The background features several vertical bars of varying heights and colors: a purple bar on the left, a cyan bar in the middle-left, a purple bar in the middle-right, a tall purple bar on the right, and a yellow-to-orange gradient bar on the far right. Two horizontal lines, one brown and one grey, cross the vertical bars. There are also small cyan and yellow rectangular shapes near the bottom right.

Narrative inquiry: An annotated bibliography for library and information professionals

Table of Contents

Useful information	2
How to cite & license	2
Funder & mentor	2
Contact	2
Introduction	2
Getting started in narrative inquiry	3
Introductory texts	3
Introductory audiovisual resources	4
Going deeper	4
Deeper audiovisual resources	6
Narrative inquiry and Library and Information Studies (LIS)	7
Narrative interviews	9
Overview	9
Unstructured, repeated interviews	9
Analysing data	10
Easing in	10
Three-dimensional narrative space	11
Storying stories	12
Four levels and analytical questions	13
Poetic re-presentation	14
Introductory chapters	14
Textbooks	14
My approach	15
Challenges	16
Personal feelings	16
Bigger picture	16
Reference list	17

Useful information

How to cite & license

Scott, Rebecca J. (2024). Narrative inquiry: An annotated bibliography for library and information professionals. Version 1. University of Hertfordshire.

CC BY-NC 4.0 DEED

Funder & mentor

Once upon a narrative: Storying the librarian practitioner-researcher lived experience is a professional practice fellowship funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Research Libraries UK. Alison Brettle, Professor of Evidence-based practice, University of Salford has provided expert mentoring throughout this project.

Contact

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Introduction

This narrative inquiry annotated bibliography is the first output from an **AHRC-RLUK Professional Practice Fellowship**: Once upon a narrative: Storying the librarian practitioner-researcher lived experience.

The aim of this bibliography is to guide library and information professionals to explore narrative inquiry as a research method and consider if it might meet the needs of a future project.

The bibliography is organised into 5 main sections and major references are presented above the annotations.

- Getting started
- Narrative interviews
- Analysing data
- Re-presenting data through poems
- Challenges

Where an additional reference is given to add context but is not a key citation of the bibliography, it is presented below the text and is tagged with the heading 'subtle reference'. All references are presented alphabetically in the reference list.

Getting started in narrative inquiry

Introductory texts

Kim, J.-H. (2016). *Understanding narrative inquiry: the crafting and analysis of stories as research*. SAGE.

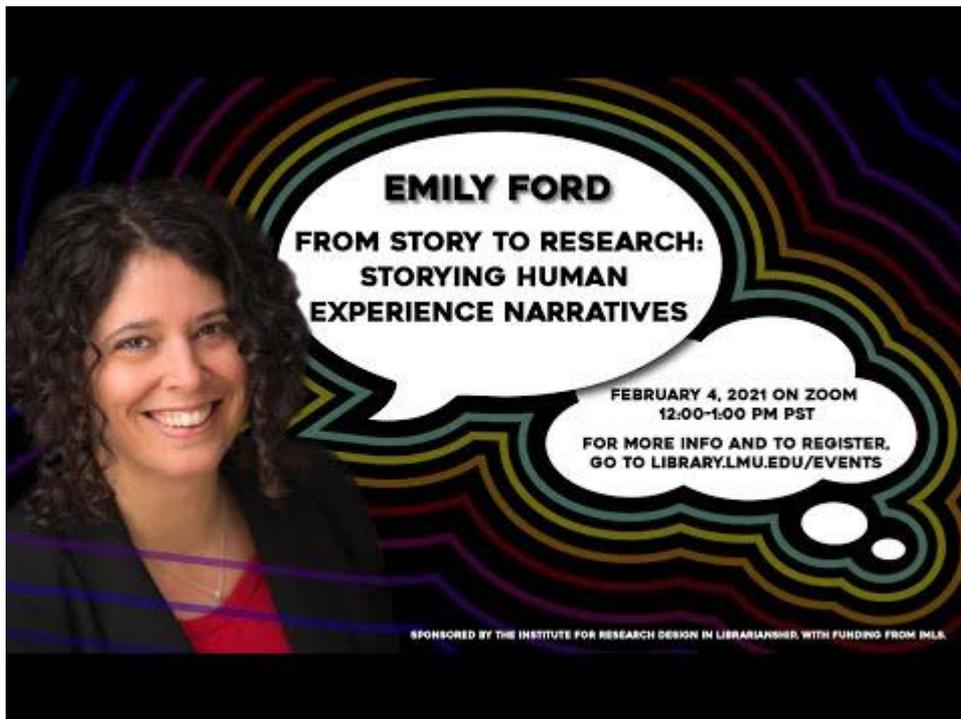
An ideal place to begin exploring narrative inquiry is Jeong-Hee Kim's (2016) book **Understanding Narrative Inquiry**. The first chapter provides a short overview of the history of narrative inquiry and how it has been used in different disciplines. Chapter 2 provides an accessible discussion of theoretical perspectives. Kim gives a brief summary of Dewey's view of experience; this is the theory underpinning much of Clandinin and Connelly's work which I largely followed in designing my narrative inquiry. Chapter 3 discusses relational ethics and the researcher as a participant in the research process. It also begins to address the topics of narrative thinking and the authenticity of told stories. (Though I think these topics require many further readings to comprehend them fully.) Chapter 5 presents different styles of interviewing. Chapter 6 is an excellent starting point to think about ways to analyse narrative data. Figure 6.3 demonstrates how a narrative inquirer might use multiple approaches to data analysis. I wanted to use several different frameworks and Kim gave me the confidence to pursue these as ways to inform a poetic approach and move towards an art-based narrative inquiry. Though Kim doesn't go into great depth about art-based approaches, she provides further readings for the novice to seek out.

