Article 1

Discovering the value of 'not knowing'.. Using drama for a deeper understanding of pedagogy and learning

Dr. Andrew Killen and Pauline Cooney

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Abstract

This paper is a recent drama research study completed in 2015. The focus is on the benefits for primary school teachers when they embark on developing their subject specific knowledge, engage in professional development and argues that the profession would benefit greatly from using autoethnography methodology to support them in an ever increasing challenging working environment. The paper recognises some of the current difficulties that face the profession, in Scotland and more widely. This is the first phase of our research which looks to use drama development to increase pedagogical effectiveness within drama but more widely in other curricular areas also.

Introduction

This journal article is an autoethnographic (Ellis and Bochner 2000) account of a research project, 'Using the reflective practice of drama and autoethnography to support teachers' development in an age of measurement', carried out in an urban primary school in Scotland. The two main areas of focus for our research centre on:

- The advantages of increased professional development through increasing subject awareness in drama for class teachers.
- The use of autoethnography as a suitable methodology for teacher research.

The relevance for all teachers should be the growing expectation in Scotland, and elsewhere, to engage with professional update, described by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) as:

> Long term and sustained improvement which has a real impact on the quality of children's learning will be better achieved through determined efforts to build the capacity of teachers themselves to take responsibility for their own professional development, building their pedagogical expertise and engaging with the need for change. *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Scottish Government 2011).

Professional update relates to the continuing professional development and comes at a difficult time for the profession as government policies have eaten into teachers' time and professional autonomy (Lawrence-Wilkes and Ashmore 2014). Within a wider context, target-driven instrumental process and framework have resulted in

> 'reflective practice becoming a chimera, denuded of most of its original meaning' (Bradbury et al 2010:194).

Later in this paper we will look more closely at concerns over the environment teachers are operating in, with particular reference to drama teachers, and consider the significance of autonomy for the profession. We place some emphasis on the premise that autoethnography can contribute to teacher autonomy and greater confidence. The methodology can also support the profession meet the challenges presented within the policies and pressures of professional development.

The framework of our research

Our research involved observing closely two primary school teachers' experiences of facilitating drama. One based in Primary One (four and five year olds) and the other based in Primary Seven (eleven and twelve year olds) within an urban Scottish school. The research however, is also about our development in light of the research experience and process. We do occasionally refer to teachers' reflection but it is our

own reflection and experiences that are central to the research. A feature of autoethnography is to describe and analyse the researchers' personal experience in order to understand cultural experience (Ellis et al 2011). Berger describes this sort of study as 'narrative autoethnography' (2001:509). Ellis and Bochner suggest that

> '..autoethnography provides an avenue for doing something meaningful for yourself and the world' (2000:761).

They also claim that autoethnography

> '..demands self-questioning in deeper ways and leads to a better understanding of others' (2000:738).

In particular it is this reflective nature of the methodology that assists teachers. Plato (2000:315) said 'the life without examination is no life'. Kuit et al (2001), however, refer to Ball's (1994) assertion that reflection has become more of a mantra than a model of practice. White and Gardner (2006) highlight concern over a lack of sufficient empirical research on the usefulness of reflective practice and (Fook et al 2006) argue that understanding of 'reflective practice' varies considerably within education. Reflection is hard to do effectively (Finlay 2008). When done properly reflective practice has the potential to help us

> 'make sense of the uncertainty in our workplaces'

and offer us the

> 'courage to work competently and ethically at the edge of order and chaos' (Ghaye 2000:7).

Some of the challenges facing the teaching of Drama in primary schools in Scotland

We intend this research to be our first tentative steps that will look more closely at some of the challenges facing the teaching of drama in primary schools in Scotland. Our starting point stems from our knowledge and experience that historically drama can be a subject that teachers find challenging. Teachers tend to avoid drama and it is sometimes taught poorly in primary schools. Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) reported in 1999 that,

> 'objectives are unclear; teachers lack confidence in teaching it and practice varies between classes in the same school' (NACCCE 1999:180).

