Celebrating Diversity in Becoming an Educational Researcher

Celebrating Diversity in Becoming an Educational Researcher

Edited by

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CONTENTS

Part Two: *A focus on professional transitions*

Part Three: *A focus on pursuing a doctoral degree*

Part Four: *Focusing on theoretical underpinnings*

Part five: *Synthesizing from the narratives*

PROLOGUE

TO BE OR NOT TO BE AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER?

IAN MENTER

In being invited to write a prologue - rather than a foreword or a preface - for this fascinating collection of accounts by fifteen educational researchers of their 'research journeys', I wish to add my own (dramatic) voice. Among the most famous prologues in English literature, we have Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities.* The first reminds us of the significance of biography and place:

> Two households, both alike in dignity,
>
> In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
>
> From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
>
> Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.

Dickens on the other hand points to the significance of history, of time and timing in human development:

> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness...

In the present volume what emerges so clearly are the influences of time and place, people and relationships, on the individual and collective trajectories of the development of all our players as educational researchers. For each of them there is a certain inexorability about their emergence as researchers, whatever the particular route they have taken. Indeed, Hamlet's bowdlerised question in the title of this prologue is not a real question for them - they have each and every one come to define themselves, at least in part, as educational researchers.

The autobiographical reflexivity that imbues the accounts in this book may provide inspiration to those readers who are themselves on the cusp of determining their own answers to that question, whether or not to be an educational researcher. For many, simply to ask that question will be the first step on the journey of becoming and being an educational researcher. In these days of centralised control of education and teaching - at least in most parts of the 'developed' world - simply to ask questions about policy and practice may be seen as a potentially subversive act. When questions like 'How am I teaching?', 'What am I teaching?' elide into more radical questions such as 'Why am I teaching like this?' and 'Is the curriculum I am teaching inclusive, truthful and accurate?', we can sense that educational research does have the potential to be seen as a subversive activity.

For my own part, having started my professional career as a primary school teacher in Bristol in the 1970s, it was the politics of what we then called 'multi-ethnic education' that first drew me towards taking a research perspective. My first published paper was a critique of the multicultural education policies of the local education authority (Menter, 1984). But it had been through involvement in the teachers' union, the National Union of Teachers (as it then was), that I had begun to experience the challenge that research could offer to established and taken-for-granted practices. Following serious disturbances on the streets of central Bristol in April 1980, near the school where I was teaching, a group of us in the Union, wrote a pamphlet called *After the Fire*, that offered a critical analysis of schooling in central Bristol and of education across the wider County of Avon (as it then was) (Bristol Teachers' Association, 1980).

Moving from primary teaching into higher education in 1984, my research attention turned more fully towards teacher education, particularly to aspects of policy in teacher education, influenced by a number of significant individuals who were already well established in the field. Subsequently, working in London and then in Scotland before concluding my full-time career at the University of Oxford, led me increasingly towards both comparative (Tatto and Menter, 2019) and anthropological (Menter, 2023) perspectives in the orientation of my research. With my erstwhile Oxford colleague, Diane Mayer, I co-edited a book offering five autobiographical accounts of teacher education researchers' development (Mayer and Menter, 2021), several of which resonate very strongly with the accounts provided in the present book. As we wrote in our introductory chapter:

> The cases highlight a range of trajectories in a number of different contexts
> which have enabled these teacher educators to develop successful research

> profiles often within policy contexts dominated by increasing and constantly
> changing regulation and accreditation requirements for teacher education
> programmes, as well as changing definitions of what constitutes valid and
> scientific research. These stories of research success reflect understandings
> of their policy, professional, research and institutional contexts, as well as
> various personal positionings. (Mayer and Menter, 2021:2)

