2: Methodology for Data Gathering

The overarching approach for my research methodology was ethnography, because I was interested in how students' ideas about the possible roles of artists might evolve through the planning of this specific event. I had never used ethnography before, and so introduced myself to Kramer and Adams' (2017) description of why and how researchers use it. It felt particularly suitable as an overarching methodology because it was about coming to a 'holistic understanding of a social or cultural group' - in my case, BA Fine Art Y3 students (Kramer and Adams, 2017, p. 2).

Ethnography also enabled me to consider how my own positionality played a role in a student's learning journeys, as I could view myself as a participant in sessions led by RUSS members.

Ethnography also felt suitable as I could use a variety of methodologies for data gathering: observation, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of images/artworks that students had contributed/references in the lead up to the neighbours event - these could be their own or other peoples. I used a variety of methodologies not in order to triangulate data 'against information gathered through other means' (Adler and Adler, 1994, cited in Tjora, 2006, p. 430), but as the most practical way of collecting data over the course of the project in order to analyse the possible transformations in students' ideas about the roles that artists can play in community organisations.

2.1: Observation

I observed two sessions: the students' first visit to the RUSS site on 15th November, and an event on 7th December where the students' presented to their peers and two tutors their contributions to the neighbours' event. My method for recording my observations was field notes.

How did I initially approach observation and making field notes?

Although in both of these sessions I was not only an active participant, but a co-facilitator of activities and discussion, alongside others, in recording my field notes I was focused on maintaining as 'naive' a position as possible given my role within the context (Tjora, 2006, p. 447).

Whilst Jones et al. (2010, p. 481) highlight that the act of observing and documenting is never neutral, I attempted to adopt this mode of naive description for a number of reasons. First, Tjora (2006, p. 438) notes that this approach resists the idea that all events can be effectively described (whether by someone in a position of authority such a lecturer, or by anyone) and avoids interpreting the events being observed, which may both result in the projection of the observer's biases onto those events and may preclude more generative reflection post-observation. Additionally, in my case, as I know the students that I'm observing, I 'need[ed] to be even more aware of the problem of including interpretations and descriptions' (Tjora, 2006, p. 447). Finally, I was also interested in generating what Jones et al. deem the 'baroque method', an iteration of naive description that aims to document the complexity of the object of study by avoiding '"making sense"' of it and thus providing 'a

textual space to think "otherwise" about what we see' (2010, pp. 487-488). Once again, this was in order to counteract the potential biases that I felt could emerge when I was analysing my data, as I felt so intertwined with the project as both a lecturer at Chelsea and a trustee at RUSS.

Re-working my methodology for ethnographic observation via Embodied Inquiry

The above ideas regarding naive description were considered before gathering any data. To an extent, they support one of my central intentions behind this project, which is to identify decolonial practices for learning within my teaching context. However, it was after a tutorial with Mallika on 30 October, and after the first instance of gathering data, on 31 October, that I reflected on whether my data gathering methodology was accurately reflecting my focus on identifying decolonial approaches to learning. It was with this in mind that I identified embodied inquiry as an additional tool with which to design my data gathering.

Engaging with Leigh and Brown's (2021, p. 28) notion of 'Embodied Inquiry' provided a way for me in my observation to subvert the potential privileging of things said in conversation over bodily actions and emotive expressions. I had to challenge the idea that the learning students and myself could be identified only in spoken and written word, as Mignolo notes that 'de-linking' from Western imperial knowledge structures relies on challenging claims that knowledge lies 'beyond bodies and places' (2011, pp. 142-143).

Embodied Inquiry is not a distinct methodology but a 'different ontological standpoint' that can support researchers' engagement with the often under-examined aspects of data gathering processes - by focusing on 'the body as a communicative and expressive tool constructing new knowledge and data' (Leigh and Brown, 2021, pp. 28, 33). This, ironically, better articulated the lens that I was searching for when reading Ellis and Bochner (2006) on autoethnography. While trying to advocate 'the embrace of intimate involvement, engagement, and embodied participation' to recognise neglected aspects of research, such as feelings and spatial affect, Ellis and Bochner's (2006, pp. 433-434) text was removed from context in a way that contradicted their argument.

