as chaos narrative, for I cannot show truly what I mean in a textual format. What follows is my textual expression of a process that has dynamic elements all working in and on each other. For example, the six stages of living action research enquiry, as presented by Whitehead (1989), offered me another more secure framework, one which I could use as a springboard into my inner world. In this sense, the framework of living action research was the link between my inner and outer worlds. I feel that this is what Bernstein (2000, p. 33) is referring to as the discursive gap between what he described as *thinkable* and *unthinkable* forms of knowing. The semi-formal structure of living action research, with the assumed “I” at the centre of the enquiry, offered safety and a point of return as I free-fell into my inner depths of mystery using Moustakas’s (1990) heuristic enquiry. Rayner’s (2003) ideas about the fluid dynamics of boundaries and space allowed me to form and reform my emerging ideas and values using the solvent of consciousness. All the above processes are going on at the

same time at different levels of my consciousness. This is perhaps better described by Talbot (1992) as a holographic universe, one where the brain sees as though it were a hologram and *lights up* when consciousness is applied to stored knowledge. I believe that understanding of the above point is crucial to understanding how I am approaching my thesis methodologically. To this end I discuss the above issues further in the following sections. I also include, in Appendix A of this thesis, a multimedia presentation on DVD of a web-based demonstration of my thinking. While my declared overall approach is heuristic living action research, grounded in qualitative thinking, I also make use of quantitative methodology when required (Chapter 6).

The meta-methodology that guides my research is Action Research Self Study, succinctly described in the following quotation from the Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices, Part 1: *The term self study is used in relation to teaching and researching practice in order to better understand: oneself; teaching; learning; and the development of knowledge about these* (Loughran *et al.* 2004). The following diagram outlines the action research cycle, as described by McNiff *et al.* (1982):

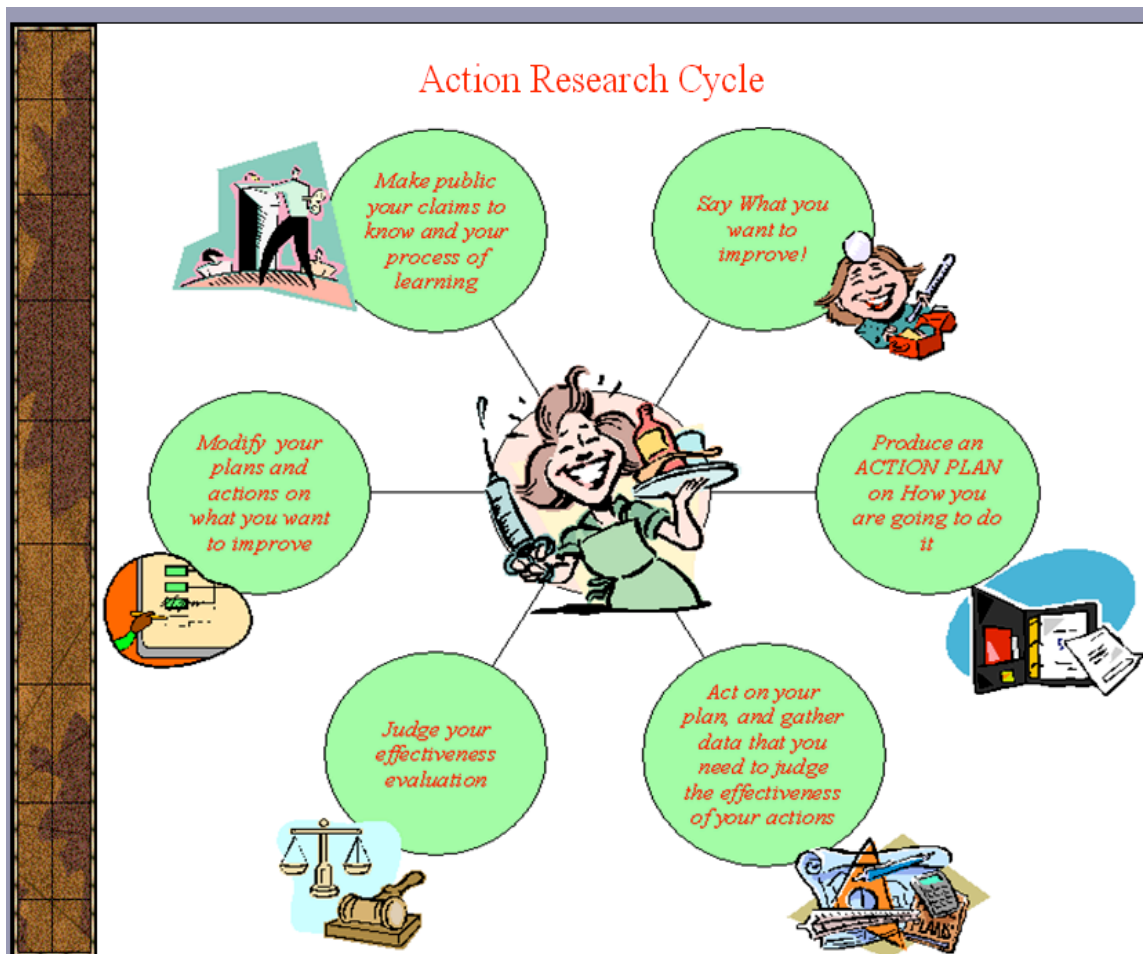


Figure 6. The Action Research Cycle with six stages of action research

(Drawn from the writings of McNiff *et al*, 1982)

There are several schools of thought regarding research and how to approach a researchable issue. Common to all research approaches there is a process of enquiry. However, Stenhouse (1975) adds another dimension to this as he distinguishes three categories of researcher: theoretical researchers try to describe, interpret and explain events without making any judgements about them; evaluative researchers describe, interpret, and explain events so that they and others can make evaluative judgements about them; action researchers are intent on describing, interpreting and explaining events while they seek to change them for the better. According to McNiff *et al*. (1982), the action research

approach or action enquiry is extended beyond Bassey's approach (1995) by the inclusion of systematic enquiry that is: *made public, informed, committed, intentional action, and worthwhile purpose* (p. 8). Action Research Self Study places the "I", that is the researcher and his/her experience, at the centre of any research question. This allows me to ask, within a professional context, questions about my educational practice to which I am committed to finding an answer. McNiff *et al.* (1982) wrote that just inserting the word "educational" in a research title is not enough:

Many writers add the adjective 'educational' before action research or enquiry to emphasise the point that the research/enquiry aims to bring about an improved situation through a careful evaluation of action. It should not be used as a manipulative device but as an educational means of bringing about good social order for all concerned. Action research differs because it requires action as an integral part of the research process itself; it is focussed by the researcher's professional values rather than the methodological considerations. It is necessarily insider research in the sense of practitioners researching their own professional actions. (p. 14)

From the above I understand that my "I", my values and the transparency of my bias in the form of my being, are important only when embedded in praxis. Understanding this and making actions explicit is more important than following any one particular methodological paradigm.

As I engage with myself, and the text of others, my understanding of the format of my research question evolves, and this engaging process informs and mediates my planning.

