Directions in Adult Education
Horizontal discourses in adult art and design education
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Introduction

This article draws upon research from a longitudinal study (2011-2014) that sought to capture the experiences of adult students as they studied their art and design undergraduate degrees in the United Kingdom (UK). The project entailed the participants meeting with the researcher twice a year for the duration of their higher education degrees. The methodological approach was based on narrative inquiry. The students were asked to tell their stories about their educational experiences rather than respond to prescribed interview questions (Clandinin and Connelly 2004; Butler-Kisber 2010).

In the UK, the majority of art and design students in higher education have previously studied 'A' Levels and many have undertaken a foundation course, which prepares them for a specialist subject area in the arts (Hudson 2009). These students tend to have come from a school or college and be 18 to 19 years old. The participants of this particular study were different, they were in their 40s and 50s, and did not have the typical qualifications required to study a degree in art and design. Instead, they had previously undertaken an Access course, which was designed to enable adult or mature students to learn the skills and knowledge that would allow them to progress onto an undergraduate degree (Parry 1996; Wakeford 1993; Broadhead and Gregson 2018). Part of the learning was evidenced in a portfolio of art and design work, which the students would show at an admissions interview (Bhagat and O'Neill 2011).

Due to the entry qualifications to higher education held by these students they were perceived by their higher education institutions as being 'non-traditional' (Hudson, 2009; Penketh and Goddard, 2008; Burke 2002). This group of students came into education with a variety of social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds and brought with them the benefits of diverse life experiences (Broadhead 2014; Busher et al. 2012).

This study was important because less mature students were studying in higher education; this was deemed to be because of the introduction of high course fees (Independent Commission on Fees 2013). Thus, mature or 'non-traditional' students were often studying in cohorts where the vast majority of learners were of a younger age range. The impact of this on the experiences of mature students needed to be examined.

The participants' narratives were analysed for critical incidents where various conversations were recounted between students and potentially between staff and the students. These incidents were considered in the light of the work Basil Bernstein (1924-2000) had done on horizontal and vertical discourses within education.

Bernstein's (1999) theory conceptualises horizontal discourse as that which is concerned with the everyday or common sense knowledge, it tends to be an oral, local, context dependent and specific, tacit and multi-layered discourse. It is realised through the day-

to-day contact between people in families, in communities, in social groups, in work places or in educational groups.

When Bernstein (1999) refers to vertical discourse, it concerns school or official knowledge, which is realised through the form of a series of specialised languages with specialised modes of questioning and specialised criteria of production and circulation of texts.

In the context of higher education, the distinction between the horizontal and vertical discourses corresponds to the distinction that is usually made between non-academic and academic knowledge, between local and official knowledge (Morais and Neves 2016).

This article explores the relationship horizontal discourse has in relation to learning within the art and design studio. As horizontal discourse is distributed orally, stories about conversations that occurred in the studio were considered.

It is proposed that horizontal discourse (created through the informal conversations people share on a day-to-day basis) occurs in the art and design learning space (studio). As a practitioner, I have observed this happening. It is possible to speculate that being included in horizontal discourse has the potential to give students access to the collective knowledge of the studio group. However, it is also possible that some kinds of horizontal discourse could exclude some people, positioning them as outside the studio group and therefore not having easy access to its knowledge. It is acknowledged that non-traditional students may feel excluded from some aspects of their education for many social, systemic, economic cultural and political reasons (Reay 2002; Hudson 2009; Byrom 2010). These socio-cultural and systemic processes regulate the form and content of horizontal discourse.

The findings suggest that it is important for art educators to be aware of how people are talking to one another in the studio space. Horizontal discourse may appear as if it is not as significant as vertical discourse (the specialist knowledge realised through specialised dialogue and texts) about the subject under study. However, this article argues it is very important and can facilitate inclusive learning. It is proposed that curricula should include times and spaces where horizontal discourse can be facilitated between students and between teachers and students, this will be considered in the conclusion.