Research in England has shown that primary teachers lack confidence and subject knowledge in teaching drama. The consequences for student teachers is a lack of role models and knowledgeable mentors who can support trainees in school (Abbot 2014).

There exists an overriding perception that drama is difficult to implement; that drama specialists are best placed to deliver this aspect of the curriculum. Drama in primary classrooms is seen as somewhat of an enigma. As Kitson and Spiby (1997:12) suggest, 'drama means different things for different people'. For many of our Initial Teacher Education students, and teachers more generally, drama in education is predominately the nativity play and or acting. Baldwin (2008) acknowledges that many teachers associate the subject of drama with script writing and performing. The delivery of drama within primary education appears to be varied with many students reporting that they did not observe drama being taught at all during placements. Any negative perception of the subject may be as a result of teacher insecurity and fear (Hendy and Toon 2001). The Scottish Government's (2015) Attainment Challenge increases pressures placed on them to teach core subjects. Even those who are convinced of the value of drama find it difficult to find time to teach it (Woolland 2010). Often teachers have a basic lack of understanding of the aims of drama. Hendy and Toon (2001:2) refer to practitioners thinking that one aim is to turn pupils into budding actors or that teachers require 'strong acting personal skills' to be effective. We acknowledge previous drama research in this area, Alexander (2009) and Woolland (2010) and our research looks to enhance this work, from a Scottish perspective. A more general concern, highlighted earlier, is that teachers are currently working within an environment that is challenging (Biesta and Tedder 2006). Pressures such as increasing levels of accountability have resulted in education being an 'impossible practice' (Edwards 2007:4). We will expand later, on the challenges this presents for the profession. Presently we will provide a brief explanation of the methodology of autoethnography arguing why it is suitable for teachers engaging in research and reiterating its potential to support professional development.

Methodology of Autoethnography

The principal premise of an ethnographic approach is the study of a group of people (Abbot 2014).   First and foremost, and consistent with the principles of autoethnography, we state that we are telling our story about that group of people. As autoethnographic researchers we   are not declaring a scientific truth but rather providing, as described by Dyson (2007), a creative construction of a reality, which we have identified. The ethnographic process is similar to the explorative drama process, in which participants interpret a fictitious story through the lens of their own personal stories and cultural experiences (Booth and Barton, 2000). Features such as those described, we will argue, result in the methodology being suitable for researching drama practice. Booth and Barton (2000), tell us that during the explorative drama process, students interpret the fictitious story through the lens of their own personal stories and experiences.

Greene (1995:14) suggests that 'any encounter with actual human beings who are trying to learn how to learn' involves creative approaches on the part of both teachers and of those they teach. There are intrinsic similarities between the

methodologies of ethnographic research and process drama: at the heart lies a story. In order to engage in, explore, respond and reflect upon our stories meaningfully, teachers working in drama and researchers both require features highlighted by Smith,

'patience, quietness, openness, sensitivity' (Smith 2013: 43).

The journal

One product from the process of autoethnographic research is a written journal that describes and analyses an experience (Ellis et al 2011). This ethnographic tool provided the structure to our research story.

The following journal extract, typical of the journals the researchers kept throughout the research period, shows how reflection and other features associated with the methodology are perhaps difficult to achieve. It also substantiates some of the many challenges facing budding researchers:

> As we approach the first drama input we reflect that despite having met with Teacher A and B on a number of occasions, having completed the process of ethical approval and discussed our intentions with each other, on numerous occasions, we are both slightly apprehensive about our prospects of discovering something worthwhile during this research. Drama and autoethnography respectively, both have as significant features, fluidity and uncertainty and this probably reinforces our own uncertain mind-sets over the eventual outcome at this early stage. Our overriding emotion would best be described as one of anxiety. We have, and continue to ask ourselves, many questions:
>
> > What is the point of what we are doing?
> > Is this original research or a regurgitation of previous drama research?
> > What are we actually doing that is new?
> > Do we have the time to complete this within our existing hectic schedules?
> > Is this research too wide or not wide enough?
>
> These were just some of the doubts that seem to preoccupy our thoughts and permeate this stage of the research process. Despite these and other concerns, we both agree that there is something exciting about this research. In addition there is perhaps a feeling of having some control and autonomy: this is our plan and something we want to do, it has not, as yet, been too onerous. Our shared belief in the importance of drama is a significant help here and acts as catalyst to continue.
> (Reflective journal; analytic notes - January 2015)

