Raising Voices Using Dialogue As Research Method in Living Theory Cultures of Inquiry

Jackie Delong's contribution to the CARN 2020 Symposium panel on the 25th October 2020

Successful Symposium Panel Proposal:

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TITLE: Improving our world by raising the voices of action researchers through living-educational-theories.

ABSTRACT. The three authors share their recent research on encouraging and supporting practitioner-researchers to create their own living-educational-theories of practitioner-researchers for informal research and for legitimation by Universities around the world. Using action-reflection cycles they explore the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I contribute to improving our world as I support others to create their own living-educational-theories? These practitioner-researchers show how their explanations of educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations, have emerged from supporting global practitioner-researchers. Raising the voices of Living Educational Theory researchers in the contexts of the UK, Canada, Nepal, USA, South Africa and the Ireland is shown to be contributing to the extending global influences of Living Educational Theory research with values of human flourishing in educational conversations. Digital visual data are used to clarify and communicate the meanings of the expression of the ontological values of the researchers in their explanations of educational influences in learning including being loved into learning. The implications are analysed in terms of original contributions to educational knowledge and of their roles as global citizens.

Raising Voices Using Dialogue As Research Method in Living Theory Cultures of Inquiry

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Abstract

Framework

In this paper, I make the argument that dialogue as a research method has evolved to the point now that dialogue is the means by which I describe and explain the nature of my influence and create my own living-educational-theory. Because of my dialogic way of being, I share data of my "loving educational conversations" (Delong, 2019) with practitioner-researchers that provide evidence of my work in raising their voices through the creation of their living-educational-theories in cultures of inquiry.

The paper is framed under the following headings:

Purpose
Introduction
Raising the practitioner-researchers voices as they create their own living-educational-theories in cultures of inquiry: early implementation
Evidence of my dialogic way of being over time

Visual data as evidence of dialogue as research
Obstacles, barriers and constraints in dialogue as research method
Going forward/Next steps

Purpose

With the theme of the CARN 2020 conference in mind of "Raising Voices", I intend to develop an argument that dialogue is a practical and rigorous research method that along with other methods such as action-reflection cycles, video-analysis, journals, narrative inquiry and others can strengthen the data used for supporting a claim to know. It has been used extensively by action researchers and living-educational-theorists, although not so much using the particular language of 'dialogue as research method'. It has become self-evident to me recently in my research and publication of articles in the Educational Journal of Living Theories (Delong, 2019; Vaughan & Delong, 2019), that it is part and parcel of the living theory cultures of inquiry that I create with practitioner-researchers locally and globally where practitioner-researcher voices are raised. In my "loving educational conversations" as I love them into learning (Campbell, 2011), I draw insight from Erich Fromm, 'If a person can face the truth without panic they will realise that there is no purpose to life other than that they create for themselves through their loving relationships and productive work.' I am constantly on a path of trying to improve, asking the question, "How can I improve my practice and live my values more fully?" and encouraging and supporting others to do the same.

Introduction

In this paper prepared for the CARN 2020 virtual conference, I draw on my prior writing and dig deeper into the complexity of my meaning and experience of using 'dialogue as research method', particularly in my work in encouraging and supporting practitioner-researchers in creating cultures of inquiry for the creation of their living-educational-theories.

Let's start with the examination of commonly understood meanings of *dialogue*. The Oxford Dictionary definition of *dialogue* is "a discussion between two or more people or groups, especially one directed towards exploration of a particular subject or resolution of a problem. It is derived from the Middle English from Old French dialoge, via Latin from Greek dialogos, from dialegesthai 'converse with', from dia 'through' + legein 'speak'.
https://www.lexico.com/definition/dialogue . As MacInnis and Portelli explain,

> "Dialogue differs from other forms of discourse whose intent is persuasion, in that there is an intention of establishing a mutual relationship between participants (Buber, 1947). Even Burbules's description of dialogue as debate clearly differentiates between a debate with dialogical aims (such as the generation of new information, and a better understanding of the issues) and a debate with the intent to manipulate for the sake of winning. In dialogue each discovery of a piece of evidence helps the participants see what additional evidence might be necessary or what additional questions might need to be explored. Therefore, a dialogue cannot be prescribed; its very nature requires that the participants go down paths that the dialogue uncovers and defines." (p. 35)

Because of my dialogic way of being, I have found that 'loving educational conversations' with colleagues, critical friends, and students have become a research method for me and that visual data are essential to deepening and conveying my thinking. In mentoring others to create their own living-educational-theories, the dialogic processes inherent in email and, especially, Zoom and Skype video recordings, enable me to clarify my thinking and enable others to do the same