Theoretical framework
The dominant pedagogy used to teach art and design students is referred to by educators as 'studio practice'. This is where students are given individual workspaces within an open plan studio. The students work in their space to develop ideas and experiment with materials (Sullivan 2006; Broadhead 2015). As students are physically close to one another, even though they have specific work areas, there are opportunities to talk about their work and other issues related to their creative practices. There may be areas in the studio that are more conducive to social interaction such as centralised seating areas or shared notice boards. The studio also acts as a social space where students and staff can

interact on a daily basis. There are some art and design programmes that design collaborative projects into their curricula and this would encourage different kinds of discourse. However, the model under consideration here considers how students use the space in developing their own studio practice. It also considers the horizontal discourse that is constructed within that particular learning space.

It is proposed that there are at least two kinds of discourse that can occur within this space, which may at times overlap with each other. Firstly, there is a form of discourse that is very specific to the particular context of the studio and the particular cohort of students. It is informal and is linked to everyday encounters within that space (horizontal discourse). This kind of discourse is not easily understood by 'outsiders' as it is in part constructed by a group of people at a particular time and place. The consequence of this discourse is to bind people together and to construct a group identity.

Secondly, there is a more formal, abstract form of dialogue related to the specialist language of art and design (vertical discourse). This form of discourse would be understood by other artists or designers across the discipline and in other institutions. It signifies that those engaged with the vertical discourse of art and design have specialist knowledge, which is transferable to other appropriate contexts. Students may be evaluated on how well they are able to talk about their work using the appropriate specialist language.

Bernstein's (1999) theories about horizontal and vertical discourses are a useful means of understanding the kinds of discourse, which occur in art and design education (Gamble 2004). His theories alongside other research into the experiences of 'non-traditional' students aims to illuminate those mechanisms, which include some students and exclude others at different moments of time.

There are many possible reasons why students are sometimes positioned as outsiders in relation to their cohort within higher education. Research with non-traditional students, indicates that higher education is experienced in different ways than by standard, 18 year-old entrants (Macdonald and Stratta, 1998; Pascall and Cox, 1993). It is perceived by mature students initially, as a struggle for personal, academic, financial and emotional survival (Bowl 2001). Literature sometimes focuses on the barriers certain social groups face when making the transition to higher education (Fragoso et al., 2013; Hussey and Smith, 2013). Often the work of Pierre Bourdieu is used to explain these barriers; that some students do not have the cultural capital that is valued in universities (Duckworth, 2014; Byrom, 2010; Hudson, 2009). Bernstein's work considers the processes that happen in relation to pedagogy which, continue to reproduce social inequalities and educational disadvantage for some social groups. Those students who are made to feel they are not part of the learning group can possibly be disadvantaged in their education because they do not have the same access to the group's shared knowledge.

Bernstein (in Sadovnik 2001) described the ways groups of students are formed as 'horizontal or social solidarities'. This referred to those solidarities constructed by educational institutions through mythical discourses about cohorts of students having similar characteristics (for example, age, life stage, subject interest, aptitude, gender).

This functions as a way of disguising any social inequalities between groups that impede some students from achieving their educational potential. One way of constructing a horizontal or group solidarity is though horizontal discourse where people are positioned as belonging or as outsiders. So within this study, people were sometimes made to feel excluded because they were a lot older than the other students in the group.

Bernstein (1999) described how horizontal discourse functioned to distribute knowledge selectively through the day-to-day contact in families, communities and in particular student cohorts. Horizontal discourse is, "oral, local, context dependant and specific, tacit, multi-layered and contradictory across but not within contexts," (Bernstein, 1999, p.159). It is organised according to the sites where it is realised (for example, at home; at work or in the art and design studio). Shared informal discourses situated within a particular context can construct a particular group identity:

> The structuring of social relationships generates the forms of discourse but the discourse in turn is structuring a form of consciousness, its contextual mode of orientation and realisation, and motivates modes of social solidarity. (Bernstein 1999, p.160)

A vertical discourse by contrast is a,

> …coherent, explicit and systematically principled structure, hierarchically organised, as in the sciences or takes its form from specialised languages with specialised modes of interrogation and specialised criteria for the production and circulation of texts, as in the social sciences and humanities. (Bernstein 1999, p.159)

It is through horizontal discourse that students ultimately gain access to the vertical discourse of their subject area and its related specialist knowledge. This is because the distributive rules of horizontal discourse "structure and specialise social relations, practices and their contexts," (Bernstein 1999, p.159). The day-to-day talk between students and tutors can construct and maintain power relationships between groups leading to differing access to knowledge. Both vertical and horizontal discourses were likely to set up positions of defence and challenge. If people are isolated and excluded within their working or learning space, they cannot take part in exchanges of shared strategies, procedures and knowledge (Bernstein 1999). In other words, students who are marginalised find it more difficult to draw upon the reservoir of strategies for success available within their learning communities (Bernstein 1999).