In other words, those five autobiographical accounts have some striking
similarities to those offered here. However, what we are presented with in
the present volume goes well beyond teacher education. These are rich and
varied stories of personal and professional development and deploy an
impressive range of methodologies. Reading through the chapters that
follow amounts effectively to experiencing a collective autoethnography -
if that is not an oxymoron! These autobiographical and deeply reflective
accounts of individuals' development demonstrate not only the importance
of personal commitment to the development of a research orientation to an
educator's work, they also provide evidence of the powerful effects of a
strong research community. Whether it be the collegiality of following a
research degree programme, as a masters or doctoral student, or the process
of sharing written accounts such as those included here and providing each
other with feedback, the book demonstrates how mutual support, mentoring,
encouragement and reflexivity can enrich and enhance the quality of
'research lives'. It seems that the process of generating these chapters has
been one of repeated and continuous dialogue and discussion among the
contributors, many of them being based within the School of Education,
Humanities and Languages at Oxford Brookes University. The
collaboration with colleagues at the Department of Education at the
University of Oxford, has also evidently been a fruitful part of the story.
In the reflexivity demonstrated throughout these chapters there is a playful
quality, both literally and metaphorically that brings humour and enjoyment
to the lives of those involved. Indeed, the innumerable metaphors and
analogies that are scattered throughout, from Mary Wild's 'self-
choreography' of her research career to Carmel Capewell's exploration of
'the minor roads' of research (avoiding the motorways) and working her way
'out of limbo', as well as Ian Summerscales's reference to his academic
disciplines, philosophy and theology, as his 'parents', are all rich in their
imagery.

Another theme that emerges strongly (and is also picked up by the editors
in their final chapter) is the interaction of the personal and the professional
aspects of the contributors' lives. This is often picked up in the discussion
of the authors' experiences of developing 'multiple identities' as they make

their research journeys. It is also evoked through reference to their (actual) parents (Hamish Chalmers) or to their (actual) children (Carmel Capewell). Closely aligned to these discussions are several explicit discussions of challenges to the authors' (strongly held) values and beliefs (Tracey Martin-Millward for example), sometimes arising from the imposition of particular government policies imposed on schools and teachers. In the light of this, we may note that an earlier output from Oxford Brookes colleagues, including several who are also included here, dealt directly with ethical issues in educational research (Brown and Wild, 2023). I see the present volume as very much a 'sibling' of that previous book.

Some of the contributors (for example Sarah Frodsham, Sibel Erduran and Deb McGregor) refer to the transition from a background in the 'hard' sciences to the woolier and fuzzier (Bassey, 1999) world of social sciences in which educational research is usually seen to lie. The epistemological and ontological shifts that this may lead to can create a real sense of psychic turbulence. This in itself is a theme worthy of yet further exploration as it has the potential to shed light on the wider relationships between research, policy and practice in education.

Underlying the stories told in this volume are deep commitments to the importance of 'systematic inquiry made public' - to use the definition of (educational) research offered by the late Lawrence Stenhouse (1983). The review that was established more than ten years ago by the British Educational Research Association into research and the teaching profession, came to the conclusion that 'research literacy' must be a integral element of teachers' professional practice (BERA-RSA, 2014). The chapters that follow here in *Celebrating Diversity: Reflections on Becoming an Educational Researcher* provide brilliant exemplification of such an understanding. Chapter 17, a collective reflection on the contributors' experiences of becoming researchers, is fascinating in the way it synthesises what has preceded and highlights the use of metaphors and analogies that is a recurrent theme of the book.

It is through all education professionals adopting a research orientation to their work - *to be educational researchers* - that we may hope to see a genuine flourishing of education in schools, colleges and universities, both in Britain and around the wider world. Indeed, to return to the words of Dickens and Shakespeare respectively, travelling on these journeys together, we may hope to see the emergence of an age of wisdom, an epoch of belief and a season of light, and again, we hope, without the spilling of

blood! We can also suggest, turning once more to *Hamlet* (see Chapter 17), that, rather than saying 'the play is the thing', we can say 'it is research that is the thing'.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

