The Adventures of Action Research

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Preamble

I elected to present my Methodology Chapter of my thesis at the recent Faculty of Education Graduate Symposium, in March 2016. This paper is a mixture of that presentation and the methodology chapter of my research proposal. Presenting the methodology chapter of a thesis may seem like an odd choice. However, as I was in the final stages of data collection, and had not begun the arduous task of data analysis it allowed me time to reflect on the process that had unfolded over the last ten-months. This proved to be very helpful as I completed the final weeks of my data collection. Prior to the commencement of the text it is helpful for me to briefly outline the purpose of the study, and who I am as a researcher. According to Pine (2009), it is important for action researchers “to examine how their gendered identities affect their personal and professional lives” as “gender is a central category of human experience and is the structure in which all individuals are framed” (p. 46).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was threefold:

1) To co-develop and implement a new inclusive pedagogical planner.

2) To explore the effectiveness of an inclusive pedagogical planner in supporting the development and enhancement of an Inclusive Community of Learners (ICOL).

3) To examine the use of Guided Inquiry as the instructional strategy when implementing the new pedagogical planner.

Who I Am as a Researcher:

Feminist research is foundational to current action research practices: not viewing the researcher/researched relationship as a hierarchical relationship; seeing emotions as valuable aspects of the research process; abandoning conceptualizations of “objectivity” and
“subjectivity” as binaries or dichotomies; taking into account the researchers intellectual autobiography in considering their conclusions; recognizing the existence and management of the different “realities” or versions held by the researchers and the researched; acknowledging the issues surrounding authority and power in research; and finally recognizing that there is power in the written representation of research (Stanley & Wise, 1993, p. 189, as cited in Pine, 2009). With this in mind, and my personal background, I consider myself a feminist researcher, and as such have adopted a research design that aligns with who I am as both teacher and researcher. With the brief purpose of the study and expression of who I am in place, the main text begins.

The Adventures of Action Research

“Qualitative research has a long, distinguished, and sometimes anguished history in the human disciplines” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 1). Qualitative research is “a complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts and assumptions” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.2). The complexity of qualitative research presents a challenge for researchers who face the reality that “it is many things to many people” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.8). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) suggested that a qualitative researcher often assumes multiple roles, and becomes a “bricoleur” or “jack of all trades” employing multiple methods and approaches when conducting a particular study. This has been my experience over the past ten months.

Qualitative researchers can and do blur the lines between research paradigms and methodologies. There are however, some generally accepted traits of qualitative research. According to Creswell (2003), qualitative research is typically entrenched with “constructivist assumptions” and uses “strategies of inquiry such as narratives, phenomenologys, ethnographies, grounded theory studies, or case studies” (p. 18). Qualitative researchers situate themselves in
the field, and attempt to “understand the meaning of events and interactions [of] ordinary people in particular situations” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006, p. 25).

As part of the research practice, the researcher is expected to bracket his or her preconceived notions held about the particular event or people group being studied. Typical forms of data collection include: open ended questions in the form of semi-structured interviews or surveys, filed notes, observations, visuals such as photographs or videos, and sometimes artifacts. The researcher looks for themes and big ideas that emerge from the data during the data analysis phase, and then attempts to connect the themes to the originating purpose of the study (Creswell, 2003).

As I embarked on my research journey, the original intent was to adopt a generally accepted approach to qualitative research, a case study. A case study that involved me, developing a new pedagogical planner integrating the demands of curriculum and inclusion, that would be given to teachers to implement. I then planned to gather data using the typical methods of interviews, observations, field notes and possibly artifacts. My intent was to compare teacher’s classrooms that used the planner with those who did not.

However, as I wrote my literature review and developed the ideas that:

a) policy makers and specialists had influenced classroom practice for more than one hundred years,

b) policymakers and specialists typically aligned themselves with two distinct and separate disciplines - curriculum and special education, and

c) teachers have been left in a tenable position as “expert” voices from outside the classroom have prescribed what they should do in the classroom,
it became clear I could not present myself as another “expert” with another good idea. I could not develop a new pedagogical planner and “tell” teachers to use it.

Consequently, I was challenged to rethink my research methodology and the subsequent research method I would employ. I began investigating collaborative research models. I discovered that a participative research approach creates space for new knowledge to be co-constructed by the researcher and participants (, 1998). Reason and Bradbury (2001) wrote, “good research is conducted with people rather than on people.” (p. 179) They considered collaborative action research, good research. Therefore, I chose to utilize a collaborative action research methodology. By doing so I attempted to acknowledge, respect and embrace the expertise of the teachers who consented to be co-researchers in the study.

