

Duoautoethnography in Teacher Education Programs

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Introduction/Need

In a world that is becoming more and more interconnected, the responsibility of developing teachers and students to be more engaged global citizens has never been greater. Therefore, global competence has become a focus of teacher education (Tichnor-Wagner et al., 2019; Rice et al., 2014; Connor & Butcher, 2016; Letot, 2023). Ramos et al. (2021) and Parmigiani et al. (2022) charged teacher educators with developing global competence in future educators. However, the lack of literature suggests there is little research on the development of teacher educator global competence.

If teacher educators are to effectively foster a globally competent mindset amongst pre-service teachers, they must be globally competent citizens themselves. New focuses must be created to encourage the professional development of teacher educators to a global mindset. Further, international, or internationally focused, experiences do not necessarily increase one's global competence. Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle highlights the need for reflecting on concrete experiences to engender true learning. Without intentionality and reflection on our own experiences, we may be missing the mark when it comes to truly preparing our pre-service teachers to build globally competent youth.

One innovative idea that can effectively increase global competence and diversify teacher education programs is conducting a duoautoethnography amongst teacher education faculty members. This provides the intentionality, reflection, and collaboration to not only build global competence within programs, but also improve program and curricula designs. We, two agricultural teacher education PhD students, completed a duoautoethnography together and it had profound impacts on us, and we believe it can have positive impacts on the profession.

How it Works/Methodology/Steps

We used duoautoethnography as a collaborative design process to explore our own lived experiences (from different countries) in school-based agricultural education (SBAE).

Duoautoethnography is a combination of autoethnography and duoethnography.

Autoethnography is a collaboration between autobiography and ethnography and is used to fill gaps and complement existing research, as well as provide first-hand knowledge of cultural experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Duoethnography is a collaborative design that involves inserting our own narratives and experiences alongside, for or against, one another and learning from them (Burleigh & Burm, 2022). We felt that a combination of these two designs was the best approach to our study.

First, we used a semi-structured guide that addressed several areas of our SBAE journeys (e.g., motivations for entering SBAE, resource access, years of teaching, teacher preparation, school climate, school demographics, etc.). Artifacts, such as official transcripts, were used as we developed our autoethnographies independently.

We then cross-examined and analyzed the autoethnographies collaboratively. This involved comparing and reflecting on our transcript data, our lived experiences within SBAE, and the other elements that were included in our guide. This was done through various graphic organization techniques on a white board. Dialogue and both self and collaborative reflections were key components of compiling the findings of our study, and to our own personal and professional growth (Salmons, 2023).

We used thematic analysis to organize and identify the emerging themes of our study. Trustworthiness was established using triangulation with artifacts and literature, and reflexivity and member checking were used throughout the entire process (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Salmons, 2023).

Results to Date and Implications

In terms of the research itself, we have completed the duoautoethnography and submitted an abstract to a conference, and we are working on a manuscript. Our research study found four emerging themes that impacted our view on SBAE teacher education. These themes were 1) factors that motivate agriculture teachers are not uncommon, 2) appreciation for the difference in resource access, 3) diversity of preparation strengths and weaknesses, and 4) development of cultural empathy.

Ultimately, we found that this experience brought about major shifts in our views of ourselves as educators, what we expected or wanted to incorporate within a teacher education program, and impacted how we viewed the world around us. While the findings and emerging themes may be different between studies, the intrinsic takeaways from such a study will be powerful for the invested researcher/participant. Conversely, there may be some similarities between studies. Teacher education programs are unique and faculty experiences are unique, but that is what makes this type of study so powerful within a program. Therefore, the transferability of this study lies within the personal, professional, and program impacts.

Future Plans and Advice to Others

This study was conducted by PhD students in agricultural teacher education. Regarding our study itself, we are currently developing a manuscript to submit to a journal. This will help fill gaps in literature and give more insight into the process we underwent to develop our own global competence. It is our intention that, when we become faculty members, we will encourage our teacher education colleagues within our departments to adopt this idea because of the richness it has brought to our lives as educators and researchers through the development of our own global competence, teaching strategies, and approach to student learning and teaching. Moreover, we recommend that current teacher education programs work to develop duoautoethnographies as a way to enhance global competence and further strengthen their programs.

It is recommended that researchers who choose to adopt this idea be continually reflexive and open to various concepts that may emerge. Because of our diverse backgrounds, our semi-structured guide constantly evolved throughout the process of our study. Researchers must truly approach this with a qualitative mindset and allow the independent autoethnographies to develop as their own phenomena (i.e., do not allow the rigidity of the guide to become a limitation to the study and personal/professional growth). This allows for richer data and more candid collaborative reflection. In duo[auto]ethnography, differences between cases are not negative but provide added insight (Burleigh & Burm, 2022).

Costs/Resources Needed

There were no costs associated with this innovative idea. We used a Google Doc to develop our guide and a white board to map, explore, and compare the various elements of our autoethnographies. This could be completed in different ways, but this is the way that worked well for us. Perhaps the greatest resource for this study is an open, critical mind.

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