

Professional Development through Reflection on Teacher Cognition

March 12<sup>th</sup> (M), at Dialogue House, International Christian University

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# Reflective Practice: Its evolving concepts to capture the “real” of teaching

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# Outline

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- ▶ 1. Background of the **conceptual confusion** with **definitions**
- ▶ 2. **Common features** of reflection
- ▶ 3. Viewing reflection through **different epistemological lenses**
- ▶ 4. View of **experience** from the phenomenological perspective
- ▶ 5. **Example** of analyses
- ▶ 6. Conclusion: **Evolving concepts** of reflective practice

# Stigmatic ambiguity of reflection

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- ▶ conceptual confusion surrounding reflective practice” (Kinsella, 2009)
- ▶ “vague slogan” (McLaughlin, 1999)
- ▶ subsequent unsureness of practitioners to know whether their practices are properly done, and amongst of all this, unsureness about what it is to ‘reflect’ (Rodgers, 2002).

What is the reason of this ambiguity and what is it that makes an understandable definition difficult. Or if it is even possible after all?

# Definition of reflection

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***A systematic process of making meaning of experiences through inquiry, description, and analysis in view of better understanding. (Tamai, 2014)***

# Definitions of reflection

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	Kemmis & McTaggart (1988, p.13)	Johns (2013, p.2)
<b>Context (Where)</b>	Educational research, curriculum	Nursing
<b>Sources (On what)</b>	Recorded action in observation	Self and experience.
<b>Purposes/ goals (Why)</b>	To make sense of <i>processes</i> . To evaluate <b>experiences</b> to know the effects and ways of proceeding. To build more vivid <b>picture of life</b> and <b>work</b> in the situation, <b>constraints</b> on action and of what might be possible.	To <b>realize one's vision and understanding</b> why things are as they are. → to gain new <i>insight into self</i> . Develop practical wisdom and one's <i>vision</i> as praxis.
<b>Methods (How)</b>	Take account of a variety of <b>perspectives</b> in the social situations and <b>comprehend the issues and circumstances</b> in which they arise. Aided by group reflection. <b>Descriptive.</b>	Through conflict of contradiction, <b>commitment to realize one's vision and understanding</b> why things are as they are. <b>Guidance is necessary for reflection.</b>

Bolton (2014, p.7)	Dawson & Kelin (2014, p.28-29)	Rodgers (2002)
Nursing	Drama & theater arts	Education/ Language teaching
<i>Events: What happened, what they thought or felt, who, when.</i>	<i>Experience.</i>	<i>Experience.</i>
To <b>know who and what we are, why we act as we do</b> , and how we can be much more effective.	Development of <b>awareness of the choices</b> in situations and recognize how to achieve the designed results.	To move a learner from one experience into the next with <b>deeper understanding</b> of its relationships with and <b>connections to other experiences and ideas</b> . To make continuity of learning possible, and ensure the progress of the individual and ultimately, society.
By bringing <b>experiences</b> into focus from as many angles as possible: Journal writing, <b>critical support with a supervisor or group</b> . Study theory and texts from wider space.	<b>Collaborative work</b> or the process: intentional <b>dialogue with self or others</b> . <b>Unpack experience</b> , examine from different perspectives, apply experience to action and apply past to present.	<b>Systematic, rigorous, disciplined way</b> of thinking, with its roots in <b>scientific inquiry</b> . <i>Reflection needs to happen in</i> <b>community</b> , in interaction with others. Importance of attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and of others.

# Dewey

- ▶ Active, persistent, and **careful consideration of any belief** or supposed form of **knowledge** in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends (1910, p.6).
- ▶ To reflect is to **look back over what has been done** so as to **extract the net meanings** which are the capital stock for intelligent dealing with further experiences. (1938, p.87)

## Schon (1983)

A practitioner's reflection can serve as a **corrective to overlearning**. Through reflection he can surface and **criticize the tacit understandings** that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice, and can make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness which he may allow himself to experience.

Practitioners do **reflect on their knowing-in-practice**.



## Common features among reflection across fields

- 1) reflection is an act *directed toward experience*.
- 2) reflection is a means to examine the practice *grounded in contexts*.
- 3) the foremost purpose of reflection is in the *understanding of experience*.