**Collaborative Action Research**

Collaborative Action Research has become a popular research methodology among educators over the last few decades (Noffke & Somekh, 2009). “It is widely accepted as a means of supporting school-based professional development …[and] to provide continuing professional development for teachers, in their efforts … to improve schools” (Noffke & Somekh, 2009, p. 2).

One topic that has been “consistently accepted” as valid in educational action research, is the “adaptation of the mainstream curriculum to meet the needs of students’ diverse and wide abilities” (O’ Hanlon, 2009, p. 119). Therefore, the selection of Collaborative Action Research for this study seemed appropriate, as the goal of the study was to integrate current curriculum expectations with an inclusive pedagogical practice.

Collaborative Action Research “seeks to create participative communities of inquiry in which qualities of engagement, curiosity and question posing are brought to bear on significant practical issues” (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 3). Participants in teacher collaborative action
research have a desire to improve or enhance their practice through a process of inquiry. Teachers are active participants in all stages of the study as the research is conducted “with” them, not “about” them. Collaborative action research is “recursive” in nature as there is a cycle of action, evaluation, and reflection required in the research design. This research study emphasized group and individual action, evaluation and reflection.

**Research paradigm.** It has been argued that collaborative action research is not so much a methodology as it is a research paradigm (Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Pine, 2009; Reason, 1998). Reason (1999) proposed that a participatory worldview was often associated with action research. A participatory worldview he asserted: “allows us to join with fellow humans in collaborative forms of inquiry” (p. 276). A participatory worldview:

- a) emphasizes holism,
- b) adopts an interactive, cooperative approach,
- c) focuses on qualitative analysis,
- d) incorporates a strong axiological component,
- e) uses new methodologies of participation and action research, and
- f) sees a universe active, animated, and co-creative (Skrbina, 2001, p. 2).

Within a participatory worldview Reason (1998) suggested reality is both subjective and objective. We live in a “subjectively articulated world, whose objectivity is relative to the perspective of the knower. Reality is subjective-objective, always called into being and shaped by the participation of the knower” (p. 4).

Reason (1998) identified four kinds of interdependent knowing within a participatory worldview: experiential, presentational, propositional and practical. Each is defined as:

1) **Experiential knowing** – that occurs “through participative, empathic resonance with
2) **Presentational knowing** - that emerges out of experience when knowledge moves beyond participation to a symbolic representation. Presentational knowledge is similar to declarative knowledge; it is knowledge a person can declare in some kind of written or oral form (Woolfolk, Winne, & Perry, 2012).

3) **Propositional knowing** - the demonstration of knowledge in conceptual forms. For example, the ability to describe a person, process, or things is propositional knowledge (Woolfolk, Winne, & Perry, 2012).

4) **Practical knowing** - knowledge about how to do something (Woolfolk, Winne, & Perry, 2012).

All four ways of knowing are activated and cycled through several times, during collaborative action research. Propositional knowing is activated as co-researchers define a problem or questions they want to explore. For the purpose of this study I identified a problem (integrating curriculum and special education) based on my prior experience, conversations with teachers, and current literature. Participants in the study had opportunity to exercise their propositional knowing, as they participated in the design of the pedagogical planner.

Collaborative action research requires participants to continually identify problems and ask questions as they reflect on their ongoing practice and the changes being made. Therefore propositional knowledge was activated throughout the study.

Practical knowing was demonstrated throughout the study as teachers were considered the experts. Middle years teachers have practical knowledge about teaching, the curriculum, their school community, classroom diversity, and what might or might not work with middle years students. Their practical knowledge was revealed through ongoing discussions, reflections, and
the co-creation of the pedagogical planner.

Experiential knowing is a key component to collaborative actions research and one that needs to be explored in all facets of the study. Teachers have experiences as individuals in their own classrooms, experiences with those who support their classroom; they will also had collaborative experiences with myself, and with the other participants in the study. The different experiences were captured in the various data collection techniques. Finally, presentational knowing was engaged as the co-participants implemented the pedagogical planner (Reason, 1998).

As a collaborator in the development of the pedagogical planner and then as an observer in the classrooms, I too activated and cycled through the four kinds of knowing. I identified how I defined the problem we are going to explore. My practical knowledge about the classroom and inquiry-based learning were used support the teachers throughout the study, I had experiential knowledge about the implementation of a research study that helped guide the study, and my presentational knowledge will be engaged as I write and present the final chapters of my thesis.

