Implementing Ethics in Educational Ethnography

Regulation and Practice

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Chapter 6

Double agent?

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Ethical considerations in conducting ethnography as a teacher-researcher

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Introduction

While developing a position of a teacher-researcher, I have aimed at making educational practice and research meet more quickly and more effectively. Working 80 per cent as a music teacher in a Finnish comprehensive school, and 20 per cent as a researcher in the University of the Arts Helsinki, I am able to bring research-based information to school practice as well as to raise current topics and to collect material from school life for research.

The key benefits of the double role are living in the field for years, possessing tacit knowledge of the teaching profession, and following the societal and educational changes in the school in real time. However, there are also ethical challenges due to the double position. How to record the daily life of the school, balancing your research interests, teaching schedule and ethical questions concerning the students? How to combine the positions as an observing researcher and as an equal and active member of the school staff? How to honor students' and teachers' right to refuse participating in my research, when I am researching the daily life of our school?

In this setting, I understand "integrity" as defined by Bruce Macfarlane (2009: 44–45), namely in addition to the research process concerning also the researcher, "integrating different parts of one's true self, physically, mentally and perhaps socially" and "linking values and identity as a person with practice as a researcher". The roles of a teacher and a researcher need not to be separated and must not be ignored, but reflected as facets of one's identity, affecting also the moral and ethical choices. Marilys Guillemin and Lynn Gillam (2004: 274) write:

> Our research interests and the research questions we pose, as well as the questions we discard, reveal something about who we are. Our choice of research design, the research methodology, and the theoretical framework that informs our research are governed by our values and reciprocally, help to shape these values.

This chapter will focus on the positionality of a teacher-researcher as a moral agent (Macfarlane 2009) when conducting ethnography. As Guillemin and Gillam above, I find the double role of a teacher-researcher informing all the phases of the research. Therefore, reflection is also needed, not only as the final phase of the research project, but throughout the process. I will discuss ethical considerations concerning both the students and the colleagues, moments of reflection and my solutions on how to define the topics and design the methods when conducting ethnography in my own educational community.

Ethical principles of teachers and researchers

In Finland, the professional ethical codes of teachers and educational ethnographers are mainly overlapping. Both professions are regulated by laws and other norms, for example, curricula or ethical principles of research given by national or international boards. Yet, in both professions, knowing legislation and regulation is necessary but still only a starting point for ethical action. In addition, both professions have their ethical norms and morals. While both teachers and ethnographers work in the field, interacting with people in their daily life, the work can neither be totally planned and controlled beforehand, nor regulated in every detail. Often unforeseen situations require quick decisions on how to react and quick evaluation on whether the planned activity is still relevant.

In Finland, ethical principles of research have been published separately for the humanities and social and behavioural sciences (TENK 2009), and the ethical approval process considering qualitative, non-medical research is relatively smooth. As for school ethnographies, ethical review process is not necessarily needed at all, if "the head teacher of a school has evaluated that the study would produce useful information for the institution or school and can be carried out as part of the normal activities of the institution or school" and if directly identifying information is not collected (TENK 2009: 6–7; TENK 2018). Even if the review process is not required, the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics (TENK) guides to pay careful attention to respectful action towards the participants through all the stages of the research by, for example, "treating subjects with respect' during the research process and 'reporting findings in a respectful way in research publications" (TENK 2009: 8).

On the other hand, universities or funding agencies may require ethical review, as is the case in the ArtsEqual project under which I currently work. The review process guides the researcher to consider the possible risks throughout the project, which acts as a precautionary process. The obvious ethical risks are eliminated, of course, but beyond that, the ethical boards work more as advisory boards, giving recommendations on what issues to consider more carefully during the research process. However, a big responsibility for the final ethical solutions is left for the researcher. The Finnish National Advisory Board on Research Ethics (TENK 2009: 13) reminds:

Evaluation never shifts responsibility for research ethics to the committee. In research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences, ethical questions focus on the encounter between the researcher and the subject, which can include unanticipated factors. The researcher is always responsible for the ethical and moral solutions in a study.

