

Chapter 7

The Students' Voice

7.1 Voices in the silence

The previous six chapters of this thesis have been an in-depth engagement with the thinking of others, my values and ideas, and the process that underpinned my design and introduction of a new curriculum into a Japanese university. This chapter shows how I held my values by paying particular attention to details. Thanks to the rigorous educational training I received in my Master of Education programme in Education in 2000, which provided a solid educational platform for designing a reliable curriculum once the knowledge content had been modified so as to make it culturally and contextually more sensitive, my curriculum proved to be a major success with my social formation in that it now attracts students to the university who wish to study healing in nursing, and it also resulted in my promotion. This chapter's narrative focuses on my seeking to understand the complex dynamics of my classroom processes, with particular attention given to what the data is saying to me particularly as I am using the students' data to reflect my values back to me. By 'seeking to understand' I mean asking *What actually happened?* Through the reflective process I used to analyse and synthesise the data, I wanted to know if the students experienced the following areas of my ontological values:

1. Did the students show evidence of critical thinking?
2. Did they enjoy their learning process?
3. Did I develop a means of transferring my own learning?

4. Did the students meet the appropriate standards required of the curriculum by the university?

My focus on critical thinking has been explained in previous chapters. My use of the word ‘enjoy’ encapsulates my belief that life has no rehearsal and that these years of university education are very precious and formative ones for the future scholarly activities of my students. The nature of their experience will reflect on the future directions that nursing practice and education will take. I wanted to move away from the students’ negatively associating learning with ‘banking education’, which to date was all they had experienced. Seeking evidence of the transferability of my knowing to my students was an important issue for me. For, if I was unable to do this, my life would have little meaning other than my own learning. My life, I believe, has to contribute to the learning of my community.

This chapter, therefore, is filled with the voices of their journey, their thinking, and their reflections, what they liked and what they did not like, including me! I listened to what the students said to me through the differing mediums of the data collection instruments, and found their expressions to be refreshingly direct and honest. Their expressions were “wet with the words of their own meaning”. However, finding a way to tell the multiple interwoven stories of their experience and learning as we co-created knowledge was problematic. I use ‘problematic’ in the sense that my experience with the students changes my ontological position in many core areas of my understanding. What I am seeking is not just an explanation/statement of my change but evidence of the fact.

[For the first time as I sit in the silence and reflect on the data that I am soon to present, I begin to see the depth of the Buddhist teaching that we are all each others’ teachers. My Buddhist

understanding believes that when the student is ready, the teacher appears, so then the teacher becomes the student and the student becomes the teacher. Once I had understood what the blindness of my own ego gave to me and removed that obstruction of myself from myself, I was able to move into a new space of understanding with the eyes and wonderment of a child. I saw in complexity a purity of simplicity as my students began my education as a nurse teacher in Japan. In terms of Eisner's (1997) statement about flying in new skies and sailing in new seas, after the initial push and period of confusion my students excelled themselves as independent thinkers.]

In this section the reflective perspective is shifted to focus on the actions and words of the students and the reflections and new epistemological understandings that emerged out of this experience. Instead of the context being faculty politics or educational policy, my focus is on what I/we learned as we co-created knowledge through praxis. Two strands of experience will be interwoven in this chapter, the first being the actual events as written by the students and myself within reflective journals, qualitative web evaluations and portfolios. The second strand of experience focuses on reflections on the learning that I assimilated during the last three years of the many rewrites of this thesis.

7.2 Baptism of fire: The birthing of a new epistemology

My new epistemology erupted out of a critical incident in the classroom, and I used Dewey's (1933) and Schön's (1995) conceptualization of reflection in the moment to analyze this. My values and practices shifted and transformed in the moment to open an understanding of what it means to bridge cultures. Palmer (1998) said of teaching: *"a good teacher must stand where personal and public meet...where the web of connectedness feels like crossing a freeway"* (p. 17). My starting point for this process was lesson one on day

one of my practice at the university. Here is my account from my journal of April 14, 2003:

I was both stunned and awed at the location and architecture of my new university. It was new, beautiful and modernistic in concept. I was also nervous about teaching a Japanese class. However, senior faculty had informed me that the students had all passed an English test for entry into the university and that English comprehension was not an issue. Also, I had a translator, who was a fellow priest and who would help me with my class. She was knowledgeable in the healing terminology. I was confident in my curriculum. My lesson plans and learning outcomes had been completed and tested for consistency in terms of meaning and knowledge content. PowerPoint slides and bilingual research consent forms as discussed in the ethics section were completed. The website I had constructed for the course was live. It contained the interactive elements of the curriculum, which were students' reflective journals, qualitative and quantitative student evaluation questionnaires for the lessons, lesson plans and lesson handouts; I was as ready as I could be.

The night before my first class I was in a state of high tension and worried that I had forgotten something. The hours seemed to stand still as I waited for the morning. I duly entered my classroom on time, lesson plans in hand, confident that all had been done that could be done. There were no surprises. As I had anticipated, the 84 students were sitting in rows and there was a gentle background hum as the students talked amongst themselves. With my limited yet functional understanding of spoken Japanese, I could hear them talking about me, the foreigner in the priest clothes standing before them. I began the class. I covered the basic introductions, health and safety, fire drill, student's research consent to videotape the lesson, all with no problems.

I began teaching the module. With a confident flourish I started the main topic, research methodology, living action research. This class was programmed as a double period. I explained the concept of Living Action Research (Whitehead 1989), asking the questions "Who am I? How do "I" improve my study skills?" The video clip of what happened next was painful to watch because what I had anticipated happening did not happen. The students sat very quietly, and all that could be heard in the classroom was the soft gentle background noise of the CD I was playing. The silence was total. I began to feel out of control, fear sprang up in my throat, and my mouth became dry and my hands sweaty.

In the past I had heard teachers talking about such moments but had never experienced one myself. I was used to the dynamic, electrical exchange of dialogue and ideas, questions and engagement with my students, the subject matter and myself. In a split second the universe stood still, as my eyes looked into the students' eyes. I was used to seeing questioning, intelligent enquiry, agreement, disagreement, anything but what I saw in my students, which was complete and total bewilderment. In that split second I knew that all that I had learned from my Western education was not going to work. Although in that moment I was not able to articulate my sense of knowing, I deeply sensed it. I readily identified that these students had no idea what I was talking about, and the fault was mine. In that moment when time stood still, all the theories, the paradigms, the complex arguments, meant nothing to me. I was shaken to the very roots of my being. I sensed that the question was wrong and, even in that very moment of realisation, I had a problem with my ego. The Eurocentric educator asked what could possibly be wrong with such a question? All my previous educative experience had proved the question to be a powerful one for instigating engagement. The ontological bedrock of my whiteness was suddenly exposed to me for the illusion it was. In

the context of that classroom the luxury of reflection on action, in Schön's (1983) sense, was not an option. However, I experienced an acute awareness of reflection in/with the moment.

Let me elucidate:

What was triggered instantly was a feeling that time stood still. I had a conversation with myself. "Do not panic" was the uppermost thought. I felt truly dreadful, sick to my stomach and all I wanted was for the ground to open so it could swallow me up. "Breathe and feel" was the second thought I had, for I had not realised that in my shock I had stopped breathing. "You know" was the third thought, and in fact I did. This knowing was intuitive and grounded in my experience as a teacher. Even though I had never taught Japanese students before, a form of knowing existed. In the Army I had experienced flashbacks to critical situations. I experienced another form of flashback now, but this time it was like watching a video set to fast rewind and fast forward all at the same time. Lessons, books, other experiences, all flashed across my consciousness as I sought to remove myself from the dis-ease of the situation. The 84 students and several faculty members seemed suspended in another time. Before I took my next breath, I had my answer. I turned off the now useless PowerPoint. I laid aside my lesson plan with all its careful preparation and asked my next question:

"As Japanese students, what do you feel would be a good way of studying new and different concepts?"

The lights went on in the students' eyes and we were back engaging together, but something had happened in that classroom that changed me.]

I will now include snippets taken from the students' qualitative evaluations of this lesson and their journals. The reader is alerted to my reason for not providing a more in-depth

data presentation and analysis in this thesis, which is that this document concentrates predominantly on the process of pedagogising my curriculum. However, it is useful to illustrate the students' participation in the process, because I claim that my curriculum is student-centred. For me it is important to evaluate the quality of their experience. Their end-of-year exam results demonstrated that they had achieved the necessary learning outcomes that satisfied the criteria of the university (81 "A" grades, one "B" grade, and two course non-completions). However, what is equally important to my interest as an inclusional educator is the students' qualitative experience of the educative process alongside the levels of their grades. I am using the students' words to engage with what they felt and thought. Each session produced a data-rich environment. Online student evaluations produced both qualitative and quantitative data. Group portfolios produced combined opinions and collective ideas as well as individual contributions. Reflective journals produced individual writings that displayed a deeper quality of reflection and insight than was revealed by the questionnaires.