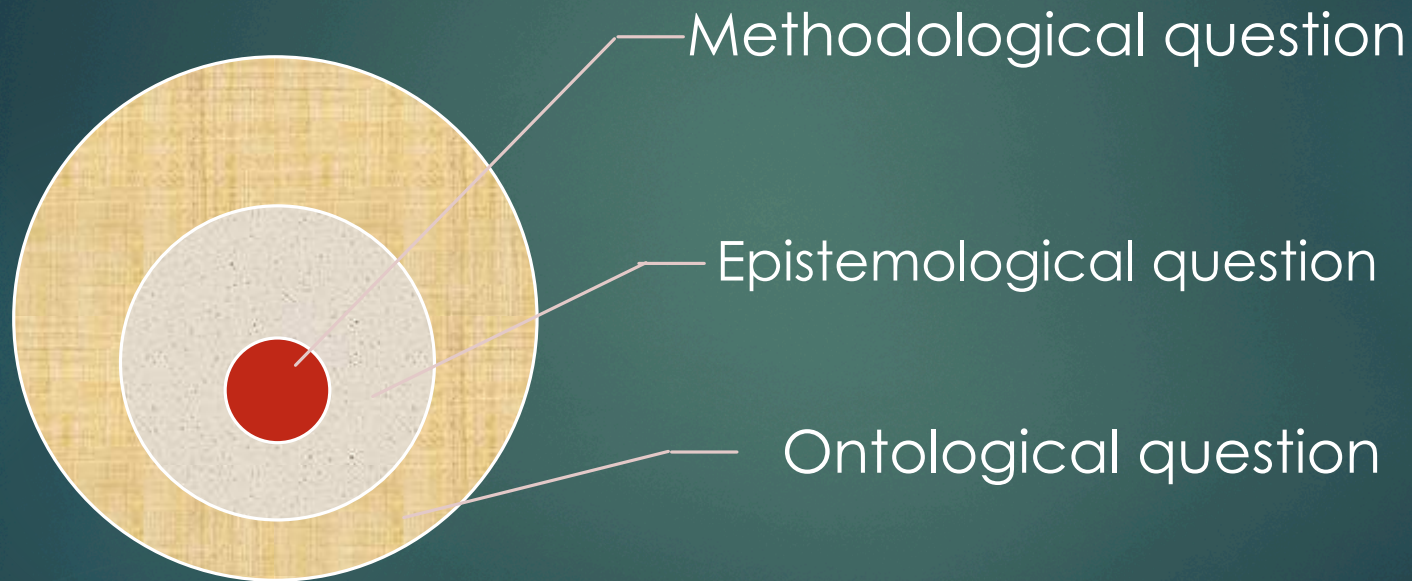
- 4) reflection is a *continual process* and *open for change*.
- 5) reflection is a *dialogic* and *collaborative* work.
- 6) reflection aims at examining *the basis of thoughts*.

reflection is a dialogic process of self-knowing through probing the meaning of experience with a view to examining the basis of thoughts



**Need of versatile epistemological lenses to capture different features of experiences:  
Teaching event in the classroom, caring in the clinical nursing**