Horizontal discourse, although localised and informal, affects those students 'who do not fit in' or those whose identities challenge the mythical group solidarities. This is because they cannot easily access the group's knowledge in order to develop their own individual repertoire of skills and knowledge that allows them to flourish. Baumeister and Leary (1995) argue that students who work alone are disadvantaged academically when compared with those who work as part of a group. A sense of belonging to a cohort not only enhances the social experience but also plays a role in achievement (Morieson et al. 2013). Many art and design practices are based learning from and with others, this may

entail collaborative projects, but not necessarily so. An education based only on individualism and competiveness would not be reflect the wider art and design field.

The kinds of discourse that occur within particular sites, the studio for example, are constructed through various social relationships (between educators and students or between students and students or between educators and managers). Thus, certain kinds of discourse are encouraged and others may be discouraged through social interaction. Discourse, in turn, structures and forms a subject's consciousness, constructing and enabling (or repressing) different dispositions or ways of being and motivating particular modes of social solidarity. Thus, social relationships can be reproduced within educational contexts where people are 'kept in their place' (Duckworth 2014).

Method

Narrative inquiry is a methodological approach, which starts from the premise that everyone can understand their lives and those of other people through stories. Narrative inquiry could be seen as partly deriving from ideas of reflection and reflexion when telling one's story. When considering the context of the post-traditional order of late-modern societies "the self becomes a reflexive project" (Giddens 1991, p.32). Self-identity can no longer be seen as something that is given but appears as something, "that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual" (Giddens 1991, p.52). Narrative is a means of re-creating the self through telling and re-telling one's life story. Giddens (1991, p.33) argued that, "the altered self has to be explored and constructed as part of a reflexive process of connecting personal and social change." This can be seen as a means of dealing with life's uncertainties and anxieties over social change and fragmentation.

Giddens views have contributed to the idea that late-modern societies required a new kind of lifelong learning that is concerned with the ongoing reflexive construction of the self in response to ongoing uncertainty and risk (Zhao and Biesta 2008). Despite Giddens's, use of the phrase 'life politics' his particular understanding of the self has been contested within the context of lifelong learning. Zhao and Biesta (2008) have said that, "the individualistic nature of such learning processes suggests that his depiction of the reflexive project of the self is rather a-political, where there is a focus on 'self-actualisation' and 'self-realisation." Giddens claimed that the individual's first responsibility is to themselves (Giddens 1991). This ran contrary to Ricoeur's (1994) assertion that to be an individual one must also be in a relationship with another. In Ricoeur's (1994) writing about narrative, he does not privilege the individual, but focuses on how stories help us empathise with other people leading to actions that take into account the needs of others.

Clandinin and Connelly (2004) stated that for them education is a form of experience and that narrative is the best way of representing and understanding it. They went onto argue that narrative is both the phenomenon and method of the social sciences. Narrative inquiry is a collaboration between researcher and participants over time and in social interaction with the context. In the present study, the narratives are co-constructed between the participants and researcher. The terms of narrative inquiry are based on

Dewey's concept of situation, continuity and interaction. Stories are both personal and social (interaction); they capture the past, present and future (continuity) and occur within a place (situation). This means that a three dimensional narrative inquiry space is constructed (Clandinin and Connelly 2004, p.50). This approach was appropriate when finding out about the experiences of students through three years of their course within particular institutional contexts.