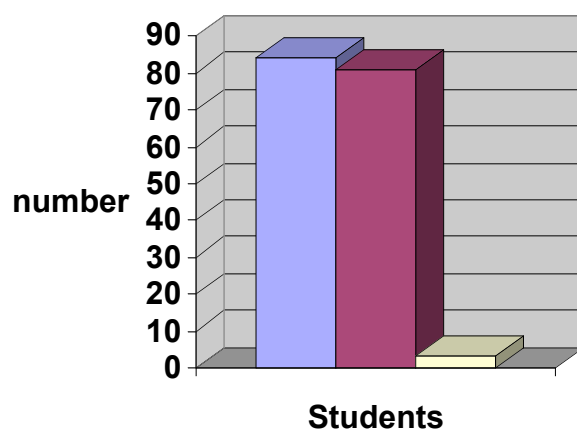
7.3 Student evaluations

The students completed online session evaluations after each of the 15 teaching sessions on the course, and these contained 15 questions each. Four of these questions were qualitative in nature (questions 12, 13, 14, 15). I manually collated the responses to these qualitative questions and grouped them into common themes. It is important to note that I will not present the results of my overall thematic analysis here but just concentrate on specimen examples of results. I will take three sample session evaluations and present their data.

These will be the first session, the seventh session (the midway point), and the final session on healing theory.

7. 3. 1 Engaging with the data – Session One

Student's Responses Session One



■ Students	84
■ Returns	81
■ non returns	3

Figure 13. Students' responses to Session One

Here is how the sessions were coded:

<i>Session Coding</i>		<i>S1/</i>	<i>/12/</i>
<i>S/</i>	<i>Session number</i>	<i>S1</i>	
<i>N/</i>	<i>Question number</i>		<i>/12</i>
<i>/a,b</i>	<i>Theme number</i>	<i>/a</i>	
<i>/n</i>	<i>Subtheme</i>		<i>/1</i>

Engaging with the data – Session One	
Session Subject	Course Administration, Informed Consent, Methodology
Question Number 12	<i>What did you enjoy most about this session?</i>
Qualitative question 1	

There were eight themes identified from the data for Session 1 (Cohort 1: C001) in response to the above question. No percentages were included in this table as some students gave more than one answer.

S1/12/a	<i>Group work</i>	61
S1/12/b	<i>Pleasant</i>	5
S1/12/c	<i>Co-operation</i>	9
S1/12/d	<i>Healing</i>	6
S1/12/e	<i>Creating a portfolio</i>	50
S1/12/f	<i>Nothing special</i>	4*
S1/12/g	<i>Increased interest</i>	3
S1/12/h	<i>Talking to men</i>	2

**(nothing special in Japanese is a positive statement indicating satisfaction but no particular enthusiasm over the issue)*

S1/12/a. Group work (61) *I re-analysed the entries for the students in this group and identified six subthemes:*

<i>S1/12/a/1 Working together</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>39. 125%</i>
<i>S1/12/a/2 Opinion</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>29. 34%</i>
<i>S1/12/a/3 Talking</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>26. 23%</i>
<i>S1/12/a/4 Thinking</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1. 63%</i>
<i>S1/12/a/5 Friendly</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1. 63%</i>
<i>S1/12/a/6 Interested</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1. 63%</i>

7.3.1.1 Discussion on the first qualitative question, question 12

At the outset of my course I was informed by senior faculty that the students were not critical thinkers. As I have shown from the nursing texts of Petrini (2001), Kawashima and Petrini (2004) and Minami (1985), this seems to be the accepted understanding of our industry in Japan. However, at this point I question these views based on my understanding of what I have seen in the classroom and the data as sampled above, which is consistent over the course. Japanese students are more than capable of critical thinking.

In fact, I would claim that they are accomplished critical thinkers. This begs the question of: *Why is there a difference between what is reported in the industry literature and by faculty and what I am seeing in the classroom with my own eyes and evidence?* I wish to hold in temporary suspension my answering of this question and revisit the data. For, as Cottrell (1999, p. 88) reminds me, critical thinking means: *...weighing up the arguments and the evidence for and against.*

7. 3. 1. 2 Second qualitative question, question 13

Engaging with the data - Session One	
Session Subject	Course Administration, Informed Consent, Methodology
Question Number 13	<i>What did you enjoy least about this session?</i>
Qualitative question 2	

There were eight themes arising from the data in response to the above question:

<i>S1/12/a</i>	<i>Nothing special</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>39. 7%</i>
<i>S1/12/b</i>	<i>Speaking English</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>11. 2%</i>
<i>S1/12/c</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>31%</i>
<i>S1/12/d</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1. 2%</i>
<i>S1/12/e</i>	<i>Not interested</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2. 5%</i>
<i>S1/12/f</i>	<i>Classroom setting</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1. 2%</i>
<i>S1/12/g</i>	<i>Worried about exam</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1. 2%</i>
<i>S1/12/h</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>11. 2%</i>

S1/12/c/ Explanation (25) I re-analysed the entries of the students in this group and identified five subthemes:

<i>S1/12/c/1</i>	<i>Explanation was too long</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>S1/12/c/2</i>	<i>Did not understand/unclear</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>60 %</i>
<i>S1/12/c/3</i>	<i>Did not understand Japanese translation</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4%</i>

<i>S1/12/c/4</i>	<i>Did not know what a portfolio was</i>	3	12%
<i>S1/12/c/5</i>	<i>Did not know what was required</i>	1	4%

S1/12/c/9/b

Did not understand/unclear (15) warranted further investigation. I then re-analysed the entries for the students in this group and found three sub-subthemes:

<i>S1/12/c.9/b/1</i>	<i>It was difficult</i>	6
<i>S1/12/c.9/b/2</i>	<i>I was puzzled</i>	1
<i>S1/12/c.9/b/3</i>	<i>Unclear</i>	8

I am unable to extract more from the data if the difficulty was due to language or subject material and/or teaching style.

7. 3. 1. 2. 1 Discussion on the second qualitative question, number 13

I had many surprises from the data throughout this research. Such surprises highlighted to me the issues of bias and keeping an open mind (Wink 2005). With 32 students reporting that they were “OK” with the session (*S1/12/a nothing special; 39. 7%*), I was expecting there to be a much larger response to my limited Japanese language skills at that time. The low response surprised me (*S1/12/b. Speaking English (9); 11. 2%*). I asked myself, “*If I included the students who cited the explanation (S1/12/c) of the cause as a problem (31%), would it reflect a more correct sampling of English comprehension?*” (Remembering that I was forbidden to ask this question by the ethics committee, I was therefore looking to see English comprehension levels reflected in this part of my questionnaire). However, when

checking if this was the case, the evidence showed that of the 15 students who reported that they did not understand (S1/12/c/9/b), *seven gave a reason why they were unclear* (S1/12/c/2/a,b). This left a total of eight students who were reporting that they were unclear but gave no reason for their answer.

7.3.1.3 Third qualitative question, question 14

Engaging with the data - Session One	
Session Subject	Course Administration, Informed Consent, Methodology
Question Number 14	<i>Were there any subjects that you would like to spend more time studying?</i>
Qualitative question 3	

Ten themes arose from the data in response to the above question:

<i>S1/14/b</i>	<i>Healing</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>52.4%</i>
<i>S1/14/d</i>	<i>Nothing special</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11.9%</i>
<i>S1/14/f</i>	<i>More time</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8.4%</i>
<i>S1/14/h</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6%</i>
<i>S1/14/j</i>	<i>Portfolio</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6%</i>
<i>S1/14/l</i>	<i>Group work</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6%</i>
<i>S1/14/n</i>	<i>Thinking more</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2.4%</i>
<i>S1/14/p</i>	<i>Do not understand yet</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2.4%</i>
<i>S1/14/r</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2.4%</i>
<i>S1/14/t</i>	<i>Bad data</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2.4%</i>

7. 3. 1. 3. 1 Discussion on the third qualitative question

My purpose in including this question in the questionnaire was to see if I was missing any area of interest that would emerge from a Japanese context. I hoped to use data from this section in modifying the teaching aims of my curriculum. At this early stage I thought it a hopeful sign that over half the students showed interest in studying healing, as attendance on the healing theory element of my curriculum was compulsory. The students are engaged in a critical process by giving an opinion in their replies. An opinion is a complex processing of data. I believe this is showing the actual critical thinking of the students in progress. Even when the response is “nothing special” an answer has been decided upon, and that represents an action and is the result of judgements being made. The response of only two students wanting to “think more” poses some interesting questions as to how successful encouraging critical thinking will be. Is this evidence of the lack of critical thinking suggested by my faculty? I suggest at this early stage that it is premature to read too much into the first questionnaire.

