

Chapter One

Reconstructing the Research Process: Methodological Considerations

1.0 Introduction: Research Paradigms and Strategies of Interpretation

1.1 The Philosophy: Participatory Action Research

The methodological approach of this dissertation is a combination of the philosophy underlying Participatory Action Research (henceforth *PAR*) (Fals-Borda, Orlando & Rahman, 1991. In this work, see Rahman:13-23.; Tilakaratna:135-45; Fals-Borda:146-66; Rahman in Fals-Borda, 1985:107-32) and the techniques of Grounded Theory (henceforth *GT*) (Glaser; & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Strauss & Corbin in: Denzin, & Lincoln, 1994: 273-285; Strauss, 1987). *PAR* is an attempt to make research more action-oriented and bring it closer to grassroots movements and social action groups. It aims at social change through developing research methods from the perspective of marginalised groups. *PAR* calls for “experience” and “commitment” as the basic qualities to be invested by the researcher in dealing with people and processes involved in the research project. The philosophy is based, among others, on the existential concept of experience, *vivencia*, proposed by the Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega y Gasset (See, Fals-Borda in: Fals-Borda, Orlando & Rahman, Anisur Muhammad, 1991:11, Footnote 2)⁹ which finds resonance in the concepts of the “life-world” of Habermas (1997:70) and “alterity” of Levinas (Levinas, 1969: Parts two and three).¹⁰ *Vivencia* combines life-experiences, learning with

⁹ „*Vivencia* is a Spanish neologism introduced by Ortega y Gasset when he adapted the word *Erlebnis* from German existentialist literature early in the present century. It may be translated roughly as „inner-life experience“ or „happening“, but the concept implies a more ample meaning by which a person finds fulfilment for his/her being, not only in the workings of the inner self but in the osmotic otherness of nature and the wider society, and by **learning not only with the mind alone but also with the heart**. This idea has found some resonance in Jürgen Habermas’ concept of the „life-world“ as a totality of experience that includes daily living and concrete value contexts (Habermas, 1984). *Vivencia*, experienced with „the other“ in this case the marginalised and the oppressed are not far from the „alterity“ philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas (1974) and Tzvetan Todorov (1982) recently diffused among *PAR* and intellectual circles in the Third World“.

¹⁰ “Levinas describes three ways of alterity: one is anonymous, one is an egonomy and the last is noble, the “other.” It is not to say that egonomy does not exist. In fact, there is plenty of it in daily life. Egonomy or what I call eco-chronomy, also exists and is necessary in life. But it is the third type of alterity, which is noble, like: ‘after you, sir’... I think, Levinas’ view of the third type of alterity, makes us say without our asking, the other involves me. ‘You write to me, therefore I respond.’ Western philosophy was bothered with the question of essence as comprehended by the ‘I’ or working out universals on the basis of ‘I think therefore I am and things are.’ The anonymous alterity searches its senses in ‘it (Being) speaks, therefore I am’... I take distance from those attempts in western philosophy that tend to a mathesis universalis or a universe. In my view, the reality is a universe and a pluriverse. The “I think, therefore, I am” is englobing (a relation with the other that is ecochronomic). The “You speak to me, therefore, I am” is an investiture (a relation of the other to me that is sociochronomic). Sidney J. Mascarenhas, e-mail message to author, April 30, 2004.

the mind and heart with authentic commitment. In so doing, PAR aims at undoing the inequalities between the South and North - on the level of access to and control over means of material as well as knowledge production (Rahman in Fals-Borda, 1985:113).¹¹ This basic idea of PAR aligns with the aims of my dissertation, which, among other things, examines the issue of control over knowledge production about the South by the North.