This process is not linear or logical, as I accept, reject, plan, and change my ideas and approach to the question in response to the context of the research and the living outcomes. By living outcomes I am referring to events that take place in the moment that modify an action or event, which Schön (1995, 1983) referred to as *reflection in the moment*. Such modifications are not expected or planned but have the authenticity of praxis as their authority.

Live teaching in the classroom as opposed to the calm world of theory is prone to situations that require instant praxis. In life there are no rehearsals for the real thing even if you have planned and rehearsed your lesson. Things go wrong and changes have to be made. My research is my practice and my classroom is the context of delivering a new curriculum. As such, any “in the moment” outcomes are truly living.

The cyclical nature of Action Research Self Study served me well as a research framework in which to ground my enquiry, but over time I had a sense of dis-ease because it appeared as perhaps too formal and did not correlate with my perceptions of being inclusional. It was not a total solution. I began to realize that the security and discipline of the above framework was necessary, but I also needed the freedom to immerse myself in my evolving enquiry through heuristic ways of understanding. This combination provided me with an educative, inclusional framework that had both substance and rigour.

2.1 Other considerations regarding methodology

The dominant lens through which I examined my conceptual framework for this thesis was that of a Shingon Buddhist priest. I transcended this framework by establishing a participatory enquiry with myself which allowed me to engage lovingly and compassionately with the other aspects of my antagonistic self, which otherwise prevented my collaboration with myself and others. Identifying the separation that this was causing, between my multiple selves and others, became part of the creation of my new living educational theory. As living action research involves the intertwining of me as the researcher with me as the researched, several considerations must be addressed. First, I offer a consideration regarding the place of passion and dispassion in research. Tholfsen (1977) suggested that it is important to be mindful of history in that history will suffer if taught from any one ideological stance; instead, its aim should be: *commitment to the disinterested pursuit of truth, accompanied by an openness to continuing debate and discussion.*

[Tholfsen's understandings present me with an unresolved paradox in that I cannot see how the pursuit of truth can be disinterested, as the passion of the enquiry is what motivated my research. On the one hand I want to live my life of enquiry passionately, yet on the other, maintaining my Buddhist commitment to non-attachment, I research from within a passionate non-attachment to truth - a truth which I understand to be contextually orientated. Perhaps, I ask myself, I am passionately attached to my theory of non-attachment?]

The second consideration is related to the politics of the control of knowledge. There are tensions in finding an appropriate research question because the academy can define what an appropriate question is. This level of gate-keeping is an important means by which the

profession can assure quality and guide novice researchers. However, it is also important to be aware of the limits of this power. Apple (1997, p. 1) highlighted this with his statement: *Academic boundaries themselves [are] culturally produced and are often results of complex policies of policing actions by those who have the power to police and the power to enforce them.* When designing my research question, I am mindful of Apple's words as they are not only applicable to academia, but to the medical profession as well. Moreover, the power of those with the power to police became a lived experience that impacted daily on the delivery of my curriculum.

2. 1. 1 Values and beliefs

Underlying my use of the above methodologies are my values and beliefs. Here I explicitly hold, assess and modify my ontological position and values as a Shingon Buddhist nursing priest, namely those of respect, sensitivity, openness, flexibility, love, non-judgementalism, non-violence, the capacity to forgive, and compassion. In so doing I also pedagogise my knowing and my claims to know (Bernstein 2000) through my development, implementation and assessment of a reflective healing curriculum for nurses in a Japanese university. This curriculum has been adopted into the mainstream national nursing curriculum as an elective option. Through this narrative I show my original and unique thinking, processes, and contribution to education and knowledge.

I demonstrate my sustained commitment to the values of respect, sensitivity, openness, flexibility, love, non-judgementalism, non-violence, the capacity to forgive, and compassion, plus inclusional thinking and language, as I reflect on experiences accumulated through my life-long learning. I subscribe to the Buddhist belief that we can

incarnate over many lifetimes to learn the lessons we need to learn to reach enlightenment. I therefore consider each life experience through my humanness as I walk my path in the Buddhist understanding of my present incarnation. I look for the teachings, the advancement of my understanding, and the next step towards my goal of enlightenment. With this understanding, I consider this journey collectively important as each individual that I meet on my journey of life has experiences to relate. Each individual has lessons of learned experiences to share, and a voice to speak about their journey. Each individual becomes not only my storyteller but also my teacher.

I invite you, the reader, to explore my values and tensions and our differences, for I feel that our differences in knowing, when held together in the loving compassion of inclusional thinking, are what make the richness of humanness so great. I am using tension in the sense that it is my perceived dis-ease filters that are at work. If another is acting in or with hostility, I am possibly either the cause or a mirror of the cause, and this makes me look to my actions, words and manner in terms of Buddhist mindfulness.

I believe that it is correct at this stage to express two deeply held tensions that have caused me considerable anxiety throughout my research, and these are colonisation and gender, which are backdrop issues that impact on my research. A value that I hold is my open public commitment to not consciously be a part of colonial thinking (Freire 1970).

Ironically, it is this value that has brought me into conflict with Japanese educators, who, as Furuta *et al.* (2000) suggest, have become colonised in their thinking, ideas and teaching methodologies by Western influences, particularly from the United States of America after Japan's defeat in the Second World War. Academic questioning and challenging is an important part of the academic discourse in my experience of Bath and

other Western universities. Surprisingly, it is not the norm in Japan. My observations and experiences have demonstrated that such an approach is seen as being very challenging to the authority of the professor and causes considerable dis-ease when senior Japanese academics are questioned on their use and understanding of imported Western educational models, concepts or hypotheses. In my experience, such questioning has not been encouraged or supported, and pedagogic conversations have not been possible for me. Even the questioning of junior colleagues in such ways as: *Why do you think that?* or *Why do you think this word is used?* or *What do you think about this?* was perceived as being harassing questioning. My later reflection was that this could be because I am a male in a largely female department, large in size, quick to respond to questions with counter questions, and who enjoys mental sparring and pedagogic conversations.

[I have to keep reminding myself that the Japanese context in which I am working is completely different from my own experience and learning and that I cannot make any assumptions that there are parallels between my British nurse education experience and Japan. At times a comparison between the two is positively unhelpful as they are so completely different. In the UK, for example, there is a recorded public struggle for nurses to become an independent profession (Kent 1918). We have an Act of Parliament that covers nursing (Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors Act 1997), we have an official body (Nursing and Midwifery Council), and we have codes of conduct and ethics all linked to legal statutes. In the UK you have to prove your “fitness to practice” every three years with proof of continuation of education, practice and research. You can be suspended from the register for non-compliance.]

In Japan you take your nurse licence one time only, and there is no body that regulates your practice after you qualify. Pre-qualification is controlled through Japanese law (Public Health Nurse, Midwife, and Nurse's Law, 1951). Japanese nursing has no nursing council, codes of conduct or ethical bodies with the legal power to police nursing. The Japanese Nursing Association likes to see itself as a lead body but it does not represent all nursing and has no legal powers to police nursing.

