

BAICE Thematic Forum: Revisiting Insider/Outsider Perspectives in International and Comparative Research

Interim Report – January 2012 to July 2013

Project Directors: Dr Lore Arthur (The Open University), Dr Elizabeth McNess and Professor Michael Crossley (University of Bristol)

Project Funding: Funded for two years from January 2012

Original Purpose and Aims: The focus of the project arose from discussions held after a seminar given by Lore Arthur at the Centre for International and Comparative Studies, University of Bristol, in November 2010. The place of insiders and outsiders from the point of view of anthropology, sociology, philosophy and psychology has a long history but, it was argued that, while scholars have engaged with the theme of insider-outsider research from a variety of disciplinary perspectives few had taken a more holistic approach, bringing these various strands together and applying them to the contemporary field of international and comparative education. Furthermore, with the development of new international partnership modalities and increased global mobility much could be gained from a more nuanced understanding of the concepts.

Achievements in 2012:

- **Keynote Speech in China:** Lore Arthur was invited to give a Keynote Speech at the The Fourth Worldwide Forum for Comparative Education, Beijing, October 2011 which helped to develop further the ideas presented in the seminar at the University of Bristol, Published: *Where is the Passion? Contexts, Discourses and Values in International Comparative Education*, *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 34, (2), February 2012
- **BTF All Day Launch Workshop:** A workshop was held at the Centre for International and Comparative Studies, University of Bristol, on Friday 10th February 2012 where participants were encouraged to consider the concepts of insiderness and outsiderhood and discuss how they might apply them to their own work. Twenty three participants, including both academic staff and doctoral students, attended the event and this resulted in a great deal of interest, and some individual and joint writing.
- **Roundtable, BAICE Research Student Conference, University of Sussex:** This event, held on 18th May 2012, provided an opportunity for five of the doctoral students who attended the BTF Workshop to present their developing ideas in a roundtable discussion and extend the reach of the topic.
- **Keynote Lecture – Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Forum on Lifelong Learning: Methodology Workshop:** Elizabeth McNess was invited to present developing

theory around insider/outsiderness, and concepts of the 'third space', at a methodology workshop in Copenhagen, 29-31 May 2012.

- **BTF Symposium, BAICE Conference at Cambridge University:** Four papers, developed as a direct outcome of the BTF Workshop day, were presented at a stimulating and well attended symposium in September 2012:

McNess, E., Arthur, L., and Crossley, M. - *'Ethnographic dazzle' and the construction of the other: revisiting dimensions of insider/outsiderness in international and comparative research*

Kelly, P. – *A socio-cultural analysis of insider and outsider perspectives in comparative pedagogic research*

Milligan, E. – *Using participatory 'insider' techniques in cross-cultural educational research in Kenyan secondary schools*

Al-Youssef, J., Colin, M., Garrido, C. and Savvides, N. – *Culture, Identity and Otherness: negotiating insider/outsider perspectives in international comparative research*

The event also added to the number of colleagues wanting to be involved in the BTF and the data base now contains 27 names from 8 HE institutions who will be invited to future events.

- **Postgraduate Research Seminar:** Lore Arthur (The Open University) presented a paper entitled *Betwixt and between: complexities of being an insider and outsider when doing international/comparative research* at the Institute of Education, London, in November 2012.
- **Presentation at the International Association for Languages and Intercultural Communication (IALIC) Conference:** Cecilia Garrido (The Open University) presented a paper entitled *The relevance of the insider/outsider debate to the development of intercultural competence*, at the University of Durham in December 2012.

Achievements in 2013:

- **Postgraduate Research Seminar:** Lore Arthur presented developing ideas at the University of Sussex in February 2013.
- **Keynote Presentation at One Day Conference: Methodological Issues in Intercultural, International and Comparative Research: Opportunities, Challenges, Approaches and Future Trends** in April 2013. This conference was convened by Dr Nicola Savvides (University of Durham), a member of the BTF, and was co-sponsored by BAICE and two Special Interests Groups from the British Educational Research Association (BERA): Comparative and International Education, and Research Methodology. Lore Arthur and Elizabeth McNess presented a refined version of the paper in development with Michael Crossley and received some helpful feedback with which to take their ideas forward for publication.
- **Publications from the BAICE Symposium:** We have gained significant publication success on the topic of insider/outsiderness arising from the papers originally

presented at the BAICE Conference in Cambridge. One paper has been accepted with revisions for publication in the *Oxford Review of Education*, another paper has been accepted with revisions for *Compare*, one paper will form part of a special issue of *Research in Comparative and International Education* (an output from the conference in Durham), and the fourth paper received the award for the Best Student Paper at the BAICE Conference and is currently being reviewed for *Compare*.

- **ECER Conference Paper:** Lore Arthur, Elizabeth McNess and Michael Crossley have had a paper accepted for the European Conference on Educational Research in Turkey, September 2013.
- **Concluding BTF Workshop:** The concluding BTF workshop is planned for Spring 2014. A keynote speaker will be invited, together with colleagues who have asked to be added to the BTF insider/outsider database. The main outcome of the day will be submissions for a book of collected papers, edited by Lore Arthur, Elizabeth McNess and Michael Crossley, to be published in 2014/15.

Ongoing Events

We are currently in the process of planning a concluding event in the Spring Term of 2014 which will bring together all those who have shown an interest in the work of the Thematic Forum with the intention of producing a major publication for the *Bristol Papers in Education: Comparative and International Studies*. Our intention is to invite an appropriate key note speaker who will be able to act as a catalyst and mentor to help shape the final volume of work, drawing on the many contributions so far to re-imagine the concepts of the ‘insider’ and the ‘outsider’ as they apply to good quality international and comparative research in an interconnected and globalised world. We thank the Association for their support so far and will present a full budgetary update when we have completed our planning for the final Workshop and wish to draw down the second half of the allocated funding.

The Project Team consider that the BTF monies have been used to very good effect so far. We have achieved much more than we had undertaken in the original proposal and we have encountered widespread engagement and enthusiasm from across the BAICE constituency. We were even able to include contributions from Mindy Colin (doctoral research student at the University of Bristol) in Mauritius via Skype at both the Launch Event and the BAICE Conference Symposium. We are very pleased with the development of this first/inaugural BAICE Thematic Forum and look forward to ongoing work in 2013/2014.

Project Team:

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10th July 2013