7. 3. 1. 4 Fourth qualitative question, question 15

Engaging with the data - Session One	
Session Subject	Course Administration, Informed Consent, Methodology
Question Number 15	<i>What improvements do you think could be made to the session?</i>
Qualitative question 4	

Six themes arose from the data in response to this question:

<i>S1/15/a</i>	<i>Educational interest</i>	29	30.2%
<i>S1/15/b</i>	<i>Nothing special</i>	18	21.6%
<i>S1/15/c</i>	<i>Healing interest</i>	16	19.2%
<i>S1/15/d</i>	<i>Communication</i>	9	11.1%
<i>S1/15/e</i>	<i>Group work</i>	4	4.8%
<i>S1/15/f</i>	<i>English</i>	3	3.6%
	<i>Bad data</i>	1	
		81	

I have to admit my surprise at this outcome and I was intrigued as to what educational issues the students had raised in the first session. I therefore proceeded to re-analyse S1/15/a for further clarification. The results are listed below:

<i>S1/15/a/1</i>	<i>Education - investigate, learn, enquire, study more</i>	14
<i>S1/15/a/2</i>	<i>Portfolio - investigate, know more, consider, research</i>	15
		29

7.3.1.4.1 Discussion on the fourth qualitative question

Freire's (1970; 1987) observation that students arrive in the classroom immersed in their worlds of learning seems highly relevant to what I was seeing. All these students had passed through an education system that is acknowledged as being that of the "banking educator". Yet in my challenging classroom situation, which has introduced new educational methodologies, the students appear to have all the necessary ingredients to

respond as critical thinkers. When I considered these responses, the niggling doubt that had been in my mind started to grow more and more. What I was seeing and the evidence I had were not in step or agreement with the published literature or the views expressed to me by senior faculty concerning Japanese students' performance in the classroom. I have yet to understand why perhaps this first session is only our 'Love affair' or 'honeymoon period' and the answers will emerge over time. At this point in time I just wanted to highlight that the early indications were surprising.

The human mind has a wonderful gift of being able to extrapolate scenarios in more than one dimension (Talbot 1992). It is a process that I enjoy and it fits so well with the heuristic immersion stage of enquiry (Moustakas 1990). The embryonic questions that were forming in my mind would be highly contentious within Japanese nurse education and with Japanese educators. In keeping with my methodology, I left these embryonic questions to synergise as I revisited the statistical information produced by the questionnaire. This data is presented in the next section.

Statistical Data Student Session Evaluation						
C001 Session Number 1						Totals
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Bad Data	Responses
Question 1. Session materials: adequate information was provided relating to the session structure?	10	55	14	2	0	81
Question 2. Was the session easy to understand?	6	50	24	1	0	81
Question 3. Teaching Style: All the session materials were un-ambiguous and easy to follow?	10	44	27	0	0	81
Question 4. The target objectives of each module were presented at an appropriate level?	8	49	24	0	0	81
Question 5. Did you feel the teacher's enthusiasm for the session?	56	25	0	0	0	81
Question 6. All the session materials were presented at the correct level?	12	50	19	0	0	81
Question 7. Were you interested in the session?	48	29	2	2		81
Question 8. Handouts were provided and easy to follow?	22	51	8	0	0	81
Question 9. Venue: heating and lighting were adequate?	15	58	8	0	0	81
Question 10. Venue: enough space was provided to work comfortably in?	24	50	7	0	0	81
Question 11. facilities. Toilets were readily accessible.	33	46	2	0	0	81
	244	507	135	5		891

Figure 14. Consolidated results of statistical data - Session One. (Class size 84 students. Returns 81)

7. 3. 1. 5 Discussion on the first teaching session

At the end of the teaching session I was shocked by my own insights and the sudden appearance of an ontological bias, that of my Eurocentric whiteness. I marvelled to myself

at how the process unfolded as described in the critical incident and how well the lesson went in general. I fully understood that I had a language problem. However, as I had been employed to help upgrade the students' levels of English comprehension, as such I was not unduly alarmed. What I needed to do next was to wait for the students to complete the session evaluations and an online test. At this point I just want to state that an online test of the learning outcomes was available for this session. Each student was able to log on to the website and take the session test. Each test could be taken as many times as was needed by the student to obtain a 100% pass. When this was accomplished the student could move on to the next session test. Evidence of their progress was accessible to me, as the course administrator, from the website which recorded students' time on task (TOT) and showed which questions they were having difficulty with. Students were not informed of all the management issues relating to what the programmes could do in terms of analysis. They were informed that all aspects of their work would be checked for consistency and used for research to which they consented. The ethics committee was aware that I could track my students' performance which I argued was part of my research in designing an audit process. This was accepted on the condition that no data that could identify an individual would be released into the public domain.

Combined with the above, students had homework tasks allocated for the session. The university had given me a formula for calculating homework time for the students, which was that for every 45-minute period, there should be one and a half hours of self-study associated with it. Therefore, my students had a double period of ninety minutes resulting in three hours of homework being allocated. My curriculum is the only one in the university that links learning outcomes to web-based assessments and evaluation of my teaching and the students' experience. Apart from the online test and evaluation, the

students had a research element in each homework task where they had to research the theme of the next lesson using any resource that they felt was appropriate, and bring the evidence of that research back to the next lesson where it could be discussed with the group and pasted or entered into their group portfolio. The last element of each session's homework was that of their reflective journals. Each student was required to write a reflective journal and bring their reflections to the next session to share with their colleagues. By pasting their reflective journals into the portfolios it immediately changed colourful scrapbooks into educative learning resources and evidence portfolios. The combined elements of this course have been designed to link together in stimulating student-centred learning. (This is another unique process that is only attempted in my curriculum.) The statistical evidence of the first session, shown in Figure 14, indicates that the lesson was a success and enjoyed by 84% of the class. However, as impressive as this data is, it gave no indications as to the storm clouds that were looming on the horizon.

As this section focuses on data, I understand that I am undergoing a process of transformation as I move from my heuristic involvement and naturalistic enquiry to that of a more active seeking to make sense of the data and to understand what that data is saying to me. I am in a very real sense seeing the birthing of my ideas as through the eyes of an observer, for I have no control over what shape or form the data will take after the concepts of the curriculum are synergised by the students. I sense that my data is becoming more conclusive and objective as the ontological abstractions that have driven my research and my practice are completing their metamorphosis into figures, reports, data segments and bits. I am deeply aware of my attachment to this process and my need to verify that I am not being ambushed by my own agenda (Douglas 1976; Miles and Huberman 1984; Denzin 1994; Denzin and Lincoln 1998). I am also aware of the contradiction that using a

questionnaire can bring about, and the analysis has to be taken as a subjective snapshot rather than a serious concrete fact. I say this because of what the following student wrote in her journal:

HTR ____ . Session I.

*"We discussed by the theme of "being what ? with healing" today. my first idea -- "-
- although kicked, if it discusses within a group and various opinions are heard, the
thing with an image which is cured and is called " and "relaxation" which has not
been noticed until now has also been in sight I was able to hear various new ideas
and was able to think more deeply."*

Tracking this student's responses to the questionnaire showed that she did not indicate that "thinking more deeply" was an issue - in fact her response was "nothing special". Another example of the differences in responses between the questionnaire answers and the entries in their reflective journal is shown by the following student's comments:

HTR ____ .Session 1

*"I have never written reflective journal before. So, this is my first reflective journal.
I am interested in "Understanding I". I am looking forward to that lesson and
Tutorials. I want to know my personality" I think that "Silence and non
participation are not options on this course" is very great word. Japanese students
are tending to silence and none participating. This is very very bad manner! I think
the cause of that is Japanese education."*

When I read this student's entry I cannot describe my wonder that from the student's own words I received a confirmation of my own thinking and that of some of the literature. I

tracked this student's response to the questionnaire and found her entry to be "healing study" as the subject she wanted to study more. Already, in the first session's reflective journal, she was engaging in what I believe is an open critical pedagogic conversation.

Another student said in her journal: HTR____. Session 1.

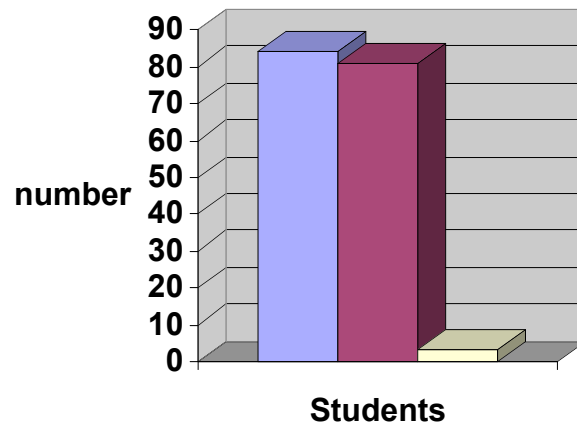
"_ don't like English. It is very difficult for me to write in English. So _ can't write in English. _'m sorry."