Embodied Inquiry encouraged me to try and record my own thoughts and feelings as they would could later provide important data points for generating a 'deeper interpretative level' within the 'hermeneutic spiral' of embodied analysis (see below section) (Leigh and Brown, 2021, p. 28). These field notes would also, crucially, allow me to reflect on what I was thinking about at points where I did, or did not, intervene in interactions within the sessions. This would help me to focus on how my co-facilitation of sessions, as well as my intrinsic positionality, was informing students' perspectives of their own roles as artists in the context of meetings with the land trust.

I intended to keep my field notes about my own thoughts/feelings on a separate page from the rest of my observations, while referring in each of them to events that happened in the session. While this separation of different field notes could be suggested to in fact reinforce a dualism between our emotions and our relationship with people and place, Tjora refers to this as an important aspect of maintaining an 'extra-naive' approach (2006, p. 439) which is in service of exploring the relationship between both.

2.2: Interview and image analysis

I aimed to interview participants, in part to reflect on my own observations but also as a pedagogic tool for the students to reflect on the project in a 1:1 context.

I had also initially considered interviews to analyse each individual student's learning journey, because I was influenced by Duna Sabri's (2017) research at UAL, where she interviewed students twice a year for the three years of their BA courses and then one year afterwards. Sabri's (2017) research generated a level of detail regarding the shifts in students' perspectives of their sense of belonging within the university that although I knew I could not reach, I saw she generated really helpful datasets that could allow for multiple modes of interpretation.

Though I had selected this approach before coming to Embodied Enquiry, it's attentiveness to 'leaving the choices regarding forms of communication to participants' (Leigh and Brown, 2021, p. 31), led me to consider whether I could also use the images that students had uploaded to the group Padlet page as data too, as well as collages they had done. Through these aspects I could trace how students' ideas about artists might have changed over the course of the project. I used some of the images in the interviews to evoke memories of feelings for participants.

In the interviews, I told students in advance that I would ask three questions.

> What has your experience of the project been so far?
>
> How could the experience have been improved?
>
> To what extent would you say the project has informed your ideas about your work and how artists can contribute to community organisation?

I kept these questions very open as I didn't want to suggest any themes to the students in relation to the research question or its rationale (beyond what I outlined in the participant consent forms). For example, I didn't want to ask 'Has facilitating the event helped you think about life after university?' or 'Has this project provided a contrast from other kinds of learning?' I did however follow lines of enquiry when they arose, for instance, if a student mentioned something that I thought was highlighting a new theme.

3: Methodology for Data Analysis

When considering how to analyse my data, I needed to ensure that I continued my engagement with Embodied Inquiry. Leigh and Brown (2021, p. 61) provide two ways to develop analysis through Embodied Inquiry: 'the interpretative approach to analysis' and 'embodied approach to analysis'. For the former, they argue that the researcher 'moves backwards and forwards between specific experiences of participants and of their own selves', developing multiple layers of 'iterative interpretation' (2021, p. 62). The latter approach 'draws on multimodality to explain forms of communication and expression' (2021, p. 63). What they don't make explicit, though is implied to an extent, is the way that this latter approach aims to engage with the material and conceptual histories of different modes -

installation, poetry - providing different frames with which researchers can explore their, and their participants', relationship with the data.

I was interested in an interpretative approach to analysis because I was drawn to the exercise of revisiting my thoughts and feelings from different perspectives in a layered way. This approach also appealed as I had initially been interested in Burgess' (1984, p. 174) notion of 'analytic notes' ('the preparation of preliminary analyses that are worked out in the field'), which I thought would help me not lose sight of the immediate feelings I had after my observations, as I knew it could be weeks before I began analysing my data due to time constraints. As such, the interpretative approach led me to writing up my one of observations through a kind of embodied style (DS2).

This interpretative approach also worked well as Leigh and Brown (2021) highlight how it can be integrated alongside more conventional forms of indexing or thematic analysis.

After the write up of my first observation, I realised I didn't have the time to do this in depth with my other field notes, and so engaging with ethnographic analytic strategies became important. This led me to 'lean coding' (Creswell, 2007, p. 152) as my initial approach to identifying themes. Creswell highlights how to be attentive towards both expected - or prefigured - codes, and unexpected ones. I analysed all data sets, including image sets, using this process - highlighting codes that became joined into more distinct themes.

Again due to time considerations, after identifying these themes, I entered the interpretive phase, borrowing from Wolcott (1994) and Creswell (2007, p. 162) to analyse these by turning 'to theory to provide structure' to my interpretations.