

Reflexivity as a Research Method



Dr Lindsey Nicholls





Reflexivity as a Research Method

What is reflexivity and how is it different to reflection?



Reflexivity as a Research Method

- It is a **critical appraisal** of your experience
- You need to **doubt** what you hold to be 'true'
- It is in the **service** of the research



‘A point of view is inevitable; and the naive attempt to avoid it can only lead to a self-deception, and to the uncritical application of an unconscious point of view.’ (Popper, 1966, p.261)



How can you become aware of an internal dialogue?
How can you question yourself when what you feel and think is a form of personal 'truth'?
Are you able to change your 'point of view'?



If disillusionment is one of life's natural forms of contemplation, the experience of dislocation is another.

This happens when we are forced by circumstance to occupy a very different standpoint from our normal one, and our angle of vision suddenly changes to reveal a strange and threatening landscape....

The value of dislocation is in the way it moves us beyond illusion so we can see 'in the round' – since what we are able to see depends entirely on where we stand (p21)



bell hooks
Teaching Community: a
pedagogy of



On becoming disillusioned... welcoming 'Unbidden Thoughts'

- Dreams
- Associations
- Poetry
- Biographies
- Associations (i.e. memories evoked)
- Supervision
(please add your ideas) ...



Class Exercise

Okay, lets try something out.

The next slide has a poem, written on the LEFT hand side.

Read it to yourselves. Let it inside you.

Then think about the questions on the right hand side and let the others know (perhaps use the hand sign that you want to speak) what associations and reflections you had with the words.

Listen to each other. Each person will have a unique experience of the poem.



LOCAL

My mother tongue
sits in my throat like an allergy

It feels like I will die if I speak it
It feels like I will die if I don't

I am carrying
An overnight bag
A bag of tricks
A survival toolkit
A suitcase of DOs and DON'Ts

There is no space to pack
or unpack my histories or my selves

I am trying to move
without attracting too much attention
to what I don't have
or what I have lost

or what has been stolen from me

What do you hear?

What do you see?

How do you feel?

What association do you have to
these words?

What story can you tell?



Class Exercise

Read it to yourselves. Let it inside you.

Then think about the questions on the right hand side and let the others know (perhaps use the hand up sign that you want to speak) what associations and reflections you had with the words.

Listen to each other. Each person will have a unique experience of the poem.

The next slide tells you about the poet



while counting the men in your life?

*Madness sits at the dinner table, too,
saying grace with one eye open.*

This highly-anticipated debut collection from one of the country's most acclaimed young voices marks a massive shift in South African poetry. Koleka Putuma's exploration of blackness, womxnhood and history in *Collective Amnesia* is fearless and unwavering. Her incendiary poems demand justice, insist on visibility and offer healing. In them, Putuma explodes the idea of authority in various spaces – academia, religion, politics, relationships – to ask what has been learnt and what must be unlearned.

KOLEKA PUTUMA was born in Port Elizabeth in 1993. An award-winning performance poet, facilitator and theatre-maker, her plays include *UHM* and *Mbuzeni*, as well as two two plays for children, *Ekhaya* and *Scoop*. Her work has travelled around the world, with her poetry garnering her national prizes, such as the 2014 National Poetry Slam Championship and the 2016 PEN South Africa Student Writing Prize. Koleka currently lives and works in Cape Town.

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COLLECTIVE AMNESIA

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Time for a break