Like researchers, teachers also work very independently in Finland. There is no school inspector system, for as the school teacher qualification requires a master's degree, teachers are expected to be able to independently plan, evaluate and develop their pedagogy, considering also ethical aspects. The Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ) guides teachers in their *Ethical Principles for the Teaching Profession* (OAJ 2018):

Any consideration of the ethics of the teaching profession calls for a distinction to be made between legal and ethical matters. The basic duties and responsibilities of teachers are defined in the relevant legislation and norms, while the content of the teaching is laid down in the curriculum. By contrast, however, the ethics of the profession are not based on compulsion or external supervision but on an internalized concept of the moral obligations attached to the work.

Concurrently, the Research Council of the neighbouring country Sweden guides researchers in the *Good Research Practice* (Swedish Research Council 2017: 17) as follows.

[O]ne must constantly distinguish between the law and morals and, when it comes to research, also between research ethics legislation and the rules found in research ethics codes. The ethical criteria can be more far-reaching than the legal requirements when their content is otherwise closely related. The ethical criteria can also address issues that do not appear in legislation at all . . . The researcher's own reflections on his or her project must instead be based on both knowledge of the content of laws and codes, and on his or her own moral judgement.

The duality of fulfilling the legal duties, on one hand, and the ethical codes on the other, has been a topic of vivid discussion during the first decades of the twenty-first century, and has also been described as "external and internal research ethics" (Swedish Research Council 2017: 12), or as "up-front and embedded ethics" (MacDonald 2017: 32). Guillemin and Gillam (2004: 263, 273) use concepts of "procedural ethics", concerning the process of designing the research taking into account the ethical issues that can be anticipated in the process and presented to the ethical review board, and "ethics in practice" concerning "the everyday ethical issues that arise in the doing of research". The Swedish Research Council makes

a distinction between research ethics and professional ethics, the former referring to conducting the research project and the latter to "the researcher's responsibility towards research and research community" (Swedish Research Council 2017: 12). As professional ethics is here understood as containing relationships to one's professional communities, in case of a teacher-researcher I read this to cover collegial communities both in academia and in school, as well as responsibility towards both the professions. In addition to the research community, the professional ethics would thus cover relationships to colleagues in school, the students, the communal authorities running the school, as well as teachers as a professional community. This kind of understanding of professional ethics finds resonance in Stutchbury's and Fox's (2009) concept of "relational thinking" as one of four dimensions of an ethical appraisal framework.

Despite various concepts, there seems to be consensus that the ethical matters of research are not solved once the review board has accepted the research plan. Especially ethnographers, dealing with values, beliefs and hierarchies of social communities, are likely to face the biggest challenges while in the field. They may sense "ethical tensions" (Costley & Gibbs 2006: 92) when they face "judgements that need to be made" (Stutchbury & Fox 2009: 494) or "resolve conflicts" (Hammersley 2013: 7) which may be "role conflicts" (Fox & Mitchell, Chapter 8, this volume), "moral dilemmas" (Levinson 2010) or "dilemmas of practice" (Josselsson 2007; Nichols 2016), or, when no stark choice between very different options is needed, merely "ethically important moments" (Guillemin & Gillam 2004).

Being a teacher-researcher, in moments of ethical tensions I find teacher ethics define my solutions even more than researcher ethics. Referring to my reading of professional ethics in the case of a teacher-researcher above, it is due to the great amount of relationality in a teacher's work. As a teacher, I am related to school students with more ties than I would be as a mere researcher; I am not only interested in their lives and opinions but also responsible for supervising the students in their studies in general, in group dynamics and in "good life". When a researcher as an outsider may choose to affect the daily life of the school as little as possible, as an insider I am expected to make a difference in school life. Thus, my power position is also different to that of an outsider. When conducting a research project in my school, it is not only about the integrity of the research project but also about my daily actions and relationality as a teacher, as a supervisor of the teenaged students, as a colleague, as an employee, as member of staff and as member of the sub teams. Similarly, Costley and Gibbs (2006: 91) argue that the practitioner researchers should prioritise their allegiance to their workplaces, for the aim of the research is usually developing the practice of this community, and let the academy be only the second community. Also, Fox (with Mitchell, Chapter 8, this volume) chose putting participants and local values first. Even with a permission from the ethical board to conduct my study, putting the local school values first and considering my relationality as a teacher towards my

students or my colleagues, I have several times redirected my research plans. I will reflect these "ethically important moments" (Guillemin & Gillam 2004: 262) as cases in this chapter.