My problem, of which I am acutely aware, is that I am so grounded in my own training and experience that I am often blinded by what I know and cannot see objectively. I keep trying to make comparisons as the result of my research and my engagement with the work of Freire (2004, 1987, 1970), whose ideas on colonisation and the banking educator have had a profound effect on me. This is made more problematic by the instructions from my Dean to help raise critical thinking in nursing students in our faculty and introduce new forms of teaching methodology. I felt that I was being established as the token foreigner, one whose new and radical ideas were deniable by senior management in the event that they went wrong. As one member of faculty said to me: "You are a foreigner, your ways are not our ways, so what did you expect?". It was a good question, "What did I expect?" Professional courtesy? A sharing of knowing and knowledge maybe? Co-operation between faculties and faculty members? What I did not expect was that it would become open season for a sustained attack at both a professional and personal level. In his scholarly response to my first draft, my internal reader at the University of Bath, Dr Michael Fertig, asked me to consider the fact that I may have actually been colonising in my approach. This rocked me

back on my heels and I felt myself to be trapped between the values I held and the job I was expected to do. It felt like an impossible task to understand my context, let alone research my praxis and complete my PhD and present it in such a way that it made sense to my reader. I later understood that I had committed several breaches of cultural etiquette. Rohlen and LeTrendre (1998), in a scholarly collection of works written by other foreign teachers within the Japanese education system, guided me to a deeper understanding of the richness and fullness of Japanese education that has very different values from those of the West. Perhaps that is the crux of the matter. It is different, and comparisons between Western and Eastern methodologies just bring about frustrations and confusions. Acceptance of the Japanese system brings with it an understanding of that system; then, when ready, the teacher can explore the faults within the system with the vision of one who is on the inside, focused on society, rather than on the outside looking in.]

Considering the above points, as valid as they may appear, it is the case that other practical pressures are at work in the now commercial universities. This sudden advent of all Prefectural universities becoming public and responsible for surviving commercially is the new crisis for Japanese university educators. In April 2006 my university, as well as nearly all Prefectural universities, became a public limited company. Almost overnight, a new university culture was born, one where a new effusion of commercial and academic outcomes is expected. There are no academic writings as yet on this issue, for it is breaking news as this thesis is being written; however, the stage is set for a new set of conflicts. Understandable tensions are being generated now with the new responsibilities of being commercial and accountable.

The future is uncertain but dynamic, as it offers new challenges for my profession. My belief is grounded in the ethical codes of conduct of my nursing experience and training which, combined with my Western teaching experience and training, have given rise to the notion that as an educator and nurse I am required to be a critical thinker in order to contribute to the enhancement of knowing and knowledge. Teaching critical thinking skills is part of my job, and they are what is needed for me to understand the complex question of; *“How do the Japanese go about knowledge creation?”* I have observed in Japan that the social ability of an individual to be a critical thinker is, at the moment, severely limited, whether that individual is a student in the classroom, an academic, or a worker in industry. A pre-modern hierarchy still exists where *time served* is far more powerful than the ability to do the job. Take Hagino, the first Japanese representative to the International Council of Nurses (ICN) in 1909, pointed out that the major behavioural pattern of Japanese nurses was to follow orders, with an emphasis on *“spiritual”* aspects of nursing. Japanese nursing has followed the traditional patterns of Japanese culture and has changed little over the past 120 years (Hisama, 2001). Hisama continues:

“After intensely studying American nursing for half a century, Japanese nurses are again asking for a new definition of nursing. They are not allowed to perform certain medical procedures that are routinely carried out by nurses in America and other advanced western countries. Japanese doctors want to do everything, including educating nurses, and there is a deep division between the Japanese Nurses Association and the Japanese Medical Association regarding many issues in nursing practice and patterns of Japanese clinical nursing, including nursing education.” (p. 453)

My research and practice context reflects the above statement. My observations on this are supported by Petrini (2001), who states that the approaches of (younger) nurse-educators, who wish to explore different teaching approaches, have largely been ignored. This suggests that these younger teachers have developed the ability to question the existing system, which is something that is not encouraged (Wolferen 1990). Consequently, few nursing faculties in Japan have introduced the concepts and ideology of critical thinking (CT), nor have they explored the new ways of incorporating CT skills into nursing curricula and clinical practice. This highly complex issue of the incorporation and desirability of CT skills in education and practice is further explored in Chapter 7 where, surprisingly, the evidence of my classroom research offered an intriguing insight to a different understanding.

Another issue that demonstrates differing beliefs and values is that of the Japanese term “nemawashi”, which refers to the way in which decision-making is carried out in academia (Wolferen 1990, p. 338). A decision on an issue is often found to have been made in a previous meeting by those in positions of power. As a Western-educated academic raised in a culture of enquiry and debate, I found such processes unfulfilling and frustrating. At no point are members of the meeting asked if they agree on a proposition: the unstated expectation is that they will agree without question. The concept of sitting around a table in a Euro-centric way to thrash out a solution seems completely alien to the culture. Respect and the showing of due deference to seniors is an important part of the culture, and such respect is demanded as correct manners and protocol. It is less often reciprocated to people of lesser social or institutional status. Against such a background, the healthy growth of academic enquiry and critical thinking is not encouraged. As Petrini (2001) states, tradition and conservatism are the order of the day.

All the above issues impact on this thesis and are grounded in the enquiry of the meanings of my beliefs through their emergence in praxis and how they can be transformed in their emergence into living standards of discernment.

In my praxis I believe that this is achieved by enriching my words with the waters of meaning. By this I mean that I am using my lived experience in the reality of nursing practice to support theory in the classroom. In some educational contexts, values and standards are seen as comprising rigour and have embedded within them declared and undeclared meanings of power and judgement. Such values and standards easily lend themselves to being applied with inflexibility, stiffness, harshness and cruelty (Wink 2005; Freire and Macedo 1987). Freire and Macedo (1987) described such standards as those of the banking educator, ones that fill the students with facts that can be reproduced on demand, such facts losing relevance to those being educated. It is my greatest fear that, in my process of educating nurses in the values and standards of nursing applicable to that of the healing curriculum, I will become a banking educator rather than a teacher. I have to keep constant vigilance on my intent and practice.

[Personal journal entry, August 4, 2003.

. . . I ask myself why this is so? Why can standards not be flexible levels of knowing? My tension in designing my framework of the healing nurse curriculum is that the very framework that I seek to evolve has benchmarks of professional and critical thinking. These

can act as constrictors that will produce a framework that will be worked within and never pushed through, thus creating the boundaries of standards. I believe we are greater than any system and must constantly challenge our boundaries to make them dynamic, progressive and living frameworks that enhance our knowing.]

