

# Reflexivity and Interview data

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# Reflexivity

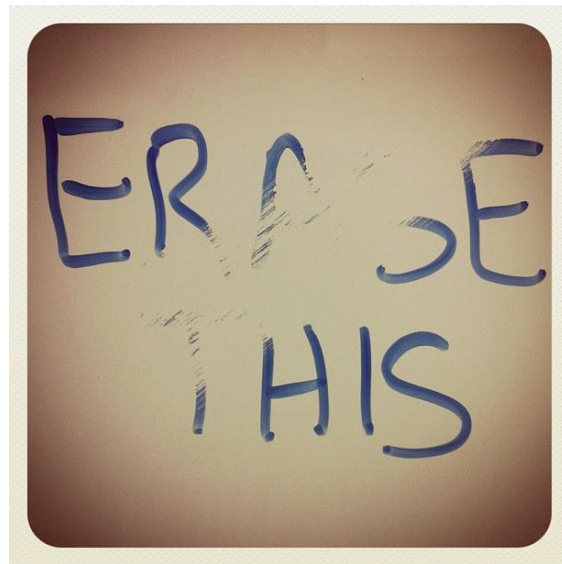
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- Clearly articulating the subjectivities interlocking the interviewer, participants, methodologies and research focus of any research project.

# Reflexivity?

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‘ if men define situations as real, they are real  
in their consequences’ Thomas & Thomas, 1928



# Reflection & Reflexivity

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- Reflection is thinking about a certain event
- Reflexivity is a continuing self-awareness relating to the research project itself.

# Decontextualized & Contextualized voice

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## THE **WHAT** PERSPECTIVE

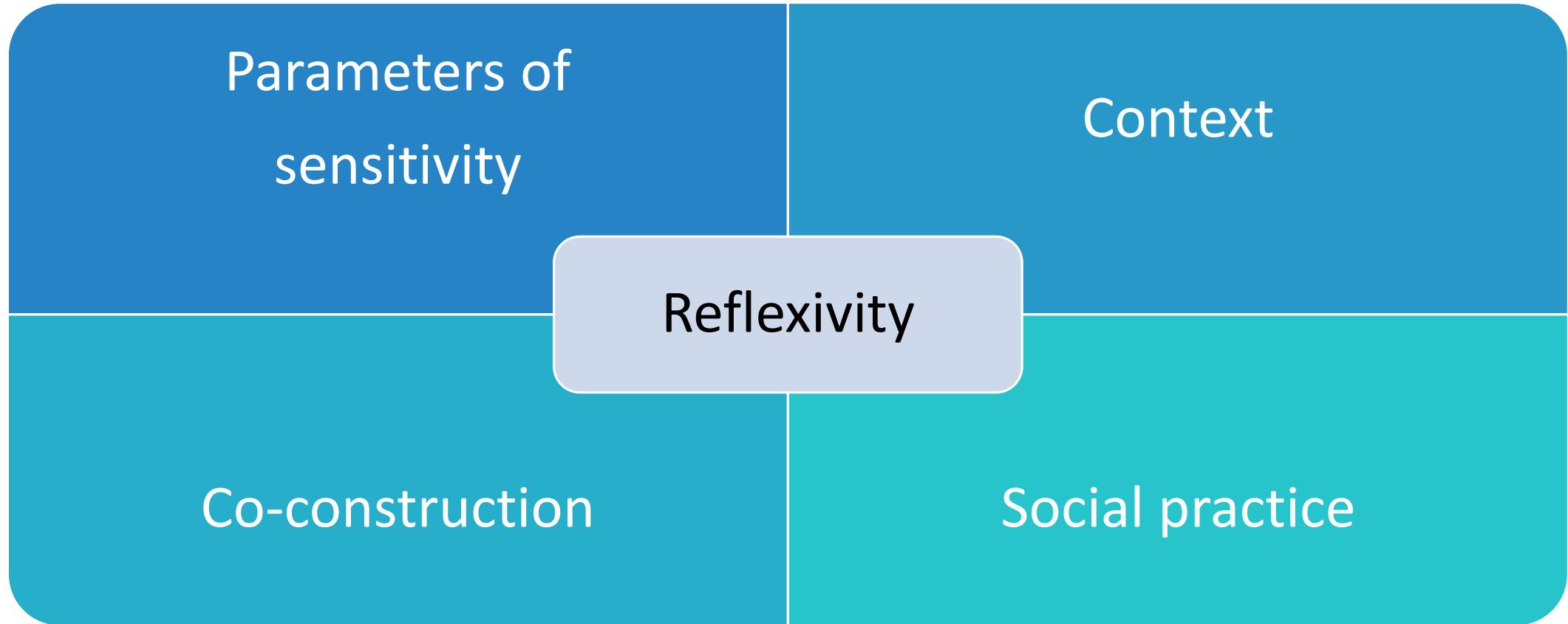
- Positivist view
- Data as a report on objective or subjective reality
- Interview as technique
- Interviewer 'invisible'
- Identity less relevant
- Participant words presented in isolation