In tracking this student's responses she marked everything in the questionnaire in the negative. In this case both the questionnaire and the reflective journal confirmed the same opinion. This student was unhappy. On reading this I took a risk in my classroom management, for this student was not the only one who expressed discomfort at the use of English. In session two I asked the students to vote on writing their journals in English or Japanese. They chose Japanese and my workload went up tenfold. However, I felt that my responsibility was for their learning and engagement with new ideas. The added pressure of forcing them to reflect in another language was, I felt, too much. So I agreed on the condition that the students would help me with my Japanese. As a result we had a win/win situation in the classroom.

In the next section I will present the data from the seventh session. In session seven, the students were introduced to the concept of the energy fields of the human body. These include thermal imagery, electromagnetic fields and hydraulic pulses.

7. 3. 2 Engaging with the data - Session Seven

Student's Responses Session Seven



■ Students	84
■ Returns	81
■ non returns	3

Figure 15. Students' responses to Session Seven

The coding for this session was as follows:

<i>Session Coding</i>		<i>S7/</i>	<i>/12/</i>
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S *Session number* *S7/*

/n *Question number* */12*

/a,b *Theme number* */a*

/n *Subtheme* */1*

Engaging with the data - Session Seven	
Session Subject	Energy Fields of the Human Body
Question Number 12	<i>What did you enjoy most about this session?</i>
Qualitative question 1	

There were four themes identified from the students' responses to the above question.

These were as follows:

<i>S7/12/a</i>	<i>Energy fields</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>48%</i>
<i>S7/12/b</i>	<i>Group work</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>23%</i>
<i>S7/12/c</i>	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>14.5%</i>
<i>S7/12/d</i>	<i>Nothing special</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>14.5%</i>

Sub-analysis of

<i>S7/12/a</i>	<i>Energy fields</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>48%</i>
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produced the following subthemes:

<i>S7/12/a/1</i>	<i>I was able to see</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>67.5%</i>
<i>S7/12/a/2</i>	<i>I was able to perform an action</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>32.5%</i>

7. 3. 2. 1 Discussion on the first qualitative question (S7/12)

This session tackled the nervous system, which is a difficult subject for anyone to learn.

Many new medical terms were introduced and many students struggled with the lesson content. I also realised in this lesson that the students' misunderstandings were due to more than a language issue and directly reflected the science-based teaching they had received prior to starting this course. I was being presented with another contradiction, for I wrote my learning objectives to English A-level standards. What became very clear was that the students did not have the grounding in Biology, Physics and Chemistry required for engaging with my course. This issue is returned to in the recommendations section of my summary as it has implications for high school policy and curriculum design. Student responses of energy fields, group work and exercise suggest that they enjoyed the practical aspects (71%) and were less than enthusiastic about the actual process of focused academic study. They enjoyed, for example, hand scanning, which is as old as humanity and gives clear evidence as to the circulation of the blood in the body. Such circulation responses to heat, cold and disease processes through the body's physiological, sympathetic and parasympathetic responses are good indicators of health; if the process is understood then deviations from the norm can be recognised. Someone skilled in thermal diagnosis can quickly find areas of thermal change. The students had a chance to make educative connections between the theory of blood circulation and the practice of feeling a body with new insights. The next section looks at what the students did not like about the session.

7. 3. 2. 2

Engaging with the data - Session Seven	
Session Subject	Energy Fields of the Human Body
Question Number 13	<i>What did you enjoy least about this session?</i>
Qualitative question 2	

Five themes were identified from the students' responses to the above question. These were as follows:

<i>S7/13/a</i>	<i>Nothing special</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>37. 2%</i>
<i>S7/13/b</i>	<i>Not enough time</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>25. 2%</i>
<i>S7/13/c</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>16. 0%</i>
<i>S7/13/d</i>	<i>Subject difficult</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>13. 2%</i>
<i>S7/13/e</i>	<i>The teacher</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8. 40%</i>
		<i>83</i>	<i>100%</i>

7. 3. 2. 2. 1 Discussion on the second qualitative question (S7/13)

No sub-analysis was carried out as the above results provided a clear analysis of the students' responses. With a class of 84 students, using qualitative group methodology as a teaching strategy is a challenge to the limited time available. I set the classroom prior to the lesson and was under strict instructions from my head of department to have the tables and chairs reset in numerical order after the session finished. No lesson time was wasted

with administration; all lesson time was focused on the task at hand. However, when the students became challenged on a subject, such as the content of this period, they required more time and explanation to complete the task. Some students only wanted to do group work as it was easier for them. Others did not want to return to the chalk and talk teaching style. Attending to the varying needs of the ten groups proved to be most difficult. I am certain that some students felt frustrated and unfulfilled with my answers to them. Such frustrations were reflected by the thirteen students who cited English as being problematic. While I do not offer excuses for my inability to communicate more clearly, it has to be remembered that I was supposed to have assistants from the basic nursing department helping me with this lesson. These were withdrawn by the head of department due to their being busy on other projects. As there were no other students in our faculty, quite what these projects were is another question.

7.3.2.3

Engaging with the data - Session Seven	
Session Subject	Energy Fields of the Human Body
Question Number 14	<i>Were there any subjects that you would like to spend more time studying?</i>
Qualitative question 3	

In response to this question four themes were identified, these being:

<i>S7/14/a</i>	<i>Energy fields and research</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>66%</i>
<i>S7/14/b</i>	<i>Nothing special</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>17%</i>
<i>S7/14/c</i>	<i>Biology, Anatomy & Chemistry</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>11%</i>
<i>S7/14/d</i>	<i>Portfolio</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6%</i>
		<i>83</i>	<i>100%</i>

7.3.2.3.1 Discussion on the third qualitative question (S7/15)

No further analysis was carried out on this question because all the themes occurred at the first level of analysis. What became clear from the data was that there was a difference between the curriculum agenda in terms of learning outcomes and the students' interests. I can understand both viewpoints, firstly because the curriculum core requirements for nursing are science based, heavily cognitive and need to be learned. Nursing as a

professional healthcare science requires an in-depth understanding of the basic sciences.

What surprised me was the absence of this understanding in my students. This point was identified by nine students (S7/14/c). Secondly, the topic of energy in the human body and all the equipment we use to measure it are exciting and fun. However, without the underpinning knowledge to support the enquirer as to what he/she is seeing, it has no purpose. In the next section I will look at the students' ideas on how the course could be improved.

7.3.2.4

Engaging with the data - Session Seven	
Session Subject	Energy Fields of the Human Body
Question Number 15	<i>What improvements do you think could be made to the session?</i>
Qualitative question 4	

Four themes came from the answers to this question:

<i>S7/15/a Nothing special</i>	27	35.5%
<i>S7/15/b Ability to think</i>	19	23%
<i>S7/15/c Group working</i>	20	24%
<i>S7/15/d Can state own opinion</i>	17	20.4%
	83	

I was surprised by the data in this section and found the concept of “*ability to think*”, cited by 19 students, to be a stimulating one. That, combined with 17 students saying that they “*can state own opinion*” gives a total of 36 students (43.4%) who were identifying aspects of critical thinking skills in answer to the question of: *What improvements do you think could be made to the session?*

I further examined S7/15/b, *ability to think*, to see if I could ascertain what it was that the students wanted to think about, and the following three subthemes emerged:

<i>S7/15/b/1</i>	<i>The working of the human body</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>S7/15/b/2</i>	<i>Relationships with others</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>S7/15/b/3</i>	<i>What is truth and meaning?</i>	<i>4</i>
		<i>19</i>

7. 3. 2. 4. 1 Discussion on the fourth qualitative question (S7/15)

As previously mentioned, this session was halfway through the allotted time of the healing theory course. I was more excited, however, to see the start of philosophical and abstract thinking emerging, as shown in the subthemes:

<i>S7/15/b/4</i>	<i>Relationships with others</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>S7/15/b/5</i>	<i>What is truth and meaning?</i>	<i>4</i>

The ten remaining students who indicated *ability to think* were engaging with human anatomy and physiology. As previously discussed, this subject was problematic for several students due to their not having been taught a particular science in their high school curriculum prior to entry to the faculty of nursing. At this halfway point in the healing curriculum, nine students were indicating that they were engaging in critical thinking. While 9 out of 84 is not a huge jump, it is a small gain.