2. 1. 1. 1 Summary of this section

The reader should now have a clearer understanding of the method and approach I am using in relation to my using bracketing to allow my reflective discourse with myself to interact with the scholarship of the enquiry; further explanations of my values will be given in Chapter 4 where I explain my ontological values as a priest. I believe that such openness will lead to a transparency of process, one in which my reader can identify how, why and what values are used as living standards of discernment. As a Buddhist Shingon priest I passionately hold the fundamental belief that each individual life is important, unique and completely connected to all things in the Greek sense of Kosmos, which is harmony and order as distinct from chaos. I also believe that I have levels of consciousness that transcend space and time. This concept is similar to that of Rayner (2003), who described the interconnectedness of everything in creation and named his thinking Inclusionality Theory. Rayner's work is the closest in my experience to the Eastern esoteric Buddhist philosophical framework using Western academic language. In this academic document I have drawn extensively on Rayner's framework to bring together the different elements of my understanding of my being, existence and purpose. A fuller insight to Rayner's thinking can be found on his website homepage: <http://people.bath.ac.uk/bssadmr/inclusionality>.

The beliefs and values represented above are neither an exhaustive account nor are they positions written in stone. Throughout this thesis they are visited and revisited and, in some cases, rejected, modified or transcended. By this I mean that I am aware that my original values or beliefs may have had limitations and my new epistemological understandings can then expand their original meanings. Such, I believe, is the nature of quantitative research and living theory accounts.

In the next section I explore my understanding of heuristic enquiry - a process that allowed me to find new forms of knowing within myself.

2. 1. 2 Heuristic enquiry

Polanyi (1964) suggested that tacit forms of knowing can emerge using the rigour of scholarship. Polanyi's early thinking on tacit knowledge influenced Moustakas (1990) in his development of heuristic enquiry. Moustakas (1990) described heuristics as the:

. . . process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experience. . . . The self of the researcher is present throughout the process and, while understanding the phenomenon with increasing depth, the researcher also experiences growing self-awareness and self-knowledge. (p. 15)

The epistemological basis for heuristic methodology was developed by Polanyi (1964, 1969) who suggested that all knowledge is either tacit or rooted in tacit knowledge, making

wholly explicit knowledge unthinkable. Contrasted with positivist approaches, heuristic research is ontologically perspective-seeking rather than truth-seeking. Polanyi implied the presence of an indeterminate range of anticipations in any knowledge bearing on reality. But, besides this indeterminacy of its prospects, tacit knowing may also contain actual knowledge that is indeterminate, in the sense that its content cannot be explicitly stated (Polanyi 1969, p. 141). It is my understanding that this author did not imply that nothing can be known; rather he suggested that more extensive understanding is only possible by considering relationships, wholeness and viewer perspectives.

Inspired by Polanyi's tenets, which became publicly known in the late 1950s, Clark Moustakas introduced a heuristic model of research in 1961, with the publication of his work, *Loneliness*. Moustakas continued to refine his methodology in publications over the next 30 years. Eventually, in 1990, Moustakas published the decisive resource for his model: *Heuristic Research: Design, Methodology, and Applications*. As described in this book, the method allows for the holistic collection of data. It engages and employs the researcher's personal attributes of understanding, insight and interpretation. Specifically, it relies on the tacit knowledge of the individual researcher and the totality of the researcher becoming fully immersed in the study. The topic of research is studied and interpreted from an axis of tacit knowledge within the researcher. There is no pretence of an objective, unbiased observer who is separate from what is observed. Every aspect of the researcher's humanness is called upon and utilised in the form of tacit understanding.

According to Moustakas (1990), the heuristic researcher begins by looking inward to discover the question through a period of initial engagement. The formulation of a research question should embody a phenomenon of human experience and seek to reveal

its essence. It should seek to discover qualitative rather than quantitative aspects of the phenomenon. It should not try to predict or establish causal relationships. Most importantly, the question should engage the researcher's whole self. There then begins a stage of intense focus called *immersion*.

My understanding of immersion is that in the letting go of my perceived boundaries and allowing them to become dynamic, in Rayner's (2003) sense of inclusional thinking, I draw from any and all experience to gain insight into the question. This includes interactions with people, places, things, meetings, readings, nature, self, hunches, dreams, intuition, and so on. This process reveals my inter-connectiveness with everything, with both object and subject as being present in each other. This concept expands data sources to virtually anywhere the topic is reflected towards, not being limited by construed boundaries of time, space and power.

When little new information emerges, it is time to put the data aside and retreat into a period of incubation. Incubation is a joyous time of growth as, at this point, tacit knowledge and intuition begin to make connections between the data and the research question, and ideas, concepts, and insights simmer in the subconscious.

Elements *bubble* up to the surface of the conscious mind, to solidify, enabling the researcher to reach the next stage, that of illumination (Moustakas 1990). This is the breakthrough stage, a period in which new understandings emerge. It is also a time of creative flows of tremendous waves of creative passion and energy. It is at these times that understanding is achieved *in the moment*. I have experienced such moments in the wonder of human thought, for in that moment the kaleidoscope of consciousness has changed and

there is no turning back. For me, this process is an evolutionary one. Martin Luther King (1981) wrote a famous speech beginning: *I have a dream...* King's writings have always inspired me, and heuristic living action research proved to be the living of my dreams, the dreams of wanting to know and to never stop my enquiry. A more practical example of this process is cited in Chapter 6 where I am engaging with the data and suddenly, after three years of working, coding and analysing thousands of data sets, a connection is made that has highly significant relevance to Japanese education. At this point it is enough to state that the process is a profound one that works in practice. This is borne out in the quotation below where Moustakas (1990) cites Polanyi (1962) as follows:

Having made a discovery, I shall never see the world again as before, my eyes have become different, I have made myself into a person seeing and thinking differently. I have crossed the gap, the heuristic gap, which lies between problem and discovery. (p. 29)

Polanyi's words above echo in my heart and resonate profoundly with me as they infuse me with commitment.

The next stage of Moustakas's model is that of explication, which allows me as the researcher to envision the research question as inclusively as possible. The core of the experience is then described in depth by the researcher in an attempt to depict the essence of the phenomenon. At this stage the researcher will meet many obstacles. In the telling of his/her knowing, the researcher will often meet the power of the *discursive gap* (Bernstein 2000, p. 30). This is where individuals act as either state-appointed or self-appointed gate-holders of knowledge. Such individuals are usually the social elite in a

society having the power to police knowledge and with a vested interest in what are or are not acceptable forms of knowing; this embraces any forms of knowledge that would challenge their power base and position (Freire, 1970). An example of this process would be the control that state religion has exercised over the development of Western philosophy (Tamas, 1991; Wolferen, 1990). Such individuals will guard vigorously whatever emerges from the discursive gap, by deciding and controlling what are thinkable and unthinkable forms of knowledge. What is missing from the model are the accounts of living through such a process, ones in which power is used to silence, to marginalise and to abuse (Palmer 1998; Mandela, 1995).

The last stage of Moustakas's methodology is where the researcher attempts to express his/her findings in a creative synthesis of the data. This is where heuristic action research links to living action research in that they both require informed praxis as a fundamental aspect of the process. The quest is said to be completed when one has an opportunity to tell one's story up to a point of natural closing. This is the one element of the model I take issue with, in that it seems out of place with the rest of the model and calls for closure, which is a Western form of behaviour.

Moustakas's methodology for heuristic research does not describe a linear process.

Although the stages generally proceed from initial engagement, immersion and incubation, and the focus then shifts to illumination, in reality the stages often overlap and loop.