# 3 inquiry paradigms (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p108)

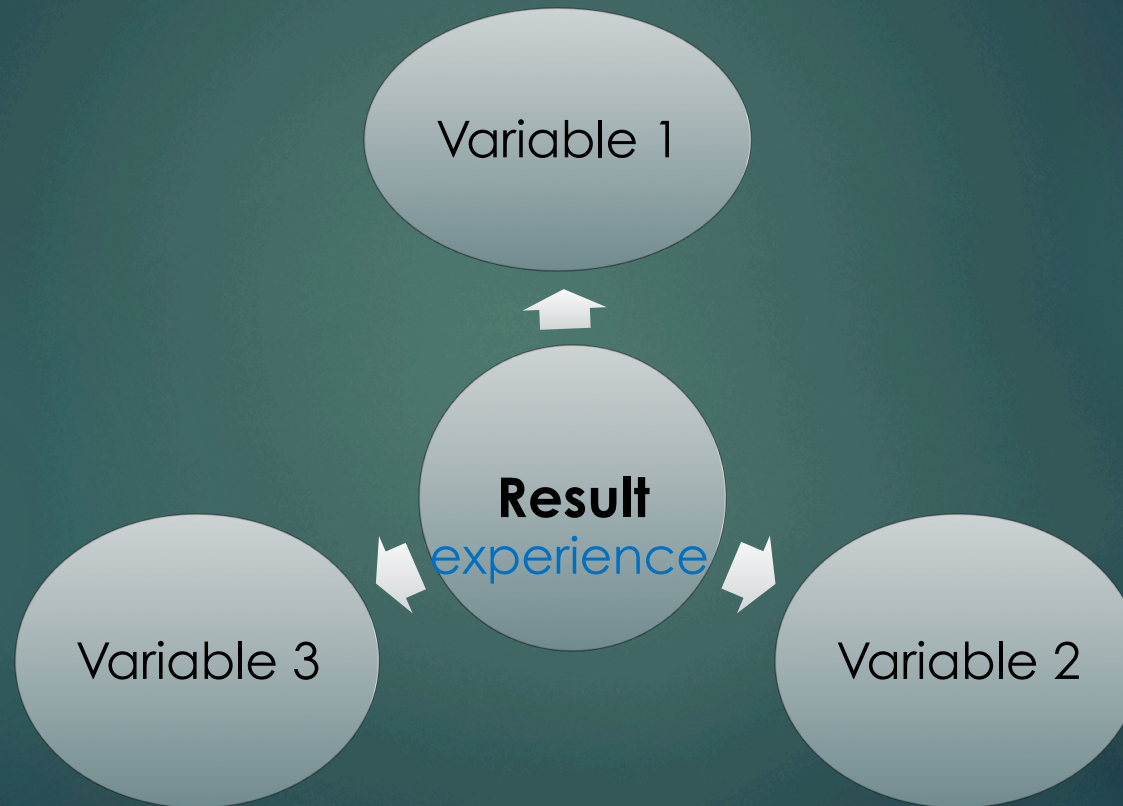


Conceptual image by Tamai

## Epistemological lenses

- ▶ Positivism
- ▶ Experientialism
- ▶ Phenomenology
- ▶ Critical perspective
- ▶ Cultural perspective
- ▶ Narrative
- ▶ Process

# 0. Positivistic account



# 1. Experiencialism

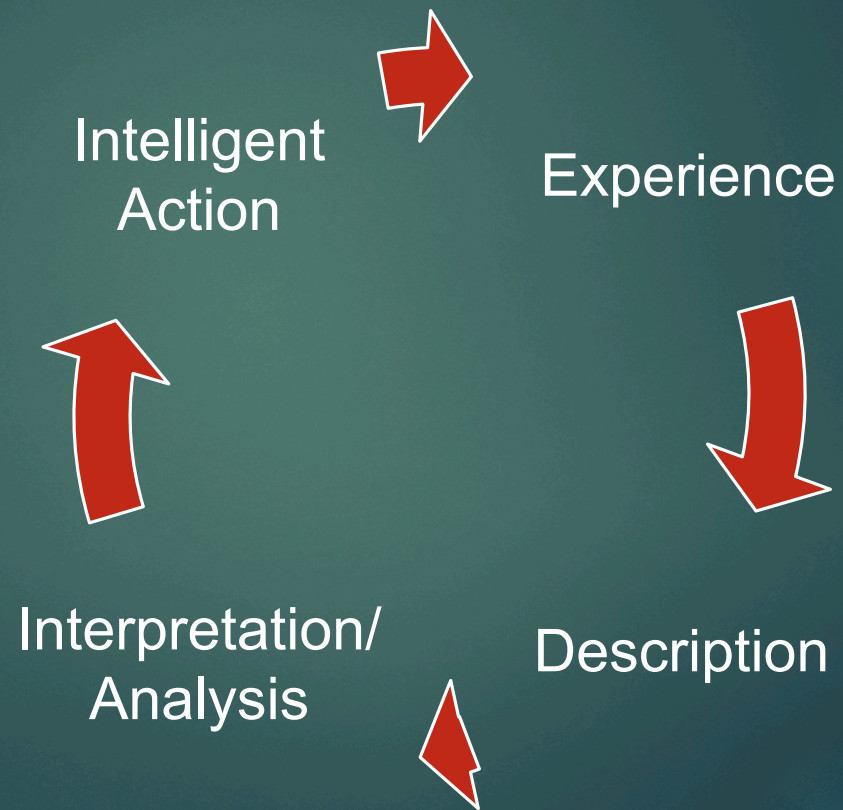
## 1) Experience as a source of learning

I assume that amid all uncertainties there is one permanent frame of reference: namely, the organic connection between **education and personal experience**" (Dewey, 1938, p.25)

# Reflective Practice (Rodgers, 2002)

based on Dewey's model

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## 2) Experience as an object of 'reflection'

- ▶ “experience and experiment are not self-explanatory ideas. Rather, their meaning is part of the problem to be explored” (Dewey, 1938, p.25).



Reflection is a means directed to experience to examine its possible meaning.