**Benefits of collaborative action research.** A benefit of engaging all four kinds of knowing is the potential for transformation as suggested by Heron and Reason (2001). A transformation that changes the ways teachers “think about and do” teaching. Pine (2009), acknowledged that collaborating with colleagues was a further benefit to participants as they engaged in open dialogue, and reflection about a common practice. Collaborative action research creates a democratic, social, space where relationship building can occur between collaborators (Reason and Bradbury, 2008; Pine, 2009; Armstrong and Moore, 2004). Pine (2009) added, that through a democratic process, collaborative action research could also create equitability for a group of co-researchers. A sense of equitability can result in a beneficial outcome of participants
feeling liberated and refreshed in their pedagogic practice.

Onwuegbuzie & Dickinson (2007) synthesized 29 additional benefits to collaborative action research with educators. I have selected nine to highlight. Collaborative action research can:

- improve instructional effectiveness,
- empower teachers by giving them greater confidence in their ability to promote change,
- increase reflection about teaching practice,
- heighten teacher curiosity and revitalize their teaching practice,
- encourage teacher-researchers to be active learners themselves,
- increase appreciation for theory as well as provide an avenue for informing theory, and demystifies research,
- increase knowledge and skills in research methodology,
- facilitate the defense of pedagogic choices, and
- yield increased commitment to the research project as teachers are co-researchers and may feel more ownership of seeing a project through (p.2).

**Challenges with collaborative action research.** Alongside the benefits of using a collaborative action research methodology there are challenges. Skillful communication during each stage of the process may present a challenge to the teacher participants and myself. “The source of the potential creativity of collaborative inquiry lies in the differences between individuals. This is why the need for skillful communication is so crucial … .” (Winter, 2009, p. 339). As the research facilitator I needed to communicate the expectations of the study clearly to prospective participants. I needed to ensure that every step in the inquiry process is clearly communicated. Communication was a key driving force in this study. How effective our
communication was is yet to be determined.

Heron and Reason (2001) identified three more challenges a collaborative action researcher needed to be aware of:

- balancing the convergent and divergent nature of the reiteration process,
- ensuring that one or two voices do not dominate the group, and
- balancing the amount of time spent on reflection and action as these phases occur several times throughout the study.

Armstrong and Moore (2004) added that another risk of using a collaborative action research approach is the study may not end the way the participants think it should. Researchers need to be aware of, and prepared for, unexpected outcomes.

**Criticisms of collaborative actions research.** Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) identified one of the biggest criticisms of Collaborative Action research is that teachers are generating knowledge about their own teaching. This criticism has led to questions about a lack of “real” research methods used in a collaborative action research study. A further criticism about collaborative action research in education is that a study is typically conducted with the intent of changing or advancing a small group of teacher’s practices. Therefore, data is not likely to be generalizable (Richardson, 1994; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990). The issue of generalizability will be addressed later in this paper.

**Recommendations for successfully using collaborative action research.** Several authors provided ideas about how to conduct a successful collaborative action research study. Onwuegbuzie & Dickinson (2007) suggested the research questions be used to direct the research process. Armstrong and Moore (2004), emphasized the importance of clearly identifying the “boundaries and limitations” of the project right from the start. Heron and Reason
(2001) suggested:

- producing a process for challenging collusion within the group which meant,
- allowing someone to play the “devil’s advocate” in order to challenge the groups thinking and any point in the study,
- that co-researchers adopt a method, collectively and individually, of managing distress and stress as the project progresses,
- that all co-researchers be prepared for chaos at some point in the study,
- that co-researchers pre-determine a way to work through chaos,
- the facilitator spend enough time with the co-researchers at the beginning of the study encouraging positive relationships thereby encouraging co-ownership of the project, and
- the facilitator be very clear about the expectations of the co-researchers during recruitment.

I kept these things in mind as the study unfolded. Now that the methodology chosen has been described and defended the methods incorporated in the study are outlined.

**Method**

**Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research typically takes place in a natural setting, involves the researcher collecting data within the setting, aims to provide deep, rich, narrative descriptions of what takes place in the natural setting, has a focus on process, uses inductive reasoning to interpret data, relies on the participants perspective of reality in the natural setting, and looks for results to emerge from the data (McMillan, 2008). By using a collaborative action research method all participants become researchers. As co-researchers they all collect data, provide narrative for deep, rich descriptions, collaborate on data interpretation, and agree on the results that emerge
from the data.