(Vaughan, 2019; Delong, 2019; Vaughan & Delong, 2019). When we have respect for the "narrativity of experience", we can "promote empowered practitioners":

> "Discussions should not be concerned so much with how we structure our programs or content for a knowledge base, but rather with how we choose the processes we use to engage with practitioners around the knowledge base that they already possess. Only by taking the narrativity of experience seriously can we produce dialogue and critical reflection in our programs, and model the process necessary to promote empowered practitioners and democratic institutions." (Anderson and Page, 1995, p. 133)

My writing over the last 25 years (Delong, 2019a) demonstrates my sustained commitment to building 'loving educational relationships' as I encourage and support practitioner-researchers to create their own living-educational-theories within a culture of inquiry (Delong, 2013). I am dialogic by nature and I am intentional about living my value of loving others into learning (Campbell, 2011) and I have both created and researched cultures of inquiry where practitioner-researchers know (Griffin, 2011; Campbell, 2011, 2019; Vaughan, 2019) that they are in a safe place for sharing their vulnerabilities. Brown (2012) states that "Not only can we not deeply love, we cannot know the truth of who we are without experiencing vulnerability" (p. 32). My culture of inquiry shares commonalities with Huxtable's (2012) 'living boundaries'. She describes a living-boundary as a trustworthy, co-creative, multidimensional, relationally dynamic space (Huxtable, 2012). I also feel a connection to Robyn Pound's (2003) concept of 'alongsideness':

> "Values of alongsideness act as explanatory principles and standards of practice and evaluation. As an epistemology, alongsideness employs Living Theory research (Whitehead, 1989). Accessibility for participants unfamiliar with this research is increased by calling the developmental process 'enquiring collaboratively'." (Abstract)

The ontological importance of dialogue in relationships informs this approach to educational conversations as a research method. The nature of my influence can be seen through the videos and emails, embodied in a form of inquiry that focuses on dialogue. The conversations are important and legitimate research processes whereby I am showing my educational influence with Michelle Vaughan (Delong, 2019; Vaughan, 2019; Vaughan & Delong, 2019). To me this is self-evident and not revolutionary, as Shotter (2011) says:

> "It is our spontaneous, embodied ways of seeing and acting in the world that we change... we change in who we 'are,' how we relate ourselves to our surroundings.
> But to say all of this is not to say anything very revolutionary, for such a form of 'research' is already a part of our everyday practices; it is only revolutionary to recognize that fact." (p.191)

I hope to do justice to the significance of this form of research in terms of alternative forms of representation (Eisner, 1988; 1993; 1997; 2005) to share the authentic reality of learning within relationships through digital visual data. Further, I do wish to recognize the barriers, obstacles and constraints for dialogue as research to unfold.

Raising the practitioner-researchers voices as they create their own living-educational-theories in cultures of inquiry: early implementation

Every researcher in the Master's cohorts and mentees that I facilitated can tell you that I repeatedly exhort them to speak with their own voices about their own embodied knowledge

and never to let others, no matter how kind they may be, to speak for them. Liz Campbell wrote that at the top of her data wall as a constant reminder. **IMAGE?**

Creating a living theory culture of inquiry is essential in my support of practitioner-researchers. My use of the word 'culture' builds from Said's (1993) definition. For Said, culture means two things in particular:

> "First of all, it means all those practices, like the arts of description, communication, and representation, that have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political realms and that often exist in aesthetic forms, one of whose principal aims is pleasure. ...Second, and almost imperceptible, culture is a concept that includes a refining and elevating element, each society's reservoir of the best that has been known and thought." (Said, pp. xii-xiv, 1993)

A culture of inquiry is a safe, supportive space wherein practitioner-researchers are enabled to share their vulnerabilities, to make explicit their values, and to hold themselves accountable for living according to those values. They learn to recognize when they are not living according to their espoused values and are what Jack Whitehead (1989) calls "living contradictions."

My initial work in action research/Living Educational Theory was encouraging and supporting educators (teachers, administrators, consultants, early childhood educators), to conduct informal research which for some provided a springboard to joining our Master's cohorts for legitimation by Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. The creation of the Master's program is described in Chapter Three of my thesis, pp. 204-221 (Delong, 2002).