As a frame, I use Macfarlane's (2009: 41–42) conception of research as a series of phases, which are framing, negotiating, generating, creating and disseminating; however, when Macfarlane considers reflecting as the final phase, I will discuss reflection taking place during all the other phases and thus consider reflexivity as an "ethical notion" (Guillemin & Gillam 2004: 262).

Anonymity impossible – questions of framing

Instead of having individual key informants to get insight into the culture, I have chosen mainly to use collective group approaches.

It is necessary to design the research setting so that the research project will not harm individual participants nor the community (Swedish Research Council 2017: 13). The double role of a teacher-researcher sets special requirements in this sense. As a member of the school staff, you get to know issues and get access to places and classified files that would not be revealed to an outsider (e.g., access to staff meetings). In turn, as a member of the community, you may not get to know issues that would be told to a researcher from outside of the school. This affects both selecting the topic and the approach.

When researching one's own practice or community, it is impossible to promise full anonymity for the participants. Even when using pseudonyms for the community and the people observed, it is easy to find out the researcher's affiliation (TENK 2009: 13). Moreover, in educational ethnography, it is usually necessary to describe the age of the participants and the size of the target group, as well as the year when the research material was collected. With these identifiers, it might be possible to recognise the participants. On one hand, very intimate issues might be better left to researchers who are not connected to participants with other ties than the research. On the other hand, a carefully and respectfully designed setting and approach may allow dealing also with delicate topics in ways that would not be possible for researchers from outside of the school community.

My doctoral research (Nikkanen 2014) dealt with how musical performances may construct the educational culture and the "local moral order" (van Langenhove & Harré 1999) of a school. I worked at a school developing methods for collaborative working, supporting students with special educational needs and nurturing a sense of community. School celebrations, including various performances by student groups, were found as important elements towards these goals. The teachers found that school celebrations were not only for fun or recreation. They served the sense of community but also, as one teacher articulated, while the whole class was working for a common performance, the students "learn something that would not be learned during the normal classroom lessons" (Nikkanen 2010: 52).

I was interested in the process of preparing for a musical performance both from the viewpoint of the educational culture and of an individual student with special educational needs. It would have been interesting to follow the process of a musical performance through the eyes of one or two students. However, this would have brought up very personal information. Bearing in mind that both the teachers and students could be recognisable by some readers, I chose to approach the issue through the community lens. I conducted group interviews instead of individual interviews or diaries, and observed a whole class instead of individual students (Nikkanen 2010, 2014).

The entire pedagogical staff of the school discussed the history, the peda-gogical significance and the future challenges of the practice of multiple annual celebrations in this particular school. While discussing, they negotiated a shared understanding of the educational culture of the school. Thus, they created a "col-lective narrative" that they could stand for as a staff.

I then observed one process of producing a musical performance by a group of second-grade (roughly eight-year-old) students and their class teacher. Instead of observing how the process looks like to one particular student with special educational needs, I chose to observe how the values and principles articulated by the staff, strongly emphasising the significance of performance processes in supporting the growth of students with special edu-cational needs, take place in action. The teacher wanted to base the process of preparing for the performance on values of participatory agency, collaboration and fair play. The musical process demanded the students to develop their skills to cooperate in engaging these values and took place in an embodied, sometimes also very noisy way. Some of the students protested strongly when the collective decision was different from their opinion. However, observ-ing this helped to illuminate the question: how is moral order negotiated in moments of disagreement? The chosen perspective – to observe the process of the class community instead of one child – made it easier to write about awk-ward moments. It allowed me to distance writing from individuals if needed. Additionally, because it was now more about group dynamics than about individual students, it allowed me to give several pseudonyms to one student when describing sensitive moments, in order to avoid several identifiers lead-ing to recognising any student.

It is hard to hide – negotiating participation

Participation in research needs to be voluntary and one should be able at any time to quit participation in the research. However, it is hard to hide while someone is conducting ethnography in your community.

On one hand, community perspective may cover individuals, letting one simply be part of the issue observed and not the key informant. On the other hand, it may also limit one's possibilities to refuse participation in the research as an individual – especially so with children. The Finnish National Advisory

Board on Research Ethics allows observing teaching even without a consent from parents, if the project is being carried out as part of the normal school work (TENK 2009: 6). Even when families are informed of the research, the decisions about participation are often made by adults. Therefore, what is the child's possibility to refuse participation, if the everyday life of the class is agreed by teachers and parents to be observed? Is it possible for the parents to deny participation without fearing that this would affect the relationship between the child and the teacher, or even the assessment?