**Role of the lead researcher.** Within a qualitative research design a researcher typically decides on his or her role during the study. A researcher can choose to be a participant in the study, an observer, or a combination of both (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). However, by adopting a collaborative action research design, the researcher becomes an active participant in the study. The role of active participant and participant observer, are the roles I took in this study. As such I will became immersed in the classroom communities of the teacher participants classrooms, and in the school.

**Research process.** In the literature reviewed there were a variety of processes utilized with collaborative action research (Heron & Reason, 2001; Armstrong & Moore, 2004; Lyons, 2012; Taylor & Taschereau, 2014; Onwuegbuzie & Dickinson, 2007). For this study a Guided Inquiry Process was applied. A guided inquiry process was chosen because the collaborators in the study were asked to employ a guided inquiry approach with their students. By working through a similar process I hoped it would help them gain, or increase, their experiential and practical knowledge of guided inquiry. Guided inquiry has a cyclical nature to it so it aligned with the iterative nature of collaborative action research (Armstrong & Moore, 2004).

**Setting.** The setting of this study was an urban school division, in a large city in Canada. The school division has 11,000 students attending thirty-four schools in a very diverse section of the urban center. The population is culturally, socio-economically, and academically diverse. The research for this study was conducted in a middle years school with four grade seven/eight teachers who met the criteria for participation.

**Criteria for participants as co-researchers.** Co-researchers needed to be middle years classroom teachers who taught the four core subjects to the same group of students. The teachers
needed to be interested in implementing an inclusive, integrated, inquiry approach to their classrooms. The study could be the first time a teacher adopted an inquiry approach, or it could be viewed as way of enhancing what they already do. Teachers designated a chunk of teaching time each day to do the inquiry unit. They willingly opened their classrooms so that I could immerse myself in the culture and community of the classroom for ten months. They willingly committed the time and energy needed for a ten-month project.

**Student participants.** All students (with parental permission) who were enrolled in the classrooms of the participant teachers were asked to be participants in the study. Parental consent and student assent were collected prior in the month of October. Approximately 75% of the students became participants in the study.

**Data Collection.** Typical data collection producers of a qualitative study were engaged: interviews, field notes, observations, online surveys, group meetings, a student focus group, and document analysis (McMillan, 2008).

The research questions informed the type of data that was collected. Table 1 was created to delineate which could support the research questions. Data was collected separately during the winter and spring term within each classroom using the same methods. Themes that emerge from data collected from each term will be compared and contrasted.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Data Applicable to Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) How effective was the pedagogical planner in unifying the tenets of the</td>
<td>• Interview transcripts</td>
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<td>specific instructional strategies? How was effectiveness measured?</td>
<td>• Evaluation rubrics</td>
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<td>• Field notes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Work samples of students</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Group discussion notes</td>
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<td>2) How did the pedagogical planner impact the planning and instruction of</td>
<td>• Interview transcripts</td>
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<td>middle-years teachers?</td>
<td>• Classroom observations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Field notes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Group discussion notes</td>
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<td>3) What were middle-years students’ responses to the unit planned with the</td>
<td>• Exit slips</td>
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<td>pedagogic planner?</td>
<td>• SurveyPlanet for students</td>
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<td>• Observations</td>
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<td>• Field notes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Student work samples</td>
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<td>4) Were all middle-years students able to successfully achieve the curricular</td>
<td>• Work samples</td>
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<td>outcomes as their teachers used the pedagogic planner? If not why not??</td>
<td>• Assessment rubrics</td>
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<td>5) Did following the inclusive pedagogic guiding principles assist the teachers</td>
<td>• Interview transcripts pre and post</td>
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<td>to approach their classroom differently? If so, how? If not, why?</td>
<td>• implementation of planner</td>
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<td>• Groups discussion notes</td>
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<td>• SurveyPlanet for teachers</td>
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<td>6) Were teachers able to remove barriers to students learning, following the</td>
<td>• Interview transcripts</td>
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<td>guiding principles? If so, how? If not, why not?</td>
<td>• Observations</td>
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<td>• Groups discussion notes</td>
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<td>• SurveyPlanet for students</td>
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<td>7) How did the students respond to a guided inquiry approach to learning?</td>
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<td>8) How did the students respond to a guided inquiry approach to learning?</td>
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Data Analysis. McMillan (2008) outlined a method of organizing data in two broad categories. He suggested that qualitative data was either emic or etic. Emic data is data gathered from participants in their own words, etic data is the researchers representation of the data that occurred during data analysis. I will use this as one of the first methods of dividing the data.