The extract above highlights concerns we had at the early stage of our research. Will we be able to engage effectively with the three main themes and purpose of our research? Can we substantiate the advantages of increased professional development through increasing subject awareness? Can we convince others that

autoethnography can be an appropriate methodology for the profession to adopt and that further moves towards professional development will benefit teachers? There were significant anxieties but also a strong sense that we could use our experiences throughout the research to support our research argument. The use of journals and extracts, as above, is a significant feature of autoethnography. The journal entry above highlights our thoughts, at that moment, but the completion of a journal has other cathartic advantages. Janesick (1999) takes an interesting view of the connoisseurship of diary writing, claiming it can increase our understanding of our own thinking. Many teachers currently engage in some form of recording of their daily practice through diary or journal entries. Will there, for instance, be a shift in understanding of the power and potential of drama for the teachers? Will the teachers experience, as Neelands (2000:54) suggests, that

> 'true art of teaching lies in the complex tempering of the planned within the lived'.

The telling of a story
Another feature of autoethnography is the telling of a story. This is our story and an interpretation of our experiences throughout the research period. What is of importance for researchers/teachers using autoethnography are the consequences stories produce. We ask,

> '… what kind of person does it shape me into and what new possibilities does it introduce for living my life?' (Ellis and Bochner 2000:746).

All stories, in some form, reinvent, omit, and revise and we would argue that academics and educators by their nature, training and motivation, will differ in opinion. Arendt's (1973:107) conception of storytelling is an activity which

> 'Reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it'.

Interestingly, Booth (1985:198) advocates that the practice of drama

> 'encourages children not to be satisfied with immediate, simplistic solutions but to keep exploring, peeling away the layers that cloud the meaning'.

A challenge for teachers here is to facilitate a learning environment that will 'awaken' pupils to 'what they wonder about the story' (Booth 1985:198). This exploration demands that teachers ask deeper and richer questions for dramatic understanding rather than for production or assessment reasons (Miller & Saxton 2004). Researchers, teachers and pupils were taking a leap into the unknown by engaging in the same process of raising questions which consider universal issues to gain deeper understanding and meaning (Miller & Saxton 2004). One view, expressed in the journal, was a feeling of satisfaction that we had some control and autonomy. We will discuss later that too often teachers have the opposite experience. We encourage teachers to consider now and throughout, the possibility that

autoethnography could be a suitable vehicle for their own professional update and development.

Impact on teachers' professional development
The research project was described in the introduction as

> 'the advantages of increased professional development and subject awareness in drama for class teachers'.

We were interested here in the impact on teachers' professional development during and after the delivery of drama lessons. Smith (2013) cautions researchers to be both sensitive and flexible in their approach to the research process to make the right demands on everyone involved in the research process. When considering increased subject awareness we were mindful that primary teachers have a broad curriculum to teach and therefore our expectations were modest. Examples of what we were looking for include: increased awareness of some drama conventions, brief discussion of a few drama theorist and advice on pedagogy such as allowing children more time to develop ideas and advising teachers on how to use Teacher in Role more effectively. There were a number of issues for us to grapple with including teacher control, lack of teacher confidence and the impact of increased subject knowledge on teachers' confidence.

Our Research Method

Having completed ethical approval and come to terms with our plan of action we felt we had reached a reassuring milestone. We met with our two participant teachers and shared with them the broad purpose of our research. Within the limitations of this paper a detailed chronology of our actual research is not necessary to capture its essence. We look to describe, in broad terms each of the research areas. What follows over the next few pages is a summary of our investigation. Mostly we did not participate directly in the drama but we did speak to the teachers before, during and after inputs to gauge their knowledge and understanding of the processes.