### 3) Experience as *continuity* and *interaction* Dewey (1938)

- ▶ ‘Continuity’ implicates that experience has a time domain as its essential quality and its meaning needs to be considered with historical context in view. → **Temporality**
- ▶ ‘Interaction’, *means* ‘lateral.’ Experience has earned the notion of social and situational context as well as spatial. → **Situatedness & Spaciality**

## 2. Phenomenology's 5 paths to experience

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- ▶ **First** : an attempt to describe the basic *structure* of human experience and *understanding* from a *first person* point of view.
- ▶ **Second** is how it looks at experience. Focus is on the *meaning*. But “phenomenologist,, attempts to understand what the behavior means to *the persons being studied..*” (Wiersma and Jurs, 2005, p.243)

**Third** is the process of *phenomenological reduction* as a fundamental and primary method for us to look at experience. → a sort of 'unlearning practice' to free us from any judgmental viewing of experiences in the world. ( Tamai, 2016)

**Fourth**, a unique take on experience: “**life-world.**”

the lived world as experienced in everyday situations and relations. (Manen, 1990). Merleau-Ponty (2014) refers to it as: “The world is not what I think, but **what I live** (p. lxxxiv).

The boundaries of the cultural bridge blur inside the children’s worlds,,the issue becomes not how children make a transition from the home world to “the” social world, but they find themselves amidst the diverse, potentially **contradiction-ridden worlds of the classroom.** (Dyson, 1993, p.18)

## Fifth is the concept of intersubjectivity

- ▶ **Intersubjectivity** is always produced in the relationships that we develop with others. In this primary “we-relations,” persons mutually occupy a time and place. Their actions are geared with respect to a common system of relevance.
- ▶ ...Schutz noted that we imaginatively construct these relations **not only with our contemporaries** (whether known or unknown) but also with our **predecessors**. (Lindolf and Taylor, 2002, p.35)

## Applying the concept of intersubjectivity to the classroom context,

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- ▶ the lived meaning of a learner's experience needs to be analyzed in relation with others: teachers, friends, family members, their community and their previous experiences in the past as well. → **situatedness**
- ▶ Co-constructive understanding of lived life does not allow one-directional viewing of experience. Need of analysis as **socially interactive process** through the interaction of our body, emotion and beliefs with open-mindedness to the past, present and the future.
- ▶ (Tamai, 2016)

### 3. Experience through power and awareness 24

- ▶ technologies of **power**, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivizing of the subject (Foucault, 1988, p.18)
- ▶ “People could not comment on their experience unless they understood how that experience was shaped by their own situatedness. They could not be free **until they realized they were unfree.**” (McNiff, 2013, p.49)



## 4. Experience through culture

- ▶ Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an **animal suspended in webs of significance** he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of **meaning**. (Geertz, 1973, p.5)
- ▶ Meaning making involves **situating encounters with the world in their appropriate cultural contexts** in order to know “what they are about.” Although meanings are “in mind,” they have their origins and their significance in the culture in which they are created. (Bruner, 1996, p.3)

## 5. Narrative as a means to tell experience as history

- ▶ “History exists in human memory but it exists only **in the story** we tell (p.9). “,,,humans are story telling animals and we halt the merciless flow of time by telling stories and live life identifying selves in the thickness of memory and description (Noye, 2009, p.18, translated by Tamai).
- ▶ “through reflection we become responsible for **our own history**, but this responsibility also comes from a **decision to which we commit our lives**” (Merleau-Ponty, 2014, p. lxxxv).

## 6. Processual perspective: dynamics of time and reflection in experience

- ▶ Dewey's emphasis on continuity → one experience is connected to the next experience for further learning so long as it is made open for a new meaning.
- ▶ Shon(1983)'s "reflection-in-action" not limiting to 'now.'  
"A practitioner's reflection-in-action may **not** be very rapid. It is bounded **by the "action-present," the zone of time in which action can still make a difference to the situation.** (p.62).

## Process than product :

Anthropology looks at culture as a *noema*: Objective and descriptive stance on culture. Phenomenological pathology looks at Culture as a *noesis*: Subjective and dynamic work to **let self talk by projecting self into the cultural life** and **letting the subject talk from inside**. Culture is a never-ending **continuous process** of generating new orders.

(Kimura, 2006. p. 435. Translated by Tamai)