Caine, V., Estefan, A., & Clandinin, D. J. (2019). *Narrative inquiry*. SAGE.
doi:10.4135/9781526421036771087

Vera Caine et al's (2019) summary of narrative inquiry was one of the first texts I read on the method. As a novice, I found it easy to understand and follow. It is short (at 27 pages) and outlines the view of experience as a storied phenomenon, continuously in motion, personal, social and relational. It's a good place to begin to consider if the narrative approach fits with your own view of the world. Caine et al clearly articulate the centrality of co-construction of the narratives with participants. The goal of narrative is not a 'singular' truth but rather a representation of experience and this is a process that develops through negotiation between participants and the researcher during the inquiry (p.15).

Introductory audiovisual resources

Ford, E. (2021a). From Story to Research: Storying Human Experience Narratives. In: Institute for Research Design in Librarianship Speaker Series: Thinking Critically about Research and Power. https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/ulib_fac/324/



Emily Ford presented two online workshops for librarians as part of the Institute for Research Design in Librarianship. This first workshop introduces narrative inquiry and touches upon key aspects of the research method including what is considered 'story' and approaches to analysis. This is a useful introduction for a librarian practitioner-researcher.

Going deeper

Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. Left Coast Press.

If you are ready to go deeper into narrative inquiry and think the Deweyan view of experience fits with your understanding of the world, then D. Jean Clandinin's (2013) book **Engaging in Narrative Inquiry** is a positive next step. This text is more challenging than Kim's (2016) *Understanding Narrative Inquiry* but with some commitment and perseverance, the novice inquirer will find it invaluable. Clandinin argues that narrative inquiry is both method and methodology but I do not feel equipped (as yet) to explain that. Helpfully though, the introduction tells us:

“ Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding and inquiring into experience. It is nothing more and nothing less. Narrative inquiry is situated in relationships and in community, and it attends to notions of expertise and knowing in relational and participatory ways.

Clandinin, D. J. (p. 13)

”

Clandinin often contextualises the narrative inquiry method with examples from her own personal experiences as well as her research with teachers.

The first important lesson I took from this text is that at the outset of any narrative inquiry, the researcher must consider the question: who are you in this narrative inquiry? The way I chose to approach this was to write my own narrative over two days and then keep adding to it throughout my inquiry. Though by the halfway stage, my additions often became lines of poetry as I tried to reconcile my role as an inquirer and my position as an insider researcher. Clandinin makes clear that narrative inquiry requires an ongoing process of reflexivity. The method is relational, the stories of both the researcher and the participant should be open in the inquiry. I interpret this to mean that each is influenced by the other, new stories unfold through the inquiry and these are relational and co-constructed.

The second important lesson I took from this book is around the continuous nature of experience. Our current experiences are influenced by those that have gone before and our imaginings of what might come next. The stories we tell ourselves about our lives, about our past and our possible futures will be shaping our understanding of the world.