With Ministry of Education funding, the adventure began:

> "Linda [Grant] drafted the proposal which would include four Ontario boards of education, Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation (OPSTF), Television Ontario (TVO), Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) and Queen's University. The proposal was awarded $200,000 in June of 1995. From this point emerged the birth and growth of action research in my life and in my board." (Delong, 2002, p. 158)

I started in 1995 with supporting a group of seven, two administrators and five elementary school teachers who created, shared and published their action research projects (Delong & Wideman, 1997). The focus was on action research as professional development. From an article that Ron Wideman and I wrote in the Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation journal, *News*, (Delong & Wideman, 1998), we shared the significance of action research as a professional development process and of giving teachers "a greater voice in the development of the knowledge base of their own profession":

> "Action research has the additional benefit of placing teachers at the centre of the process of creating educational knowledge. Traditionally educational knowledge was developed by "experts" in universities and government who expected this "knowledge to be implemented" by teachers. To strengthen the teaching profession, practitioners must have a greater voice in the development of the knowledge base of their own profession. Action research enables teachers to use their investigations to develop their own living theory of education and to share that "living" theory with the larger community." (p. 8)

Image 1. Ron Wideman and Jackie Delong. See our pleasure in writing in working together to improve the world for teachers.

One of the teachers in the research group, Bev Macdonald, wrote:

> "It's very intimidating at the beginning, but don't let that stop you from taking the risk. Because in the long run you have control. You have control of every single step of the process. You have control of the question that you start off with. You have control of the steps that you want to take. I find that as a professional growth model it's the best one that I've come across. It's the one that meets my needs." (ibid., p. 6)

The full description of my systemic influence creating a living theory culture of inquiry in the Brant County/Grand Erie District School Boards is located in the third chapter of my thesis:

> "The second part of Chapter Three analyses how I have managed to provide sustaining support for inquiry, reflection and scholarship as a systems manager. It focuses in particular on my influence on the development of a culture of inquiry and reflection as I mobilize system supports and then create sustained supports through contributing to building communities and networks. The *systematized knowledge* that Catherine Snow (2001) is searching for already exists in my board. I begin with my initiation into action research, the beginning years in Brant, the supports that I built up to provide sustained support for the teachers and principals in my district and as an additional benefit in other districts." (Delong, 2002, p. 10)

During the years 1996-2007 as I built a culture of inquiry, reflection and scholarship, data accumulated in my own thesis and in the school district teachers' informal (not for credit) action research outlined in seven volumes of "Passion In Professional Practice" https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/ActionResearch/passion/index.html that I supported and edited. Director of Education for the Grand Erie District School Board, Peter C. Moffatt, articulated his support for action research as "the highest form of professionalism" on page 3 of the first volume (2001):

> "The highest form of professionalism is the on-going, self- generated pursuit of improvement and excellence. Teachers and administrators who are involved in action research demonstrate and develop that professional passion. The rewards of this professional activity are improved student learning and personal engagement and growth. Through the posing of important questions, the collection and analysis of classroom and

school-based data, the articulation and presentation of results, the sharing of those results and the posing of new, important questions, teachers and administrators take control of their own job satisfaction. They can support their classroom practices and they improve classroom learning.

It is with a great deal of pride that I congratulate the professionals of Grand Erie who have contributed to this collection. I congratulate them for their writing, for the influence that they have had on education, and on their achievement of the highest professional status. Their passion makes a difference!" (Moffatt, 2001, p. 3)

Evidence of my dialogic way of being over time

If I review my writing during the years of my doctoral research and even earlier, there is abundant evidence that dialogue is an inherent part of my ontology and methodology. In retrospect, it is amusing to read ("…and Jackie would interrupt...") what I wrote with Ron Wideman (Delong & Wideman, 1997) about our preference for collaborative writing and dealing with my dialogic way of being:

> "…As one person articulates a thought or perspective the other builds on it or connects it to different thoughts and perspectives. The dialogue results in a creation greater than one could be alone.
>
> As we edited transcripts, we found that Jackie tended to conceptualize holistically and Ron tended to conceptualize sequentially. Ron would focus on editing and Jackie would interrupt with thoughts about action research a paper triggered, including those about inter-relationships among papers. Our cross-purposes frustrated us both. We found that writing down Jackie's comments preserved them for later consideration and gave Ron permission to also engage in this kind of thinking while we both continued in the editing process." (p. 106)

At first, I associated that characteristic solely with my being extroverted but as I read Belenky et al. (1986), Tannen (1990) and Gilligan (1982) I began to see that it is also associated with my gender. Not only is the talk part of my learning, it is also part of my need for intimacy and relationship. Belenky (1986) makes a distinction between real talk and "didactic talk in which the speaker's intention is to hold forth rather than to share ideas" (p. 144). What constructivists call "real talk", Jurgen Habermas (1982), called a kind of ideal speech situation: "Speech that simultaneously taps and touches our inner and outer worlds within a community of others with whom we share deeply felt, largely inarticulate, but daily renewed inter-subjective reality (p. 620 in Belenky, 1986, p. 146).

