Duoethnographic Research in English Language Teaching
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Introduction
First conceptualised by Norris and Sawyer (2004), Duoethnography is an emerging method of qualitative research in which two or more researchers juxtapose their life histories in order to explore a specified topic or field of study. Methodologically, it draws on autoethnography (Adams et al., 2015) and narrative inquiry, both of which link personal stories with wider societal narratives (Barkhuizen et al., 2014), taking a broadly poststructuralist epistemological stance.

Doing and writing duoethnography
Rather than being a prescriptive method, duoethnography instead outlines a number of central tenets which researchers may follow. These include a focus on ‘currere’, or life history as curriculum (Pinar, 1974), the creation of polyvocal and dialogic texts, audience accessibility, and the disruption of wider societal grand narratives, with the goal of achieving social justice and the elevation of marginalised voices (Norris and Sawyer, 2012).

In terms of data collection, duoethnographies usually begin with two or more researchers deciding on a topic they want to investigate. They engage in multiple recorded (written or spoken) discussions about that topic in relation to their life histories. The resultant data is then coded by theme, with the researchers looking for similarities and differences in their respective experiences. With audience accessibility in mind, the final research reports of duoethnographies are often presented in a dialogic, playscript style, with the data usually rewritten to make it more readable (while maintaining the integrity of the raw data). However, more traditionally formatted reports that present verbatim transcriptions are also common (Pinner and Ushioda, 2020; Rose and Montakantiwong, 2018).

Duoethnography for ELT research
Within English language teaching (ELT), duoethnography has so far been used to explore topics as diverse as native-speakerism (Lowe and Kiczkowiak, 2016; Lowe and Lawrence, 2018), the development of professional identity (Warren and Park, 2018), privilege and marginalisation (Gagné et al., 2018), and the intersections between, gender, race, sexuality, and native-speakhood in teacher identity (Lawrence and Nagashima, 2019). Although there are a number of areas in which duoethnography could be applied as a research method in ELT, we believe it could provide the most insights if used to investigate critical issues, teacher and student identity, and teaching approaches and practices.

In terms of critical issues, duoethnography draws on postmodern and critical approaches to research which promotes skepticism towards grand narratives and gives voice to the marginalised. Within ELT, this may be applied to: ‘native speaker’/’non-native speaker’ issues, the notion of cultural determinism, and issues of gender, class, sexuality, and race. In other words it is in a very good position to investigate critical issues; especially those which are concerned with the unequal balance of power in ELT.

Duoethnography also has great potential for further exploring teacher identity as the dialogic nature of the approach could help to illuminate and contrast the lived experiences of teachers, both personal and professional. Student identity is another area which could be fruitfully explored using duoethnography, as the method could help capture the student
experience, build academic community, and question established or dominant pedagogies (Diaz and Grain, 2017).

Finally, with regard to teaching practices, duoethnography has the potential to help question and disrupt professional and pedagogical practices. This can occur at three different levels. First, with regard to macro (or industry-wide practices), duoethnography could help juxtapose different experiences of the same industry in order to help readers question foundational assumptions about how areas of the ELT industry operate. For example, Hooper, Oka and Yamazawa (2020) contrast their experiences in the Japanese eikaiwa industry to show how misunderstandings and ambiguities can exist between the commercial and educational goals of these institutions. At a more local level, duoethnography can similarly help to question meso (or institutional-level practices). As an example, Lowe and Lawrence (2018) investigated the hidden curricula in their ELT training, showing how hidden assumptions of superiority of teaching approaches were embedded in their courses of study. Finally, on the micro (or classroom-level), duoethnography can be used to assess and critique the value of methodologies. For example, Rose and Montakantiwong (2018) look at the relationship between teaching methods and English as an international language.

**Criticisms and future directions**

There are a number of criticisms of duoethnography, which deserve to be addressed. The first of these regards the semi-fictionalised nature of the dialogues. Earlier we emphasised that this rewriting must be done in a way so not as to compromise the meaning of the data. However, researchers must be very careful here, as it can be easy to let biases slip in or meanings to be subtly altered. While audience accessibility is of great importance, it must not come at the expense of accuracy.

A second limitation of duoethnography is the potential for unequal power relations between researchers to cause issues. As duoethnographies can expose quite vulnerable information about the participants, and as power imbalances may make it difficult for a researcher to refuse to share this information, this is a key ethical concern that must be borne in mind by those wishing to engage in this kind of research.

A final concern which has been raised is the accuracy of memory. Duoethnography relies on life histories as its main source of data, but human memory alone is fallible and recollections may not reflect what truly happened in the past. As such, researchers have begun recommending and experimenting with introducing procedures such as triangulation with other sources of data (such as written records), and member checking with others who were present at the events recalled (Lowe and Lawrence, 2018).

**Conclusion**

Duoethnography is an emerging research method in ELT which has great potential for investigating critical issues and questions of identity, as well as disrupting dominant professional discourses and practices. As a method which is not yet well established, there are still questions to be considered about its effectiveness, and about how it may be made more robust, but it has shown great promise for exploring a number of issues in ELT, and has potential for helping to illuminate many more.
References
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