Much of the theory developed in this research project is informed by my own experiences and the experiences of my other educator activist friends in the South and the North. Theory here is informed by my praxis and not the other way round. "Action research goes beyond the notion that theory can inform practice...and the theory is really only useful insofar as it is put in the service of a practise focused on achieving positive social change."¹² In a similar vein, it is an attempt to lay a communication channel open between researchers and practitioners involved in the field of education towards increased social awareness and social engagement. Action research, in the above sense, is necessarily interdisciplinary and has a complex history emerging over time from a variety of fields. My concentration, however, is upon the strain of action research developed by Orlando-Fals Borda (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991).¹³

A key value shared by action researchers is an "abiding respect for people's knowledge and for their ability to understand and address the issues confronting them and their communities". Citing Ernie Stringer, Brydon-Miller formulates the task of action research being to "provide people with the support and resources to do things in ways that will fit

Also see the following works of Sidney (Michael) J. Mascarenhas. "The Human Condition. Towards a Socio-chronological Intrigue-Scrutiny-Location in the writings of Emmanuel Levinas up to 1974" (Ph.D. Diss: Université Catholique di Louvain, 1982), Vol. 1: xv+345; Vol. 2:347-741.

"The Human Condition. Towards Sociochrononomy. Part-I". In Divyadaan (Journal of Philosophy & Education). 9(1998), n° 3, p. 200-229; "The Itinerary and Language of a Pluriverse". In Antonianum. LXXVI(2001), Fasc. 3, p. 479-493; "11 September 2001; "A Pluriverse Eclipsed". In Divyadaan (Journal of Philosophy & Education). 13(2002), n 2, p. 234-260.

¹¹ Here Rahman writes: "...domination of masses is not only in the polarisation of control over the means of material production but also over the means of knowledge production including...the social power to determine what is valid or useful knowledge...In order to improve the possibility of liberation, therefore, these two gaps should be attacked, wherever feasible, simultaneously".

¹² Brydon-Miller, Mary et al. "Why Action Research?" in: Action Research, 1(1):15. What I am referring to, as PAR is the term used by Fals- Borda to signify action research. I prefer to use that term. It is, however, also variously called as Action Research or Participatory Research Action etc.

¹³ Also see, Fals-Borda, Orlando. "The Application of Participatory Action-research in Latin America. In: International Sociology. 2(4), pp. 329-47; Fals-Borda. Research tensions and paradigm shifts in action sciences. Posted on the website <http://www.congressconsult.com/mes3/Plenaries/FalsBorda.doc>.

Fals-Borda. Peoples' Space Times in Global Processes: The Response of the Local. Posted on the Website: <http://www.jwsr.ucr.edu/archive/vol6/number3/pdf/jwsr-v6n3-falsborda.pdf>

their own cultural context and their own life styles. The people, we knew, not the experts, should be the ones to determine the nature and operation of the things that affect their lives". In a similar vein, Werner Fricke speaks of action research involving, "*empathy* and *listening* while meeting the other, it is a commitment to basic values like human creativity and democratic participation. It is based on the perception of social reality as a continuing process with individuals being subjects of their history and the social contexts they are dependent on". Brydon-Miller *et al* summarise the basic values that underlie the common practice of action researchers with the terms, "respect for people and for the knowledge and experience they bring to the research process, a belief in the ability of democratic processes to achieve positive social change, and a commitment to action"(Brydon-Miller, *ibid*:14-15). These values of respect for the grassroots knowledge and their ability to liberate themselves from various ways in which oppression functions accompanied my research process all through to the end. I gathered such knowledge and strength through surveying technical and non-technical literature of the marginalised groups, especially the *dalits* in India, and other grassroots literature from the South. Emancipatory literature belonging to the marginalised groups in the North: women, people of colour, gays and lesbians also aided my sensitivity to issues under consideration here. I had to learn to practice immense *empathy* and *listening*, referred to by Fricke above, during my interviews and conversations with activists and theorists in India and Germany. I hope that I succeeded in putting across their views without too much interference from my own biases and assumptions regarding S-N "development" work.

While I mentioned values guiding PAR, a brief reference to the constructivist and cultural studies paradigms that inform the perspective of PAR and mine are in place here (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 14ff; Guba, 1990: 17-30). "Paradigm" here refers to the interpretative framework, to the basic set of beliefs that guided my research process. Constructivism as a paradigm is characterised by a belief that there are multiple realities wherein the subject and knower create understandings in the lived world. Credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity. On the other hand, cultural studies paradigm is a multifaceted approach consisting of different strands drawing ideas from Marxism, feminism and post-modern sensibility. In this there is a human, lived experience component coupled with the structural and material determinants of race, class and gender.