In the abstract for my doctoral thesis (Delong, 2002), I wrote about "valuing the other in my professional practice, building a culture of inquiry, reflection and scholarship and creating knowledge." So, I am and have been devoted to building relationships and encouraging and supporting others in cultures of inquiry:

> **"HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY PRACTICE AS A SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS AND CREATE MY OWN LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY?**
>
> **Abstract of PhD Submission**
> **Jackie Delong**

One of the basic tenets of my philosophy is that the development of a culture for improving learning rests upon supporting the knowledge-creating capacity in each individual in the system. Thus, I start with my own. This thesis sets out a claim to know my own learning in my educational inquiry, 'How can I improve my practice as a superintendent of schools?'

Out of this philosophy emerges my belief that the professional development of each teacher rests in their own knowledge-creating capacities as they examine their own practice in helping their students to improve their learning. In creating my own educational theory and supporting teachers in creating theirs, we engage with and use insights from the theories of others in the process of improving student learning.

The originality of the contribution of this thesis to the academic and professional knowledge-base of education is in the systematic way I transform my embodied educational values into educational standards of practice and judgement in the creation of my living educational theory. In the thesis I demonstrate how these values and standards can be used critically both to test the validity of my knowledge-claims and to be a powerful motivator in my living educational inquiry.

The values and standards are defined in terms of valuing the other in my professional practice, building a culture of inquiry, reflection and scholarship and creating knowledge."

In the thesis, dialogue as research is pervasive and it was my way of writing to insert the visual on the page first and that would cause me to write as internal dialogue as well as external and all of this is conveyed through visuals (photos at the time), and transcription of dialogue with principals in my family of schools and emails. In Chapter Two of my thesis, I share an email that I sent to Greg, one of the principals in my family of schools, in response to his description of my influence on him that conveys the prime importance to me of non-hierarchical, caring relationships:

"I will summarize the points I made in my answer to the question, What have I learned from you, Greg?

You inspire me with your tremendous capacity to make people feel valued
You confirm my belief that principals can be and must be curriculum leaders.
Clearly you start from the foundation of building the relationship first.
You inspire me because of your solid values-base.
You teach me that superintendents can work collaboratively with principals and that we can learn so much from each other. I've always felt that we've worked together as colleagues, never as people in a hierarchy.
You've taught me about diffusing situations, about listening and caring, about the value of consummate patience.
You reinforce my belief that real relationships cannot exist without trust. The trust we have has been built over time and through a variety of experiences. From my standpoint, it has never been at risk.
<u>You made me feel valued</u>. Even in what some principals might have seen as threatening situation, you said, "It was good that the superintendent was there as well because she was able to share some perceptions as to why the parent reacted as she did. Throughout this discussion the teacher became a little less anxious and felt a little more comfortable about the whole situation. Above all, we should not be taking what the parent was saying personally. It was good sound advice that actually comforted the teacher." (Buckles,

1999) Even superintendents need to feel that they are making a difference in the lives of students, teachers and, yes, principals."
 (Delong, e-mail 11/11/98). (Delong, 2002, pp. 75-76)

In Chapter Four of my thesis, I explain my dialogic way of being and how my work as a school district Superintendent improved when the environment changed to respect my need for dialogue:

"It was a seminal event in my life when I recognized that the difference between the way my thinking and learning worked and Peter Moffatt's. I can't put a specific time on it but I do remember a conversation in his office early in my tenure as superintendent. I think we were discussing our profiles on the Myers-Briggs Inventory, a scale that measured our leadership styles. I remember saying to him that what was preventing me from being as effective as I might on Executive Council was that everyone was an introvert except me; I am an extrovert. I meant that all of the others processed information internally and individually and I processed information through thinking out loud and in dialogue. The others would come to the meetings with fully analyzed, fully completed reports and expect my support without any discussion. …By my articulating my dialogic learning style, Peter has become more responsive to my needs." (p. 250)

In my work more recently, as I mentor practitioner-researchers around the globe to create their own living-educational-theories in cultures of inquiry, you hear and see my passion to make the world a better place, a better way of being. I have the advantage of not being grounded in institutions, so I am able to mentor others, love them into learning (Campbell, 2011) and take the "slow approach" to action research as Mairin Glenn (2020) says, "Engaging in a slow approach to action research allows researchers to reflect on their identity, their values as well as their ontological and epistemological commitments- factors of the utmost importance in research in practice." In the living poster below, I express my intentions to improve my practice as a mentor and as a global citizen (Potts,

Mentoring: "And, finally, mentors ought to see the world they themselves can only dream of through their faith and trust in the guided." (Yamamoto, 1988, p. 187)

Culture of Inquiry
The creation of a safe, supportive space where students and teachers are enabled to make explicit their values and make themselves accountable for living according to those values. They learn to recognize when they are not living according to their espoused values and are living contradictions. Action-reflection cycles based on asking questions like "How can I improve my teaching of these children?" become as natural as breathing.