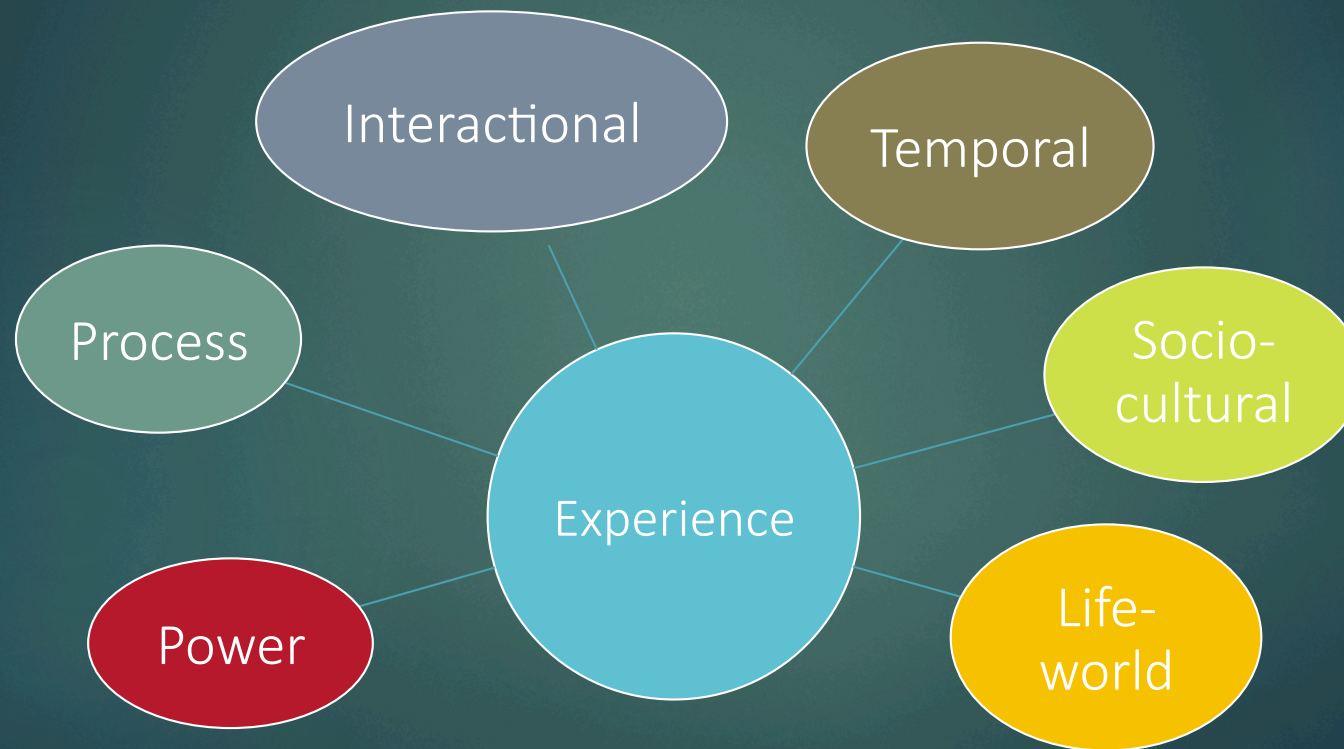
Phenomenology allows itself to be practiced and recognized as a **manner** or as a **style**, or that it exists as a **movement**, prior to having reached a full philosophical consciousness.

(Merleau-Ponty, 2014. p. lxxi)

# Aspects of experience in teaching:

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## Six dimensions of viewing experience