Different elements of different questions move in and out of consciousness, akin, I would say, to a cauldron simmering away.

One remarkable aspect of this methodology is that I am never certain when a particular element of my enquiry will present itself to me. At times such an approach seems like a contradiction, as short term memory has an inbuilt desire for immediacy or closure which can distract a logical, organised mind. The methodology's reliance on tacit knowledge requires that the research data filters through the researcher's levels of consciousness, in and out of different levels of memory and praxis, while at the same time becoming part of the researcher. The focused-on stages will vary in scope and intensity. The heuristic design is very much a personal quest to achieve individual understanding of the studied subject's essence.

This methodology can provide an element of personal understanding of a local event that is less a universal truth than a unique individual perception of a moment in time. Heuristic research is not non-research or anti-research. Instead, it provides an additional, scholarly way of accessing an individual experience. I truly enjoy the interaction of Boyer's (1992) educational approach to scholarship, balanced with an intermediate discipline of living action research, combined with the *free fall* of heuristic enquiry. What appear at first to be contradictory methodological approaches, when used in critical harmony, they enhance understanding and present a powerful tool for critical analysis. The heuristic living action research model offers a research tool through which I can approach the development of a new way of understanding my own educational practice and the narration of my research.

I discovered that Moustakas's thinking about illumination ran parallel with ideas in one of my own papers, *Faceting of the Diamond of Self* (Adler-Collins 2000), in which I described *self* as a raw diamond of pure consciousness. Diamonds in their natural raw state are unremarkable but when faceted reflect their light internally. In the same way,

consciousness becomes illuminated through the immersion process where cloudy perceptions and ideas rub against each other in the subconscious and then emerge as clear thought. I drew on Boyer's (1992) writings about four different forms of scholarship and saw each one as a tool to facet my diamond of self. I found Boyer's model useful as he described a process through which I could create my own scholarship of enquiry by asking myself a series of questions and then allowing the heuristic process to run its course. The questions were of the nature:

Can I show and evidence the process of discovery in my practice?

In terms of discovery, what is it that I have discovered in myself, my thinking, my practice?

Can I show and evidence the process of integration of my theory into practice?

How did I integrate my discoveries into my praxis?

Can I show and evidence the application of my knowledge, theory and practice?

What did I do, how did I do it and what were the results?

Can I take this process and show how it can benefit my teaching?

In this last section I have given a rationale for using integrated combinations of differing methodologies in this thesis, and now I move on to explaining narrative, which was the means by which I conveyed my process of enquiry.

2.2 The process of narrative

Narrative is a systematic process that is about discovering and presenting aspects of the self that are of great importance. Miles and Huberman (1984, p. 27) defined narrative as a conceptual framework that: *explains, either graphically, or in narrative form, the main dimensions to be studied - the key factors, or variables - and the presumed relationships among them.* Josselson (1997) said that the value of this sort of research using a narrative approach:

... is the representation of process, of a self in conversation with itself and with its world over time. Narratives are not records of facts, of how things actually were, but of a meaning-making system that makes sense out of the chaotic mass of perceptions and experiences of a life. (p. 37)

In this heuristic action research, I present accounts about my development, implementation and design of a nursing healing curriculum, and my journey, using narrative. This has allowed me to apply a degree of solidification about my ideas and experiences within a given criterion (that is, this thesis). I found narrative to be a good discipline as it focused my mind into a critical thinking and evaluative mode. Narrative, I believe, kept my account human in its telling and did not reduce my fundamental human experiences and learning to dry academic discourse.

I want my thesis to read like a circular or spiral journey as it traces and retraces the relationships between all the parts in the attempt to convey the experience of my research.

In this way I believe that the reader can recognise the experiences explained as authentic and credible, and new insights are provided into the phenomena.

My use of narrative follows the ideas of McClure (1996), who said that narratives involve making links, backwards and forwards, in a retrospective search for relevance in the past and significance in the present. This forms part of my becoming a critical thinker in a Western sense, a process that Freire and Macedo (1987) referred to as: *Reading the world always precedes reading the word and reading the word implies continually reading the world* (p. 9). I made explicit my reading of the world in my autobiographical account (Adler-Collins 1996), but at that time I did not fully comprehend how I could represent my knowing of the world in the word. This happened later in a paper (Adler-Collins 2003) where I addressed a very painful issue of my being, in the word. This was not only educational but healing, because it allowed me to identify tensions that I had never expressed. In a very personal sense the words of Freire and Macedo, quoted above, empowered me. Further evidence of self-growth and learning are demonstrated throughout this thesis, in which I am able to identify such changes in their emergence. Kearny (1984) noted that the structure of narratives, by which we acquire an identity, is demonstrated when trying to impose an order on our past, by retelling and recounting what has been. These two orientations - towards the future and towards the past - are not incompatible. I want to focus further on McClure's (1996) analyses of stories of action researchers in *Narratives of Becoming an Action Researcher*. McClure claimed that her analyses showed that the concepts of singularity and explanation are fundamental to narratives. She considered the possibility, even desirability, of moving into the abyss, which I understand to mean moving into experiences of *being*, which calls one's sense of identity into question

to the point of abandonment of self as I know myself. Further, I understand her use of *singularity* to refer to that which makes me unique, and *explanation* as the process of allowing the emergence of that uniqueness through narrative expression of praxis and experience. It is through that process that one enters an abyss and transforms.

Skolimowski (1994), in his book *Participatory Research*, in a section entitled *The Yoga of Transformation*, offered a framework to guide that journey. He stated that the process of transformation is achieved by passing through stages of the journey utilising certain skills.

These skills were:

The art of empathy

The art of communion with the object of enquiry

The art of learning to use its language

The art of using its language

The art of talking to the object of our enquiry

The art of penetrating from within

The art of in-dwelling in the other

The art of imaginative hypothesis, which leads to

the art of identification

The art of transformation of one's consciousness, so that it becomes the consciousness of the other (p. 160).

The use of the word 'art' suggests to me that the materials are present, but to apply the art of a situation requires skills honed with experience in practice. The above writings are uncannily similar to the Buddhist teaching of mindfulness. It is with such mindfulness that I want to proceed to examine the art of space creation in the next section.

2.3 Creating a safe space

Safe space and safety will be a constant theme within my writing as it is within my life. I have experienced unsafe places, which caused deep wounding of my psyche. I transcended the abuse of my childhood that occurred within the establishments that were charged with my care, as documented in the BBC film *Warrior to Priest* (Adler-Collins 1998) and one of my papers (Adler-Collins 1996). The writing of that paper was a healing process as the abscess of the past was lanced, brought out into the open, forgiven, and allowed to heal. As a direct result of my experiences there exists within me a passion that drives all I do, that is, never to violate the space of another human being in the way that I was violated.

In addition to the above, and the insights I have received from my Eastern esoteric priest training in Japan and my nursing education and experience, I have become conscious of different meanings of space, energy, thought and praxis. I am also consciously aware that I can be a healer with the power of human love and compassion and a desire to serve; however, I could also be an abuser of others in my privileged capacities. I have to make

sure that I do not manipulate others for personal gain or gratification, that I maintain my neutrality and am always non-judgemental.