It could be argued that narrative inquiry is an inherently ethical and moral activity (Clandinin& Connelly 2004; Clandinin et al. 2009; Caine et al. 2013). Reflexivity is seen as essential for both the participants learning about themselves and the researchers' project to recount ethical, authentic stories. Giddens wrote: "In so far as it is dominated by the core perspectives of modernity, the project of the self remains one of control, guided only by morality of "authenticity"" (1991, p.225). Giddens showed the importance of being true to one's self through reflexive thought. The notion of authenticity is an important aspect of narrative inquiry; the aim of this project is to tell authentic stories about the participants' experiences on their art and design degrees. This is ensured by engagement in reflexive practice concerning the ethics of narrative inquiry. Caine et al. (2013) argued that by entering into a narrative relationship with the participant they became the inquirer's first responsibility. Importantly what was told by the participant should be accepted rather than the researcher taking an overly sceptical stance. Carter (2008) highlighted the importance of thinking reflexively about the researcher's position when eliciting, interpreting and re-telling stories. A reflexive awareness meant that the researcher could focus on being ethically and methodologically robust.

Art and design mature students who had achieved their Access to HE diplomas in 2011 (an entry requirement for mature students entering higher education) were emailed and asked if they wanted to take part in the study. They were told about the time commitment needed to participate effectively as well as the reasons why the research was important and that it would follow the ethical guidelines set out by the British Educational Research Association (2011). Nine participants gave their informed consent to be participants in the project. Of the nine, one student dropped out of her course in millinery after the first interview. Of the remaining sample, five participants had chosen to study at a College full time; these were two women and three men. Their ages ranged from late 20s to mid-50s. Three students had chosen to study at a local higher education institution (HEI); these were all women in their late 40s to early 50s. Of the participants who studied at the HEI two had decided to study part-time and one full-time.

The narratives considered in this article were from three working-class males in their late 40s and early 50s. There were two reasons why these three participants were chosen. First, the three men shared the same studio space with a larger group of much younger students; therefore, they were operating within a similar studio culture.

Second, the experiences of working-class mature men in art and design education are not often discussed because they underrepresented in art and design higher education

(Broadhead 2017). Through the intersections of age, gender and class, it could be argued that mature, working-class male students face more cultural barriers and discrimination than mature, middle-class women within the context of higher education (McGivney 1999; Burke 2006; Broadhead 2017). Thus, it is important to consider their stores in particular because they are a minority within art and design education.

Over the next time span of three years, the researcher met with each participant six times. At each meeting, the participant was asked to tell their story about their experiences on their art and design degrees. The researcher did not have a set of prescribed interview questions, as it was the students who decided what was important to talk about. However, the researcher did, on rare occasions, encourage the student to expand their story. The resulting conversations were recorded and transcribed. The results were a series of stories, which had been co-constructed between researcher and participant. Many if not all narratives are co-created between at least two people (the narrator and the audience) within a particular context (Carter 2008). The researcher has a privileged position within narrative inquiry in that they simple do not simply relay the stories of others but re-present and interpret them (Crocket 2014). A commitment to academic integrity entails a responsibility in telling the participants' story whilst acknowledging the positionality of the researcher. The approach taken in this article was to acknowledge that there is no one authentic story; all stories are mediated through the telling and retelling. This was achieved by reflexive practice where the researcher was mindful of their own story as an educator and researcher from a working-class background. The researcher's social identity, their experiences and their values would inevitably become part of the stories told in the project.

The transcripts were analysed for critical incidents that were then interpreted in light of Bernstein's (1999) theories about horizontal and vertical discourses that occur within and outside educational contexts. Chase (2005) identified five interconnected, analytic lenses used in narrative inquiry:

1. the narrative as a vehicle for the uniqueness of human actions
2. the narrators' voices and the verbal actions and choices made by the narrator
3. the ways in which the narrative is constrained by social circumstances
4. the narrative as socially situated, interactive performances between the researcher and the participant
5. the researcher as narrator as in autoethnographic research

In this article, the emphasis was placed on Chase's second and third lenses, on the ways in which participants told narratives that described their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour in relation to their educational experiences and on the ways in which those narratives were linked to conversations in the studio. They narratives deconstructed in order to reveal significant moments, where conversations were about issues that were important to the participants.

Results

Joe, Simon and Bob (these were fictional names) were three mature students who were studying on an art and design undergraduate degree. They were between 40-50 years old and before they had achieved their Access course, they had not gained many academic qualifications, although Bob had been successful in being awarded a vocational qualification. During their higher education, they learned in an art and design studio. Within this studio, each person was given a space where they could perform their art practices (Broadhead 2015). Their studio was a place to work and learn in but it was also a social space where students and staff met and chatted, sometimes on a daily basis. From my observations as a practitioner in art and design education, it appears that the conversations between people within this context were relaxed and informal but sometimes they could be more formal when the conversations related to the art and design objects the students had produced.