In this sense, my study and presentation of the findings, “methods” are used strategically as resources for understanding and for producing resistances to local structures of domination (Richardson in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 516-29). This process was a tough one including theoretical reading, practical training work and discussions with many other colleagues on the way to generating purposeful theory and action.

1.2 Techniques of Grounded Theory and Software Supported Qualitative Analysis

Within the above perspective, I employed the techniques and analytical strategies of GT. I chose to use GT techniques because they allow for a creative combination of interviews; documents; seminar and conference observations; and professional experiences in generating theory based on qualitative data. For the implementation of the interviews, the technique of the *Problem-Centred Interview* developed by Witzel (1996:49-76) based upon GT methodology was of particular help.¹⁴ The whole text, generated through fieldwork, surveying of technical and non-technical literature, was analysed using GT techniques with the help of an updated Qualitative Data Analysis Software (henceforth *MAXqda*).¹⁵

Although I used various aspects of different research methodologies that refer *extensively* to GT, the process-oriented nature of the research is my own contribution to the style that I developed. My final compositional style, the presentation of data and analysis of the text and my theory could be compared to the “confessional tale” referred to by Maanen (1998)¹⁶. In the process of my research and presentation of its results, I became the subject matter and explored the processes underlying those (Maanen, *ibid*:75).¹⁷ Writing, therefore, for me was not telling someone, something but a gateway to inquiry, discovery and analysis of what I knew and experienced in the past years, was an attempt to give a theoretical basis to these knowledge and experiences. It was an attempt to explore my own processes and preferences through repeated writing and re-writing.

¹⁴ See Witzel, Andreas. Das Problemzentrierte Interview [26 Absätze]. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research (On-line Journal), 1(1). Aufrufbar über: <http://qualitative-research.net/fqs> (accessed on: 25.Jan 2003).

¹⁵ MAXqda. Software for Qualitative Data Analysis. VERBI Software. Consult. Sozialforschung. GmbH, Berlin 2001. Website: <http://www.maxqda.de>

¹⁷Maanen states: “Much confessional work is done to convince the audience of the human qualities of the fieldworker. Often the ethnographer mentions personal biases, character flaws, or bad habits as a way of building an ironic self-portrait with which the reader can identify... The omnipotent tone of realism gives way to the modest, unassuming style of one struggling to piece together something reasonably coherent out of displays of initial disorder; doubt and difficulty”. Maanen, *ibid*., p. 75

In the process of coming to the final text, I first created a field text or rough text through “indexing” my interviews and documents (Sanjek, 1990:389-89).¹⁸ This led me to form the research text and finally the public text in the form of GT, which can be termed my final tale because theories now a days are read in narrative terms, as “tales of the field”(van Maanen, *ibid*:8).¹⁹ My preoccupation with the representation of the “other”, for instance, *dalits*, women, marginalised, theorists and activists was continuous. My constant concern was also to relay the message of the previously unheard (*dalits*/South) voices to all and to critically understand the dominant voices from the North.

1.3 From Ground Realities to Grounded Theory

The concepts like “educator activists”²⁰ and “learning from the south”²¹, do not exist as epistemologically and systematically constructed concepts. The effort of mine was to portray the dynamics behind the insemination, gestation, birth and growth processes of such concepts that gave momentum to my research. Although the research-idea arose out of my long years of experiences with working in an international scenario, both in theory and praxis, I attempted to give an epistemological, intellectual framework to those

¹⁸ The term “indexing” refers to the process by which a researcher must systematically put together notes and scattered files to form an initial field text. The following sections of these methodological reflections and the whole *CS* offer one an inkling into the way in which I indexed my field notes. *MAXqda* was of immense help in this process of indexing. What also constituted my indexing process were my cards, rough texts entered into the computer, and the doctoral diary that I regularly updated and a diary that I maintained on my research visit to India in March-April 2003. Added to that are the umpteen number of notes that I made with the pencil on the number of books and articles that I read at home and during my journeys. In the end, I had to put together all these scattered notes to form a “rough text” that was the basis for further formulation of a more systematic text.