ALARA World Congress, 2018
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swTrYSfeb0g

Where do we go from here in contributing to 'The Action Learning and Action Research Legacy for Transforming Social Change?'
Jackie Delong, Jack Whitehead and Marie Huxtable
ALARj 25 (1) (2019) Action Learning, Action Research Association Ltd www.alarassociation.org

This living poster reflects my current work since the earlier one:
http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/jackied0619.pdf

How am I contributing to the Living Theory social movement by creating cultures of inquiry for mentoring practitioner-researchers to create their own living educational theories?

Video on Mentoring: https://youtu.be/2kL5TgyZAmE

Papers and Publications
http://www.spanglefish.com/ActionResearchCanada/
http://www.actionresearch.net

Michelle Vaughan

Workshop ARNA June, 2019
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZO0ZE1C74II

Michelle sees my work as a kind of "ripple mentorship" in which "like a fairy godmother", I give: "a little bit of loving kindness here, a little bit of loving kindness here and that ripple effect.

Vaughan & Delong publications:
Delong, J. (2019) *Dialogical relationships in living cultures of inquiry for the creation of living-theories* http://ejolts.net/node/334
Vaughan, M. (2019) *Learning who I am: The exploration of my guiding values through a Living Theory methodology* https://ejolts.net/node/336
Vaughan, M & Delong, J. (2019) *Cultures of inquiry: A transformative method of creating living-theories* https://ejolts.net/node/349

Parbati Dhungana

Daring to use the term 'love' in educational practices
https://youtu.be/94jkUjfVXq0

Jackie: You were talking about love as a value, and then you kind of put it aside and said, "No, my main values are collaboration and reflection." So, why did you take love out as one of your main values?
Parbati: ...regarding love it's within me. It's not explored yet. I need to look into it in depth but like I am sure that my main value is love-nothing else, so I need to have some references, some evidence so that I dare to use the word love in professional development.
Jackie: Dare to use it. Wow! And you go for it. OK!

Parbati Dhungana (2020) publication: *'Living love': My Living Education Theory* EJOLTs in press

Image 2. How am I contributing to the Living Theory social movement by creating cultures of inquiry for mentoring practitioner- researchers to create their own living educational theories?

As I worked through the creation of my living poster, I found it to be a completely different experience from the first one I created in 2019 http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/jackied0619.pdf

The first living poster was a compendium of my research and writing up to that point with boundaries constructed primarily through my work as a Superintendent and Adjunct Professor at Brock University. When I was working as a superintendent, my focus was very much on the professional development of the staff I was responsible for plus their influence in enhancing the learning of the students as well as getting financial support in the budgets. That defined the boundaries as I brought people together, getting them connected in for example, the Brock Master's cohort. Now what I think I have done since then which comes out in this living-poster is to extend my sense of my boundaries. So, whereas the boundaries were provided by being a superintendent of schools, I am now responding much more as a global citizen connecting for example with Michelle Vaughan at Florida Atlantic University and with Parbati Dhungana in Nepal at Katmandu University. I am still using my values and insights but the boundaries within which I am working have extended into this global context.

My interest is in mentoring, providing support for Parbati with how she is and responding to what she is doing and others in Canada and Cathy Yuill in Durban, South Africa. Now it's actually connecting these conversations together. My latest living-poster which was posted for the June 27 Living Educational Theory Research Gathering website where people could then connect in terms of what it is that I'm doing now as my boundaries have changed and transformed since I

moved on from superintendent to actually taking on this global response to the work of others as I spread the influence of Living Theory research.

The 1st International Living Educational Theory research conference clearly answers one of our questions, "Have I shown how raising the voices of Living Educational Theory researchers in the contexts of Canada, Nepal, USA, and South Africa have contributed to the extending global influences of Living Educational Theory research with values of human flourishing in educational conversations." See http://www.spanglefish.com/livingtheoryresearchgathering/index.asp

In a 270320 Skype conversation with Jack, Jackie said about Parbati: "She is a really good person. When you talk about making a better world, she is that kind of person". I wondered if that came from her religion. When I asked her on Skype 010420, if her quality of goodness came from her religion and if it was Hindu, Parbati said that her beliefs came from Spiritualism and not a particular religion.

In a Skype conversation on April 1, 2020, Parbati shared the process of creating her own living-educational-theory with my mentoring. She said that she always felt that she could ask any question, show her vulnerability and felt supported and free to take her own direction. She said that she felt that my mentoring built her confidence. When I asked if she ever felt colonized, she said that she never felt pressured to go in any direction she did not want to go. Further, Parbati shared that she is basing her support of other students at the university on Jackie's model of creating a culture of inquiry and plans to teach that way when she finishes her studies.