7.3.2.5 Critical incidents

From the classroom results at this midterm point I was feeling optimistic about the students' engagement with the course, but clouding this optimism was an intuitive sense that another energy was in my classroom and that several students were receiving outside coaching which caused agitation in the classroom. I posted my concerns to my website discussion forum, Living Action Research, as follows:

Thu, 29 Jan 2004

Two evaluations were carried out in my class, without my knowing, by the faculty, and they actually agree with my findings. However, the use these evaluations are being put to is very different. This trend was identified early in the course and this core of unhappy students had a varied number of reasons for their dissatisfaction. The main one was that healing was rubbish and had no purpose - only science counted. This was the opinion of a senior member of faculty who influenced a small group of students (7) who had been sponsored or introduced to the university by this individual. This group of students was constantly negative and they reported my actions to the Dean each week. That would not be a problem except that my course is part of the foundation year and compulsory. Whether students liked the course or not they had to do it, as successful completion was worth two credits. I believe that it is my duty as a teacher to try and reach out to these dissatisfied students, not to change their minds but just to get them to do their work. The continual horizontal violence continues - I have been accused of trying to teach religion and trying to change values by being oppressive. Religion is a sensitive issue in Japan after the Sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subways on March 22, 1995.

It is strictly forbidden to teach religion in Prefectural property, even to the extent that hiring rooms in civic centers to run healing workshops is first vetted for religious content. The fact that I am an ordained priest is what I am, not what I do. In my classroom I am a professional teacher, and as such my spiritual beliefs are not discussed. The wounding and the depth of pain I feel at this accusation cannot be described. However, I need to look at it and see if I have been, as Jack would say, "a living contradiction in my classroom". All the videos I have of my class have been reviewed. All show the engagement of most of the students, with their fun and laughter and open body language. There is no evidence to support this claim and I will, over the next few weeks, post links to these clips for review and assessment by you. I have an open door policy and have had students coming in with the usual student problems of not doing homework and asking for extensions. I am told the students are afraid of me. Yet their portfolios and again the videos show no evidence of this, so I am at a loss as to how to proceed. Many of my colleagues have very familiar and friendly relationships with the students; I acknowledge that I do not seek to be their friend or their enemy but rather their teacher. Being fair, warm and polite is enough. Focusing them on their studies is my job, not being popular, well that comes with the turf. My whole classroom methodology is about the classroom being a safe learning space built on respect and using co-enquiry action research and participatory enquiry as my chosen tools.

Due to the nature of the design concept of my research, I had included several options in the software which allowed me, if needed, to provide in-depth analysis of which students had attempted which questions and how many times they had answered them, along with

how much time each individual student spent on each question. I wanted to know if the students were having any problems with the content of the course, and this system would alert me to any particular learning objective that was causing concern. (My citing the students' dislike of the incense and not wanting to write their journals in English are examples of this system working). Another function of the software soon became apparent and was one that I had not intended. A critical incident occurred when a group of students complained that I had given them too much homework and that they had to spend several hours doing my homework at the expense of other classes. The same seven students complained about this and I was duly called into a meeting with senior faculty to explain my actions. When I understood what the complaint was, I offered the students the chance to reconsider what they were saying, as I was being investigated as to my actions and teaching in the classroom due to their complaint. The students were adamant that I was doing what they said; I therefore turned on my laptop and showed the live data on the server. Against each student's name was the time they spent on the homework listed by the time taken for each question (Time On Task, TOT). I took no pleasure in proving that not only had these students lied, but some of them had not even taken the online homework tests, and those who had had completed the first test and made mistakes, which was expected. On their second attempt they passed at 100% correct, with an average of 3.5 seconds TOT. This, when compared with other students, showed that they had copied the correct answers from the first test and cheated.

With such clear and damning evidence, the students and the faculty had a problem of what to do, as the students had been caught in a web of intrigue of their own making fuelled, I suggested, by certain members of faculty who had no idea of the capabilities of my programme software. The faculty member in the meeting suggested that the students had

made a mistake and it was all a misunderstanding and that what they meant was that they needed more help. At this point I was having none of this. If faculty wanted this all to go away, I wanted the names of the members of faculty who had been coaching the students; this was given and I asked that the said members be called to a meeting to justify their actions. I heard nothing else about the matter, which I have learned is the Japanese way of dealing with problems from people with less institutional power. I have to admit that at this point I was becoming angry. If individuals have a problem with me, then so be it; however, when they took their issues into my classroom they crossed a line in the sand of my ethical tolerance. Non-violence, for which I have taken a vow, is not a case of being passive to abuse. I was not Japanese, even when my faculty made no allowance for my being a foreigner and said that they were treating me as Japanese, as though it were a good thing. I was not going to allow an abusive system to enter my classroom and violate the safe space that I was creating.

Palmer (1998), in his book *The Courage to Teach*, talks of cases where teachers just lose heart in a system that drains them of enthusiasm. Palmer says of this: “*We lose heart, in part, because teaching is a daily exercise in vulnerability*” (p17). Palmer goes on to use words that burn themselves into my heart: “*a good teacher must stand where personal and public meet...where the web of connectedness feels like crossing a freeway*” (p. 17), and more to the point I had the experience and educational knowledge to engage them in the game they were playing from a position of power but not from a position of academic strength. It was on this academic strength that I made my stand.

I had learned from my experiences to date that to confront the Japanese directly is a cultural mistake that alienates and causes them to react in a defensive manner to avoid

confrontation. The Japanese will go to great lengths to avoid confrontation, which is frustrating when one is trying to resolve a problem. I am certain that if any evidence of the students' claim could have been upheld, then I would have faced further disciplinary procedures. What I was experiencing had nothing to do with culture and was clearly grounded in power and power plays. The hostility towards my healing curriculum by faculty from a science background had been brought out of hiding. What these members did not understand, or chose to ignore, was that my curriculum draws strongly on science, and compassionate human practices.

My methodology shows the value of a transparent audit trail that leaves clear logical lines of process that can be evidenced. A computer audit trail such as mine, for example, is not only a means for survival but is good educative practice. In the months following this critical incident I faced three further incidents that were all dismissed because the evidence trail of my educative process was overwhelming, grounded in my teacher training and the experience I gained in completing my Master of Education at Bath University. The discipline and analytical process I designed into my curriculum as a direct result of my formal teacher training and research into education saved my position as a teacher in the faculty. For example, I was called to explain my *poor evaluation* by students of my teaching on a questionnaire that was conducted in my class, without my knowing, by a senior faculty member. This individual produced selected comments from 20 students' replies about my teaching. Again, I offered this member of faculty a chance to reconsider, which, due to their position of power, was refused. I then presented my live server database with its more than 12,000 analysed responses from students. I suggested that when the said member was prepared to engage in a meeting grounded on any educational research of substance, I would be happy to share my data with them in an open faculty

meeting and debate the merits of their accusation, so that I and other teachers could learn from their wisdom and insights. I took the member's silence to mean that the meeting would not take place and the issue was finished.

I had actually found a way to protect my classroom, and that was to use educational practices grounded in evidence and research. For faculty members to attack on that basis meant that they would be attacking the very essence from which they claimed their authority and, as most of them were not qualified teachers, such authority was only based on the power of position. The ethical position that was taken by these faculty members was a separate issue, as culturally they believed they had the power and, with that top-down authority, the right to act in a pre-modern manner, as they saw fit.

It has always been my belief that good educational practices will sustain themselves over time against any power play by individuals in positions of power. At this point in my research I was not so confident that the power of truth could win out against the truth of power. While I had been successful in defending my classroom and curriculum, I had been less than successful in protecting my students from the manipulations of power. This was my fear and I really should have been more confident in the resilience of my students and that, given the chance, they would find their own way to their own truth.

I was at the limits of my physical, emotional and mental strength when, one Monday morning, I was called again to the office. I was informed that my neighbour's car had caught fire, blown up its gas tank and burnt my house down. There is a moment of disbelief when you are given shocking news, even more so from the emotionless manner in which I was told. I was at this time so emotionally exhausted that I thought it was yet

another sick attempt to get me to become angry. However, in this case it turned out to be true and in a stroke I lost everything again. As I walked through the ashes of my home, seeing if I could find anything of use, I pondered on the certainty of impermanence and attachment. Strangely, the loss that caused me the most pain was not my private things but that of my books which I had built up over the years of my studies. English books were rare and expensive in Japan. Some books were out-of-print works that would be hard to replace. For me, the loss of all that knowledge was heartbreaking. All my PhD notes, videos and papers were lost. I had back-ups but that was just of the thesis framework. Shock and despair descended like a freight train. The irony of the situation was not lost on me, for I had had good insurance cover up to three days before when I had to pay a large hospital bill. I did not have enough money for both. I heard a rustle behind me and saw, to my surprise, that many of the students from the university had heard that my house had burnt down and had come to help. I was humbled by their compassion, as many brought single plates or cups or a pot to help replace what was lost. Their compassion moved me beyond words. It is not the first time I have lost everything but there is something so final about fire. Yet, with their acts of compassion, the students removed the fire from my heart with its anger against the antics of faculty.

Sadly, my physical body was not so quick to respond to the insights that removed my anger. The next week I was admitted to hospital with a blocked head of pancreas and acute pancreatitis. I underwent an operation, which was successful, and was advised to reduce the stress in my life. As previously discussed, I could not change my circumstances without vacating the space and, as my supervisor Dr Jack Whitehead advised me, by just being in the space I was holding it open to bring about change. It was a thought that I often returned to over the coming years.