Initial discussions with the teachers
Before starting the drama research, we often met with the participating teachers and also exchanged emails to clarify minor concerns. We did not provide prescriptive advice except to ask each teacher to use the strategy of 'Teacher in Role' (Toye and Prendiville 2000). We asked them to operate in a way, developed by Heathcote, in which spontaneous and collaborative problem-solving lay at the centre of the approach. It was important to remind the teachers that they were not performers nor were the class an audience (Morgan and Saxton 1987). We advised teachers to work within a story-based drama and encouraged them to provide children with an opportunity to direct the fictional pathways. We also encouraged the teachers to respond to the ideas of the pupils. This we felt would support collective enquiry and exploration (O'Neill 1987); a prominent feature of process drama. We were hoping that teacher and pupils would experience qualities such as, engagement, delight, and

ownership often found in drama activities (Fleming 2002). The journal entry below, similar to the previous extract, captures some of the challenges and uncertainties of the research:

> *As we reflect on the first few inputs for Primary One we are not sure how successful we will be. We realise we are asking a lot of the teachers and that they are relatively inexperienced and new to the profession. We are mindful that they are a little nervous about implementing this programme and that our presence in their classroom heightens feelings of anxiety. Teacher A has found it difficult in letting go of control during the drama lesson; she has a very effective teaching style and an excellent relationship with the class but seems uncertain or unwilling to allow children to move the drama forward as they wish. During the inputs, we have identified a number of opportunities to take the learning in a direction that the children wanted but, so far, teacher A has failed to connect with these. What is most interesting is the engagement from the children and some of their ideas to solve the 'problem' with the dragon. Ideas such as taking a medical box to help the dragon, ensuring everyone is wearing suitable clothing for climbing the mountain and fear from some about the dangers presented by the dragon, demonstrate a clear connection from the children with the context of the drama.*
> (Reflective journal; analytic notes - February 2015)

The extract above demonstrates that a teacher, who we know to be a proficient practitioner, can experience challenges with respect to what is an appropriate pedagogy to adopt. The children on the other hand are engaged fully in the drama. Children are being themselves and are

> 'functioning in whatever way the situation demands' (Bolton 1984:101).

This ability of children is not necessarily about their acting skills but rather an increased perception and growth of ideas beyond their development stage. Vygotsky (1978:102) says

> 'In play a child behaves beyond his age, above his daily behaviour; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself'.

There is a sense here also, in the actions of the children, of what could be referred to as suspension of disbelief. Children are able to move into pretend worlds, described as metaxis by Aristotle and as dual affect by Vygotsky. O'Toole (1992:98) describes such a situation as children realising that

> 'this is happening to me … I am making this happen'.

The initial challenges for the teachers
The teachers stated that drama was part of the Scottish curriculum and, as a result, had to be taught (Scottish Government 2009). How the subject was taught depended upon their individual levels of competence and confidence in the subject. The

teachers were reflective and expressed a lack of subject knowledge and adopted what Fleming (2001) refers to as a fragmented approach. Both teachers expressed, in writing and verbally, an overriding feeling that drama was difficult to implement. Both felt a sense of anxiety about using drama activities with little or no relevant training. Their lack of confidence in and understanding of educational drama practice was evident in their journals. Both recognized the 'pedagogic value of children's play' (Boulton and Ackroyd 2004:2) and wanted to take the risk by engaging in drama praxis (Taylor 2000).

A possible factor in the anxiety of teachers is the knowledge that to be more effective in drama they must create opportunities to allow children to take ownership of the unfolding story (Fleming 2001). O'Neill offers useful advice for the profession when suggesting that teachers working as co-artist (Taylor 2000) need to recognise it is a

> 'cognitively sophisticated and demanding activity' (O'Neill 1991:24).

In order to work effectively with pupils the

> 'teacher must operate from inside the process' (O'Neill 1991:25).

Kitson (1997:32) refers to Similansky (1968) and Hutt (1989) to support the accretion that

> 'enriched learning comes when the adult is working in the story alongside the children'.