¹⁹ Although my presentation in *EA* does not have a “tale” like character, the transcribed interviews in *CS* really read like a “tale from the grassroots”. The inspiration to call my *CS* a tale came from reading the work, “Tales of the Field” of John van Maanen. “My use of the folksy term “tales” ...may seem somewhat curious to readers. I use the term quite self-consciously to highlight the presentational or, more properly, representational qualities of all fieldwork writing. It is a term meant to draw attention to the inherent story-like character of fieldwork accounts, as well as to the inevitable choices made by an author ...this does not of course, imply that ethnography is mere fiction or that the whole world must be put between quotation marks. I only mean that writing is something writers do, and it stands at least one-off from what is written about. There is no direct correspondence between the world as experienced and the world as conveyed in a text, any more than there is a direct correspondence between the observer and the observed”(p.8).

²⁰ The only book I came across which has something similar in its title but does not deal extensively with it in its details is: Crocco, Margaret et al. *Pedagogies of Resistance: Women Educator Activists, 1880-1960*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1999. It should also be noted here that most often themes related to activism and intellectual work are treated separately and there are rare attempts to bring theorists and activists on to one platform. Some positive hints to such a combination of theory and praxis is seen in terms or concepts like, engaged intellectuals, committed intellectuals etc.

²¹ During the years 1998-2001, a European Union funded project “*Vom Süden Lernen*” was implemented by INKOTA Netzwerk e.V., Berlin that was initiated by Dorothea Giesche, and later implemented by my wife Anita Reddy and myself. A report of the evaluation of this project is available with me.

experiences. It is not a mere putting together of ideas and findings, but a systematic analysis and presentation of stories from the field.

1.3.1 Life-Stories from the Field

Although not a quantitative research in the classical sense, a detailed and intensive qualitative research of this kind can also be considered equally mathematical, calculated and closely analytical. This is one of the basic arguments of *GT*, which considers “generating theory and doing social research as two parts of the same process”(Glaser, 1978:2). The intense discussions/interviews with educators and activists have had tremendous impact on my way of thinking and researching. In the process I challenged my own biases, hypothesis and convictions. If one compares the original formulation of my hypothesis and the changes that it underwent in the last four years of actual work on the thesis, one would see the changes and the growth in the initial inquiry. Although my research leans on earlier findings, it develops its own story based on the life-stories and actual happenings in the world stage and local levels during the period of formulating my dissertation. The interviews were so patterned and conducted that they were at the same time both emotional and analytical wherein you could touch, feel and understand the theoretical standpoints of the personalities behind these interviews. This way of open-ended interviews helped respondents to retain a sense of authenticity and spontaneity in their responses.

1.3.2 Grassroots Voices

One other reason as to why I chose *GT* is because it gives expression to the voice of the grassroots, a space to activists in the South and the North. Their voices are otherwise seldom published or taken seriously enough by the intellectual community. “Interpretations...” in *GT*, “must include the perspectives and voices of the people whom we study... we have obligations to the actors we have studied: obligations to ‘tell their stories’ to them and to others-to give them voice-albeit in the context of their own inevitable interpretations. We owe it to our ‘subjects’ to tell them verbally or in print what we have learned, and give clear indications of why we have interpreted them as we have” (Strauss & Corbin, 1994: 274, 281). Moreover, *GT* must correspond closely to the data if it is to be applied in daily situations”(Strauss & Corbin, 1994: 181 citing Glaser & Strauss,

1967, p. 238).²² This technique remains faithful to the grassroots level and corresponds with my approach to PAR.