My dialogical way of being is very evident Sunday mornings. When our post-doctoral community meets on SKYPE, we share an update of what is happening in our research worlds and in our personal lives: what is working and what is presenting us with problems. Just listening and consoling is valued but so are strategies for moving on. Very frequently, we find solutions to the problems presented or, at the least, provide directions to be considered. I look forward to those conversations every Sunday morning even though, for me, it is at 8:30 a.m. Because of my dialogic way of being, these meetings allow me to share my thinking, provide me with constructive criticism to improve my research and writing and give me new ideas to ponder. You hear everyone saying, "how can I help?" Here is the session on September 3, 2018: **REPLACE WITH CURRENT CLIP**

Video 1. Postdoc Group
https://youtu.be/DhenTow0-9c

Visual data as evidence of dialogue as research/ Alternative ways of knowing and representing

In this part, I share how I have used visual data primarily from video-recordings to provide evidence of dialogue as research in alternative ways of knowing and representing. Marshall (1999) describes the significance of images:

> "Images, phrases, concepts and questions around which I organise my sense of inquiring can arise from a variety of sources, but when they 'appear' they can have an intensity which makes me recognise them as powerful, or invest them with such power. They have an evocative quality for me, repeatedly catch my attention, and/or are rich phrases (often with ambiguous or multiple meanings) which echo in different areas of my life. They serve as organizing frames for my self-reflection and for taking issues further conceptually and in practice. Typically, they have been repeated in more than one setting. Sometimes I will be encouraged because they have resonance for other people as well as me, but sometimes this is unimportant." (Marshall 1999, p. 4)

As I became more competent in the use of video-recordings for generating data and data analysis, the dialogue in them played a significant role in my research and writing and in fact, I could not continue this work without them. In order to encourage the use of video-recordings and the value of video-data as evidence of our claims to know, to have improved our practice, I needed to show myself using it. I draw the following example from my EJOLTs article,

"During the course of my thesis I unveiled what I thought was a prerequisite space, a Culture of Inquiry, for educators to influence themselves, others and social formations. This Culture of Inquiry space is an environment for giving voice to teachers. I frequently exhort them not to allow others to speak for them, to represent their embodied knowledge for and by themselves. I invite them into a Culture of Inquiry, a culture of love and support and encouragement, to unveil their embodied knowledge and create their own living- educational-theories. The passion that I feel for encouraging teachers to create knowledge can be seen in the following video-clip.

Video 2. Empathetic resonance (http://youtu.be/qsECy86hzxA)

In the 3:11 minute video-clip, I am contributing to an international panel at an International Conference of Teacher Research. I am responding to a question about my support for teacher-research in the Grand Erie District School Board in Ontario. The process of empathetic resonance involves moving the cursor along the clip and responding to moments in which the

viewer experiences the greatest flow of energy from the speaker. For example, as the cursor is moved backwards and forwards around the moment at 2.49 minutes, I am talking about the "SWAT" team arriving to support a teacher in her research. Both Jack and I claim that the image above (at 2:49 minutes) shows me expressing my life- affirming energy and valuing of an embodied expression of a culture-of-inquiry in which several individuals are responding to the needs of another. The expression of my life- affirming energy at 2:49 minutes was evoked through my response to a question about the support I am giving for teacher-research. The responses of others appear attracted into an inclusive space with me and they experience a pooling of a flow of their own life- affirming energies. If we try to communicate the experience of my presencing this flow of life- affirming energy with the words, "flow of life-affirming energy" without the visual data, we (Jackie, Jack, Liz and Cathy) are claiming that something vital about the meaning is lost." (p. 30)

The students in my Master's cohorts, while reluctant at first to turn the video on themselves, found the benefit of seeing themselves in action to discover whether they were in fact improving their practice and in turn, their students did the same. Again, I draw from "Introduction to living theory action research in a culture of inquiry transforms learning in elementary, high school and post-graduate settings" (ibid, 2013) for the first example from Liz Campbell:

"When we are analyzing video and looking for explanations of our educational influence, we use two techniques for showing the significance of a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries (Rayner, 2011): first we scan through the video data looking for moments of empathetic resonance in which we feel most strongly that we recognise the energy flowing values of the other, the activity of the participants is increased, or there is evidence of tension; second, we write visual narratives to explain our interpretation of the empathetic resonance.
The visual narrative is at the same time raw data and an explanation of the empathetic resonance. This means that in the moment of conversation and while reviewing the video, we are mindful of the dynamics of our interactions including the times when our ideas are resonating and there is a building of excitement between us as new knowledge is created and we recognize our shared values. But we are also aware of the tensions, the times when our meaning is not resonating with the others or when we feel there is something unclear, missing or not fully explained. In these cases, more dialogue or reflection is needed to uncover the source of the tension.