Within the stories shared by Joe, Simon and Bob there were incidents where the researcher wondered if they had been either included or alienated from their learning group. There also were also moments where through horizontal discourse they were able to access the group's reservoir of knowledge. There were also times where they appeared to be excluded from it.

At the beginning of his course, Simon shared a painful moment where he felt excluded from his group due to the comments made about his clothes.

> There was one incident where I had a summer scarf on because I don't like the sun on the back of my neck, I hate it, and there was a group of girls here huddled together and made some kind of comment about my scarf. They all started laughing. But I knew exactly what was happening. They were all huddling together to get support from one another and all it takes is one person who isn't very nice and they all run with it. They might not think it themselves but it's like a 'pack mentality'. Sometimes you see it loads of times on building sites and areas like that but I wouldn't expect to see it in a college like this! (Simon November 2011)

Simon's story is one where is he not part of the group, or the conversation, but is the subject of ridicule. It is possible that comments functioned to bond the group of girls together but excluded Simon because he was different due to his age, gender and possibly class. Incidents like this serve to make people feel like outsiders or 'imposters'. It is unlikely that Simon would feel able to talk to this group about his work. A year later Simon described his feelings of being an outsider, as if this was something that was part of his personality. Simon goes on then to tell a story about how he usually is separate from the group. The researcher wondered if, this was a story he told himself to explain being positioned as an outsider.

> Yeah, but I've never been really involved in many things. I see people forming groups and interesting themselves. I've never had the inclination

to get involved, I'd much rather stand on the sidelines and keep well out.
(Simon Nov 2012)

Interestingly at the end of his degree, Simon discovered that at least one other student felt excluded from the group.

I was just speaking to one of the students and she said she didn't have many friends here. She only told me because we were talking about this picture. It made me realise how alienated she was but I didn't see it at the time because she's not in my age group. (Simon June 2014)

Simon was not able to easily converse with the younger students but when he did, he realised that people can feel excluded for many reasons. Simon's story showed how he was not always able to empathise with others who he perceived as being different to himself and that exclusion is not 'one-sided'. What was interesting from a pedagogical perspective was that they were discussing artwork and it was this that allowed a dialogue to begin. The formal and informal modes of discussion were fluid enough to allow different layers of discourse to flow together. It was unfortunate that this sharing and empathising between two students had happened at the end of the course.

Although Simon's example shows how horizontal discourse between students can reinforce a sense of being an outsider there were also examples where discourse brought people together and enabled them to share knowledge about the course. For example, Bob's stories revealed many instances of shared dialogue with others in the studio.

I had this conversation with one of the younger guys and he said - Andrew it was - and really out of the mouths of babes, - he says, "Well you keep going on about that you wish you'd done that years ago. You're doing it now and really that's it, you know, time starts now." So I've got that in my head now, that's it, I'm not going to talk about all that wish I'd done it years ago, yeah. (Bob, June 2012)

Bob clearly enjoyed discussions with younger members of his learning group. As a mature student Bob had voiced some regret that he had not studied art earlier on in his life. However, he was able to talk about this with another student who was able to give him some advice about living in the moment and taking advantage of the opportunities he had now rather than fixating on the past. This showed a level of trust by both Bob and the younger student. It was also significant that Bob chose to take the advice on board and did not dismiss it. Later on Bob was able to learn assessment 'tactics' from another student

I learnt a lot from Rose, [another post-Access student], who's in my group. She showed me how to do a blog and that helps me get everything structured so I could 'tick the boxes' for the people who were marking my work. And at that point I realised that I don't think my art has changed it's the organisation of what I do and how I answered the questions that are being asked, do you know what I mean? (Bob June 2013)

Bob had struggled to write about his work for his assessment. Rose had shown him a way to organise his thoughts through using a blog. This method made Bob more confident

that he was writing material that would satisfy the course's assessment criteria. Towards the end of Bob's course, he recounted an incident where he was able to help another student.