The third is the social dimension of experience. Our stories are influenced by those around us. Our lives at home, our lives at work or school, the places we meet with friends, all shape the stories we tell. Sometimes these "nested lives" create tension as the stories may not always align. Ultimately, interactions between people and social institutions are continuously influencing our storied lives.

Riessman, C. K. (2008). Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences. SAGE.

We'll return to Riessman again in analysing data, but for now I think it is useful to share this quote to consider the relevance of stories for understanding society.

“ Stories can have effects beyond their meanings for individual storytellers, creating possibilities for social identities, group belonging, and collective action.

Riessman, C. K. (p. 54)

”

It is not just at the individual level that stories have power and afford a sense of agency; it is also at the collective level. Stories can shape group identity. This reminds me of Becker's labelling theory; for an example, you could read Klimecká's (2023) article discussing the the gifted and talented label and how that shapes students' identities. A label is not exactly the same as a story but I think perhaps, it is the kernel of a story.

Klimecká, E. (2023). Advantages and Disadvantages of Being 'Gifted': Perceptions of the Label by Gifted Pupils. *Research Papers in Education*, 38(6), 902-923.
doi:10.1080/02671522.2022.2065523

Deeper audiovisual resources

McKenna, T., & Clandinin, D. J. (2017). Experience and Story: Jean Clandinin and Tarquam McKenna in Conversation YouTube, Victoria University.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFMMCzoo2js>



This 37-minute recorded conversation between D. Jean Clandinin and Tarquam McKenna emphasises the importance of honouring people's lived experience and their storied lives. It also highlights some of the challenges and I found it useful to start to think about these at the beginning of designing my study. For example:

- More time is needed to build trust in the relationship; stories "unfold" and "in fold" over time.
- Complexities of experience and the need to avoid reductionism.
- The researcher as a part of the process.
- Attentiveness to the researcher's own story and also the wider narratives (institutional, social, cultural, political) in which participants' stories are nested.
- In arts-based approaches, the risk that the creative output obscures that which is the purpose of the study i.e. to understand experience.

Barkhuizen, G. (2020, 21 October). Narrative inquiry in applied linguistics: Work in progress YouTube, UCL Centre for Applied Linguistics Research Seminar.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uai0g0yd3SM>



The audience for Gary Barkhuizen's (2020) presentation to the UCL Applied Linguistics Research Seminar is socio-linguists; however, Gwyneth James, a Senior Lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire and experienced narrative inquirer, recommended it to me as it accessible for novices from any discipline. It provides a useful grounding in the foundations of narrative inquiry. Barkhuizen discusses what is meant by story in narrative research and he asks: if research doesn't include or re-present story, is it actually a narrative inquiry? This has stayed with me. I have read many narrative inquiry journal articles from different disciplines and often, there is very little use of what I consider to be story. This, in part, is due to academic publishing conventions (see Challenges section). I take the position that to be a narrative inquiry; there must be story. The story may be presented in different ways but it should be there to provide a mirror into lived experience and the storied nature of that experience.

Narrative inquiry and Library and Information Studies (LIS)

Ford, E. (2020). Tell Me Your Story: Narrative Inquiry in LIS Research. *College & Research Libraries*, 81(2), 235-247. doi:10.5860/crl.81.2.235

Emily Ford's (2020) article situates narrative inquiry within library and information studies (LIS). Ford argues that narrative inquiry can provide a collective mirror to the library community to reflect on what we do, why we do it and start to rethink. I think this is necessary for the profession as we are still struggling to communicate our value, have somewhat failed with open access and are operating in a highly complex digital landscape. Ford emphasises that narrative inquiry is not about generating over-arching themes across a dataset. Rather, it is a case-based approach centred on learning from an individual's lived experiences. Ford outlines how narrative inquiry had been used to date in our discipline to evaluate systems, to understand school

librarians' careers and to explore information literacy pedagogy. From this paper, it is evident that narrative inquiry is not commonly used in LIS but has much to offer. I found it inspiring.

Ford, E. (2021b). Stories of open: opening peer review through narrative inquiry. Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association. <https://bit.ly/ACRLStoriesofOpen>

Ford's (2021b) open access monograph explores open peer review processes. Chapter 2 explains how Ford came to her decisions in designing the narrative inquiry. Ford adopts Coralie McCormack's (2004) storying stories approach to analysing narratives. Her approach to re-presenting data makes use of visual elements such as type face and layout. She also adds her own interpretive text to contextualise. Happily, I am able to share the example below (from page 29-30) where Ford explains her re-presentation decisions. (Ford uses a CC BY-NC 4.0 license.) I enjoyed reading this book. The discussion around active interviews guided my thinking for my own inquiry. On a personal note, I enjoyed the discussion around 'reviewer two' in chapter 3 and the insights into other people's experience of the peer review process.