Statistical Data Student Session Evaluation						
C001 Session Number 7						Totals
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Bad Data	Responses
Question 1. Session materials: adequate information was provided relating to the session structure?	1	38	41	3		83
Question 2. Was the session easy to understand?	3	24	50	6		83
Question 3. Teaching Style: All the session materials were un-ambiguous and easy to follow?	2	26	52	3		83
Question 4. The target objectives of each module were presented at an appropriate level?	3	34	44	2		83
Question 5. Did you feel the teacher's enthusiasm for the session?	36	41	6	0		83
Question 6. All the session materials were presented at the correct level?	2	41	39	1		83
Question 7. Were you interested in the session?	34	43	5	1		83
Question 8. Handouts were provided and easy to follow?	7	48	27	1		83
Question 9. Venue: heating and lighting were adequate?	11	56	15	1		83
Question 10. Venue: enough space was provided to work comfortably in?	24	53	6	0		83
Question 11. facilities. Toilets were readily accessible.	25	50	8	0		83
	148	454	293	18		927

Figure 16. Consolidated results of statistical data for Session Seven (Class size 84 students, 83 returns)

7. 3. 2. 6 Discussion on Session Seven

This section has shown me how important it is to place statistical evidence into its actual context. Using narrative brings out the hidden story of the learning process, one that is lost in the silence of numbers; yet, in contradiction, numbers can in themselves speak a

thousand words. As with many things I believe it is a question of balance. The living nature of my research could not be expressed by statistical data alone. I was very surprised to find that the statistical data provided me with insights that I could not have seen just by using my narration. Statistical evidence gave an authority to the authenticity of my account. I had a feeling that a group of my students was being coached to be as disruptive as possible. I felt the presence of another influence in my classroom, but without such feelings being proved by the evidence that the statistical analysis gave, proving such intuitive knowing would otherwise have been problematic.

As already discussed, the value of good educative practices and audit trails cannot be overstated, but, more importantly than that, I understand in myself the truth of remembering myself and the values I stand or fall by. Freire (1970; 1987) talked about revolution being in the word and the word being embedded in praxis, without which words are but hollow rhetoric. Palmer (1998) talked about the revolution that emerges from finding yourself. Re-remembering ourselves, according to Palmer, involves: *“putting ourselves back together, recovering identity and integrity, reclaiming the wholeness of our lives...When we forget who we are, we do not merely drop data. We dis-remember ourselves, with unhappy consequences for our politics, our work, our hearts.”* (p. 20)

Here are some excerpts from a student’s journal for this session:

HTR_79. Session 7.

“Moreover, energy healing has the strong power in which it can be made to change to the energy which the surrounding man has, when the energy which he has emitted changes. This is very mystical -- it is -- me myself -- it got interested very much about this I think that there are many those who need energy healing in

modern society for thinking. When we take it outside little by little rather than hold various stress by ourselves, I think that the thing also mentally and physically "original itself" can be regained"

I believe this student is showing his original thinking and exploring new areas of thought from his engagement with the curriculum issues. This is not a colonisation as the student's own process of enquiry has been stimulated and he is making connections through his understandings.

Here is another example of emerging enquiry:

HTR_23. Session 7.

"When I suppressed the feeling and brought both hands close, it was surprised that "mind" was felt between hands. I felt actually with whether this is mind, and it was impression. I was deep emotion that I was able to do greatly again as for mind. However, I had the question whether that collected "mind" is a good mind and whether it was a bad mind. I must think more."

HTR_71 . Session 7.

"I finished exercise, and with healing, though it thought that it was uncanny, when why the body got hot, I had a vague question? Then, I thought that imaginative power and concentration would be related to healing demonstrating an effect. It is because I thinks that the imaginative power which imagines the flow of an aura, and the concentration which maintains an image are required for it since healing prepares bodily balance by adjusting in-the-living-body energy (aura) and maintains health."

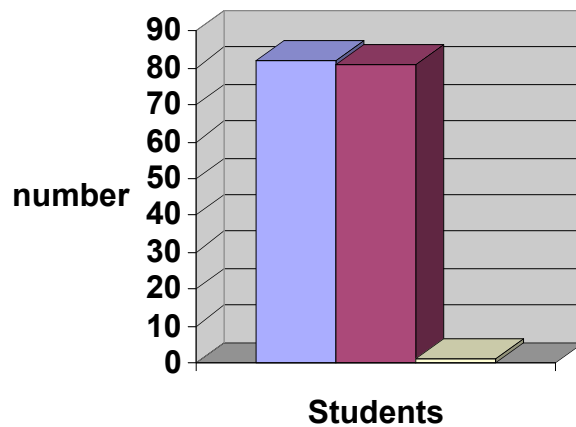
Tracking this session in the statistical questionnaire gives the impression that the students were not happy, as over 50% marked in the negative. Yet this is not supported in their qualitative statements. There appears to be a contradiction between the statistical data, e.g., the multiple choice answers, and the qualitative data sections of the session evaluations and their reflective journal entries. I was at something of a loss to understand why. I went back to the time on task (TOT) data to see if this would help me find an answer and I found some interesting results. For students who were expressing dissatisfaction in the statistical analysis, their average time on task in filling out the statistical section was 20 seconds! The time spent on the qualitative questions was 120 seconds. Students who indicated a degree of enjoyment spent on average 140 seconds completing the statistical section and 370 seconds completing the qualitative section. *What brought about such a time difference? A logical conclusion is that those who were upset at that moment just rushed the questionnaire, did not read the questions and wrote the very minimum to conform to the lesson outcome. Those who enjoyed the session, or were at least engaged with it, spent longer thinking about their answers and correspondingly wrote more in the qualitative section. The conflicting evidence from their journals present another side to the problem as, for the most part, the journal entries were informative and constructive even when a negative opinion was expressed. A colleague of mine suggested:*

“... Maybe the students understood more step by step and completed their journals at a later time. The web evaluation has pressure to be completed by the next session. Reflective journals need to show the student’s reflections for each session. They have thinking and learning time.” (Personal conversation, Ohmi Yukiko, research assistant, adult nursing, May 2005)

My colleague's comments made logical sense to me and, on the one hand, highlighted the care that needs to be applied to data analysis. On the other hand, they evidenced a clear reflective process in the quality of their writing. In the next section the final session evaluation is presented. I was keen to see if I had managed to reclaim my classroom and make safe its space with the stand I had taken against certain practices within my faculty.

7. 3. 3 Engaging with the data - Session 15

Student Responses Session 15



■ Students	82
■ Returns	81
■ non returns	1

Figure 17. Students' responses to Session 15

7.3.3.1

The coding for this session was as follows:

<i>Session Coding</i>			<i>S15/</i>	<i>/12/</i>
<i>S</i>	<i>Session number</i>	<i>S7/</i>		
<i>/n</i>	<i>Question Number</i>	<i>/12</i>		
<i>/a,b</i>	<i>Theme number</i>	<i>/a</i>		
<i>/n</i>	<i>Subtheme</i>	<i>/1</i>		

<i>Engaging with the data - Session 15</i>	
<i>Session Subject</i>	<i>Final session evaluation</i>
<i>Question Number 12</i>	<i>What did you enjoy most about this session?</i>
<i>Qualitative question 1</i>	

There were three themes identified from the data for Session 15 (C001) in answer to the above question:

<i>S15/12/a</i>	<i>Healing practice</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>54.2%</i>
<i>S15/12/b</i>	<i>Nothing special</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>30.0%</i>
<i>S15/12/c</i>	<i>Thinking</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5.0%</i>
<i>S15/12/d</i>	<i>Bad data</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1.2%</i>

83

Analysis of S15/12/a was done to find out what the students enjoyed most about healing practice, producing three subthemes which were:

S15/12/a/1 <i>Touching</i>	33	62.0 %
S15/12/a/2 <i>Feeling</i>	10	19.0%
S15/12/a/3 <i>Practice</i>	10	19.0%
	53	100%

7. 3. 3. 1. 1 Discussion on the first qualitative question (S15/12)

The results of this final session evaluation were deeply profound for me, in the sense that in this final evaluation the students' data reflected the one core value that I had striven to instil in my students, namely the importance of a nurse's touch. I believe that this is a nurse's treasure. I did not expect these results, and to have 33 students express such feelings at the end of the course offered me hope for the future of nurse practice. I say 'hope' because I believe that nurse education has lost sight of its core purpose in its drive to become more professional and academic, that core purpose being caring, compassionate, skilful touch. I am not referring here just to physical touch, but to the touch of compassionate eyes, voice and finally the touch of a compassionate soul or spirit. It is these combinations of touch that reach out to the patient in times of fear, darkness and pain. It is these values of touch that I hold so dear and have experienced as a patient in my own sicknesses and injuries. It is these values that have found fertile ground for growth in 40% of the class. The uniqueness of my healing curriculum is that it is the only element of the nurse's training in our curriculum that addresses touch, its values and the actual practice of becoming conscious of the embedded power of touch. Palmer (1998) reminds me that the

pain I felt during this course was partly due to the teaching profession glorifying the method and leaving people who teach differently feeling devalued and forcing them to measure up to norms that are not their own (p. 12). I may well be devalued by faculty, and indeed I have been marginalised to the extreme. Yet these results affirm my held values, giving me hope that, step by small step, I can and will bring about change.