DEBRA MCGREGOR, SIBEL ERDURAN AND SARAH FRODSHAM

Abstract

This chapter introduces and argues why a narrative approach has been taken, in this book, to elicit the nature of individuals' journeys to becoming an educational researcher. It offers a range of extensive and thoughtful storied experiences that demonstrate how diverse personal journeys can be for those endeavouring to become an educational researcher. The process may take several years, perhaps even a decade or so. Consequently, many influences may come into play with a stronger or weaker force along the long and winding road. To elicit the nature of individuals' lived experiences the book includes testimonies in three different forms. There are 15 individual narrations of different experiential journeys to achieving researcher-hood (chapter 2 – 16). Each of these chapters is concluded with a summative list of ten things the author wished they had known prior to embarking on their research endeavours. Finally, there are dialogic excerpts (from a focused group discussion) that highlights specific features of the authors' experiences. These conversations are playfully presented in a theatrical format in chapter 17. In this chapter various authors share more about how and when they began their research journey; who was most influential and what were the biggest challenges they faced. The finale in this chapter also offers ways that authors metaphorically reflected upon their becoming a researcher experience. What becomes apparent looking across the storied experiences are the ways in which family connections, social interactions, professional transitions, studying for a doctoral degree and strong volitions shape and inform becoming a researcher.

What Does it Mean to Be a Researcher?

Becoming a researcher can be a long and lonely experience (Cantor 2020) usually because of the individual and unique business of research. As Normann (2017) describes for inexperienced researchers there are also the challenges of designing the research project, determining the methodology, adopting and adapting methods and then deliberating how to analyse data and present findings. Indeed, Whisker et al (2010 p.5) recognised that learning researchers may become 'stuck' in a liminal space where making sense of their work is troublesome. Meyer and Land (2005) also highlight how understanding 'threshold concepts' involving abstract ideas about truths and realities in alternate paradigms (Denzin et al 2024 p. 75) can be challenging. Achieving complex doctoral level thresholds (Trafford and Leshem 2009) that involve 'ontological' shifts can disrupt researcher identity and self-confidence (Whisker et al 2010 p.6). She also highlights how 'epistemological shifts' that require researchers to problematise and deepen knowledge can be perplexing and confusing for would-be researchers. Besides the conceptual demands of doing research there are also the pragmatic efforts of recruiting key participants, experts or informants (O'Leary 2010) and considering their involvement ethically (Brown and Wild 2023) depending on the nature of the project/s. Research usually involves carrying out field work, collecting and analysing data (of a quantitative or qualitative nature) each step often resulting in 'learning leaps' (Whisker et al 2010 p.6). The added pressure that in the future the work may also be published for anyone to read is yet another challenge (Wellington et al 2005). All these new learning experiences involving thinking, acting and writing in different ways can be pre-determined to some extent, especially if embarking upon a doctoral degree programme (Whisker et al 2010) but often, as you will read in this book, many journeys to *becoming* also involve elements of serendipity, and they certainly all require personal dedication and perseverance.

The work of a researcher can be incredibly rewarding, with no two days alike. The learning expedition (because it can feel like that after several years) and outcomes achieved by individuals will be unique and unlike those of other researchers. Whisker et al (2010) refer to the 'learning leaps' (p.5) and 'aha' moments when conceptual understandings are achieved and/or data collected and analysed makes sense. She also discusses how 'leaps of faith' (p.5) require learner-researchers to work beyond their comfort zone to struggle with making sense of the evidence and be able to 'see' and interpret their research in different or new ways (Meyer and Land

2005). The individuality of research projects (as well as the formal requirements for a doctorate) and the tasks undertaken to achieve them mean that those involved are likely to undertake work that is innovative and unprecedented. The novel research approaches taken undoubtedly generate unique and bespoke outcomes, reflecting quite resoundingly the inimitable voyage each author has been on to achieve becoming a researcher.

Contrasting Becoming a Teacher or Researcher

Embarking upon becoming an educational researcher involves pathways that are not so clearly defined as those generated for individuals wishing to becoming a teacher. There are now several clearly defined routes (DfE 2023; UCAS 2023) to becoming qualified as a classroom practitioner. Indeed, pathways to achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) as a graduate (or without a degree) offer clearly laid out opportunities for individuals to choose how to become a teacher within a year or two. However, mapping out how to become an educational researcher is not so straight forward and certainly requires several more years of studying and developing the appropriate knowledge and required skills (as discussed earlier). Funding to support qualifying as a researcher is not so readily available either. Interestingly, despite the unique, often convoluted and certainly lengthy journey to becoming an educational researcher (as demonstrated in this book), career advice can be found that [over] simplifies it to five distinct steps (Indeed Editorial Team 2023):