> Yeah because Luke was going to throw them [sketchbooks] away, "I'm going to throw this away!" Now I'm saying to him, "Don't do that - you don't do that - save those because later on when you get to be my age you'll look back at those and say I wish I'd saved them." I'm glad I saved mine, it's the nostalgia thing plus you can see a natural progression, sketchbooks are much better than any blog. (Bob June 2014)

Bob was able to encourage a fellow student about the value of sketchbooks as a visual and authentic means to document their working processes. Bob was suggesting that they would be valuable in the future long after the course had finished. Professional artists and designers often use sketchbooks for recording and developing their work. This resource was something that Luke would value in his future creative career.

Bob went onto reflect on the impact, learning to blog had had on his work. He saw both the positive aspects of blogging and aspects that were problematic for practical people.

> But I think people like myself who struggle with writing things and when they keep blogs it's beneficial, the tick box, the tick boxes can be accessed – "Has he referenced this? Has he looked at that? Bing! Bing! Boom! Boom!" That gets me through my exam and my assessment. It gives the tutors the ability to assess that I've understood and looked at things. However, I think that if you're a real artist whose day-to-day sketchbook is really important and you can see the person, you see them in the book. In a WordPress blog, it's cold and it's dead. But yes, it gives evidence in understanding certain things but I don't think other things come across in the blogs. (Bob June 2014)

Bob was able to draw upon the reservoir of knowledge in the group which added to his own personal repertoire of skills and knowledge leading to his success in finishing the course. He was also able to contribute his own knowledge about sketchbooks based on his experience and wisdom about using a sketchbook. Another student Joe also described instances where horizontal discourse had supported his knowledge and understanding.

> Currently we're doing a module called Personal and Professional Practice (PPP) and nobody knows what PPP is or what format the module should be submitted in. Apparently we've just been sent an e-mail now of what we have to do but it's going to be end of the day before I get on to the computer. There's only a week or two left to bring all this together. I've taken in the lectures with the tutor regarding PPP. But I have no idea what it is so that's another frustration but then there's other students telling me what PPP apparently is. (Joe June 2012)

Although Joe was unsure about this module, it is apparent that the students were talking about it in the studio and are sharing information about it. It must be remembered, that

unless Joe reads the email for himself, he may get misinformation about its contents. However, he was part of the group's conversation about assessment. He was able to glean knowledge from the horizontal discussions in the studio, which will help him understand what he needed to be doing to pass this part of the course. Without being part of the studio group, he would have been less informed about possible assessment strategies. Joe went onto say that he wished tutors would take part in horizontal discourse.

> It would be nice to have a chat [informal conversation often one-to-one] with the tutors on a daily basis, to see them coming in and just sitting down with us for an hour and seeing what's happening or just milling around and chatting to us, seeing what we're thinking, why we're thinking it … (Joe June 2012)

Joe appeared to prefer horizontal discourse as a means of learning rather than formal lectures. He also appears to want the teachers to part of the social group of the studio rather than being distanced from it. From the stories told by Simon, Bob and Joe it appears that horizontal discourse within the studio plays a part in the students' representation of their learning, in a certain moment/situation.

The day-to-day discourse between students has the potential to create group cohesion (horizontal solidarity) where all students feel they are part of the group and have something worthwhile to contribute; this can be seen in the experiences of Bob and Joe. This means that students are more likely to have access to the specialist language associated with the subject (vertical discourse) as a safe, inclusive space have been created where vertical discourse can be practised and performed. Also through every day dialogue, a reservoir of horizontal knowledge (specialist subject knowledge) can be held within the group, for example the benefits of blogging and keeping sketchbooks. The term 'reservoir of knowledge' comes from Bernstein's (1999) theoretical writings. It reflects Bernstein's structuralism in that it conceptualises knowledge as something which is ahistorical and static and something fixed which can be contained. This understanding of knowledge is problematic because it does not explain how knowledge can change and adapt, nor how what is claimed as knowledge is socially constructed within particular contexts. Perhaps a more appropriate notion is that the group constructs shares strategies for academic success, these can be adapted depending on the changing context of the course. Individuals tell stories about conversations with their cohort. Through these exchanges, the students can become aware of group strategies that can enhance their own repertoire of skills and understanding. The individual can then contribute their own wisdom to the group so they feel valued.