Also, amongst the staff, agreeing participation as a community may in effect force an individual to participate non-voluntarily. In schools, the decision about participation in a research study is usually made by a steering group or solely by the principal. Still, the individual employees can not be forced to participate (Gray 2014: 90). Yet, even though no actual coercion would take place, it may be almost impossible to refuse to participate in research if the researcher has got permission to attend your meetings or observe the daily life of your workplace. It may also be difficult to refuse if doing so would make an individual feel that they seem resistant as a colleague, as a friend or as a member of staff.

> A researcher must make sure that the principle of voluntary participation is also observed in situations where there is interaction with subjects. A subject's annoyance, embarrassment, fearfulness or physical fatigue can be sufficient grounds for the researcher to discontinue the study as far as the subject is concerned, even if the subject does not expressly refuse to continue. It is essential to ensure that subjects are participating voluntarily when studying people in institutional settings.
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> (TENK 2009: 9; 2018)

As for students, I have asked for oral assent in addition to signed consent from parents. If a student has not wanted to be filmed or interviewed, I have honored his or her decision. Sometimes I have recorded merely the feet of the children if this was accepted, or set the camera so that the particular child is not visible. In some occasions, I have just shut the camera. As for adults, one occasion left me hesitating and led even to a change of research topic – although I eventually returned to it – as is described in the next narrative.

Narrowing the field – questions of generating data

In ethnography, it is usual to collect any possible data that may shed light on the phenomenon inquired. However, I chose to narrow the field and define the time and the venues where I collect data.

In 2014, a renewed version of the *National Core Curriculum for Basic Education* was published.[1] Compared to the previous Core Curricula, greater emphasis is laid on, e.g., crossing the borders of subjects and classrooms, active participation, the significance of the emotions and the joy of learning. The schools

are expected to annually offer every student at least one multidisciplinary learning unit, that is, a unit combining contents and methods of two or more subjects.

While during the pre-school and primary school years, usually taught by class teachers, multidisciplinary approaches are widely used, I was interested in how this principle could be brought into practice in the very subject divided and forty-five-minute lesson divided tradition of the lower-secondary school. Also, I was keen to know whether it would be possible to use art-based approaches and appreciate artistic modes of learning, knowing, doing and being also when studying contents of academic subjects.

One of my research themes I named as "Arts, Academics, and Wellbeing", including the question of "How to organize collaborative planning, working, teaching and learning in teachers' and students' schedules?" I expected that the modules would be carried out within the traditional schedule, to be term- or year-long and between two or three subjects, and I started planning a module with a history teacher. On the contrary, the steering group of the school set a special team to plan the realisation of these modules. The team has innovated several possible designs, each tested within a couple of years. For example, the first module was designed in groups of six to seven teachers of various subjects and age levels. Every group was to plan one lesson on the theme space, which was then taught to every class (from first to ninth grade) within one week. I had been prepared to document the process of me and the history teachers planning how to synchronise the contents and perspectives of the music and history courses during the eighth grade. Suddenly, the planning and implementing was spread through the whole school. I tried to follow documenting, how we would overcome the challenge as teachers in an 850-student school, catering for general education, special education, music-specialised education and education for recently immigrated children. I planned to write diary notes of how the process progressed, what issues were discussed as benefits and problems, how the problems were solved and how the task was encountered emotionally. One day, I was working by the computer in the teachers' lounge while I heard some teachers discussing the process. I started writing notes, not mentioning the names of discussants, but documenting comments and interpreting emotions connected. I needed to leave the computer for a while and when I returned, a colleague, looking for a free computer to work with, made clear that she had seen my notes by asking: you are working by this computer, aren't you? Suddenly I felt guilty. I knew I had done nothing illegal; the school had accepted the role of partner school for the research project, and the teachers knew this and the subject of my research. Still, I felt like a spy disguised.

For a researcher from outside of the school, there would not have been any problem in documenting the discussion. It would also have been evident for the teachers that the researcher, when present, might be taking notes. I realised that in spite of the consents and the nature of ethnography, I should not record every aspect of the everyday life. The participants need to know when I do the research and when I am present merely in the role of a colleague or teacher.