Much research originating in Europe uses material authored by central Europeans and Americans. This praxis leads to an isolation and neglect of the good and critical literature authored by Southern researchers and experts. Therefore, I include abundant interviews, research material and monographs from the South. This ensures enough exposure to the marginalised and Southern voices and research largely neglected in South-North advocacy. It shifts from merely focussing on the marginalised and their problems from the point of view of the privileged North. Instead, it focuses on the “North” itself and its actors, who find themselves, willingly or unwillingly, in a dominant position compared to their Southern counterparts. It surveys and critiques identities and issues of dominant groups involved in transnational “development” work from the perspective of the dominated, the poor (Baumann, 1999:147).²³ Research today needs to be not about the subaltern but “with the subaltern”(Mato, 2000). It is important that we do not neglect the role of privileged individuals and societies and their identities in these unjust structures. Being too inquisitive only about the experiences of the oppressed would amount to paternalism. Through my process oriented interviews, therefore, I let the voice of the people speak for itself. I remained being only a facilitator, giving a theoretical framework to this voice and to grassroots experiences.

²² “Clearly, a grounded theory that is faithful to the everyday realities of a substantive area is one that has been carefully *induced* from diverse data...Only in this way will the theory be closely related to the daily realities (what is actually going on) of substantive areas, and so be highly applicable to be dealing with them” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967:239). Glaser and Strauss list the following four characteristics necessary if grounded sociological theory needs to be practically applicable. It must: closely *fit* the substantive area in which it will be used; be readily *understandable* by laymen concerned within this area; be sufficiently *general* to be applicable to a multitude of diverse daily situations within the substantive area and must allow the user partial *control* over the structure and process of daily situations as they change through time. *Ibidem*:237.

²³ Writing about research around multicultural societies and critiquing the dominance of majority communities, Baumann notes: “Practically, we need to understand those who hover at the cutting edge of racist violence, for racism is largely a problem created by so-called majorities, not so-called minorities. Intellectually, we need to understand how, why, and when conceptions of ethnicity, culture, and even race are reified and unreified. This is also the advice I have come to give most of my ‘ethnically Dutch’ students in Amsterdam who want to do research on the multicultural future: Don’t push your way into a suppressed minority whom you are not yet competent to understand. Study your own tribe, for it may be they who are the ‘multicultural problem.’”

1.4 Other Methodological Works Consulted

Apart from PAR and *GT*, and the Problem Centred Interviews, the recent work of Ralf Bohnsack (2003) was useful for analysing the interviews, posters and photos. Bohnsack's concept of reconstructive social research (*Rekonstruktive Sozialforschung*) basis itself on reconstructing one's practise of research („*Rekonstruktion auf der Ebene der Forschungspraxis*“) seen as a critical reflection on some of the important aspects of *GT*. Bohnsack clearly sees Glaser and Strauss, the initiators of the *GT*, as role models of such an approach (*ibid*:25).²⁴ Thereby, Bohnsack distinguishes between reconstructing the research practise from reconstructing the methodology. One must arrive at methodological principles through reflecting upon and reconstructing one's research practise and not the other way round (*ibidem*).²⁵ Further, works on qualitative social research by Uwe Flick (1991; 2002) were partly influential in interpreting the interviews. Both the authors make extensive references to the work of Glaser and Strauss.

1.5 Conceptual Density

Owing to the process oriented nature of my research method, the hypothesis(see introductory chapter above) was constantly checked, re-checked and reformulated in order to develop theory from my findings and avoid tailoring my findings to fit the hypothesis. The processes of data collection, revision of the hypothesis through newly gathered material through documents and interviews were continued until satisfactory “theoretical saturation” and “conceptual density” were reached. Strauss and Corbin, write, in this regard, “Naturally, the more interviews, observations, and documents obtained, then the more evidence will accumulate, the more variations will be found, and greater density will be achieved. Thus there will be wider applicability of the theory, because more and different sets of conditions affecting phenomena are uncovered”(Glaser, 1978:124-127; Glaser&Strauss, 1967:61-62; 111-112). My research process and its findings could be compared to looking through a prism, a colored glass through which to imagine the reality of the categories that I investigated. My wish is that the readers could feel and imagine