1. Get a degree [most research positions require more than a first degree. Usually a doctorate is essential, but a master's in a relevant field may be sufficient];
2. Choose your area of specialism [Educational research as a discipline can include many fields, so selecting where to focus your endeavours matters];
3. Get a certification [this can provide an indication of your particular area of specialism and commitment];
4. Gain professional experience [having classroom or in-school experience as well as roles involving analysis];
5. Participate in postdoctoral programmes [engaging with fellowships to support training]; Apply for roles [from job boards etc].

In contrast to the five steps conveyed above that communicate how to become a researcher, the narratives in this book are testament to the fact that it really is not so straightforward. The stories in each of the chapters

evidence how there are many, many more than just five simple steps to achieving researcher-ship!

Perhaps the view of becoming a researcher has been simply mis-understood because there are so few texts written to describe the nature of such a demanding and personalised experience. Mayer and Menter (2021) provide guidance (and five autobiographical accounts) about becoming a teacher education researcher. They foreground advice about combining teaching and researching for those aspiring a position in higher education academia. In contrast de Ibarrola and Phillips (2014) offer a collection of personal narratives written by renowned and well-established educationalists such as Erik De Corte and Andreas Demetriou recollecting their experiences on the road to becoming researchers. This book, in contrast, offers narratives that range from those part-way through or those who have recently completed their doctorate to others who have worked as experienced researchers for several decades. As such, looking across the narratives, it becomes clear that personal and professional influences are entwined. Familial encouragement and support, inspirational others, personal curiosity and certainly sheer dogged determination are but a few of the factors that play a notable role in the journey of would-be-researchers.

Working with doctoral students, many of them ask, 'Where can I go to find-out how others have done it?' or they may request from supervisors or mentors, 'What challenges lie ahead for me?', 'How might I best prepare?' Overcoming the paucity of auto-biographical narratives that highlight the heterogeneous ways that individuals can succeed in becoming an educational researcher is a key focus of this book. Many key features of personal journeys to achieving such an accolade are highlighted through these relatable storied experiences. The diversity of ways that the authors have achieved (or are on the road to accomplishment of) their doctorates and beyond is celebrated across a range of disciplines. Within the 15 research biographical accounts, there are distinctive illustrative moments that will surely inspire and encourage others in considering a career in educational research.

Narrating the Lived Experience of Becoming a Researcher

The individual narratives (chapters 2 – 16) comprise a collective suite of illustrative cases demonstrating the heterogeneous pathways it is possible to follow to become an educational researcher. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000 p.77) emphasize 'specific stories' or narratives such as these can offer

'nuggets' that highlight features from 'life in its broadest sense on the [researching] landscape'. It is these some of these 'nuggets' we hope to bring to the fore in this book. The original insights each author offers highlight both affordances and constraints along the various storied journeys lived and told. As Clandinin and Rosiek (2007 p. 41) describe these kinds of stories are 'the result of a confluence of social influences on a person's inner life' reflecting their 'unique personal history'. As such the book provides a series of recounted experiences that 'make up people's lives, both individual and social' (Clandinin and Connelly 2000 p.20). The nature of recounting the lived experiences of each author's story (chapters 2 – 16) are outlined in the next section.

The Focus of the Narrated Chapters

Chapters 2 – 16 in the book cover a range of themes related to the career progression of educational researchers. These include reflections on experiences of childhood and upbringing; teaching at primary and secondary school level; research training such as pursuing PhD and EdD degrees and academic backgrounds in philosophical foundations of education. Often these themes are intertwined in the chapters, and they are covered to a different extent in different chapters. In other words, chapters do not exclusively cover only one of these themes. For the purposes of organising chapters 2 - 16, four primary themes have been used to arrange the chapters in sequence and to summarise key messages that are conveyed by the authors. The four themes are (a) familial focus (Chapters 2-5), (b) professional transitions, (c) pursuing a doctoral degree, and (e) focusing on theoretical volitions.