Figure 1: Ford's (2020) visual re-presentation of data

the following explanation.

Portions of this book written around interpretive narratives begin at the left margin of each page and are presented in Minion Pro font. This includes all of the text thus far. Each subsequent chapter includes text written for this book as well as portions of the interpretive narratives.

My framing of interpretive narratives and analysis are indented once and printed in Courier New.

Portions of interpretive narratives, or stories, begin indented twice and are printed in Times New Roman.

When my own words or an interviewee's words are used to clarify the context of a story told, they are further indented and italicized. This text is ancillary in that it provides only the context of the interview and is not part of a storied story.

Intellectual/Emotional Response

My emotional and intellectual responses, as well as relation to the text—which are one of the first steps of transcript analysis in the storying stories method—are right-justified, italicized, and labeled as Emotional Response, Intellectual Response, or Relation.

29

Additionally, there are a few instances where interviewees, upon reviewing their interview transcripts, responded to my responses. These are right-justified.

McCormack, C. (2004). Storying stories: a narrative approach to in-depth interview conversations. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 7(3), 219-236. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570210166382>

Narrative interviews

Overview

Kim, J.-H. (2016). *Understanding narrative inquiry: the crafting and analysis of stories as research*. SAGE.

Kim (2016) advises that most interviews in narrative inquiry are either semi-structured or unstructured; the researcher and participant co-construct meaning through "a dynamic relationship that promotes growth and learning for both" (p.98-99). However, it is important to note that not all meanings created in the relational space will be shared (see Watson & Mcluckie, 2020).

Watson, C., & Mcluckie, C. (2020). Analysing narratives. In M. R. M. Ward & S. Delamont (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education*. Edward Elgar.

Silipigni Connaway, L., & Radford, M. L. (2021). *Research Methods in Library and Information Science (7 ed)*. Libraries Unlimited.

In chapter 11, Silipigni Connaway and Radford (2021) provide a short overview of interviews in qualitative research for library and information professionals.

Lloyd, A. (2021). *The Qualitative Landscape of Information Literacy Research: Perspectives, Methods and Techniques*. Facet Publishing.

See chapter 5 in Lloyd (2021) for a discussion on how interviews have been used in information literacy research.

Wildemuth, B. M. (2016). *Applications of social research methods to questions in information and library science*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

To explore more about unstructured and semi-structured interviews in the context of LIS studies, I recommend reading chapters 25 and 26 in Wildemuth (2016).

Unstructured, repeated interviews

Holstein, J. A., & Gubrium, J. F. (1995). *The Active interview*. SAGE.

When taking into account relational ethics and the power-sharing dimension of narrative inquiry, I felt that unstructured interviews were most appropriate because they allow the participant to

explore avenues of interest to them rather than answer a pre-determined set of questions. I adopted Holstein and Gubrium's (1995) active interview method to embody the relational dimension of narrative inquiry. In this approach the researcher may have a broad idea of topics but the interview is more conversational and not restricted by a rigid interview guide. The interviewer's role is to "activate narrative production" and "harness the respondent's storytelling to the research task at hand" (p. 39). I adopted a two-phase interview - a narration phase and a conversational phase – adapted from Kim's (2016) summary of the life story interview. I found the lack of questions a little unsettling and so I conducted two pilot interviews to practice the technique. This grew my confidence when my participants did indeed tell stories.

Elliot, J. (2020). Gathering narrative data. In M. R. M. Ward & S. Delamont (Eds.), Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education. Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

I selected repeated interviewing which is common in narrative inquiry (Elliot, 2020). A consequence of this in-depth approach is that sample sizes are smaller; each interview generates large volumes of data. The study design is also more likely to be longitudinal. The benefit of repeated interviews is that participants' lived experiences can be studied over time and the continuous nature of experience can be explored.

Neale, B. (2020). Qualitative Longitudinal Research: Research Methods. Bloomsbury Publishing.

You might like to read Neale (2020) to explore some of the design considerations in longitudinal qualitative research.

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. (2012). Qualitative interviewing: the art of hearing data (3rd ed.). SAGE.