Simply being present is not sufficient in drama, therefore, teacher involvement is fundamental (Kitson 1997). One way in which teachers can work within the story is to adopt the strategy, referred to earlier, of 'Teacher in Role'. This is when the teacher presents a set of attitudes with conviction as if they are someone else (Baldwin 2004). This was a new experience for both teachers and it caused them great uncertainty. Teacher in Role can be challenging and demands, we would argue, that teachers listen in a different way to their pupils whilst engaging in dramatic contexts. A dialogue requires teachers to listen to and tap into pupils' make believe worlds and construct ways of working. When executed effectively the teacher is able to guide pupil learning by raising possibilities and as a result deepening children's learning experiences.

The value of 'Not Knowing'
Perhaps it is the immediacy and responsive responsibility of working in role that was the source of anxiety for the teachers (Taylor 2000). There is an expectation that teachers are able to control their class. Often during our observation the teachers' sense of the need to be in control was palpable. It appeared to us that, they felt that by engaging in the way we suggested, they would lose control of their class. The teachers did not, after all, know what responses the pupils would provide. 'Not knowing' where the pupils would *take* the drama was a source of concern for the

teachers involved in the research. However, as the research period progressed and teachers become more confident, they embarked on constructing a story with their pupils. At this stage both teacher and pupils began to interpret meaning and the teachers gradually appeared to experience a sense of creative engagement. Paradoxically, it was precisely this uncertainty, this 'not knowing' that gave their drama its creative potency. Booth (2005:7) notes that in drama 'everyone is a student and everyone teaches'. Surprisingly this research experience has led us to consider the value of uncertainty and of 'not knowing' in teaching and learning in drama. This was a key finding in our research. The teachers discovered that 'Teacher in Role', is much more than a strategy (O'Neill, 1985). Teacher in role introduced the teachers to a way of working which allowed them, as co-participator, to structure and guide the learning. Taking on a role allowed them to effect the dramatic action as they worked alongside the pupils, as well as providing opportunities for reflective consideration out of role (Booth 2012). Teachers stepped into a fictitious story in search of possibilities not probabilities (Booth 1995) with knowledge of learners and learning, of subject and of teaching (Burn et al 2015). The teachers, we believe, have increased their subject knowledge in drama.

Conclusions from the research

As we moved towards the end of our research, we were interested in how the teachers viewed their experiences. As we prepared to interview the teachers we were mindful that 'teachers and teacher educators are to keep the themes of transformation, openings and possibilities audible' (Greene1995:17). This research is autoethnographic but it is important that we are aware of its impact on others because that in turn informs us. We thought it necessary to consider if our claims for the research could be substantiated. One way of discovering this was from making sense of the teachers' views of how their participation in the research impacted on them.

> *The filming of the teachers at the end of the drama research (having given them six weeks to reflect) has enabled us to feel more confident about the objectives of our research. The positive reaction from the participants resulted in a weight being lifted from us. We believe that engagement in this research has provided teachers with professional development. We have observed teachers increasing their self-esteem. Both teachers claimed to have found their participation enjoyable and provided thoughtful accounts of how the drama research has impacted on them. Comments included, 'children were in control and had opportunities to explore, I now have more confidence to break down barriers when teaching drama, children surprised me because they reacted differently than in other curricular areas and every child appeared to be engaged in the drama'. The teachers felt more confident regarding their ability to teach drama effectively. We reflect that the success of this research was never intended to be defined as teachers and researchers 'feeling good' about the completed process; success is more difficult to define. One possibility of success might be acknowledged through both researchers being encouraged to continue working with teachers to explore different uses of drama techniques. We are more confident about encouraging teachers within the profession to engage in professional development. We anticipate*

that such engagement might ultimately support teachers in coping with the challenges that appear to blight the profession presently.
(Reflective journal; analytic notes - April 2015)

The journal entry above reveals a sense of relief because we consider that the participants experienced significant benefit from participating in the drama research. We observed teachers increasing their autonomy through their increased confidence to engage in professional development and from increasing subject awareness.