The first set of four chapters (Chapters 2-5) focusing on familial issues by Jane Spiro, Hamish Chalmers, Sarah Frodsham and Sibel Erduran explores early life, childhood and family experiences and influences related to career professions in educational research. In Chapter 2, Jane Spiro tracks her journey over five decades, from childhood storyteller to educational researcher, mapping the milestones from creative writing and literature to cultural history and applied linguistics before arriving at educational research as a destination. Whilst she acknowledges that she experienced these disciplines as separate domains, each with their own set of cultural norms and values helped her to ultimately develop understanding of educational research. She draws on conceptual tools such as "academic tribes" described by Becher and Trowler (2001) to highlight how she has viewed her own engagement in various roles. She reflects on the way she

experienced the differences between the different domains by analysing a significant project in each of the five areas of creative writing, literature, cultural history, applied linguistics, and education. In the first part of the chapter, Spiro focuses on projects written in childhood and undergraduate years, and within the broad disciplines of creative writing and the humanities before turning to postgraduate studies within the disciplines of cultural history and linguistics. In Chapter 3, Hamish Chalmers focuses on the nature of evidence in educational research but does so through reflections on his own family history. He has been inspired by his father's work and in outlining his personal experiences in both a family and professional context he explains how the nature and importance of evidence has become key for him. He reflects on his experience in conferences that created the opportunities for deeper thinking behind evidence-based practice. He recounts events that stand out as having helped him to imagine what evidence-based education could look like. He also reflects on analogies on evidence in healthcare, expertise of practitioners, and evidence about stakeholders' needs and preferences (e.g., Goldacre, 2013; Haynes et al., 1996).

In Chapter 4 Sarah Frodsham reflects on the development of her identity and the influences that cause her to experience a paradigmatic shift. Having set out as a biochemist to obtain a social science doctorate she encountered many perplexing moments along her research journey. At the onset of the process, she expresses that she had little awareness that she would philosophically go from seeking a singular ontological perspective of finding the truth to questioning the very nature of the social world. With these beginnings of becoming an educational researcher in mind, the chapter captures her reflections, as she entered and interacted with an interpretivist landscape to examine the nature of creativity in primary school science. This is achieved reflexively (Bolton, 2010) by not only re-examining her journal entries, written at that time, but by also drawing on fictional texts to illustrate pivotal moments in this transition. She focuses on the first year of her research study to illustrate the complexity and intellectual nuances of her shifting position. Overall, she highlights the mental and intellectual struggles as well as successes during the shifting position as she traversed from being a postgraduate student to becoming a post-doctoral researcher in social science.

In Chapter 5, Sibel Erduran presents a self-reflective account of growth as an educational researcher and of transition to infusing research into her teaching as a teacher educator. Her reflections include the research journey

in the physical sciences and educational research, transition into teacher education, background in history and philosophy of science, and views on issues related to the incorporation of argumentation in teacher education. She discusses the influences of her family background in terms of having a parent and a grandparent as teachers. She presents data from her own teaching on argumentation (Toulmin, 1958) on the part-time master's course aimed for continuous professional development of science teachers. Such data illustrate how she infused research findings into her teaching and demonstrate an example of practitioner research as a teacher educator. Through the reflective account about her professional development, she discusses how she came to re-envisage herself as a researcher and a teacher educator who is trying to make sense of some rather abstract and deep epistemic ideas such as argumentation. Overall, she outlines how she negotiated her professional identity through differentiated expertise in relation to science education research, philosophy of science and teacher education.