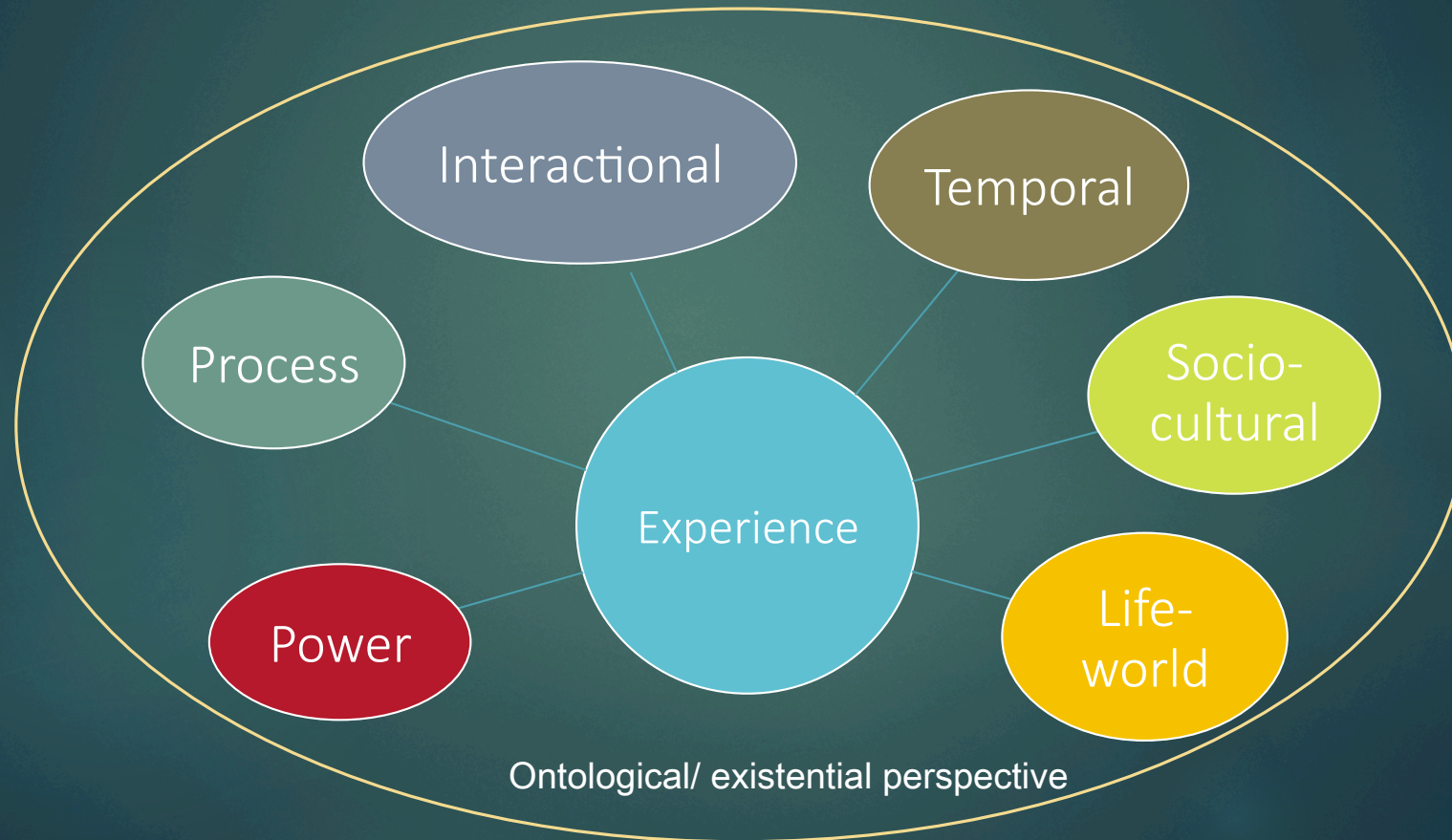


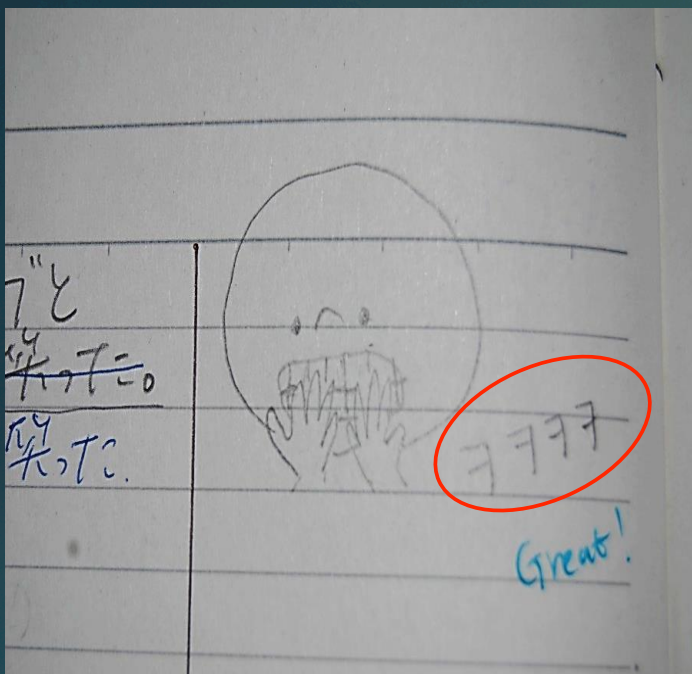
(Tamai, 2016, p.48)

# Six dimensions of viewing experience

(based on Tamai, 2016)

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In the passage when Professor Snape made sarcastic remarks to Harry, “Draco Malfoy and his friends Crabbe and Goyle sniggered behind their hands” (101-102)

**Interview with Y, Extract 3** (Y: student Y, M: author)

M: Why did you draw this picture?

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Y: Tee-hee (=laughter), why did I draw it? I think it's because the translation was different from mine. I translated by myself, but I didn't understand the meaning. When I heard the explanation and understood the meaning in the class, I was convinced and drew the picture. I drew because I was convinced.

M: You were convinced?

Y: I was convinced.

M: If you visualize “behind their hands,” is it like this?

Y: Yes. These “hee-hee” are Korean imitative words of laughter.

M: Oh, these katakana are Korean.

### Copies of Tomoko's Momotaro ( Peach Boy)



1) An old lady found a peach. When she cut it open, Momotaro (a peach boy) was born.