## THE **HOW & WHAT** PERSPECTIVE

- Social constructivist view
- Knowledge co-constructed
- Interview as localized accomplishment
- Interviewer 'visible'
- Identities highly relevant contextual feature
- Words presented in context

# Reflexivity in interviews?

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# Parameters of sensitivity

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- *Rapport*
- *Disclosure*
- *Empathy*

*Established prior to and during an interview*

# Contextual elements in interviews

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- **Why** – researcher's purpose in setting up interview
- **Where** – physical, social and institutional context
- **Who** – interviewees & interviewer
- **How** – genre of interview, recordings, question types, language used
- **What** – interactionally relevant artefacts



# Contextual elements — The why

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- Investigating the use of English and Korean in NNESTs in South Korea and their impact on the social construction of the classroom
- PhD study

# Contextual elements- The who

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- **Researcher:** NZ adult male, teacher –trainer, positive views on L1 use but taught on programs that advocate L1 exclusion, Native English speaker, outsider status, married to Korean native
- **Participants:** South Korean adult females, ex-trainees, current ETs, varying views on L1 exclusion, non-Native English speakers, insider status, almost all married (one to a foreigner)

# Contextual elements — The where

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- Interviews mostly held in schools, in the classrooms where participants actually taught
- Influenced by professional identity of participants in school (teacher's lens)
- Highlighted the insider-outsider status
  
- Contrasted with interview held outside of school (café)-professional identity - insider-outsider status/ teacher's lens less evident

# Contextual elements — The how & what

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- Semi-structured interview
- Opened ended questions + reactions
- Voice recorder
- Conducted in English (*participants aware of my Korean language knowledge*)

# Extract 1-highlighting co-construction

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*“It’s a kind of personal idea but when I use English students feel more comfortable so when I speak in Korean they just look at me as a real teacher or an adult. How can I say an authority figure but when I use English they feel like really comfortable woman in front of them”*

# Not swept under the carpet

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- Researcher/participant emotions
- Unexpected reactions



# Advantages of reflexivity

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- More balance between the 'what' & the 'how' of interviews
- Consequential for transparency of data
- Develops a more critical approach to interviewing rather than quotable cut outs that serve our own purposes.
- Adhere more to proclamations of social constructivist approach
- Allows for more honest appraisal of own role in the interview

# Showing reflexivity

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CONTEXT  
MATTERS

- Accounting for context-who, where why, how, etc.
- Accounting for the unexpected
- Acknowledging emotions/unexpected reactions
- Acknowledging own role in co-construction



# Questions



# Extract 3- *parameters of sensitivity*

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**R:** Do you think you learned anything from ITT?

**T:** Yeah

**R:** For example? Anything you learned that you used in your own classes

**T:** (laughs) ahhhhh

**R:** If you can't remember that's OK

**T:** Yeah but I don't remember now

**R:** Yeah that's Ok I fully expected it, it was a long time ago, yeah Ok and then you took the smaller programs did you like the smaller programs the WTT and the ...

**T:** Oh the winter yeah I liked...

**R:** Why did you take those? Because those were during ... ah a lot of people don't like those sometimes because of the ... they're like your vacation time or something

**T:** Oh right

**R:** So why did you take it?

**T:** I took it for ITT program (laughs) yeah to volunteer for ITT program I had to take training

**R:** Yeah a lot of people do that. I often wonder why people volunteer to do WTT or STT during vacation, it sounds like a nightmare

**T:** (Laughs) Nightmare! Why?

**R:** Well some people I know are passionate but giving up your vacation you know if you are giving up your vacation

**T:** Right

**R:** You must have a lot of passion or a good reason, uh that's all

# Extract 2

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R: When you were... then you couldn't use Korean at all so how did that feel?

T: Well we are worried a lot before we teach but the ...

R: What were you worried about?

T: Just you know using English to you know other people they can't understand Korean but it was simple, very simple we just write the alphabet on the black board 'repeat after me A' "A" so similar with my class they don't really understand my English but my body language was .....

R: Do you think that if you could have spoken the Thai language at that time you would have spoken Thai to help them?

T: Yeah I think so I was learning a little bit of Thai language at that time so I used numbers in Thai like this in the class, like first second third so they learned about it