As I write my narrative I am living my service, and it is important to explain what I mean by the term 'neutrality', which can be problematic. I believe that when we consciously attempt to suspend judgement and critical engagement in the moment, this is an attempt to achieve what I would refer to as a positively neutral space. I ask myself the question: *Can we really disengage ourselves from our belief systems and be open to the thoughts and values of others?* I try to find an answer from within my understanding of inclusional thinking (Rayner 2003, 1997). It could be argued from a language point of view that we cannot have two opposite emotions in the same space. Being positively neutral is as close as I can get to the state of mind that I consciously seek to live by.

Others have a different view, for example those activists who see neutrality as supporting the status quo. Myles Horton, the founder of the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee and a legendary figure in progressive organizing and adult education, is one of many who have critiqued the act of claiming neutrality, which he described as an immoral act.

Neutrality, he said, is: . . . *a code word for the existing system. It has nothing to do with anything but agreeing to what is and will always be - that's what neutrality is. Neutrality is just following the crowd. Neutrality is just being what the system asks us to be* (Myles and Paulo 2006, p. 43). South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu argued that neutrality is choosing the side of the oppressor: *If you are in a situation where an elephant is sitting on the tail of a mouse and you say, 'Oh no, no, no, I am neutral', the mouse is not going to appreciate your neutrality* (Tutu in CNN News broadcast, March 17, 2004). Another

insight into neutrality lies behind the title of Howard Zinn's political and intellectual memoir, *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train*, (Zinn 2002) when he said:

If a train is moving down the track, one can't plop down in a car that is part of that train and pretend to be sitting still; one is moving with the train. Likewise, a society is moving in a certain direction - power is distributed in a certain way, leading to certain kinds of institutions and relationships, which distribute the resources of the society in certain ways. We can't pretend that by sitting still - by claiming to be neutral - we can avoid accountability for our roles (which will vary according to people's place in the system). A claim to neutrality means simply that one isn't taking a position on that distribution of power and its consequences, which is a passive acceptance of the existing distribution. That is a political choice. (p. 49)

Seeing these differing, and I believe exclusional, views of neutrality, shows its complexity. By exclusional I mean that these views do not include 'the other' and are all cases where a choice is required, very black and white, right and wrong, such as in Zinn's argument above. Inclusional thinking sees no separation between us and them in terms of responsibility, and is a collective issue embracing all. It is, however, not passive, and the choices one makes are individual choices grounded in one's individual moral codes and ethical values.

Accepting a stance of neutrality is complex and by no means the easy option. Often neutrality means speaking the other side of the issue, but it will always mean having your declared values open and explicit. In Buddhist inclusional thinking, all opinions are included in the argument or debate; right and wrong are subjective stances depending on individual viewpoints and biases. In other words, there is more than one train going in more than one direction to different destinations.

[As I am writing I am mindful of the tension I hold concerning my deep fears of my violation of the other by my being a colonising agent. From engaging with the above debate on neutrality I feel that I can make clearer how I see colonisation working within the framework of this thesis. In Biology a species colonises and competes for space and natural resources in order to expand and grow at the expense of other life forms unless it is in a symbiotic relationship. My introduction of new forms of thinking and methodological outcomes are presented in a mindful manner, one that is aware of social context and is offered as another way to do something or is a different way of looking. They are not presented as ways of replacing existing forms of knowing. In the learning outcomes of my course, students are required to experience these new methodologies as possible tools for future use in their practice. Being exposed to new forms of knowing is part of the human experience as knowledge develops in the living context of culture and praxis.]

I show in my thesis that I truly try to suspend, as best I can, my conscious beliefs, values and ideals in the moment and positively create an inclusional neutral space. I do this through acting consciously with what Buddhists term a *correct mind*. A *correct mind* suspends judgement and actively seeks to embrace the values of positive love and

compassion. As I hold my correct mindfulness, this creates a space that can allow others with hostile or value-laden ideas of I/them/us/we to place such values in a neutral zone, without having to engage with the negative or positive aspects of the values they carry. Furthermore, I expand safe space to include my teaching/healing space, since this is where I also need to be mindful of unresolved personal issues with my students, and where I need to be mindful of not taking them on a journey into an abyss. My mindfulness is something that has been and continues to expand and develop my conscious praxis in the moment of doing.

[*In my personal journaling extract, 28 June, 2001, I wrote:*

I believe Skolimowski's framework gives the means for the reader to be safe and to participate at a level of engagement of their own choosing. I have to learn the use of appropriate language, and the appropriate art of communication to bring my consciousness to that of the understanding of the reader. I remember my own sense of outrage and violation from reading texts that led me to an author's ambush as I am extremely conscious of the power and value-laden qualities of words. Part of my ontological position is the Buddhist sense of being, that is not to be the cause of distress and pain in others. Clear and transparent signposts are needed in textual accounts and I will try to use them to make the journey safe...

I still hold with such thinking and I believe that I have strengthened the ability to create safe spaces by the inclusion of bracketing which makes clearer to my reader and myself the process and filters being used at any particular point in this narrative..]

2.4 Towards identifying my research area

During the initial stage of my thesis write-up, I had several inner tensions about identifying my research question or problem. I discovered that there was actually more than one problem. It was more like a matrix of differing causes presenting themselves like the tip of an iceberg. Trying to isolate which problems were more suitable for researching was to discard others as being too complex or difficult to address in this thesis. This presented me with a moral dilemma within which I have done my best to find the middle way to resolution. In the words of my supervisor, Dr Jack Whitehead, in a video conference we had about focus and threads of enquiry:

The breadth and depth of the threads of your enquiry is too large, each separate thread lends itself to a PhD enquiry on its own. What you need to decide is which thread is most important to you in terms of what you want your thesis to stand for. Think about how you have tried to overcome problems in your professional practice. I think such a reflection will reveal that you have experienced a tension in holding certain values and experiencing their negation at the same time in your practice (Personal communication transcribed from videotaped supervisory session, Japan 2002).

Whitehead's statement above highlighted the experience of existing as a living contradiction, as the following entry in my personal journal indicated:

For an example - my values of love and compassion as a nurse and priest and how the nursing profession and educational system does not exemplify these values, they are almost a contradiction. Nursing and education have different political and contextual agendas. The values that I want to teach in the classroom of critical enquiry can be blocked by the policing and policy power of the establishment. I want to be an educator who empowers students to think, the contradiction is I could actually be a banking educator (Freire 1970; Freire and Macedo 1987) in my actual practice. Deciding which thread is the most important and how to frame that thread was problematic to me. I truly could not disentangle the varying elements of my being and just present a selected distorted exclusion account. I acknowledge that the limitation of the word count focuses the writing and as such much is left out of the narrative.

(personal journal entry, August 4, 2003)

My experience as a living contradiction as initially highlighted by Dr Jack Whitehead became a core experience of my reflection. Recognising that I am a living contradiction seems like a good place to start on the focusing process of trying to represent the complexity of my multiple selves to my reader.