However, horizontal discourse can also exclude individuals from the social solidarity of the course. Where talk between people can reinforce different leading to feelings of shame and isolation. This means they have less access to the group reservoir of knowledge and skills and are disadvantaged in their learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be seen that narrative inquiry was a successful means of collecting significant incidents where dialogue between students in the studio had made an impact on them. The three dimensional narrative space described by Clandinin and Connelly (2004) was constructed by the social interaction between the researcher and the participants; the continuity was created by collecting stories over time that took place within a particular situation which was the art and design studio. Many examples of horizontal discourse were made apparent within the narrative spaces under discussion. Narrative inquiry was not as successful in representing examples of purely vertical discourse, that is, the more specialised and abstract modes of dialogue. This could be because the students chose to tell stories about conversations between other students rather than with tutors. Nor did they choose to talk about any discussions in detail that were conducted around the reviewing of their artwork as part of formative and summative assessments. These omissions suggest that horizontal discourse, even though it can be informal, is a very important part of these students' learning experiences. Joe explicitly suggested that tutors should 'chat' more often to the students in the studio, which suggests a desire for informal conversation rather than formal dialogue that references the specialist language of art and design. .

It is possible that the design of the research project influenced the participant's decisions, for example, they were relying on remembered events that could account for the lack of detail. In addition, sharing stories with the researcher (a member of staff) about interactions with tutors (also staff) may have been deemed inappropriate or uncomfortable. Maybe there was less risk to future academic success when discussing conversations between students.

The students told stories about how they were able to draw upon the cohorts' strategies for success through the horizontal discourse occurring in the studio. Knowledge about sketchbooks, blogging, professional development and assessment were shared between students. Bob's story claimed that he had enhanced his own personal repertoire of skills because he could organise his work more efficiently for assessment through using the WordPress Blog. This is a positive story of academic success that he was able to succeed at something he has struggled with; Bob's story was about how he had learned something from another student. This suggests his education led to Bob achieving something. He tells his story because it shows how he has overcome a difficulty and has achieved some control over a situation about assessment that was difficult.

However, the experiences of Simon showed that horizontal discourse between students could also be a means of exclusion, of making someone feel they are an outsider and that they do not belong to the cohort of students. Bernstein (1999) argued that horizontal discourse structured the consciousness of the individual. This can be seen when Simon talked about himself as choosing to be on the outside, as if it was part of his own subjectivity was to not be part of the group. Simon's story suggested he was an active agent, situating himself outside the group. However, was this actually a strategy for presenting himself as being in control of a situation in which he felt excluded?   There

were fewer incidents within Simon's stories where he drew upon the group knowledge to enhance his own educational achievements.

A more positive element of Simon's story was that formal and informal discourses in the studio were fluid and that critical discussions about the art and design work could lead to more informal talk, which in turn had the potential to create a sense of belonging to the cohort. Bernstein's theories about horizontal and vertical discourses are useful for understanding how knowledge can be unequally distributed within a group of students. However, his writing often represents discourse as a series of binary oppositions, (vertical/horizontal; formal/informal; generalised/specific). It could be argued that in practice discourses are fluid and responsive to the situations where the speakers find themselves. Thus, horizontal discourses can inform vertical discourses within the studio context.

The implication of this small study for educators in art and design is that they should not underestimate the importance of horizontal discourse in the studio as a means of students sharing local knowledge about their subject and their education. Mature students who are learning within a studio space, which is occupied mostly by younger students, are in danger of being excluded because they look, dress and act differently. Care must be taken to ensure that they feel they belong in the studio and are able to take part in day-to-day talk with other students. Bernstein's work shows us that social exclusion means that individual students can be disadvantaged in gaining the knowledge that will help them succeed in their studies. Therefore, strategies and spaces should be devised to facilitate positive and affirming horizontal discourse within the studio. This cannot be done in a didactic or controlling way. However, people can learn from example to be inclusive by being in the presence of teachers who are inclusive in their dialogue and conduct. So the suggestion given by Joe that tutors should take part in daily informal 'chats' with students could be a conducive way of bringing people together. The design of the curriculum and approaches to pedagogy could also sustain horizontal discourse. A focus on collaborative projects that are less individualistic and competitive could promote greater social interaction within the art and design studio.

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