

this dual role of both was and becoming since they not only serve as data collection instruments but also due to the very act of writing engender both reflections and new insights. As I reflect now on both my original memories of SR's elementary school (2002- 2010) and high school (2010-2014) and those regarding college (2014-2018) I find myself putting these memories within a new perspective based on what we shared as a family during the 2016 interview as well as in our follow-up letters and conversations. I seem to have constructed a more integrated perspective of how both positive and negative instances of caring can be used by individuals to re-cast their memories if they so choose in either positive or negative ways. For example, SR when describing Mrs. Danforth (the English teacher he had in high school) whom he characterized as quite uncaring and non-supportive seemed to transform his interpretation of his memories in a way that has resulted in a more positive mindset. Today, I feel a sense of accomplishment rehashing and reflecting upon my time as a debased student. No resentment has brewed in the years since. Think back to times you may have been at arms with a teacher who you felt was against you. Do you feel any resentment? Do you use resentment as a propeller or the accomplishment of producing quality work? Let the desire of work well done be your driver, not the residual contempt from a negative experience drive your goals.

Like SR, I have come to see negative memories as those that can ultimately be re-cast in a positive way. It is also sometimes the case (though not as often) that I have found myself re-casting positive memories into more subdued hues as a consequence of placing these memories into a larger context based on time and experience. For example, while I idolized an uncle of mine because of the way that he treated me (including surprise gifts), I have since learned that he was a carouser and womanizer which I now know caused my aunt a great deal of sorrow. While I will always carry wonderful "flashbulb memories" of my uncle, these memories are now framed within a larger understanding of the social context. I have termed this phenomenon of re-casting or re-framing memories metamemories because it involves not only thinking back to original memories but also transforming these memories based on reflections and experiences that occur following the original events into a revised perceptual framework. Pivotal events for my own metamemory transformation for this study were the family interview and SR's letter that enabled me to "see" recalled events through both an historical as well as a dynamic temporal lens as experienced by SR. Because each of us are not only self-learners but also social-learners, I found my own memories being transformed as SR shared his own transformed memories during both the initial interview as well as

through his letter-to-self. There seems to be an inherent resilience, creativity, and drive in us that enable us to reshape and transform memories in a way that supports the ongoing re-construction of our own worldviews.

From a self-phenomenological perspective, I find myself actively trying to discern how I have experienced this foray into family research as it relates to schooling. A close reading of the SR and MR letters has led me to appreciate how research on families can shed light on some intractable issues in the field of education. Although most families will not engage in formal research, if we recognize that interviews are nothing more than focused conversations, perhaps we can learn as families to "interview" each other in a caring way and on a regular basis to learn what is on our hearts and minds and thereby be able to offer loving support when it is most needed. Perhaps we might even re-invigorate the lost art of letter writing to both self and others as a way to further promote understanding. However, it might also be the case that it is only the medium of time and perspective that enable us to transform our memories of positive and negative experiences and recast them into metamemories. I think that the family interview and our letters provided such an opportunity for the three of us to do just that.

Wolcott [32] speaking about the respective roles of description, analysis, and interpretation in qualitative data analysis states that thoughts related to data analysis and interpretation may linger for years, just as details of events long forgotten may pop into one's head, or experiences in a new field setting may suddenly prompt a fresh perspective for rethinking the meaning of events in an earlier one. So, when we talk about the transformation of memories related to experiences of caring and non-caring in school or other important aspects of our lives, it is important for us to have others listen and share in transforming memories within the context of a caring environment.

It is also important to note that with qualitative research, there is usually improvisation that accompanies the development and conduct of a study – and that was certainly the case here. For example, when trying to clarify the complex nature of this study in contrast to the first study [2], my son and I had several conversations including a particularly memorable one when I was visiting him at his university and we met on a Sunday morning in November at a café near the campus. From a descriptive standpoint, I wrote much of this article in "real time" while we were seated next to a warm fireplace with flames licking about. It was a cold morning and the fire lent not only physical warmth but also an environment that seemed to make conversation and understanding flow more easily. In addition, a mother with two young children, who seemed to be preparing for an upcoming dance

lesson, were around the other side of the fireplace and were sharing in the warmth while also providing visual expression to the transferability of caring in education across families and generations. I also have found that I have been “mindfulness” as I collected data [18] where “the core of mindfulness is a heightened awareness that is the result from paying attention on purpose”. SR’s description of how the negative memories of Mrs. Danforth were transformed into positive ones continues to resonate with both my wife and me and have provided us with a lens to better understand our son – both who he is now as well as how the challenges he faces offer opportunities for further growth. This lens seems to embody Piaget’s notion of “assimilation” and “accommodation” in a concrete yet more inclusive way to reveal to SR how he can continue to grow along not only cognitive but also emotional, social, and spiritual paths. It also helps us as parents to hopefully guide his growth with more grace and wisdom.