2. 5 Praxis: Walking the talk

McNiff *et al.* (1982, p. 13) stated that: *the aim of all research is that of advancing knowledge.* As part of this process, knowledge must be subjected to tests of validity. As a researcher, who is a nurse, educator and priest, I understand and accept that the public and

my peers in academia, nursing and the priesthood will hold up my claims to know and my knowledge to the validation and rigour of their respective accepted knowledge bases and practices; and as part of my own process of rigour and validation I need to ask myself and seek answers to the following questions:

What is rigour?

How is it applicable to, or on, or in my practice?

How can the validity of living educational theory be tested?

How valid is the process of validity?

What is evidence?

Who decides?

2. 5. 1 What is rigour?

Rigour in Freire's (1997) sense is academically challenging work that has a total commitment to the passion and the process of learning and teaching. I believe that in order to show that I am exercising rigour I must demonstrate trustworthiness to my reader, and embedded in that trustworthiness is my respect for the science of the scholarship of enquiry. Emden and Sandelowski (1999, p. 5) offer an important explanation regarding rigour in qualitative research, where they suggest that no one set of criteria is conclusive and all research has a "criterion of uncertainty". They also suggest that what amounts to rigour is in fact a judgement call by the researcher (p. 6). I believe that my trustworthiness

is a process that begins with the relationship my text creates with my reader in terms of comprehension. This comprehension, according to Streubert-Speziale (2003), sets up four conditions for the reader, these being “credibility, dependability, conformity and transferability” (pp. 38-39). For example, is what I am saying credible? Have I shown that I seek to truly know myself in terms of limitations and abilities? Have I made explicit my understandings of my bias? And am I open in my account to the ideas and values of others? Can I show evidence of a structure that the reader can rely on? Can my reader engage with my process?

Dependability, I believe, is parallel to reliability and likewise concerned with the stability of the data over time. I need to be able to demonstrate any changes or shifts in the way in which my inquiry was conducted and show the rationale/logic for such changes .

Lincoln and Guba (1995) write about conformability as being an audit trail that another can follow. I hold some reservations with such an explanation because, desirable as an audit trail is for those who wish to apply a judgement to the process, I associate an audit trail with a set of criteria laid down by those with the power to police or enforce those criteria. Such auditors may not agree with the conclusion developed by the original researcher (Sandelowski 1998). If, however, I am laying out a framework so that others can engage with my data and findings, I concur with Sandelowski’s (1998) argument that only the researcher who is immersed in the research and data can confirm the findings.

The data and findings from my research are original to the context, the participants and me. They cannot be repeated by someone else, although another researcher can use my process and ideas, which in turn will generate another unique set of data that may or may not agree with my findings. In terms of transferability, Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggest that it is

relative and depends entirely on the degree to which salient conditions overlap or match. I understand them to mean that such relativity is mostly verified through "data rich" description. I provide my data in the context of my research to the best of my ability in order to facilitate transferability judgments on the part of others.

As a criterion of rigour, the expectations derived from my data as to whether the findings "fit" or are transferable rest with the users of the data and its findings rather than mine as the researcher. My research has context specific criteria and conditions that shape the form of the data and the conclusion. It is for this reason that I look at transferability in humanistic enquiries with caution, as no two research conditions or contexts are the same. The credibility of the research relies heavily on judgement calls made by the reader set against the academic criteria of my writing. For example, have I made any claims that have not been argued or supported? Have I conformed to what is the expected level of credibility for my level of writing?

This thesis style is very different from what is expected from an academic article in a peer reviewed journal or for a presented conference paper. In my academic writings, have my ideas and claims been supported by evidence and argument? Have the sources of all ideas and data been acknowledged? Are my sources trustworthy? Is the grammar and syntax appropriate to the scholarship? I can remember driving my supervisor to distraction with my early writings due to their grammatical errors and poor syntax. Merriam (1988,p.45) provides a table listing the requirements of a "Dependability" audit in quantitative research, this being the last element of Streubert-Speziale's (2003) four conditions. Merriam lists them as:

- Dense description of research methods
- Stepwise replication
- Triangulation
- Peer examination
- Code-recode procedure

While this table is useful, it delineates between the different methodologies of qualitative and quantitative approaches. In 1970, Kuhn proposed the concept of specific paradigms, suggesting that there can be more than one set of basic beliefs or 'paradigms' about what constitutes reality and counts as knowledge (Kuhn, 1970). Kemmis (1974) asserts that the true value of non-experimental research lies in its connection to the real world, its ability to describe actions in their social and historical contexts, and its ability to rationally critique these descriptions. Central to the qualitative paradigm is the belief that people assign meaning to the objective world, that their valued experiences are situated within a historical and social context, and that there can be multiple realities (Vygotsky 1978).

2. 6. Serious limitations

2. 6. 1 The question of self or not self?

Part of my research method is self-study. I have given considerable thought to the expression of “self” and the tensions that such expression has aroused in me. In a Buddhist understanding the “self” does not exist other than as a phenomenon arising out of mental causation, or a mental construction. Such understandings are not a helpful stance to adopt when writing a PhD thesis on self-study in a Western academy, and so they presented some interesting challenges to me. The major challenge is the exploration of

my Buddhist faith through the critical lens of scholarship, and finding tensions that have brought my teachings into question. When I study “self” I am studying my mental constructs and how they shape my perceptions and understandings. I found a degree of blindness in the teachings of Buddhism; blindness that was revealed to me through the Western eye of criticality in that I overlooked the genderism of Buddhist values and their exclusion of women. The Buddhist Sanskrit writings are very class- and sexist-orientated in relationship to castes, high birth, low birth and the rights of women (Gross 1993). It has been my experience in Japan to find similar glass ceilings: in Japanese Buddhism an example being that a woman priest cannot be fully ordained to the same level as their male counterparts. However, I do feel that this is perhaps the influence of the cultural filters of the writers and gate-holders of the teachings rather than the teachings themselves, as the Buddha’s words were not written down until 300 years after his death. My Buddhist filters are explored in greater depth in Chapter 4. At this point of my narration I just wish to flag up that I am aware that if I do not apply mindfulness in the sense of bracketing, as previously mentioned, the bias of my faith could colour the research analysis.

2. 6. 2 Ethical considerations

Ethics and ethical issues are always problematic as they mean different things to different people. Singer (1979) argued that ethical actions are those which are justified by an equal consideration of the interests of all those likely to be affected by such choices of action. In resolving specific dilemmas, ethical considerations involve an attempt to answer the question: *What would I have anyone/everyone do in this situation, and why?* Ethical principles, or guidelines for action, tend towards statements as universals, such

as ‘one should tell the truth’ or ‘minimise harm’, but they are not universally applicable. Thus ‘telling the truth’ may be an ethically justifiable action in some circumstances but not in others. Ethical precepts are not absolutes.