To frame her research process for the reader, Liz videotaped the evolution of the Living Theory Action Research Process. Liz Campbell can be seen to be engaging in the action research process, as we understand it from Whitehead and McNiff, in the following clip and her explanation of methodology emerging from expressing her energy-flowing values such as "Being Loved into Learning" (Video 1).

Video 3. See 54 seconds into the 18:44 minute video of Liz Campbell for an expression of being loved into learning (http://youtu.be/zmBcrUsDG8s) "

(Campbell, et al., 2013, p. 8)

The second example of video-recording is Cathy Griffin's (2012) use of video where her students shared their action research questions for improving their learning:

"In the following video, four of my students read their personal research questions. Since creating their questions, I have sorted students into research groups based on the themes of their inquiries. The themes include focus, group work, independence in learning, interacting with others and conflict management and fear of talking in front of the class. Rather than getting ideas from books, we worked individually and in groups to develop action plans based on what the students already knew. You will hear each student explain the barriers they experienced and action they are taking."

Video 4. The Living Curriculum: Student Action Research Projects (http://youtu.be/rz2sSUeZlno) (Griffin, 2012**, p.)**

Through the visual data, I am highlighting the methodological importance of my dialogic way of being and through my' loving educational conversations' and dialogues I am clarifying the ontological values which are the standards of judgment that I use as explanatory principles in my educational relationships with my colleagues, Cathy Griffin, Liz Campbell, Michelle Vaughan Cathy Yuill, and Parbati Dhungana. These five live in totally different contexts, are very different individuals, and yet each is generating or generated her own living-educational-theory accounts with deep insights with the support of our loving educational conversations.

As Vaughan and I explain (2019), it is important to note that cultures of inquiry can be both on the micro and macro level in small and large groups. When we hear the term cultures of inquiry, it may conjure up images of groups sitting together with the purpose of using dialogue to explore various inquiry questions. And while this may be an accurate representation of some of the ways in which cultures of inquiry are formed, they can also be as small as two people involved in a mentoring relationship, where, as Yamamoto (1998) discusses, both parties benefit from the paradox of mentorship through the fulfilment of their roles. When both members of the mentoring relationship are valued and 'seen' for their equal contribution to the relationship, symbiosis occurs and both members reap the reward of the relationship.

As Yamamoto (1998) describes, it is the recognition of the other individual, the experience of being seen that has an impact far beyond what the message or advice may be:

> "What is sought is not praise, reward, or pity, all of which are an accounting for past deeds. Rather, it is regard-an acknowledgment of one's personhood as well as trust in what is and is to come-that is desired...If that is the case, the recognition and affirmation by a mentor may be expected to have a profound influence on the chosen few." (p. 184)

In this video clip, Michelle says that she imagines me "like a fairy godmother with all these lives that you are touching." Here is my reaction! If you put your cursor on the red line of the clip and just move it back and forth, I think you can see the life- affirming energy in both of us in the process called, "empathetic resonance" (Delong *et al*., 2013, p. 79)

Video 5. Empathetic Resonance https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZO0ZE1C74lI

Michelle sees it as a kind of "ripple mentorship" in which:

"a little bit of loving kindness here, a little bit of loving kindness here and that ripple effect. And I think about the lives and the students that I've touched and then they're going into classrooms validating their students. And it's exciting work because it feels so true."

I also share Yamamoto's (1988) "paradox of mentorship":

"There are, to begin with, not many masters in any given field of human endeavor. Of these, only a fraction would qualify as mentors worthy of the name, that is, as individuals of virtuosity, vision, and wisdom... And, finally, mentors ought to see the world they themselves can only dream of through their faith and trust in the guided." (p. 187)

Obstacles, barriers and constraints in dialogue as research method

While I do not intend to cover this topic comprehensively, I will address some of the issues that can constrain us: critical feedback, gender and cultural differences.

One of the barriers in supporting practitioner-researchers is the struggle to give critical feedback that is received as helpful, acceptable and not personal. When I am guiding the individuals. I say that I want the students to become aware of who they are and want to be, and support their development as best I can. Offering critique that might be valuable can be challenging. The intended message is not necessarily the one received by the student. This is even more challenging when the mentoring is written and given by e-mail, than when it is delivered face-to-face. In order to try to establish a dialogue, I encourage the students to reply to the advice so that I might learn about the effect my message has on them. Marie Huxtable (2020) says that it is a fairly common problem: "On the one hand there is resistance to introducing what might be construed as a note of discord into intellectual discourse, on the other hand no progress is made without it."