Turning it around, I also do not want that, in my presence, colleagues would suspect that anything they say could and would be used for purposes they could not control.

I decided to terminate this research topic for I felt that it was ethically impossible to observe something so scattered in time and all over the school. Luckily, my second topic – how the school could increase accessibility of after school musical activities – turned out to be fruitful and possible to study. I continued developing the multidisciplinary and art-based practices as a teacher, and helping other researchers with their interventions in my school.

One of the interventions initialised by another researcher was a language-sensitive dance workshop for recently immigrated students. After one term of working with these small groups I suggested that we would develop the design by collaborating with a peer group of a general education class. To be able to run a larger project, we could use the week reserved for multidisciplinary learning units and connect with the common theme, Finnish nature and animals. We chose the peer group to be an eighth-grade group and, consulting the biology teacher, decided to concentrate on Finnish forests, that being a key issue in the eighth-grade biology course.

Suddenly I noticed that we had planned a multidisciplinary learning unit, using an art-based approach on an academic topic, engaging a limited number of participants, time and space. Thus, we had framed a bounded context which enabled us to document the phase as originally intended.

Teaching and researching – questions of creating results and interpretations

In participatory ethnography, the researcher should not impose personal bias in the data. However, as a teacher, I design my lessons and courses, and as a member of the staff I am expected to participate in decisions on the educational culture of the school.

My ideal in developing the position of a teacher-researcher has been bringing research-based information to school practice and bringing practice-based information from school to research. However, Macfarlane (2009: 59), for example, is doubtful about the quality of research where the researcher is part of the phenomenon, and names school teachers particularly as an example. He sees bias and ability to change the process as clear risks. Indeed, ethical honesty is required when deciding which practices are to be developed and researched, and how to act within these practices both as a teacher and as a researcher. Important questions for me to reflect upon have been: does research influence my actions as a teacher? Do I ask students to do something just because of my research? Do I favour some students or activities only to get good results as a researcher?

One solution connected to this aspect is balancing with power positions. Although being deeply interested in developing the school, I have not volunteered

to be a member of the school steering group. I find it important that the steering group accepts the plans for the research interventions. I need to be able to rationalise the suggested interventions in terms of the curriculum and the good life in school to the steering group. It is also easier for my colleagues to make critical questions on my plan when they are acting as members of the steering group, being in this role above me in organisational hierarchy and speaking with the collective "mouth" of the group, than it would be in their role as my peers.

While planning the implementation of the multi-disciplinary learning unit "Finnish Forest" described above, I needed to choose one class to be a peer group for the group of the recently immigrated students. I was supervising one group and knew that it would be most convenient for me to run the intervention if I chose this group. The intervention was to take place during the multidisciplinary unit week and the supervisors were to work with their groups for the whole week. By choosing this particular group, I could combine my roles both as a teacher and a researcher in a practical way.

Yet, I had noticed last year that this group – being a music-specialised group – spent great efforts on making their presentations look and sound nice while paying less attention to the content and the language. Thus, I preferred to use the week with this class for rigorous academic work and ask some other teacher, some other group and some other researcher to participate in the intervention, for me to be able to set the students' needs first and concentrate on my task as a class supervisor. However, in the run-up to the intervention, there turned out to be increasing signs of tensions within this group between peer groups or individual students, like leaving someone out or speaking impolitely. In the Finnish National Core Curriculum, in addition to the subjects to be taught, seven "transversal competences" are pointed out that are to be promoted in school instruction as part of different subjects (Finnish National Agency of Education 2018). As important as competences in "thinking and learning to learn or multi-literacy", it is to rehearse "cultural competence, interaction and self-expression" (*ibid.*). While literacy skills can be practised throughout the year in any subject, the special week offered a special environment for studying interaction. Therefore, I changed my mind and chose my supervisees to participate in the intervention engaging non-verbal, embodied communication and collaboration. Of course, it is hard to say whether I found this justification only because I was looking for one. Reflecting on the case now, I still argue that I used my teacher knowledge and ethics appropriately, for a year later, in the annual discussions with every family, the students generally claimed that the mental atmosphere within the group was better than last year.