In qualitative research the researcher is looking for themes that emerge out of the data. Baumfield, Hall and Wall (2008) offered some tips for researchers as they analyze the data: 1) remember, you are trying to answer your research questions, 2) keep a well detailed analysis log as you begin to read through the data collected, 3) record any “hunches” you have about themes as you read and re-read the data, 4) be careful not to have a preconceived notion of what the data will reveal, and 5) conclusions are stronger when they can be validated (pp. 6-8).

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) agreed that the researcher should not be afraid of speculating and, to keep notes of all speculations. They also encouraged a researcher to spend time alone with the data before talking over the findings with anyone else. In their judgment if the researcher talks ideas over to quickly it may “hinder analysis.” Their final tip was to not be afraid of making copies of the data working copies that can be written on, highlighted, and basically “covered with lines and notations.” Recording you initial thoughts and questions is a key to seeing themes emerge from the data.

As the researcher is reading and making notes on the data, a coding system needs to be established. Codes are developed to help sort out the qualitative data. There are different types of codes that can be used. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggested creating codes for: a) setting and or context, b) definition of the situation, c) perspectives held by participants, d) ways the participants think about people and objects, e) process codes, f) activity codes, g) event codes, h) strategy codes, i) relationship and social structure codes, j) narrative codes, and k) methods.
The list presented by Bogdan and Biklen (2007) is not an exhaustive list, they suggested that as the researcher begins reading through the data he or she should begin to develop a coding system that does not exceed 50 codes. I plan on using a coding system for the qualitative data I will collect. The qualitative data will consist of: a) interview transcripts, b) observations, c) field notes, d) reflection journals, e) group discussion notes, and f) work samples collected for portfolios (McMillan, 2008).

Once the qualitative data has been collated and coded, emergent themes will be looked for within the codes as they are continuously analyzed and synthesized. I have opted to use a computerized program called NVivo to assist with my data collection. This program will allow me to follow and implement many of the suggestions and ideas noted above.

**Credibility and transferability of data.** Credibility is an important aspect of a qualitative inquiry such as a collaborative action research study. Creswell and Miller (2000) suggested that a qualitative researcher consider their own research lens when identifying criteria for credibility. A research lens is a viewpoint the researcher establishes to ensure credibility.

For example, the lead researcher in a collaborative action research study determines what length of time is required for prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field so that good themes or categories will emerge from the data. I immersed myself in the school for ten months. The longer a researcher can stay in the field “the more the pluralistic perspectives will be heard from the participants and the better understanding of the context of participant views” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 128).

Spending prolonged periods of time in the field, a researcher is able to provide rich, thick descriptions that include “abundant concrete detail” about the setting and environment where
they study is taking place (Tracy, 2010, p. 843). Through writing with vivid detail the researcher establishes credibility as the reader may be transported or located in a situation that connects them to some aspect of the study. The reader may feel a connection to the participants or the situation being described (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

To illustrate data’s complexity, researchers are advised to show, meaning that they provide enough detail that readers may come to their own conclusion about the scene. This is contrasted from the author telling the reader what to think. Showing is rhetorically more difficult and usually requires more words than telling. (Tracy, 2010, p. 843).

A third lens the researcher can use to help establish credibility is using data collected by and from the participants in the study. “The qualitative paradigm assumes that reality is socially constructed and it is what participants perceive it to be” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 125). The lead researcher determines how much data and what data will be collected from participants. The lead researcher also determines what process will be used to include participant data.

In collaborative action research the participants are considered co-researchers so all levels of their data collection will be included in the analysis process. The act of collaboration is in itself a form of credibility. Creswell and Miller (2000) identified that having participants become co-researchers they are involved in all aspects of the study, which adds “further credibility to [final] narrative accounts” of the study (p. 128).

In this study member checking was attempted. I was unable to get feedback from the teachers about the transcripts of our interviews. After several reminders via email and in person I stopped asking for it. Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified member checking as perhaps the most important step in establishing credibility so it is unfortunate I did not get any feedback from the teachers. I will attempt to complete this step with the final interviews and as I send them a
synopsis of my conclusions.

Triangulation will be used to show credibility as data will be collected and analyzed from various sources such as: observations, interviews, surveys, ongoing group and individual meeting notes, field notes, rubric assessments, and student work samples. Relying on multiple sources of information for emerging themes enhances credibility in data analysis (Creswell, 2007).