Rubin & Rubin (2012) is a useful text to learn about different types of interview questions and prompts.

Olewnick, L. (2020). Failure to probe: Lessons learned from a novice interviewer. In L. A. Fullington, B. K. West, & F. Albarillo (Eds.), Reflections on Practitioner Research: A Practical Guide for Information Professionals. Association of College & Research Libraries.

Lauren Olewnick's (2020) chapter discusses the challenges she experienced as a novice in-depth interviewer in this book on LIS practitioner-research.

Analysing data

Easing in

Kim, J.-H. (2016). Understanding narrative inquiry: the crafting and analysis of stories as research. SAGE.

Narrative inquirers embrace uncertainty and undertake multiple approaches in their analysis (Caine, 2019). To begin your exploration of narrative data analysis, I recommend you first read Chapter 6 in Kim (2016).

Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. SAGE.

Next read chapters 3-6 in Riessman (2008). Riessman outlines (with examples) the four main approaches to narrative data analysis: thematic, structural, dialogic, and visual. These readings provide the foundational concepts. They are challenging and require attentional resources but will help guide your approach. Of course, the avenue you take will be informed by your own interpretation of what constitutes a narrative inquiry.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995). *Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis*. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8(1), 5-23.

Polkinghorne (1995) discusses the two main approaches in depth: Analysis of narratives and narrative analysis. This is a seminal text in the field of narrative inquiry; it is a challenging read. However, if you persevere with it and revisit it a few times, it will deepen your understanding.

James, G. (2017). *Cul-de-sacs and Narrative Data Analysis – A Less Than Straightforward Journey*. *The Qualitative Report*, 22(12), 3102-3117. doi:10.46743/2160-3715/2017.3163

Gwyneth James discusses her experiences as a novice narrative inquirer and the challenges of narrative data analysis. She makes clear that the process is individual, creative, fluid and contextual. This article gave me permission to draw on previous frameworks as a "springboard for creativity" rather than a set of clearly defined parameters to follow (p. 3113).

The next sub-sections of the bibliography provide further detail about the frameworks I selected for my narrative data analysis.

Three-dimensional narrative space

My narrative inquiry study has been heavily influenced by the work of D. Jean Clandinin and colleagues. They have written numerous publications and are considered significant figures in the field.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). *Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry*. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2-14. doi:10.2307/1176100

Connelly & Clandinin (1990) advise approaching data analysis as a process of 'burrowing' into the data. This focuses the researcher's attention on the emotional, moral dispositional and aesthetic qualities of a story.

Clandinin, D. J., Caine, V., Estefan, A., Huber, J., Murphy, M. S., & Steeves, P. (2015). *Places of practice: Learning to think narratively*. *Narrative Works*, 5(1), 22-39.

In this 2015 paper, Clandinin et al describe narrative data analysis as a process of learning to think narratively. They recognise that it is not easy for a researcher to practice narrative

thinking. Kim explains (2016) that narrative thinking allows the researcher to retell participants stories, temporally, creatively and authentically.

Wang, C. C., & Geale, S. K. (2015). The power of story: Narrative inquiry as a methodology in nursing research. *International Journal of Nursing Sciences*, 2(2), 195-198. doi: 10.1016/j.ijnss.2015.04.014

I developed my analytical approach based on Clandinin & Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional narrative space using the table presented in Carol Wang and Sara Geale's (2015) article on using narrative inquiry in nursing research. The table guided my narrative thinking and provided a structure to analyse experience as personal, social and continuous.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: experience and story in qualitative research*. Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Storying stories

The next element of my framework was derived from Coralie McCormack's (2000a, 2000b, 2004) storying stories approach. This method of narrative data analysis uses multiple lenses. McCormack draws on the work of Labov (see Chapter 6 in Kim, 2016 for an introduction to Labov or Chapter 4 in Riessman, 2008).

McCormack, C. (2000a). From Interview Transcript to Interpretive Story: Part 1—Viewing the Transcript through Multiple Lenses. *Field Methods*, 12(4), 282-297. doi:10.1177/1525822x0001200402

The first publication focuses on narrative processes and the lenses of language, moments, and context. McCormack (2000a) provides a series of questions which can be applied to the interview transcript to consider both the content of stories and their structure. Novices will find these questions accessible and able to apply them to their own narrative interview data. The questions on language and moments were relevant to my chosen poetic interpretation method and became part of my analysis framework.