The next set of five chapters (Chapters 6-10) by Poppy Gibson, Polly Bell, Mary Briggs, Tracey Martin-Millward and Debra McGregor focus on professional transitions and draw on backgrounds as primary and secondary teachers to illustrate the impact of professional and practitioner experiences in developing identities as educational researchers. In Chapter 6, Poppy Gibson reports her professional journey by revisiting transitions from training and working as a primary school teacher in England, through the educational challenges of doctoral study for a Doctorate in Education, and finally as a senior lecturer at university. Using Mockler's (2011) question *"Who am I in this context?"* she reflects on how educators can define their moral and educational purpose. The author believes that her transition required the construction of a whole new epistemological way of being, composed of knowledge and skills that were founded in the previous knowledge and experience as a primary educator. Developing her new identity in higher education is not a smooth or straightforward process as also confirmed by research (van Lankveld et al., 2016). Gibson draws on research (e.g., White and Heslop, 2012) that articulates how being a teacher educator ultimately requires being situated in a grey region somewhere between both academic and professional fields. In her own transitions, she explores how it is normal for staff to struggle with identity crisis when moving roles from the classroom into higher education, arguing that identity crisis can be lessened through reaching out to others in the academic network, and also through taking part in a range of strategic networks that

allow for various versions of self to be performed, and for further knowledge and information to be gained.

In Chapter 7, Polly Bell explores her decision to become an educational researcher, reflecting on her motivations and what she gained from doing so. She explains how repositioning from teacher to researcher has been illuminating and insightful for both her teaching and her research. Her approach is based on methods of reflection (Frick, Carl and Beets, 2010) highlighting the tensions experienced as a primary teacher enacting English educational policy. Although she appreciated the benefits of some initiatives such as Every Child Matters, she struggled with others - in particular the assessment policies (DfE, 2010). Her doctoral research heightened the awareness that she was not alone in valuing creativity while struggling to support or enact it at times in her teaching. As a researcher, she observed how others succeeded in achieving a balance in meeting the demands of the education system while expressing their individuality and creativity. She articulates how looking at teaching from the outside in (as a researcher) revealed insights that she would not otherwise recognise had she not made the transition to educational research.

In Chapter 8, Mary Briggs focuses on the cognitive conflicts in her values and beliefs as she progressed in her professional journey to educational research. Her journey motivated her to ask questions such as *"whose interests are being explored in educational contexts. Are learners always at the centre of the process?"* She recognised the importance of research informed practice as a practitioner during part time study alongside a firmly held belief in a lifelong learning approach to professional working whether a teacher, researcher, teacher educator or teacher-educator-researcher. This has been a significant part of her journey and the development of the use of research and knowledge exchange process through her career in teaching. The trajectory has been uniquely personal for her as it involved opportunities available along the route as well as barriers that have prevented some areas of development. Drawing on critical incidents (Bruster and Peterson, 2013) she highlights the interrelationship between the roles of practitioner and researcher to demonstrate how some have been complementary and how others have created conflict. Furthermore, she explicates the way the internal and external factors that have shaped the whole process of her personal development and the resulting outcomes. She refers to terminology used by de Vries (2005) such as 'feeling a fake' and 'imposter syndrome' to characterise the internal reflection on the barriers to development. These terms frame the concerns of researchers in terms of

being 'found out' about shortcomings and weaknesses, others passing judgments and anxieties about performance. She discusses possible strategies and their consequences for others embarking on this journey in order that roles might be more complementary rather than creating conflict for the individual.

In Chapter 9, Tracey Martin-Millward draws on Kiley and Whisker's (2009) notion of threshold concepts as applied to research education. She considers this notion to be particularly relevant in terms of elements of identity of a learner and the transformative nature of both the subject and one's identity. The theoretical framing of threshold concepts resonates closely with the author's own transformation from teacher, through teacher educator, to educational researcher, which has led the author to "scrutinise her professional identity at close quarter, and to reflect on her ontological position as a scientist and then academic in the humanities." Throughout the chapter she highlights her changing relationship with data and the underlying epistemological assumptions she adopts at different stages of her career and career transitions. In Chapter 10, Debra McGregor recollects the ways that the nature of her work and identity has developed initially from that of a secondary science teacher, then to a university lecturer concerned with teacher education and finally in role as educational researcher. She draws on Holland et al's (1998) notion of Figured Worlds (FWs) and relates the nature of work and activities to the three different communities of practice according to Wenger's (1998) theorisation of learning with others. Her in-depth characterisation of the ways she and others with her in each of the three communities, 'learn through doing'; 'learn through experience'; 'learn through belonging' and also 'learn through becoming' brings to the fore contrasting teaching and learning processes. Discussion about the three distinct work arenas that are experienced differently by both herself and others enables readers to appreciate the contrasts in lived experiences of teachers and researchers in their FWs of work. Drawing from Bakhtin (1986) and Vygotsky (1986) she uses dialogic excerpts to demonstrate nuanced features of teaching and learning in the three contrasting FWs of work. She also maps out, how, over time the gradual development of her research outputs relates to the shifting nature of her altering work in the three FW arenas considered.