General challenges and pressures facing the profession

Our focus now switches to some of the challenges and pressures that are all too apparent in the profession at this moment. Consideration will be given to 'Managerial Dismemberment' of the profession (Barber 2002). The author argues that there appears to be a disempowerment of the profession which has resulted in their removal from decision making processes and a general increase in accountability and control. These pressures are placed against the need for teachers to discover ways of gaining increased levels of autonomy and self-esteem to combat the negative effects of such pressures. Begley and White (2003:391) refer to

'the importance of higher levels of self-esteem to cope with workplace stress'.

Teachers now have greater demands placed upon them than ever before with an apparent crisis within the profession (Avis 2003). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2006:670) suggest:

'..given today's political context, where much of the decision making and discussion regarding teachers occur outside the walls of the classroom, the teacher's role is to implement the research findings of 'outside' experts who are considered alien to the everyday happenings in classrooms.'

Significant challenges remain for the profession especially in light of the claims that teachers are at the bottom of the 'implementation pyramid' Bottery and Wright (2000). There is a stark reality for teachers:

'autonomy and trust have been replaced with additional forms of accountability and control' Olssen et al (2004:186).

The significance of agency in teacher professionalism
Another reality is that 'teachers find themselves in trying times' and that increased accountability threatens to undermine their agency (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009:5). The significance of agency should be considered in light of the suggestion that it is linked to having voice.

'Having voice means being empowered to express oneself within a complex power space' (Barnett and di Napoli 2008:6).

It is precisely this feeling of empowerment described above that we consider could have significant benefits for today's beleaguered profession. In the past 30 years, successive governments have moved the concepts of an autonomous profession towards greater regulation (Forde et al 2006). Woods and Jeffery (2002:97) refer to

'an assault on teacher autonomy … leaving teachers with a feeling of powerlessness'.

One possible solution to these challenges described above is through Forde et al's (2006) claim for teachers to reclaim the agenda. Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (2006:13) view that teachers have been removed from the decision making process and that

'sharing good practice has become synonymous with standardisation and central control'.

Within such an environment teachers' professionalism appears to be undermined. Professionalism, described as having the following characteristics where,

'practitioners educated to a particular standard, and were often in possession of knowledge or skills which were not then available to the wider community' Humes (1986:20).

When considering teacher professionalism, agency and feelings of self-efficacy are crucial factors as is

'our ability to; set goals, think strategically, think optimistically, persevere in the face of challenge and be resilient when faced with adversity and stress' Bandura (2000:75).

Avis (2003:321) suggests that notions of teacher professionalism, where the teacher was granted autonomy within the classroom are now 'untenable'. Autonomy is an important facet of teacher professionalism. Perhaps it is too easy for managerialist policy to ignore affective components associated with teachers' identity, including self-esteem, self-belief and professional self-confidence. It is necessary to record that there are many barriers that will counter attempts to move the profession towards increased autonomy, confidence and self-esteem. We have confidence that the personal and professional reflection associated with autoethnographic methodology, raises the possibility of enhancing teachers' professional role.

The value of autoethnography

We argue that a profession that is more aware of autoethnography, as a research methodology, raises the prospects for greater autonomy and

> 'the right to negotiate, and to negotiate from a position of strength' Forde et al (2006:15).

We hesitate to make too many grand claims for the methodology. We do state, however, that autoethnography, if it is to be effective for practitioners, would require to, at least, alleviate managerialist pressures on teachers. It could provide an antidote that will result in a profession enjoying increased levels of self-esteem and autonomy: a profession that is better equipped to teach with increased effectiveness.

Autoethnography provides an additional platform for teachers to reflect on their practice and reflection is a crucial element of professional development. Sachs argues that at its strongest, reflective practice moves beyond the individual level. Stating this allows a move towards a critique of governmental policy and practice and a possibility

> 'to empower the individual towards activism and a questioning of the status quo' (Cited in Larrivee 2000:296).