McCormack, C. (2000b). From Interview Transcript to Interpretive Story: Part 2—Developing an Interpretive Story. *Field Methods*, 12(4), 298-315. doi:10.1177/1525822x0001200403

The second article discusses these different lenses and provides a worked example. The analysis begins with identifying story 'titles'. These are shared with participants to check the authenticity of the ongoing analysis. McCormack (2000b) provides a list of questions which can accompany the titles to assist participant reflection. She also demonstrates how she arrived at her re-presentation.

McCormack, C. (2004). Storying stories: a narrative approach to in-depth interview conversations. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 7(3), 219-236. doi:10.1080/13645570210166382

The third paper focuses on the construction of an interpretive story which includes the voice of the researcher and reflexivity through elements of the re-presentation. McCormack (2004) explains her choice of language and visual elements to re-present her participant's experience; this makes it possible for a novice inquirer to follow a similar approach. Page 221 includes a table summarising the whole storying stories method.

Ford, E. (2021c). Story Craft: Developing Interpretive Narratives Using Storying Stories. In: 2022 IRDL Scholar's Speaker Series. <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/irdl-speakerseries-2022/1/>



Emily Ford's second workshop for the Institute for Research Design in Librarianship provides a learning opportunity to apply the storying stories approach. Her resources are shared in an [open Google Drive folder](#).

Four levels and analytical questions

Bentley, A., Salifu, Y., & Walshe, C. (2021). Applying an Analytical Process to Longitudinal Narrative Interviews With Couples Living and Dying With Lewy Body Dementia. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20, 16094069211060653. doi:/10.1177/16094069211060653

Allison Bentley, Yakubu Salifu and Catherine Walshe (2021) use narrative analysis in the healthcare context, specifically in repeated interviews with couples living with Lewy Body Dementia. They adapted Murray (2000) and Murray & Sools' (2015) four levels of analytical questions for health psychology. I found the table of questions presented on page 3 accessible and informative. I used these questions as a basis for critical reflection on the relational space

between participant and researcher, as well as the broader social and cultural context shaping the shared stories. This became the final element in my analytical framework.

Murray, M. (2000). Levels of Narrative Analysis in Health Psychology. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 5(3), 337-347. 10.1177/135910530000500305

Murray, M., & Sools, A. (2015). Narrative research. In P. Rohleder & A. C. Lyons (Eds.), *Qualitative research in clinical and health psychology*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Poetic re-presentation

Introductory chapters

Chapters in broader works on arts-based approaches provide short overviews and are a useful starting point to consider whether poetic interpretation would be appropriate for your research.

Faulkner, S. L. (2019a). Poetic inquiry: Poetry as/in/for social research. In P. Leavy (Ed.), Handbook of arts-based research. The Guilford Press.

Of the chapters mentioned in this section, Faulkner's (2019) is the most detailed; she defines poetic inquiry, addresses the social purpose, different poetic forms and the question of quality criteria.

Janesick, V. J. (2016). Poetic inquiry: Transforming qualitative data into poetry. In N. K. Denzin & M. D. Giardina (Eds.), Qualitative Inquiry Through a Critical Lens (pp. 59-72). Routledge.

Janesick's (2016) chapter is short and includes some examples of poems from different research approaches.

Leavy, P. (2020). Poetic inquiry. In Method Meets Art. Guildford Publications.

Leavy's (2020) chapter discusses the different approaches to using poetry as a research approach and includes a helpful checklist of considerations.

Textbooks

Faulkner, S. L. (2009). Poetry As Method: Reporting Research Through Verse. Taylor & Francis Group.

Sandra Faulkner's (2009) book on research poetry provides an excellent introduction to the topic. She explains that poetic inquiry has been described in numerous ways: found data poetry, poetic transcription, research poetry. Chapter 2 summarises the five main goals poetic inquirers aim to achieve through their interpretation:

- Evoke a certain feeling or mood for the reader
- Foster political action leading to social change
- Create a shared connection between the researcher, audience and participant
- Create an emotional response in a small space
- Reach new ways of understanding a phenomenon.

Faulkner, S. L. (2019b). Poetic inquiry: Craft, method and practice. Routledge.

The second edition (slightly different title, different publisher) expands on the first adding more detail and more recent examples.

Owton, H. (2017). Doing poetic inquiry. Springer.