I found findings related to the the underpinnings of this study (Piagetian Learning Theory, Constructivist Learning Theory, Polanyi’s tacit and propositional knowledge, and nostalgia research) to be most revealing. While I am gratified to have been able to appreciate these connections to metamemories, I am quite sure that there are other theories and concepts in the fields of psychology, sociology, and anthropology that would shed even more light on this phenomenon including metacommunication where the original intent of a communication is interpreted differently by different individuals. I am also quite certain that additional connections can be found in in art, music, novels, and theater. In fact, it is probably these latter non-academic pursuits where our emotions become more integrated with our reasoning and therefore help us to recognize, accept, and appreciate more fully that we humans are also “integrated” – it is both our thinking and feeling that contribute to our memories as well as how we come to transform them into metamemories.

Qualitative research can indeed be rife with non-control and “contamination” of data but at the same time very rich with the potential for helping to understand what really matters in teaching and learning as well as in other important areas of our lives. I recognize that not every family will decide to undertake a formal research study such as this one; however, the real key may be simply cultivating an attitude of adventure, caring, and mindfulness as we revel in the “ordinary” of our daily lives including the importance of our metamemories no matter the specific area or context of the inquiry. It is only through our awareness and cultivation of not only how we perceive experiences but also how we continuously re-construct them into metamemories that we can come to appreciate how wonderfully

complex we are and that all inquiry approaches offers us opportunities to learn more about these complexities.

7. References

- [1] Berliner, D.C., (2002). Educational research: The hardest science of all. *Educational Researcher*, 31(8), 18-20.
- [2] Bernauer, J.A., Bernauer, M.P., and Bernauer, P.J., (2017). A family affair: Caring in teaching and implications for teacher and researcher preparation. *Brock Education Journal*, 26(2), 4 – 15.
- [3] Creamer, E.G., (2018). An introduction to fully integrated mixed methods research. Sage.
- [4] Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L., (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Sage.
- [5] Creswell, J. W. and Poth, C.N., (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.
- [6] Erikson, E. H., (1963). *Childhood and Society* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Norton.
- [7] Gage, N. L., (1989). The paradigm wars and their aftermath: A “historical” sketch of research on teaching since 1989. *Educational Researcher*, 18(7), 4-10.
- [8] Guba, E. G., (1967). The expanding concept of research. *Theory into Practice*, 6(2), 57-65.
- [9] Guba, E. G., (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology Journal*, 29(2), 75–91.
- [10] Guba, E. G., (1990). *The paradigm dialog*. Sage Publications.
- [11] Heider, K. G., (1975). What do people do? Dani auto-ethnography. *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 31, 3-17.
- [12] Hesse-Biber, S. N., (2010). *Mixed methods research: Merging theory with practice*. The Guilford Press.
- [13] Jaeger, R. M., (1988). *Complementary methods for research in education*. American Educational Research Association.
- [14] Kelly, G. A., (1963). *A theory of personality: The psychology of personal constructs*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company.
- [15] Kessous, A. and Roux, E., (2008). Nostalgia as connection to the past: A semiotic analysis. *Qualitative Market Research*, 11(2), 192-212.
- [16] Komaraju, M., S. Musulkin., and G. Bhattacharya, (2010). Role of student–faculty interactions in developing college students’ academic self-concept, motivation, and

- achievement. *Journal of College Student Development*, 51(3), 332–342.
- [17] Kuhn, (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (2nd ed.). The University of Chicago Press.
- [18] Lemon, L., (2017). Applying a Mindfulness Practice to Qualitative Data Collection. *The Qualitative Report*, 22(12), 3305-3313. <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol22/iss12/14> (Access Date: 14 December, 2020).
- [19] Lichtman, M., (2013). *Qualitative research in education: A user's guide* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- [20] Lincoln, Y. S. and Guba, E. G., (2013). *The constructivist credo*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, Inc.
- [21] Muller, J., (2015). Exploring 'nostalgia' and 'imagination' for ubuntu-research: A postfoundational perspective. *Verbum et Ecclesia* 36(2), Art. #1432, 1-6.
- [22] Muncey, T., (2010). *Creating autoethnographies*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- [23] Nisson, J., (2021). Nostalgia is good for you. *The Saturday Evening Post*, January/February, pp. 10-12.
- [24] Dwyer, L.M, and Bernauer, J.A., (2014). *Quantitative research for the qualitative researcher*. Sage.
- [25] Piaget, J. (1954). *The construction of reality in the child*. (M. Cook, Trans.). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- [26] Piaget, J., (1963). *Origins of intelligence in children*. New York, NY: Norton.
- [27] Polanyi, M., (1962). *Personal knowledge*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- [28] Polanyi, M., (1966). *The tacit dimension*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- [29] Tierney, W. G., (1998). Life history's history: Subjects foretold. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 4, 49-70.
- [30] Umbach, P., and M. Wawrzynski, (2005). Faculty do matter: The role of college faculty in student learning and engagement. *Research in Higher Education* 46(2), 153–184.
- [31] Vygotsky, L. S., (1987). The genetic roots of thinking and speech. In R.W. Rieber and A.S. Carton (Eds.), *Problems of general psychology*, Vol. 1. *Collected works* (pp. 101-120). New York, NY: Plenum. (Work originally published 1934).
- [32] Wolcott, H. F., (1994). *Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis, and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SagePublications.
- [33] Wolcott, H. F., (2008). *Ethnography: A way of seeing*. Altamira Press.
- [34] Woolfolk, A. H., (2014). *Educational psychology*. (12th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.