Another form of credibility that was included in this study was identification of researcher bias. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2006), a qualitative researcher attempts to “objectively study the subjective states of [his or her] subjects” (p. 37). However in a collaborative action research study the adult participants would not be considered subjects, as they are co-researchers. McMillan (2008) suggested that researcher bias in an action research study should include an identification of the researchers motivation for conducting the study as well as the anticipate level of researcher involvement. He purported that “the more the researcher is involved in doing an intervention and obtaining information, the greater the opportunity for experimenter bias” (p. 339). In order to enhance credibility around researcher bias comprehensive notes have been maintained about every aspect of my involvement in the study.

The final method of creating credibility used was the development of an audit trail (Creswell & Miller, 2000). “An audit trail is established by researchers documenting the inquiry process through journaling and memoing, keeping a research log of all activities, developing a data collection chronology, and recording data analysis procedures” (p. 128). I have created and maintained a research log throughout the ten months of the study. Along with helping establish credibility, an audit trail promotes the trustworthiness of the study. Creswell and Miller suggested that the research log be included in the appendices of the final study document, and or made available to thesis committee members. I will make my research log available to all
committee members.

Transferability is a term used in qualitative research, it is “achieved when readers feel as though the story of the research overlaps with their own situation and they intuitively transfer the research to their own action” (Tracy, 2010, p. 845). Researchers can create transferability through the use of the deep, rich, descriptions, and by writing in a way that is accessible and inviting to the reader.

According to Polit and Beck (2010), “the main work of transferability … is done by the readers and consumer of research” (p. 1453). The reader of a study needs to determine which findings they could apply to another setting and how. The reader is the one who “transfers” the knowledge he or she has gained from the study. Polit and Beck (2010) pointed out that transferability was similar to the concept of “proximal similarity” developed by Donald Campbell (1986). “Within the proximal similarity model, researchers and consumers envision which contexts are more or less like the one in the study” (Polit and Beck, p. 1453). The more thick and rich the descriptions of the study are, the easier it is for a reader to determine if the study is similar to other studies or not. Therefore, my goal is to provide as rich and thick a description as I can of the actions taken during the study and of the subsequent data findings.

The methods that I have and will continue to utilize as the study comes to an end have been clearly outlined. During my presentation I spent time reflecting on the process to date. Below is a summation of that reflection.

**Personal Journey**

As I reflected on the benefits, challenges, criticisms and recommendations of Collaborative Action Research and my journey over the last ten months I realized that many of the points I included in my original chapter were accurate. Keeping in mind that I have not
completed or begun to analyze my data, I can comment on a few of these points:

- we developed a positive collaborative relationship
- we spent time reflecting on our teaching practice
- we were committed to the project for the entire ten months
- we challenged each others thinking
- we developed a way of managing stress
- I endeavored to be a skillful communicator, sometimes I was more successful than others
- I think at times I have been the dominant voice in the group
- the data collected will not be generalizable due to the specific location and size of the study, but will hopefully be transferable

I had been reflecting on a single word I could use to sum up the year, for my presentation. The word that resonated with me was - dance. The last ten months have felt very much like a dance. With constant movement back and forth as the five of us navigated schedules, meetings, discussions, and communication. I tried to step forward and sometimes lead and I tried to step backwards and let the four teachers take the lead. The challenge of leading and following has been real and sometimes tricky to navigate. As our relationships have developed I think the ability to anticipate each other’s steps has improved somewhat. I think we have all learnt something new this year. Something we can be proud of like a new dance routine, but something that can continue to improve.

As we developed and honed the “dance” this year I have been the leader, follower, coach, prompter, observer, participant, interviewer, note-taker, photographer, interpreter, collaborator, teacher, and guide. I have become a bricoleur, who will construct a “quiltlike bricolage” (Denzin & Lincoln 2000, p. 6) as I begin to analyze, interpret, and make sense of my data looking. I will
look for emergent themes that will subsequently be aligned with the original purpose of the study.

As I look back on the last ten months I think the research design I selected did indeed reflect who I am as a researcher. It did allow for collaboration in the development of the pedagogical planner and I think has challenged the teachers to reflect on and question their own practice. I also understand more fully just how complex and multifaceted qualitative research can be. I look forward with anticipation, as the patchwork of my data analysis becomes “quiltlike” with patches representing each of us who have participated in this journey.
References


doi: http://dx.doi.org.proxy2.lib.umanitoba.ca.proxy1.lib.umanitoba.ca/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2010.06.004