The third set of chapters (Chapters 11-13) by Adrian Twissell, Carmel Capewell and Mary Kitchener highlight issues related to pursuing doctoral degrees. Drawing from Goodson (2013), in Chapter 11 Adrian Twissell adopts a narrative theory approach to presenting a personal life story to

capture his own sense of meaning and purpose in his professional journey. His discussion intertwines several phases of learning, professional experiences and participation in an EdD course. He believes that pursuing an EdD was a key factor in influencing and motivating change in professional identity as a response to emerging interest in the topics of EdD study and the challenges faced by wider curriculum changes in England. He focuses on the transitions between domains of knowledge, highlighting research-focused principles, aims and goals. He describes how he has come to be aligned with the identity of a "researcher as educator". Drawing from Spiro's (2009) research not only empowered but also enabled him to act within the framework with a certain attitude for embracing and promoting knowledge. He believes that this attitude embodies the knowledge developed during the 'figuring' (Urietta, 2007) stage of learning about educational research, and that his knowledge development and identity have evolved together. Consequently, he finds himself 'thinking like a researcher' (Trafford and Leshem, 2009: 311) more frequently as his professional identity was transformed. A further chapter focusing on the impact of carrying out postgraduate research degrees is by Carmel Capewell who presents a personal account of the journey she made from completing her PhD into a full time, permanent Senior Lecturer in Chapter 12. This experience encompassed interacting with a number of higher education institutions. Along with pragmatic issues such as funding, she considers a researchers' philosophical stance as a significant challenge in the doctoral journey. Relating ontology and epistemology (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) was something that was unfamiliar based on previous experiences. She believes that reading the work of Freire (1993) with focus on each person's knowledge and experience being of value moved her forward in the research journey. She discusses a range of states that she faced when she felt in 'limbo'. Using Bamber et al. (2017) she characterises the stages of her journey.

In Chapter 13, Mary Kitchener, on the other hand, reflects on an array of influences as she pursued an EdD degree by focusing on the transition from a professional career to that of a full-time academic as her research inquiry. She explored the experiences of colleagues who had entered an academic role from diverse professional backgrounds. The research process supported her to become familiar with working in higher education and further develop her research skills. As a practitioner researcher, she considers herself to have been situated within the research as an 'insider'. Therefore, from the start, she made the decision that the research enquiry was to have a constructivist understanding that experience is a subjective, human

construct, that is value-laden (Mutch, 2005). Through conversational-expository methods (e.g., blog posts and comments), and conversations on the model of the BBC's Listening Project (BBC, 2017), she had a platform to develop not only her research skills, and contribute to knowledge through achieving a doctorate but also offer space to process and interpret the transition from a professional to an academic post. Blogging and listening projects became effective tools for Kitchener to bridge from a metaphorical 'in between' space to digest and discuss the different roles together. So in her case, there has not been a transition from the identity of a teacher to the identity of a researcher but rather a synthesis of both.