Helen Owton has also written an introductory text. Chapter 4 focuses on the process of interpretation and transformation of data. She provides examples of cluster poems on patients' experiences of asthma. Cluster poems are groups of poems based on different narratives and by bringing them together, differing lived experiences are demonstrated. As an asthmatic, I found that some of the poems evoked my personal experience and connected with me as a reader. This is the power of the poetic approach.

My approach

Coralie McCormack (2004) notes that researchers do not commonly make explicit the analytical processes behind poetic interpretation. I think in part this is because it is a creative process, iterative and messy. In journeying through this messiness, the analysis stage can feel unruly, unsystematic and open to criticism of lack of rigour. This is something that Professor Alison Brettell and I have grappled with. We concluded that narrative inquiry recognises the subjective nature of the process, and the authenticity of the interpretation can only be judged by the researcher. The quality of poetry produced through research is discussed in the literature (see Faulkner, 2019a for example); however, it is not the poem in and of itself that should be judged but rather whether the poem re-presents the essence of experience. That interpretation is unique to the researcher and developed in the relational space with the participant.

Having said all that, after trying different approaches and experimenting with Glense's (1997) poetic transcription approach (reference below). I took a step back and created a framework from different narrative analysis approaches that I had explored. This provided a more transparent, rigorous method to inform the poetry. It comprised each of the frameworks discussed in the analysing data section.

Glesne, C. (1997). That rare feeling: re-presenting research through poetic transcription. Qualitative Inquiry, 3, 202-221.

Corrine Glesne (1997) shared her approach to 'poetic transcription'. The process begins with close reading and then generation of narrative themes. Finally, three rules governed her approach to the writing of the poems. The rules comprised: using only the participant's words, selecting the words from anywhere in the transcript and using the participant's speaking rhythm.

Richardson, L. (2003). Poetic Representation of Interviews. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), Postmodern interviewing (pp. 187-201). SAGE.

doi:10.4135/9781412985437

Laurel Richardson (2003) recommends that novices attend creative writing classes to learn about poetic devices, imagery and rhythm etc. Richardson argues that poetry is in the domain of 'making' rather than 'knowing'. I attended poetry writing classes through an arts outreach programme at a local university. Experiential learning was beneficial to my confidence and also my creative craft. I encourage you to hone your poetic skill through any avenues that are open to you.

Challenges

Personal feelings

Larson, C. L. (1997). Re-presenting the subject: Problems in personal narrative inquiry. International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 10(4), 455-470.

doi:10.1080/095183997237034

Larson's (1997) paper provides an insight from the perspective of a narrative researcher as the subject of a narrative study. This article conveys the complexities of making meaning with a person's story and argues for the need for a deliberative dialogue between researcher and participants.

Bigger picture

Barkhuizen, G., & Consoli, S. (2021). Pushing the edge in narrative inquiry. System, 102, 102656. doi:10.1016/j.system.2021.102656

Gary Barkhuizen and Sal Consoli's (2021) editorial in the special issue on narrative inquiry provides insight into the ongoing challenges of the method. Gary raises five questions which are prompts for inquirers to consider. I found the fifth question resonated with my concerns around conventions of traditional academic outputs. I frequently wonder how to present a series of poems as a set of findings in a journal article. I question whether this is really the best method of dissemination when my purpose is to present a mirror to the library profession. The research to practice gap in LIS has been well-documented (Booth, 2003; Haddow & Klobas, 2004; Haddow 2011); various interventions have sought to narrow this gap by developing collaborative networks or building practitioners' research knowledge (see for example, Hall, 2019, Albarillo et al, 2022). However, I feel it is professional associations and LIS managers and leaders who can influence change within the broader sector, and it is unclear if they are regularly engaging with academic publications.

Sal discusses the challenges around rigour, credibility and the inherent 'messiness' of narrative inquiry as a research method. The insights in this editorial present the bigger picture and can help contextualise some of the issues a novice may experience.

Albarillo, F., Kennedy, M., & Brancolini, K. (2022). Assessment of the Institute for Research Design in Librarianship (IRDL): Impact on the Research Productivity and Careers of Academic Librarians. *Evidence based library and information practice*, 17(4), 3-35. doi:10.18438/eblip30094

Booth, A. (2003). Bridging the Research-Practice Gap? The Role of Evidence Based Librarianship. *New Review of Information and Library Research*, 9(1), 3-23. doi:/10.1080/13614550410001687909

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