Observing critically, writing respectfully – questions of dissemination

"One form of ethnography is critical ethnography, studying issues like power and empowerment, inequality and inequity, dominance and repression, hegemony

and victimization" (Creswell & Poth 2018: 94). However, critical examining of structures does not mean writing critically of individuals.

In my doctoral research (Nikkanen 2014), as mentioned above, I observed the process of a second-grade class with their teacher to write a song for the summer celebration of the school. They wrote lyrics, composed a melody, painted illustrations, planned instrumentation, agreed on task division and rehearsed for the performance. The process with a group of eight-year-old students, many with special educational needs, was not easy for the teacher to lead embodying values of participatory agency, collaboration and fair play. Having observed a process of balancing with educational ideals, curriculum objectives, musical relevance, time and space, my material contained data about some very sensitive moments.

In this case, it was easy for me to respect and even admire the solutions of the young teacher. Yet, while I brought the first drafts to our doctoral seminar, my peer candidates told they felt uneasy reading it and found themselves thinking of how they could help the teacher in the noisy mess. Having been present in the class and knowing the teacher, the students and the school, I also knew that the situation was not in fact out of the teacher's control as my peers had interpreted, although nurturing participatory agency may often look like a mess in the beginning. I spent a lot of time trying to find a way of writing so that I could catch the nature of the process from chaos to order and still keep the dignity of the teacher and guide the reader safely through the text.

In ethnography, it is necessary to also capture moments of chaos or conflict, but it is as necessary to write about these in a way that does not harm the persons or the community involved.

> Researchers should avoid any damage or harm to subjects that may be caused by research publications. However, this principle should not prevent the publication of research findings that may not be pleasing to subjects in all respects. A researcher's task is to produce new information without having to fear the reaction of authorities or other research subjects. Particularly research concerning the use of power and the functioning of social institutions must not be restricted on the grounds that results can have negative effects for subjects. The best way to ensure freedom of research is to conduct research carefully and systematically and to publish results with proper arguments and shedding light on different perspectives in a balanced manner.
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> (TENK 2018)

It might be tempting to take sides when writing ethnography, for example, to sympathise with the students as much as to express antipathy towards the teachers. This kind of stance could even lure more readers. However, the researcher is committed to encounter all the participants with respect, even when writing about issues difficult to accept (see, e.g., Barbour 2010; Sikes 2010). This means looking at the issue from both sides; opening the view as to why such decisions

are made or practices created; seeing the individual as members of their community and their decisions in relation to the culture of the field. Whilst critical ethnography aims at recognising irrelevant practices and structures and finally changing them, an ethical act is to discuss the problem while still in the field and, if possible, also to describe any progress happening. It is important to take into account the researcher's own part in the communication (see also Costley & Gibbs 2006: 95). When writing, instead of focusing on individual people, it may help to focus on processes. One solution is to describe the phenomenon, but not in detail, e.g., telling what happened but not who were the individual actors. It is important to keep the research questions at the forefront – how the practices, structures or professional understanding should be developed and how the problem could be solved.

Double agent – reflecting and balancing

The double role of teacher-researcher contains special ethical advantages as well as special ethical risks. Returning to Macfarlane's fears about the quality of the research conducted by an insider, I argue that, although acknowledging the risks as real, actually, the possibility to change the educational process is the clue of the double position as a teacher-researcher. However, constant critical reflection is needed for recognising one's multiple motifs for action.

Ideally, being a "double agent" and hence knowing the practices, languages and ethical codes of both professions, a teacher-researcher can act as an *active agent* for participatory practices and positive change in both fields. A teacher-researcher possesses timely knowledge on quickly changing school practices. The context-specific tacit knowledge that may be gained only by working in a school community may help to develop special, local, research-based pedagogical solutions, as well as relevant research designs. With professional researcher skills, in turn, these local solutions may be evaluated and reported to the benefit of global knowledge.

The ethical risks derive from balancing with these two roles. In my experience, the roles are not contradicting, but partly overlapping. Constant critical reflection is needed through all the phases (Guillemin & Gillam 2004: 274) and all the layers (Stutchbury & Fox: 2009) of research. First, ethical consideration is needed on the effects of sharing the time between two tasks and two employers; does it harm my school work that I work only 80 per cent at school? Is it possible to do any meaningful research with only 20 per cent weekly working time? On one hand, some of the work is overlapping, for example, part of planning and teaching in a course that is carried out also as a research intervention. On the other hand, both the school and the university have their demands concerning the duties outside of the actual teaching or researching, and they seem often to be the same for me as they are for the full-time teachers and researchers.

