



EDUC 500: Research Methodology in Education Activities

Articulating Research

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Expressive Productions— Create a series of minor texts and productions that respond to a variety of genres and styles. The genres of the productions are provided below and it will be your responsibility to interpret these as the form dictates. The backdrop is **Research as Rhetoric**, which suggests that content does not dictate form inasmuch as form shapes content. The Theme is **Articulating (my) Research**, challenging you to express your research *topic* through a variety of genres. Your challenge is to express this *topic* through a variety of genres. There is a difference between re/presenting your proposal versus re/presenting your topic (or a moment, subset, etc.) through a variety of genres.



Each production is limited to title page and 2 pages, double-spaced, plus references (APA), 12 point, Times font. The arts-based production is open-ended in that it can take the form of video (3-5 minutes), performance (3-5 minutes), material culture, or mixed media. You will have to interview each other to complete some of the productions. At the end of the course, collate all of the productions in the form of a manuscript, complete with title and references. Present the five productions and plan for a 5 minute limit on each production.

THEME: Articulating Research

1. Production: Articulating (my) Research: Autoethnography
2. Production: Articulating (my) Research: Phenomenology or Hermeneutics
3. Production: Articulating (my) Research: Critical Theory
4. Production: Articulating (my) Research: Postmodernism, Poststructuralism or Postcolonialism
5. Production: Articulating (my) Research: Arts-Based or Media Based Research

Production: Articulating (my) Research: Autoethnography

- a. What is culture? To write ethnography or autoethnography it is important to understand what culture is. It is important to have a broad definition of culture.
- b. The culture that accommodates you (the auto) in the ethnography should be clear to the reader. What is the auto (you) in the ethno (culture)?
- c. There is a lot to be said for good description. It is imperative that you know the difference between description, reflection and interpretation when writing an ethnography or autoethnography. Ethnography is all about the power of description.

Production: Articulating (my) Research: Phenomenology or Hermeneutics

Phenomenology

- a. Phenomenology is primarily descriptive. Phenomenological questions tend to begin with: "how does it feel...[to be a graduate student, etc.]? or "what does it mean to be... [a naturalist, etc.]? Phenomenology claims to deal with the nature or essence of experience.
- b. What is your phenomenological question? This should be clearly stated.
- c. Hence, phenomenology is ontological. The goal is to *describe* the nature or essence of things. There is power in phenomenological description.

Hermeneutics

- a. The goal is to interpret. Hermeneutic phenomenology aims to interpret experience. Interpretation is not to be confused with explanation and causal forces.
- b. For a good example of hermeneutics, see Perez-Gomez and Bronfman (1999), and pay attention to pp. 3-4 where they first argue that the issue or essence of architecture is neither aesthetic nor technological— rather, it is ethical. This is a classic Heideggerian move (e.g., the essence of technology is nothing technological...). Then they take a hermeneutic turn and proceed to interpret architecture by going back, etymologically, to the text— 'return to the text' is the hermeneutic mantra— the phenomenologist's mantra is turn to lived experience... or return to the immediate— or basically stay in/with the moment.
- c. Hermeneutics = interpretation = meaning making; hermeneutic techniques = etymology, exegesis, reflective analysis of (the) text (but not content analysis or discourse analysis).
- d. For those writing on & about nature, one place to start is the question of nature: what is (the nature of) nature? What is ecology? What is an environment? What is outdoors? And so on. For example, I was once writing on appropriate technology and ecology, and ended up turning to hermeneutics: "Economics, like ecology, is rooted in the Greek *oikonomos*, or knowledge of the household— not only individual houses but the household of Gaia. Perhaps appropriate technology will be a catalyst for us to get the house of design and technology education in order lest we continue to contribute unnecessarily and unwittingly to the disorder of our big house— the Earth...." Or you can ask what does birding

entail? Or stewardship? The point is to interpret the text of what has been written on these types of questions through the hermeneutic circle— a sort of back and forth from text to new author of the wor(l)d (i.e., you). Hermeneutics has been criticized because it attends to the text but not necessarily to interests and the author (i.e., author of the text). So, the new author (i.e., you) is in the hermeneutic circle but the old author is not. It's you and the text...and the text and you...in a circle.

- e. To begin the essay, you can start with a brief story or narrative, or a recent headline, etc. Enough to raise a question or problem— turn to the text for interpretation, and then back to the present.

Production: Articulating (my) Research: Critical Theory

- a. The goal is to *explain* what animates actors. What are the causal forces, processes or structures that make us do what we do? It is important to understand the difference between constructivism (or psychological forces) and constructionism (or social forces). Critical theory is primarily concerned with cultural and social forces, and favours theories that blur or erode boundaries between the psychological and social. Critical theorists initially tried to integrate Freud's psychological theory with Marx's social theory.
- b. The goal is to explain by identifying the structures behind agency. Critical theorists are also interested in identifying agency in the resistance to structural forces.

Production: Articulating (my) Research: Postmodernism, Poststructuralism or Postcolonialism

- a. Basically, doing post- research involves deconstruction as a method— deconstruction of absolutes, authenticities, binaries, essentialisms, grand narratives, innocence, purities, structures, etc. If the deconstruction is playful, then typically the approach is postmodern. Otherwise, the approach is poststructural or postcolonial.

Production: Articulating (my) Research: Arts-Based or Media Based Research

- a. Arts-based research (ABR) is the use of art to re/pro/duce data and then in turn, question, interpret, and explain these data (and the process). Extending Schon's idea of *The Reflective Practitioner*, advocates typically point out that ABR is not merely the aesthetic re/presentation of data or the connoisseurship and aesthetic judgment of research (Finley, 2003). ABR is primarily concerned with using methods of the arts to derive meaning from performance and production, and secondarily concerned with aesthetics of form and pattern to re/create svelte, good-looking data. Concerned with ideographic interpretation (particularity), ABR is a hybrid of research practices most commonly expressed as:
 1. Art therapy (McNiff, 1998, 2004).
 2. Creative writing, narrative, poetry, performativity and ethnodrama (Barone, 1995; Barone & Eisner, 1998; Bochner & Ellis, 2003).
 3. A/R/Tography (Irwin & de Cossen, 2004; Springgay, Irwin & Wilson Kind, 2005).
 4. Aesthetics and connoisseurship of research methodology and data (Barone, 1995, 2001; Barone & Eisner; Bochner & Ellis, 2003; Denzin, 2000; Eisner, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1985; Piantanida, McMahan & Garman, 2003; Phillips, 1995).

In models of ABR, perspectives of the artist and those who participate with the artwork or arts in question are combined with research practices such as description, analysis and interpretation (Sullivan, 2004).