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**The use of metaphors as a tool to enrich and broaden
emotional and cognitive expression among student-
teachers: Application in teaching art**

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Keywords

art, nonverbal/verbal metaphors, emotions, cognitive, processes, study group, mediation, custructivist narrative research.

Abstract

This research project is narrative and qualitative characterized as an Ethnographic Action research., which studies two courses in visual art that were conducted by me in the academic years 2013-14 and 2014-15 at the David Yellin College of Education in Jerusalem.

Because of the nature of the research and in order to maintain its concept and goals, I used narrative tools for the investigation as well as for the analysis of the results.

1. The research objectives are:

- 1.1. To examine the use of various metaphors, verbal and nonverbal-visual and their impact on the thinking processes, of the participant students, in order to enable them to adapt new thinking skills into new behavior patterns.
- 1.2. Trying to develop the participants' abilities to work with their future pupils, not only as teachers transmitting material, but also as educators and mediators, who take responsibility for the totality of issues: cognitive, mental, physical, social, of their students. The research examines the effectiveness and the feasibility of this personal and educational process.

2. The study participants: 28 students from these two courses. 22 students from 2014-2015 and 6 students from 2013-2014. These 6 students participated in the study six months after completing their studies.

3. The methods of investigation: were mainly narrative and concentrated on:

3.1. Open-form Questionnaires.

Questionnaires were given to all students during or at the end of every lesson. They didn't have to submit the assignment, but most of them did. They were expecting feedback from the lecturer, and usually good feedback urged them to continue and even to improve their performance.

3.2. Interviews: mainly a combination of open-ended, ethnographic (in-depth) and semi-structured interviews. They were extensive: oral and written dialogues, and interchange of e-mails, between the researcher and the interviewees.

Interviews are one of the most important sources of case-study information. The interview can take one of several forms: open-ended, focused, or structured. In an open-ended interview, the researcher can ask for the informant's opinion on events or facts. I chose the "in-depth-interview" as my main data collection tool in this section because it enabled me to embrace various aspects within the research and various influences in developing their potential. The in-depth-interview is particularly useful in studies of a range of factors governing students' behavior, like emotions, unconscious needs and interpersonal influences. Moreover, interviews allow access to the main participants in the project in a direct way and alert the researcher to those issues which are relevant, providing important research data.

Another reason for using interviews is the amount of information that is accessible through them.

3.3. Conversations: official meetings in the form of focus groups, or occasional meetings between the researcher and his students.

Focus groups turned out to be one of the case research methods that provided information of the highest order of importance. In the focus groups, each student could share other students' experiences as a member in the community of students, targeting themselves to achieve personal and professional benefits for their lives as human being and professionals, clarifying the main problems and struggles facing them in developing their potential. Focus groups also allow researchers to explore the nature and effects of ongoing social discourse in way that are not possible through individual interviews or observations. Individual interviews strip away the critical interactional dynamics that constitute much of social practice and collective meaning making" (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 902) and "to give voice to the previously silenced by creating a safe space for sharing one's life experience" (Chase, 2005, p. 648).

This focus group included most of the class members and is compared to the unstructured yet focused individual interviews that were performed in this research. The process in group interviews was more structured: I asked every student to give her/his own perspectives during the group discussion, to jot down notes as they thought of an issue. I was interested in personal experiences and views.

3.4. Written correspondence.

3.4.1. diaries

Diaries are a research technique concerned with logging activities by the participants in a study during a certain period of time in chronological order” (Rieman, 1993; Zimmerman & Wieder, 1977, in Babapour, Rehammar, & Rahe, 2012, p. 49)

“The use of a research diary was grounded in the epistemological position of social constructionism and the need for reflexivity in research” (Nadin & Catherine, 2006, p. 215); this is the pedagogical concept of the course and the philosophy on which this study is based.

In the study it was two types of diaries:

The follow-up diary – During the academic year all the participants (students) of the researched course were asked to fill out a diary that was not accessible to me/the researcher. It was used to maintain the connection between the students and their advisers.

The role of the personal advisors was complex:

- 1) To follow-up and to support the students during the process (as learners and as investigators) being researched;
- 2) To represent the students to me and to be my partners and advisers in my decision-making when it concerned their students.

Personal diary – This process included my personal diary, in which I recorded, prior to and at the end of each lesson, my thoughts, my plans, assessments about myself, and my teaching abilities

3.4.2. E. mails were exchanged between the students and the researcher.

3.5. Observations were conducted and documented by the researcher during most of the lessons

3.6. The study was followed by a pedagogical counselor, who is an arts teacher

4. The research question: The purpose of the study is to evaluate and improve a working model, which uses metaphors as a reflective tool for the facilitation of personal processes. The study examines the use of metaphors and their effectiveness in processes of transformation and the teaching methods and pedagogical perceptions by which it is possible to implement the use of metaphors for the purposes of personal transformation.

Therefore the research question is:

How can the expansion of the use of metaphor as a tool to enrich and broaden emotional and cognitive expression among students of education and teaching be implemented in art instruction?

With an emphasis on:

1. How to build a guidance model that shall allow the use of metaphors to enrich and broaden emotional and cognitive processes, in order to facilitate a process of personal transformation;
2. How does the use of metaphors affect the processes of transformation of each individual?