The work of Santos is seminal to the topic of cultural differences.

"Intercultural translation is Santos' alternative both to the abstract universalism that grounds Western-centric general theories and to the idea of incommensurability between cultures. He sees the two as related and accounting for destruction and assimilation of non- Western cultures by Western modernity:
For Santos intercultural translation consists of searching for isomorphic (similar form or structure) concerns and underlying assumptions among cultures. It includes identifying differences and similarities, and developing, whenever appropriate, new hybrid forms of cultural understanding and intercommunication. These new hybrid forms
... may be useful in favouring interactions and strengthening alliances among social movements fighting, in different cultural contexts, against capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy and for social justice, human dignity, or human decency. (p. 212) (Whitehead, year, p. 91)

With Parbati, in our Skype visit, I asked her outright if she sensed any hierarchy in our relationship or if my "guiding practice" (Gjotterud, 2009) was gentle and helpful. She said that she had never found my influence to be controlling or colonizing and she felt the way that love actively influences the way I work with her. She does say, however, that gender issues are prevalent in the patriarchal society of Nepal (Dhungana et al, 2019). In the abstract with her colleagues, she wrote,

"We critically discussed where we encountered gender issues, how we perceived and addressed them, and how we continued the PAR journey through cyclical spirals of conceptualization, action, reflection, and re-conceptualization of gender which eventually became a part of our transformative learning."

And her earlier research (Master's (Dhungana, 2007) and M. Phil. researches (Dhungana, 2013) was concerned with gender inequality and female subordination in literature, and in society.

I have observed that often female students will receive criticism differently. In one incident, Parbati's supervisor made some suggestions for readings and she felt that he was criticizing her work. After we talked about it, she realized that he was just trying to help and enjoyed reading the literature recommended. Shakeshaft (1995), concerned with the androcentric nature, which she defined as "the practice of viewing the world and shaping reality through a male lens" (p. 140), and her earlier research (1987) indicated that:

1. Relationships with others are more central to all actions for women than they are for male administrators.
2. Teaching and learning is more often the major focus for women than it is for male administrators
3. Building community is more often an essential part of the women administrator's style than it is for the man (Donmoyer et al., 1995, p. 146).

As opposed to valuing being single-focused, Bateson (1989), feels multi-tasking, a dynamic of moving amongst the multiple intelligences, (Gardner, 1983) is a capacity which is very natural for women:

"But what if we were to recognize the capacity for distraction, the divided will, as representing a higher wisdom.? Perhaps Kierkegaard was wrong when he said that 'purity is to will one thing'. Perhaps the issue is not a fixed knowledge of the good, the single focus that millennia of monotheism have made us idealize, but a kind of attention that is open, not focused on a single point. Instead of concentration on a transcendent ideal, sustained attention to diversity and interdependence may offer a different clarity of vision, one that is sensitive to ecological complexity, to the multiple rather than the singular. Perhaps we can discern in women honoring multiple commitments a new level of productivity and new possibilities of learning" (p. 166).

Going forward/Next steps

In this paper, I have shared evidence of my dialogic nature and made an argument for dialogue as research method, a method that aligns with my ontology and methodology. I would definitely appreciate critical responses to the paper in order to strengthen it. It is evident that our understanding of the qualities of life-affirming energy and energy-flowing values are limited by text alone. How do we know that we are living and experiencing these qualities as we create our own living-educational values? We know because we can see and experience them with others in the analysis of visual data. In fact, I would be unable to explain the nature of values and my influence without the recordings of the dialogue between me and the mentees and my colleagues.

I will continue to contribute as a global citizen (Potts, ****) to a Living Theory social movement and to human flourishing as I mentor practitioner-researchers around the world. Living Theory as a social movement was evident in the Living Educational Theory Research Meeting on June 27, 2020. The keynote addresses and the small group conversations of the 70 researchers in attendance were full of the excitement of contributing to improving our world especially in this time of the COVID pandemic. While the confinement of the pandemic may be constraining, it can also be seen as an opportunity to live according our values more fully and support each other through the technology and social media. Dialogue as research method seems perfectly suited to learning/researching in the current pandemic times, as we meet almost entirely virtually using Skype, Zoom, FaceTime and moving our thinking on depends on the dialogue, its recordings and analysis.

Currently, the next international conference, also virtual, will be AERA 2021 and I wait to see if my proposals have been accepted.

In addition, Jack Whitehead and I are writing a Living Educational Theory text that we hope will be helpful to practitioner-researchers and tutors around the world who are committed to creating their own living-educational-theories as part of the social movement.

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