7.3.3.2

Engaging with the data - Session 15	
Session Subject	Final session evaluation
Question Number 13	<i>What did you enjoy least about this session?</i>
Qualitative question 2	

There were only two themes identified from responses to this question, these being:

S15/13/a	<i>Nothing special</i>	75	90.0%
S15/13/b	<i>Cold floor</i>	8	10.0%
		83	100%

7.3.3.2.1 Discussion on the second qualitative question (S15/13)

There is little to say about these results other than that the students appeared to be satisfied.

The eight students who mentioned the floor being cold included my regular seven dissatisfied students. In this case they had just cause, as their responses refer to another

critical incident when senior faculty changed tactics and denied me use of a classroom. As incredible as it may seem, I was not allowed to use the basic nursing classroom for healing practice. No reason was given other than that the professor refused. It was the middle of winter and I could not find any faculty who would let me use a classroom. It is important to explain that we are a brand new university and each department, such as basic nursing, midwifery, and community and adult nursing, has a fully fitted-out hospital ward. There were no students other than my class as it was the first cohort. There was absolutely no excuse for this action other than an attempt to assert power. My assistant researcher was in tears over the matter. I therefore took my class to the university gymnasium and we did our exercises on the floor without heating. I took photographs of the class and, in a conversation I had with a member of faculty, I mentioned that, given the effort and expense that parents went through to give their children a good university education, imagine how upset they would be to find out that their children were being refused facilities paid for with their Prefectural taxes. We made the best we could out of a poor situation in which no student or teacher should have been placed. However, I was plagued by terrible feelings of guilt because I felt the students were being made to suffer and they were my only point of vulnerability as well as being my responsibility.

I think the most shocking aspect of this situation was the total lack of moral fibre shown by faculty, who failed themselves in my eyes and those of their students by their inability to act. I feel that, more than any other event, this one issue showed the depths to which the power-seekers would go in order to assert their dominance. I had shown that I had teeth and could bite if pushed, and I had shown that I would defend my classroom. What this faculty still had to learn was that I would not stand for abuse of my students' chances of a good experience in education. I wrote a detailed report of this incident, including date-

stamped photographs that I took of the empty new teaching ward and the dirty old gymnasium of the other faculty which we were using. I spoke to a friend I had in the community support group of the university where I had been running community healing night classes and had trained thirty local therapists in massage and healing to the same level as the university students. I had experienced no problems at all in the community. I just happened to leave a copy of my report on my desk in the classroom by accident and it was read by some of the group members. The community support group is a powerful local collection of business-people and officials in the community that acts almost as an unofficial board of governors. They are responsible for fundraising and have a lot of political clout in the community. It is a foolish member of faculty who engages the wrath of this group. As it was, many of this group were already expressing concern over the arrogance of some faculty in dismissing the group's importance or their value to the university. Several weeks later I was informed that I could use the classroom for my next course, subject to conditions. Yet another small step had been taken. I suppose I was at last learning the pedagogic codes of my context!

In the next section I look at the curriculum subjects that students would like to study more.

7.3.3.3

Engaging with the data - Session 15	
Session Subject	Final session evaluation
Question Number 14	<i>Were there any subjects that you would like to spend more time studying?</i>
Qualitative question 3	

In response to the above question four themes were identified, these being as follows:

<i>S15/14/a</i>	<i>Nothing special</i>	35	42%
<i>S15/14/b</i>	<i>More practice</i>	20	24%
<i>S15/14/c</i>	<i>Listening skills/communication</i>	17	20%
<i>S15/14/d</i>	<i>Healing</i>	12	14%

7. 3. 3. 3. 1 Discussion on the third qualitative question (S15/14)

50% of this course wanted more practice; however, the actual course is about the theory of healing and only has a taster session for experiencing healing. Healing practice is offered as a students' choice in the spring semester.

No further analysis was carried out as all responses were identified. In the next question I examine what the students would like to do to improve the course.

7. 3. 3. 4

Engaging with the data - Session 15	
Session Subject	Final session evaluation
Question Number 15	<i>What improvements do you think could be made to the session?</i>
Qualitative question 4	

In response to the above question four themes were identified, these being as follows:

<i>S15/15/a</i>	<i>Nothing special</i>	52	62. 7%
<i>S15/15/b</i>	<i>More practice</i>	20	24. 1%
<i>S15/15/c</i>	<i>Concentration</i>	7	8. 4%
<i>S15/15/d</i>	<i>Chakra studies</i>	4	4. 8%
		83	100%

7. 3. 3. 4. 1 Discussion on the fourth qualitative question (S15/15)

There is little to add to the analysis of this question as it is similar in content to the previous question's responses. Quite why concentration was cited by seven students is rather a puzzle (S15/15/c). I suspect, however, that this is a personal response to the question.

Below I present the statistical analysis of the final course evaluation.

Statistical Data Student Session Evaluation						
C001 Session Number 15						Totals
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Bad Data	Responses
Question 1. Session materials: adequate information was provided relating to the session structure?	46	32	2	0	0	80
Question 2. Was the session easy to understand?	37	41	2	0	0	80
Question 3. Teaching Style: All the session materials were un-ambiguous and easy to follow?	42	34	4	0	0	80
Question 4. The target objectives of each module were presented at an appropriate level?	38	39	3	0	0	80
Question 5. Did you feel the teacher's enthusiasm for the session?	65	15	0	0	0	80
Question 6. All the session materials were presented at the correct level?	32	44	4	0	0	80
Question 7. Were you interested in the session?	50	28	2	0	0	80
Question 8. Handouts were provided and easy to follow?	32	47	0	1	0	80
Question 9. Venue: heating and lighting were adequate?	48	30	2	0	0	80
Question 10. Venue: enough space was provided to work comfortably in?	42	38	0	0	0	80
Question 11. facilities. Toilets were readily accessible.	53	25	0	2	0	
	485	373	19	3	0	880

Figure 18. Consolidated results of statistical data for Session 15

7. 3. 4 Discussion on the students' online test evaluations

The three samples used as evidence of my research process in the classroom were those of sessions one, seven and fifteen. These produced insights as to the living responses of my students and myself within the context of my classroom and curriculum, all these elements being engaged in our pedagogic process of learning. From my viewpoint, the development of web-based technology to assist in evaluating the sessions offers exciting prospects which have been highlighted in the above discussions. In the next section I present the students'

voice through the qualitative instruments used on my course, namely those of portfolios and reflective journals.

7.4 Qualitative data

This research produced a large amount of qualitative data, the main sources being the students' portfolios, reflective journals, and evaluations of my lessons and teaching. I would like to take a moment to explain how I see the different types of data and how I am using them. I am asking myself the following question. I designed the curriculum to address certain needs or deficiencies which I had identified in nurse education and training. I have produced vast amounts of data. How then can I draw valid meaning from my data?

Answering what appears to be a simple question is problematic. Traditionally, data and research are divided into the distinct theoretical camps of the Quantitative versus Qualitative debate, with favoured paradigms being held and rigorously defended by each camp. I have within me a sense of frustration, which seems to be the case at every turn in the field of education. Individual scholars cut up knowing and knowledge into a proliferation of fragmented bits. Each bit is then the domain of an 'expert' and the fragmentation of knowing and knowledge is guaranteed through such exclusion practices. However, such practices are not for me as I seek my web of connectedness (Palmer 1998; Rayner 2003). I strive in my life and work to be as consciously inclusive as possible. In my work I use the method and paradigm that is correct for the issue at hand. Sometimes I need statistics to give me a snapshot or overview or even a pattern or trend in data. At other times I am looking for lived and experienced meanings that can be well grounded and rich in descriptions of process and praxis in identifiable contexts. My classroom is not unique in the teaching sense; the situations I describe and the words of the students can be

identified easily across the length and breadth of any teaching experience by any teacher.

What is unique about my classroom is how the dynamics of knowing and knowledge change with the interactions between the students and me as we co-create in creative synthesis the curriculum of the healing nurse.

The method of analysis I use has to meet the following criteria:

1. It is practical
2. It can communicate the essence of the meanings easily and effectively
3. It prevents self-delusion
4. It will produce knowledge that others will accept as reliable and trustworthy.