Second, there are issues of balancing duties as a member of two staffs. Does it harm the school community if I am present only four days a week? Does someone need to do extra work due to my absence? With so few working hours, do I harm communication in my research group? While a researcher from outside of the school can ask for permission to observe any place or class or group during a day, a teacher-researcher needs to follow both the schedules and the organisational structures of the school. Thus, the challenge is to keep your position as a normal member of the staff. For example, if you are a member of one team, it is difficult to follow or effect the work of other teams. Do the benefits of being a link between the two fields compensate for the shortage of time?

Ethical codes of both teachers and ethnographers are converging in the sense that everything that is not denied is not allowed either.

> In research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences, ethical questions focus on the encounter between the researcher and the subject, which can include unanticipated factors. The researcher is always responsible for the ethical and moral solutions in a study.
>
> (TENK 2009: 13)

> The work of teaching should include consideration and evaluation of the ethics of one's own goals and motives.
>
> (OAJ 2018)

Thus, the third challenge is balancing the interest of collecting data and developing practices with ethical action as a teacher. Constant situational, critical and sensitive consideration one's own motives is needed for the double role; do I research to make the practice better, or do I change practice to make the research better? Do I research to develop practices that may also help my colleagues, or do I use my colleagues to help my research? Do I develop practices to make the courses better for my students, or do I use the students in developing my courses to make my research better? (See also Guillemin & Gillam 2004: 275.) While at best the whole school community may benefit from the professional skills of a teacher-researcher in developing the educational culture, at worst there is a danger of disintegrating the community. If the colleagues, students or parents feel insecure about the purposes or methods of the research, instead of being appreciated as an active agent, the teacher-researcher may be perceived as a *spy agent*. Thus, special sensibility is needed in choosing both the research topics and methods.

While an outsider may see or say something that would not be possible for an insider, sometimes it is also vice-versa. Andrew Barbour (2010), for example, describes a problematic situation while observing teaching of his colleague and friend. He noticed some obvious malpractice but felt unable to articulate it while an outsider in this particular classroom and feeling a need to be grateful for access

to the field. While being part of the phenomenon researched also causes hindrances for some topics, methods and actions, it also allows the researcher to affect on practice from inside. If a practice is noticed to confront the public aims, an insider, as a full member of a community and as a peer, may take the initiative and articulate that *we* have something wrong here and suggest that *we* do something to this together.

Lizzi Milligan (2016) coins a term, *in-betweener*, in context to be a teacher doing ethnography in a foreign school and being in a position between students and the staff, and being an insider in school life but an outsider in the local culture. In this position Milligan found herself getting closer to the students than she would have if acting as a teacher. However, for some students she seemed to be "the outsider who can change their world" (p. 241). The researcher as an outsider may see and hear issues that are never questioned in the community, but have no power to change them other than pointing them out, whereas a teacher-researcher, as an insider in both the fields, is able to make research and practice interact immediately in one's own practice.

For me, the great chance of being able to work as a teacher-researcher in two great professional communities has also caused anxiety. There are sometimes amazing things happening and I catch myself thinking that there is no recording of these situations taking place. Simultaneously, I remind myself that there is no need. I can relax as a researcher and enjoy such moments in the role of a teacher, for this is not my research topic – but, as I find this fascinating professionally, it might become one in the future.

Note

1 The Finnish system of the National Core Curriculum with local applications is described as follows on the web page of the Finnish National Board for Education: "The national core curriculum is drawn up by the Finnish National Agency for Education. It includes the objectives and core contents of different subjects, as well as the principles of pupil assessment, special-needs education, pupil welfare and educational guidance". The principles of a good learning environment, working approaches as well as the concept of learning are also addressed in the core curriculum. The education providers, usually the local education authorities and the schools themselves draw up their own curricula for pre-primary and basic education within the framework of the national core curriculum. These curricula may be prepared for individual municipalities or institutions or include both sections. The national core curriculum for basic education was renewed in 2014, and the new curriculum has been implemented in schools from August 2016. www.oph.fi/english/curricula_and_qualifications/basic_education.

Acknowledgements

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