2) Momotaro decided to punish bad goblins with a dog, a bird, and a monkey.

(Yuge, 2015)

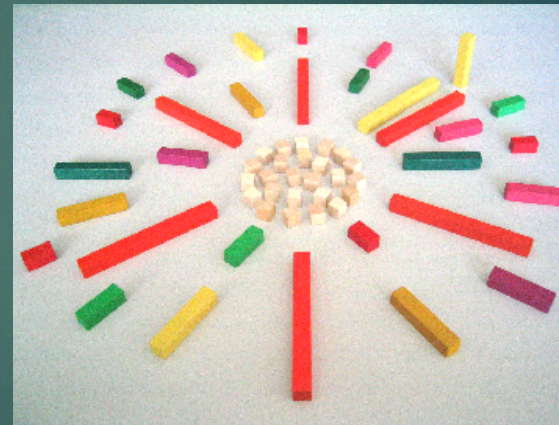
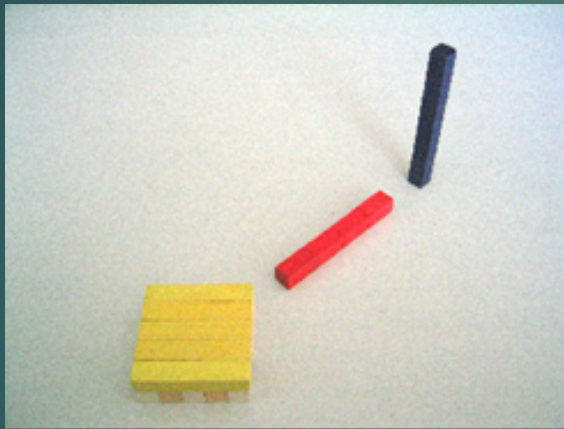


## Y's findings (Yuge, 2015, pp.66-68)

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- ▶ Acceptance of my true feelings: I **didn't want to be a teacher of the autistic class.**
- ▶ Discovery of new perspectives on the student-teacher relationship: T who tries to know Ss' reality.
- ▶ → Students who are ignored and refused turned out great learners. → Any student is an autonomous learner by nature.
- ▶ Discovery of her **new identity** and the importance of her **openness.**

# M's moments of awareness 1: Silent way rods



# Moments of awareness 2: Journaling

May 11<sup>th</sup>                      November 15<sup>th</sup>

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“So noisy!!!” One student got angry instead of me. He hit his desk severely and shouted, “(It’s just so noisy. Shut up!!)” I was ashamed of myself. I said, “(There are students who are studying hard, so don’t disturb.)” However noises never fade and just I was in haste to finish today’s reading for mid-term examination. It seemed hard for them to read. Maybe some of them got irritated against incomprehensible texts. ( *But, I thought I had to do it and taught the lesson.* ) Noisiness continued and one student who sits in front of the teacher’s desk suggests that “( You can be angry and scold them.)” I was ashamed of myself again.

The student who has annoyed me was awake today. I pointed at him and he answered well. Then I approached him to point where to take memo. He usually shows anger saying “It’s boring. I don’t want to do it.” Today he wrote them down. During the lesson I approached him several times and told him good! In the end he completed half of them. Getting better. He never faced down today. **On the other hand another student** kept on sleeping. I know he helps his father at night and gets tired, but it is not good for him to sleep at school all day. During recess I sat in front of him and looked at his hand out. He wrote nothing. We promised to study together on Friday lunch time. He nodded to come.

# Collaborative web-journal

May 14, Thursday

## Lesson Objectives:

1. Y will improve her reading comprehension by taking sentence structure into consideration. ( Eiken pre2nd level )
2. Y will do better at putting the words in the correct order.( Eiken pre2nd level )

(Wataru, how about putting above objectives into "Ss will be able to ~" form. This form will help you articulate what you expect Ss to achieve by the end of the class hour.)

**Teaching Objectives:** (Here, I would like you to write what you would like to challenge yourself as a teacher Beginning with "I would like to ~" might be one way.)

1. I would like to be more patient and not to give too many hints when Y struggles to answer questions.
2. I would like to pay more attention to her understanding and find out her weak points.

My private-lesson student Y is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year high school student. She barely passed the Eiken 3<sup>rd</sup> grade this February. Now she is studying for the Eiken pre2<sup>nd</sup> grade, which is going to take place this Jun. She's been taking my lesson about half a year. When she started, she knew English grammar little. She knew some English phrases, but when she made sentences, she didn't care about subjects and verbs. Gradually she's getting used to basic English grammar, but still her understanding of grammar is not enough to pass the Eiken pre2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Especially when she reads, she tends to pick up some words and imagine what the sentence means without taking the sentence structure into consideration.