My methodological reasoning was covered in depth in Chapter 2. However, I feel it is important to look at the nature of data in a little more depth. Qualitative data can preserve chronological flow and reveal precisely which events lead to which consequences. Good qualitative data can, through creative synthesis (Moustakas 1990), help the researcher to move beyond initial concepts and boundaries to generate new or revised conceptual frameworks. Miles and Huberman (1984), firmly in the Qualitative paradigm, expound the value of qualitative research as follows:

The findings of qualitative studies have a quality of “un-deniability.” Words, especially organised into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavour that often proves far more convincing to a reader - another researcher, a policy maker, a practitioner - than pages of summarized numbers (p. 1)

Their words, to my ears as a researcher who values such accounts and processes, have a distinct and compelling emotional appeal. Yet I am unhappy with their words even as I agree with them. I needed to explore this vague feeling of unease. Qualitative research has issues that need to be addressed even in the climate of a flurry of new qualitative approaches and the move towards greater acceptance of qualitative data. Miles and Huberman (1984) identify some of my concerns when they say that qualitative data collection is:

“labour intensive... frequent data overload, the distinct possibility of researcher bias, time demands on processing and coding data, the adequacy of sampling when only a few cases can be managed, the generalisability of the findings, the creditability and quality of conclusions and their utility to the world of policy and action.” (p. 2)

In terms of the validity of this process, I draw on the data obtained from the use of different data collection instruments to see to what extent I can evidence and communicate the nature of the following standards of practice:

1) Creating a safe teaching/healing space. Students understanding, critiques, journals



Figure 19. Students engaged in portfolio building (Healing Theory)

Understanding that no two individuals will see the same thing in a visual context, I wish to tell the story of what I see in this picture and add to that story some accounts from my students' journals. I see expressions of fun. The student on the left has just said something that the other student finds amusing, their body language is open, and the space is a group space.

Portfolio building proved to be popular as the following comments indicate:

HTR029

"I got to know that there was a thing called a portfolio for the first time. Till then, I thought that a portfolio was the group work currently now performed by the healing theory. But when we investigated a few into the group, it turns out that portfolios are "a self-pursuit and self discovery." When I found this, I thought that a portfolio was a thing indispensable when carrying out healing."

HRT079

“I enjoyed myself with each other and thought it important an instruction and to learn.”

2) Maintaining a safe teaching/healing space. My analysis of classroom video, students’ responses, journals



Figure 20a. Students in group work (Healing Theory)



Figure 20b. Students in group work (Healing Theory)

What these pictures show to me is a group of students engaged in the process at hand; the group huddle can be seen in the first picture where most of the group are facing towards the centre where one student is speaking or engaged in writing. This is a still photograph and you can see the pens in the students' hands that are not in perfect focus, suggesting that animation or movement of the pens is happening alongside the act of conversation. The second picture gives a clear indication of the negotiated space that the students formed in their groups. Smiles on the faces of the students in the second photograph show that they are having fun. If the classroom was oppressive I suggest that such open, natural body language would not be seen.

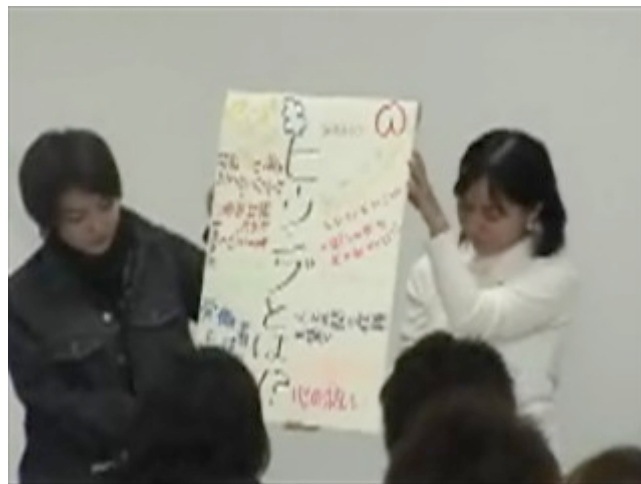


Figure 21. Students presenting their ideas (Healing Theory)

This is not the best photograph ever; however it shows a very nice portfolio page where the students have used colour and text dynamically to express their group ideas.

Here are some students' comments from their journals:

HTR019

"I think that space of peacefulness which is wrapped in music is made by me."

HTR67

“Space is required for "human being to exist in this lecture..."nothing" meant the spiritual body, the mental body, the emotional body, and the physical body, there were no they, since there was nothing, it was explained that it is "nothing", and I was able to understand easily.”

HTR 084 *“I will not understand all anymore, if "whether you are whom in fact", or "whether this world being true", and such a thing are considered first time. I had not considered such a thing until now. ... although I will become somewhat fearful when thought with the different viewpoint, another view came out and new touch also carried out to thinking place”*

3) Students understanding a safe healing space. Analysis of students' reflective journals, students' critiques



Figure 22. Page from group portfolio (C001)

4) *Students expressing love in the healing process. Pictures of body-language and touch from classroom healing activities*



Figure 23a. Healing touch (C001)



Figure 23b. Healing touch (C001)

I see a sense of caring focus and peace in these two pictures, sleeping patients is often a good sign that all is relaxed in terms of space and practice.

Here are some students' comments from their journals:

HRT020

"I think that this energy healing is existence very good [we / for]. and it was thought that it was wonderful."

HRT 066

"... I believe that there is the effect. It is because I thinks that it has the effect of curing people in warmth of people's hand in my old experience. ... Moreover, I think that I can load a hand with warm feeling about the same as the heart. I thought that I wanted to value my hand and touch as treasure"

5) Students expressing compassion in the healing process



Figure 24. Compassion

I like the peace that this picture suggests to me. The faces are out of focus; had they been in focus they would reflect a calm serene look which I have associated with the inner healing Buddha of compassion. The look I am referring to can be seen more clearly in the final photographs.

6) Students expressing understanding in the healing process



Figure 25. Understanding

Here the students are in a body language mode that suggests engaged listening with open eye contact at the same level as the student listens to her patient. The other individual in the picture, while adopting a listening body language, is standing while the patient is sitting. This individual is university staff, and I suggest that it is showing a power relationship being subtly expressed as the teacher is standing above the patient. For me the student in front is showing an advanced level of listening skills.

7) Enabling the other to understand their healing process



Figure 26a. Enabling the other to understand

I do like this photograph as it suggests to me a life-affirming flow of energy where the therapist and the patient are in an engaged space of connectedness.



Figure 26b. Enabling the other to understand



Figure 26c. Enabling the other to understand

I believe these pictures speak for themselves about the aftermath of healing. For me, the face of the compassionate Buddha within us all is seen when we reach the total relaxation that these patients have achieved. The peace and serenity that I see in these pictures filled me with a glowing, very un-Buddhist warmth for the success of my students in their ability to produce peace with their touch. After all we had been through, the acid test of praxis had answered the major question I asked myself about the transferability of my knowing (p.25). Seeing these pictures gave me a sense of peace, for I believe I have been able to transfer some of my

knowing which had been synthesised by my students, made their own, and represented in their praxis. My life as a teacher of healing touch now had purpose grounded in achievement.

7.5 Summary of this chapter

Inclusionality, in Rayner's (2003) sense of compassion and flexible dynamic boundaries, is my stated ontology. Consciousness and reflection is my epistemology and the four-fold path is my praxis. My pedagogy of the healing nurse curriculum embodies all of the above.

It does so in the following way:

My assumptions about healing are grounded in inclusionality and inclusional practice.

Such expansion of the inquiring consciousness and reflection are the means by which I enter or become more aware of my I/we/the others' space/boundaries (I/we/you/us). Such awareness sets up my webs of connectiveness. This connectiveness draws on the four-fold path of the Buddhist Noble Truths, and the praxis is my ability to engage in a transformative space/boundary adventure with another – a balancing act, a process whereby my intention sparks the others to recreate their matrix of wholeness and health.

Inclusionality then becomes the space within which healing/teaching/learning occurs and healing becomes the space of inclusionality. This dynamic space then becomes part of the framework within which are held my emerging living standards of discernment.

My emerging epistemology has been modified through this process of research in and on my actions, context, personal values and teaching skills, often through my engagement with

my students' voices. I am sensitive to the critical issues of race within education and the power relationships involved with knowledge generation and its control. I see clearly my own limitations and frustrations as an educator, and make a life-long commitment to improve them. I believe that the classroom can and should be a safe place for learning where the students and the teachers co-create knowledge that is not only the given curriculum but citizenship and life skills as well. The values I hold of love and compassion, grounded in my Buddhist faith, have been questioned. While my understanding has deepened with the process of critical enquiry, my basic underpinning ontology has been strengthened.

In the next and final chapter I will summarise where I am now with my learning, for this research is not concluded. The first cohort graduated in April 2007 and three more cohorts have passed through this curriculum. Events have moved on and the context has changed in response to the ebb and flow of life.