For my research I used the BMA (1996) “*Declaration of Helsinki (1994)*” ethical guidelines for human research. These are the guidelines also used by the ethics committee of my university in Japan. I was soon confronted by what Rohlen and LeTendre (1998, p. 13-14) reported about lesson plans in Japan staying the same for several years as the knowledge was time served, understood and proven. Fernandez (2002) suggested that Japanese educators do not have the authority, or in some cases the will, to change lesson plans. However, Stigler & Hiebert (1997) reported that in the teaching of mathematics, while Japanese teachers follow an established routine outlined in a very detailed lesson plan, the pedagogy of the lesson was unique to Japan’s maths teachers. Problems were presented and discussed with the class in terms of seeking solutions. The answer was expected to be arrived at by the class focusing on and discussing the solution (p.20). From my teacher training, Western lesson plans tend to be reminders of the learning objectives of the lesson that the teacher can modify readily in his or her approach to the situation of the classroom. The ethics committee wanted from me a detailed step-by-step account of what I would be doing in the class. I was unable to provide one as my methodology was that of group work with its emerging underpinning values that would be a guide for learning outcomes.

Cultural differences over how Japanese faculty conducted research, as compared to my Western experience, soon emerged. For example, the ethics committee of the university passed messages to me via a translator who did not understand

what action research or heuristic enquiry were, and this created enormous difficulties for me in terms of trying to make sure that the true nature of my research was correctly represented. My frustrating experiences with the ethics committee included consent for research being held up because of their concentration on methodology rather than on the ethical issues related to my research. I found myself in a position where my curriculum was approved by MEXT in Japan and my PhD research proposal had been approved by Bath University, but was not understood and approved by the ethics committee here in Japan. Ethical decisions often involve choices among alternatives which are themselves ethical in nature; a clash between “might and right”. Several restrictions were placed on my research which shaped the way the research was later reported and analysed. Ethical approval was finally given two days before the course began, subject to various conditions as outlined below.

2. 6. 3 Restraints on data collection

Restraints placed on this research by the ethics committee in Japan were as follows:

No demographic data was allowed to be collected on the students in my classroom and I was not allowed to ask the question as to the history that brought each student to my class. Secondly, data collection was limited to the lesson period only. Next, reflective journals and portfolio entries could not be assessed for content, only for process. For example, this meant that if a student wrote an entry for a session they would receive a credit for making that entry. I was not allowed to evaluate the content or suitability of the data or grade it. I felt that this was a huge constriction since the object of my research was the very thing that I was not allowed to undertake, namely a holistic humanistic enquiry, one in which background data may have given cultural insights and allowed contextual influences to be

identified. The next restriction was that no student learning contracts were allowed, and this meant that I could not teach the students about responsibility for their learning process. I believed negotiated learning contracts to be a powerful tool for self-learning by the students, as they would then be free to negotiate with me over what they expected from me as a teacher and what I expected from them. Another limitation was that all PowerPoint presentations and lesson materials had to be checked by a senior member of staff for suitability before being used. This was highly problematic, as I felt that this staff member was not educationally informed about the research methodology or my content and was not a qualified teacher. This issue of most university faculty not being qualified teachers presented itself frequently, and many of the misunderstandings would have been avoided if I could have negotiated as one teacher to another. I hold the opinion that having a higher degree such as a PhD does not automatically imply that you can teach or even understand teaching processes and knowledge generation. A further limitation was that no assessment of students' English skills was allowed on the grounds that it could have caused the students embarrassment. Since I was employed to teach in English I wanted to check and gauge my students' understanding of my content, which is a basic requirement for a teacher, and I was not allowed to do this.

[Considering the restrictions placed on me by the ethics committee, the only data I could collect was as follows. I designed a bilingual questionnaire which I placed on my website for students' evaluations of my lessons. The web based questionnaire contained both qualitative and quantitative sections (see annexA). As I was a new foreign teacher I wanted to get quick feedback as to how the lessons and learning outcomes had been received. I designed the course in such a manner that the completion of the web

assessment was a learning outcome linked to assessing peers and improving computer literacy skills.

The reflective journal process had two objectives. The first is in line with Egglund & Heinemann's (1994) suggestion that record keeping and the reporting of views, ideas and observations are critical skills for nurses. A nurse has to pass on information accurately and concisely with an informed opinion. Benner et al.(1999) and Benner (1984) advocated that observing, thinking and feeling are important skills, as more often than not the nurse will see more of the patient than other medical staff and will have a "sense" of the patient. Takemura and Kanda (2003) suggest that Japanese nurses should provide care based on continuously knowing the patient's subjective world, thus extending Benner's idea of a "sense" (p.256). As I concur with these sentiments I held the opinion that using reflective journals would help develop these skills. Secondly, critical thinking skills were selected by the dean of the faculty as a faculty goal in terms of learning outcomes. Learning how to reflect by using a journal grounded in their educative practices could be a useful experience for the students' professional development and writing skills. The Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT) had approved my curriculum and the use of reflective journals and, as previously discussed, Japanese curricula in new universities were not allowed to be modified for four years. Therefore the students had no choice other than to comply with the learning objective and complete the required number of journal entries. What had to be modified was the content of the journals and I was required to explain that 15 journal entries were required relating to their thoughts about the lesson contents. Students were told formally that no data of a personal nature, or comments that they did not want to be used in the public domain, were to be included in their classroom

journals. What I had hoped would be a rich source of ideas, thinking and engagement had been reduced to a series of limited snapshots bounded in an artificial context of compulsory 95-minute sessions. However, even such limitations provided me with insights to my students' thinking that proved to be inspiring for me.

Another data source was the students' group portfolios where they responded to a set theme by researching the theme the week before, collating their ideas and evidence in the classroom and reporting back their findings. Reflective journal entries were pasted into the portfolios to strengthen the educative account by the added layer of reflection. The ethics committee reduced the value of portfolios to task-orientated learning. 15 headings, 15 entries, thus the focus was shifted to a performance based outcome rather than the one I wanted, which was a skills based one where tasks and reflection were the praxis].

In consideration of the above limitations on my research imposed by the ethics committee, and the fact that it became so contextually grounded, it is very difficult to extrapolate the findings of this research to other settings than that of my classroom. In hindsight I came to realise that my formal training as a teacher in a Western setting required me to improve my practice of teaching by researching that practice and reflecting on my actions.

Checking knowledge and providing proof of that knowledge is a commonplace requirement for teachers, according to my English experience. Clear audit trails are expected and examined but in Japan this was clearly not the case. At the time of writing this thesis, indications from the new Prime Minister of Japan, Mr Abe, are that moves will soon be made to ensure that university teachers can teach and must have a basic teaching licence.

Informed consent was obtained from the students by means a formal presentation in the first session of the course when I outlined the research objectives and the conditions of the research. I re-checked their understanding of their consent in my second session. All the students consented to the research and signed a formal research consent form releasing all images and text for use in future academic papers, conferences and research. No student withdrew their consent over the duration of the course.

2. 7 In conclusion, in this chapter I have clarified my values and beliefs and described the contextual conditions of my enquiry. I have clarified my ontological position and offered some insights to these values. In the following chapters the nature of these values will become clearer. They are I believe value-added in as much as they extend my understanding of my ontology and inner world so as to engage my outer world through the dynamic synergy of Buddhist values with inclusional theory and their union in praxis. In the next chapter I position my framework by extending the depth of focus on my practice, further outline my ontological base through its emergence, and examine how such emergence affects my standards of judgement.