5. The assumptions of the study: The positivist paradigm claims, that it is needed to maintain an objective position towards the phenomenon being studied (Linciln & Guba, 2000). Those who advocate the constructivist paradigm, however, argue that it is impossible to distinguish between the researcher and the object of the study and to provide an objective position regarding the phenomenon (Gube & Lincoln, 1989, 1998). The constructivist stance sees the individual and his world as interdependent: 'the observer is part of what is observed and not separate from it. What the observer sees determines what he will define, measure and analyze' (Charmaz, 2000, p. 25), (Shkedi, 2003, p 23).

“For this reason “a qualitative study inquires to state research questions not objectives (specific goals for the research) or hypotheses (prediction that variables and statistical tests” (Creswell, 2007, p. 120).

“Qualitative research is based on assumptions that are very different from quantitative hypothesis” (ibid, p. 227). "In qualitative research, inquirers use the literature in a manner consistent with the assumptions of learning from the participant, and not prescribing the

questions that need to be answered from the researcher's stand point” (ibid, 2014, p. 29). This study is constructivist- narrative research, hence there is used in assumptions.

The study assumptions are

- 5.1. The use of metaphors, which allows introspective levels, in different parts, and the use of art as a metaphorical tool, bring deeper aspects of the mind to the surface.
- 5.2. Working with metaphors, as supporting personal change processes, the educator-mediator has a major role in the space between action and result, but also, he has the duty to give freedom and leeway to the participants

6. The study variables: The study variables refer to the actions performed using verbal and non-verbal metaphors, and their effect on the transformation processes which the students undergo.

Answering the research question was achieved by analyzing the participants' testimonies regarding themselves and the transformation processes they have undergone:

This means that the processes of change of the participants during the research time entailed by using verbal and nonverbal metaphors, and the study variables, testing the findings, results and conclusions. These help educators who want to influence the behavioral patterns of their students, build the necessary tools.

The additional angle in my research is to examine the changing components and to examine in depth how the using metaphors operate on the individual and influence and set in motion processes of change, cognitive and emotional processes, viewing how they receive their changing expression from one individual to another

7. Findings. The majority of the findings derived from the evolving study, as customary in an action-ethnographic research, show that:

- 7.1. The use of non-verbal metaphors was of great significance to the majority of the participants in creating a new self-perception.
- 7.2. For the students, creating a work of art and then observing and analyzing it through a cognitive way of thinking, is more significant for them than simply observing another's

work of art, or learning simply from world art ideologies, and trying to establish communication between their internal world and that of the artist.

- 7.3. Using an indirect tool through which they can contemplate their inner personality, and represent themselves through metaphors (art), increases the participants self-confidence and for some, a sense of self- control.

It emerges clearly that their learning group was very significant during the process of their studies, and became a safe and protective place for them to reveal themselves, without feeling any fear of injury. Moreover the group became a body which assists the individual to observe himself. All of the participants indicated that the unconventional structure of the learning system helped and urged them to adopt another kind of learning system that was meaningful to them.

8. Main Conclutions:

- 8.1. The choice to allow students to create art in each of the course's units is correct. When allowing students to respond through art, they communicate with themselves and with the artwork;
- 8.2. In order for the use of verbal metaphors to be of significance to many participants, they must be combined with the use of visual metaphors, thereby, creating a link between the images in the participant's mind, and what he is visually exposed to;
- 8.3. The class discourse will always be based on verbal visual metaphors, emphasizing them in order to create a "common language" for group members. This kind of work is especially useful in multi-cultural groups;
- 8.4. The mediator must construct the group in a gradual manner, based on his emerging personal knowledge of the group, and facilitating growing intimacy among group members. He will achieve this with the help of graded tasks, that require an increasing level of introspection and sharing. As noted earlier, the group has a key role in the individual's development, towards a process of change (see section IV.2 above);
- 8.5. The outlook guiding the mediator in the manner in which he works with the students, examines the existent elements, and questions them, in order to create a system which builds processes of change, and not one that freezes or perpetuates existing elements;
- 8.6. To enable and drive optimal work so students are free to work on their personal-change process; the mediator must find work methods, which allow him to recognize students' difficulties during the course. One example of this is a method developed in this course, in

which at the end of every lesson students were asked to address their difficulties in writing. The continuous exposure of personal process, allows the mediator to treat these difficulties immediately, and without delay. Deferral and insensitivity may harm the process;

- 8.7. The personal-change processes are enriched and highly significant when combined with academic learning of theories, concerning personal change, and formulate examples of making such changes. Particularly in this course, examples were taken from the art world;
- 8.8. The diary is a key tool influencing cognitive and behavioral transformation. The project-companion diary, in which every student must continuously write, is also a permanent means of organized communication between the mediator (the lecturer) and the student. It must be a tool which perpetually creates personal reflection within the student, bound by the mediator's specific instructions. The courses researched here, also required a reflective communication tool with a personal guide, who according to predetermined course principles, was assigned to each participant. This was designed to enable a process of heightened awareness of hidden layers, revealed during the participant's personal work, and to design a framework for a personal-change process.

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