Being a reflective practitioner can provide a feeling of empowerment. Reflection can enable teachers to find out more about themselves through a process of critical thinking. It can develop in teachers a questioning stance as well as an ability to solve and overcome problems (Lawrence-Wilkes and Ashmore 2014). There is the danger of reflection being used, by those in power, to change practice and our professional identity towards a specific model of being a *good* practitioner. Reflection can be one aspect of professional development that allows teachers to have a more strategic view of their challenges. The present scenario is one where the profession are mostly unreflective about their teaching practice and tend to accept the status quo. Mezirow (1991) suggests reflection can help us become more aware of challenges that we currently fail to deal with effectively. Brockbank and McGill (2007) argue articulation of our ideas to others is central to the development of an open, critical perspective. Autoethnography can be a methodology that will support teachers' efforts in moving towards a more reflective and less passive profession.

Reflection and engaging in professional learning is, however, an additional workload and impacts on you physically and professionally**.** The journal extract below epitomises one aspect of the onerous nature of such work:

> *Very occasionally we would write our journal entries at my desk in university or a few days after an event. The journal was the most important tool for recording and reflecting on our experiences. From these initial recordings we*

would contemplate what issues and themes would frame the advice for the teachers and our focus for the writing of our research. There were difficulties with respect to the time it took to complete journals and uncertainty over the appropriate length for each entry. In addition, on reflection at times early journals were too introspective rather than issues that might have a broader importance.
(Reflective journal; analytic notes - May 2015)

Reflection on the above extract provides a sharp reminder of the time-consuming nature of research. The extract resonates with Murrow's view that,

'The obscure we see eventually. The completely obvious, it seems, takes longer' (Jargodzk and Potter 2001:5).

The journal also shows that there is a danger of reflection being too insular. It is, however, necessary to be mindful of Janesick's (2000) thoughts that such practice allows

'..for stepping into ones' inner mind and reaching further into interpretations of behaviours and beliefs and words we write' (cited in Ellis and Bochner 2000:745).

The journal highlights the complexity of writing within this methodology, the challenges and benefits of reflection.

Conclusion

Having considered issues surrounding professional development, increased subject awareness, some challenges facing the profession and some aspects of autoethnography, we now draw towards a conclusion. In the introduction of this paper we referred to the growing demands for professional update as highlighted below through the GTCS (2015:6):

'Developing the Enquiring Profession Developing the notion of the enquiring profession and what it means to be an enquiring professional.'

Of crucial importance here is how the profession embraces notions of professional development. For some it might be viewed as a form of managing people because of the need of a workforce that is more flexible. One consequence is the creation of a malleable worker, who is required to continually train and retrain. Sennett (1998:46) describes the promotion of flexibility as

'fundamental to the global economy in transforming the meaning of work'.

Bourdieu (1998) suggests this process is better defined as a 'flexploitation' managerial strategy through its reliance on uncertainty and insecurity within

employment and indeed welfare provision. Olssen et al (2004: 189) suggest that in Foucauldian terms, this

> 'flexibility represents a micro-technology of power that sustains relations of governmentality'.

What appears to be an ever-growing expectation of professional development should, however, be viewed as a positive opportunity for the profession. Our assertion is that such an environment affords the opportunity to engage in research. We reiterate that the experience and reflective nature of an autoethnographic research process may ultimately be beneficial for the profession. This research also looks to make a case for teachers to increase their subject knowledge in drama. It also suggests that teachers can use this experience to increase their pedagogical awareness and over time begin feeling more confident and less disempowered.

Loughran (2013:120) argues 'reasoning underpins practice'. Teachers in our study were encouraged to engage in reflection and discussion about their practice with colleagues. The alternative to such teaching is private practice, which has a danger for the profession of being

> 'fallacious reasoning leading to ineffective practice' (Westrick and Morris 2016: 159).

Wallace and Priestly (2011:359) recognise that,

> 'strong professional communities can foster pedagogical change'.

Teacher-led collaboration is a shared experience in which teachers can contribute their ideas and opinions. We encourage teachers to make 'pedagogical reasoning visible' (Loughran 2013: 130). A profession aware of theorization of teaching practice in such a way as

> 'to know and be able to articulate the what, how and why of teaching and to do so through the very experiences of teaching and learning about teaching' Loughran (2006:14).

The Standard for Registration: mandatory requirements for registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (2012) cites collaboration as being a part of professional engagement and professional learning. We look to develop this premise through this drama research.

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