Also, she is not good at putting the words in the correct order.

She got seven correct answers out of ten questions at the reading exercise. I made her translate the sentences that have answers of the questions she couldn't answer. She couldn't translate them correctly, mostly because she didn't know the words in the sentences. Also, she ignored pronouns and didn't really understand what or who the subjects or objects were. I told her to always make sure to understand what pronouns stand for.

At the exercise of putting the words in the correct order, she got six correct answers out of ten questions. Even though there were some hints written on the handout, she did better than I thought. She could pay more attention to subjects and verbs more than before. I found that she doesn't know much collocation which is really important for this kind of question. Also, she couldn't make complicated subjects such as "No other student in this class".

For her homework, I gave her a list of 50 collocational phrases like "get rid of, and participate in". She's taking the test on Jun 5<sup>th</sup>, so she has only 3 more weeks to study for it. Because there isn't much time for the test, I will focus not on teaching grammar so much but improving her vocabulary.

Dear Wataru,

It seems that Y hasn't been able to build her grammar knowledge in the level where she can use it for comprehension. We don't know the reason, but we know it must be quite miserable if she cannot trust her own knowledge in guessing the meaning of sentences. As you wrote pointing out the subject and verb of the sentence might be the most crucial knowledge she might have to learn. Finding where she is stuck and designing a way with which she could clear the hurdle I am sure were your challenge is. Ken

>Thank you for your sincere comment, Tamaisensei. And, I'm sorry I didn't quite follow the format Wataru <-- No problem at all. Getting used to the idea of writing T's challenges takes time to anybody. This tells you are in the midst of teacher learning. Welcome. Ken

Hi, Yoko-san

Now many students in my class are going to take eiken. I have divided students into some groups according to their levels, and I'm trying a method of cooperative learning, or "協同学習". In Japanese. When it comes to a private lesson for eiken, I don't have any know-hows. I'm looking for effective ways because the exam is getting closer. I hope Y is doing her best for eiken. Haya)

>The "Manabiat" method sounds really interesting. Please tell me more about it this weekend! Wataru

Hello Wataru-san,

I was teaching some classes for Eiken at the school I used to work at. Since it was a primary school, the English level was not so high but some were studying for the 3rd grade. I learned at the school that the Eiken test can be a strong motivation for some students. I usually taught in groups but you teach your student man-to-man so you seem to know her strength and weaknesses a lot. It must be a huge advantage for her to be able to depend on you whenever she wants to ask questions and need encouragement.

Junko Takagi

Hi, Wataru,

Oh, my! Eiken exams. I know those exams are important for students in Japan. My 2nd daughter is taking level 3 soon. Her choice, not mine. I had her take a free practice exam from the STEP Eiken website to see where her weaknesses are, which I did with my 1st daughter as well, but it seems you have already identified several areas of knowledge that you can work with. I wonder if she has learned any test-taking strategies? The word order section is particularly difficult I think, and sometimes students don't know that they can write on their test booklet to help them keep their thoughts organized. I often try to combine test-taking strategies to help students learn how to be better guessers. Good luck to all the Eiken test takers! Juan

Hello! Wataru-san,

These days, it seems that Ss didn't learn grammatical terms in junior high school. When I ask my Ss about parts of speech, they sometimes answer like 動詞(or 形容動詞), which do not exist in English. Moreover they sometimes don't concern the order of words. They often put the English words in the Japanese grammatical order when they write English sentences. So I often struggle to teach English word order. As you wrote, I try to make Ss focus on subjects and verbs first. (Mari)

# Perspectives of **phenomenological reflective practice**

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- ▶ 1) Reflection is a means to capture **lived experience**.
- ▶ 2) PRP aims at approaching the **essence** of experience.
- ▶ 3) Experience is a **complex, dynamic and multi-dimensional process** which is always **open** to new understanding.
- ▶ 4) The complex and multi-dimensional features of experience invite versatile definitions. It's **researchers' responsibility** to articulate their theoretical frameworks.

- ▶ 5) **PRP** uses first-person narratives. The significance is that **only the first-person narratives tell how an experience was lived** by the person.
- ▶ 6) Description of experience gets refined through the process of dialogical sharing. This refined description is called **phenomenological description**.
- ▶ 7) It becomes possible for the teacher(practitioner) to know his **teacher belief** only through knowing the **essence of his experience in relation to that of learners**.

Practitioner's exploration is in the process of teaching with our whole body open to learners in front. Our challenge is in what we do to capture the real of learner's experience in their life world.

ありがとうございました。



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