Finally, the next three chapters (Chapters 14-16) focus on theoretical underpinnings of doing educational research. Carol Brown, Ian Summerscales and Mary Wild raise some foundational philosophical and academic questions about being an educational researcher. In Chapter 14, Carol Brown explores her journey into educational research by considering various roles such as the faculty ethics officer highlighting how her theoretical knowledge and experiences were influenced as a psychologist. The journey also includes stages of being a student and an educator with a specific interest in ethics. She considers the significance of ethical understanding on her development as she progressed to being a mid-career researcher. She offers some insights into the transitional processes of learning and teaching about ethical procedures and their application in a research environment. The applications of ethics are considered in relation to teaching as a psychology educator. Moreover, she discusses the role of ethics as an educational researcher including issues related to theory and practice. In Chapter 15, Ian Summerscales targets some fundamental concepts about philosophy of research. He argues that the work of an educator which embraces educational research can be understood as a way of life. Such life is a process of becoming and unbecoming, of change, of becoming another which he regards as the core of education for student and educator/researcher. Drawing on the work of Huebner (1999), McGhee (2000) and others, as well as his own experience of teaching and of co-directing a Doctor of Education (EdD) programme for seven years, he suggests an understanding of educational research and work as a thoughtful involvement in the being, becoming and unbecoming of teachers and students. Next in Chapter 16, Mary Wild discusses her learning journey as an educational researcher by pointing to the importance of differences between different genres of research. She argues that no one genre is superior to the others and argues each has a valuable and necessary contribution to make to understanding. She then proposes that there are

some underlying principles and techniques that can be applied and acquired respectively to apprehend educational research processes and illustrates her views by drawing on metaphoric parallels with learning to dance. Though these may manifest themselves differently dependent on the genre, she considers it important to have an appreciation of a range of approaches and techniques to be a critical and engaged researcher. The chapter highlights how crucial collaboration and continued reflection and learning have been at all stages of her academic life.

Chapter 17 led by Sarah Frodsham collates the cumulative dialogue authors engage in about becoming a researcher. Throughout the book, the authors are both the researcher and biographer. The lived experiences recounted through conversation are those which the writers consider to be significant during specific periods of their educational researcher development. From their formative years as a young child through their years spent in educational institutions, such as secondary school, undergraduate degree courses, postgraduate programmes and as lecturers in these higher educational environments. Authors reconsider their experiences in becoming an educational researcher through conversational exchanges with others in the book. This chapter is formatted playfully to reflect a theatrical approach, giving voice to each contributor's perspective. The creative presentation draws from Frodsham's narrative of becoming a researcher (see Chapter 4) by reflecting on a fictional Shakespearian character, namely Hamlet. By organising the discussion in a thematic way the chapter offers personal access to additional events or experiences in the researchers' lives. Shining a direct spotlight on the researchers' to illuminate their voices, emphasises or even uncovers additional verification/s about their lived experiences.

Finally in Chapter 18, the finale of the book, Deb McGregor, Sibel Erduran and Sarah Frodsham consider how the three forms of testimony that have underpinned the authors' storied experiences within this book offer distinct insights about researchers' journeys to becoming. The personal narratives from Chapter 2-16, "10 things I wish I knew" from each author's account, and the transcripts of the conversations from Chapter 17 each offer additional dimensions to each of the 15 self-portraits (de Ibarrola and Phillips 2014) of becoming a researcher.

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PART ONE

A FAMILIAL FOCUSS

CHAPTER 2

DISCIPLINARY ISLANDS AND THE LEARNING LEAP: RESEARCHING ACROSS DISCIPLINARY BORDERS

JANE SPIRO

Abstract: Islands of Beliefs

This chapter tracks my journey over five decades, from childhood storyteller to educational researcher, mapping the milestones from creative writing and literature to cultural history and applied linguistics before arriving at educational research as a destination. Whilst I experienced these disciplines as separate islands, each with their own set of norms and values, being a traveller between them shed fresh light on each culture. Disciplinary differences have been described by Becher and Trowler (2001) (Trowler 2008) as 'academic tribes', each with their own assumptions and approaches to knowledge. These different disciplinary theories of knowledge manifest themselves in language choices, clues to ideologies that lie under the surface. Discourse analysts have focused on multiple different text types and language features, in order to explore and explain the link between language and hidden cultures. For example, Bazerman (1988) analysed scientific texts, Wilder (2012) literary texts, Hyland (2013; 1999; 2002) selected specific features which are revealing, such as citation and authorial presence and Nesi (2012) and Bruce (2008) decoded disciplinary discourses through genres and text types. All of these are ways of suggesting that deep hidden differences and surface ones are closely connected, if one were to 'notice'. In this chapter, I will track the way I experienced these differences by analysing one significant project in each of the five disciplines: creative writing, literature, cultural history, applied linguistics, and education. Each project entailed rethinking the kind of