²⁴ After explaining the importance of reconstructing one's own research praxis, Bohnsack writes, “Von einer solche Rekonstruktion auf der Ebene der Forschungspraxis, für die sich in der Chicagoer Schule und bei den in ihrer Tradition stehenden Forschern (v.a. Glaser/Strauss 1969) Vorbilder finden, ist eine Rekonstruktion auf methodologischer Ebene zu unterscheiden.“

²⁵ “...die Forschenden sollten das, was sie mit dem Alltag, der Alltagspraxis derjenigen tun, die Gegenstand ihrer Forschung sind, auch auf ihren eigenen Alltag anwenden. Sie treten zu sich, zu ihrem eigenen Alltag in ein reflexives Verhältnis und versuchen auf diese Weise - auf dem Wege einer derartigen Reflexion oder Rekonstruktion - zu methodischen Prinzipien zu gelangen.“

with me the ways in which actual S-N relations could transform themselves into what I visualise they could be. This was not meant to serve a narcissistic desire of wanting to see my own ideas reflected everywhere but a desire to reflect, together with others in the field, a deeper, just and sustainable transnational advocacy and mobilisation. The prism that I offer is only one of a million ways of imagining, interpreting and scientifically dreaming of what sustainable advocacy could look like. All through this process, I allowed the data to enrich my “theoretical sensitivity” (see section 1.12.1 below), in the sense of Glaser’s terms, to aid the practical goals that I was pursuing.

1.6 Determining Successive Phases of Inquiry

I formulated my original hypothesis after the first stage of a six-month research survey in early 2001 during which I scanned literature related to the themes of S-N development co-operation, advocacy and learning material concerning these fields. Mid-2001 to October 2003 was the second major phase during which I formulated my field text or rough text containing the results from the technical and non-technical literature I gathered. I then included the results of the qualitative analysis of the transcribed interviews conducted between March and August 2003 in India and Germany. Further phases included the analysis and interpretation of the rough text and transcribed interviews and an updating of technical and non-technical literary resources. The last phase between January and end 2004 was the formulation of my final “tale”(van Maanen, 1998), the end text, which also integrates into it the findings from my interview analysis.

Phase of Inquiry	Object of Inquiry	Method	Timeframe (approximate)	Constant comparison of the hypothesis with the data during all the phases of Inquiry
Building the original Hypothesis	Technical and non-technical Literature	<i>GT</i> and <i>PAR</i>	January-June 2001	
Formulating the Field Text	Surveying Technical and non-technical Literature	Data Collection/Constant Comparison	July 2001-February 2003	
Interviews/Research Visit to India	Selected theorists and activists in Germany and India	Face-to-face Interviews/Observation/Transcription/Learning with the marginalised	March -August 2003	
Updating Sources/Updating Field Text	Surveying Text generated through new Literature, Articles and Interviews	<i>GT/Problem Centered Interviews</i>	September-December 2003	
From Text to Theory/Final text	Field Text	<i>GT</i> : Theory Extension and Saturation	January-end 2004	

Table One. Graphic Presentation of the Phases of Inquiry

1.7 Sources

1.7.1 Technical and non-technical Literature

Technical literature refers to reports and monographs of research studies, theoretical and philosophical papers relevant to the various disciplines and themes that I investigated. In the Introductory chapter, under the section *Status of Literature and Research*, I made elaborate references to the technical literature relevant to my study and will not repeat it again here. I proceed here to concentrate on the analysis of interviews and non-technical literature.

1.7.1.1 Interviews

Tape-recorded and completely transcribed Interviews formed the concrete material to build upon the main categories for formulating my final text. While analysing the interviews, not only the utterances but also the interactions and activities of the participants were most

important to me. The interviews were useful in two ways in my research process: firstly, as source of text-generation and secondly, as a source of “participatory observation”(teilnehmende Beobachtung”). It is to be differentiated from mere “observation”(Beobachtung) that I applied while training various groups in anti-discrimination (see section 1.7.1.2 below). Uwe Flick mentions “participatory observation” being an additional competence of the researcher besides interviewing, which involves hearing and speaking. When one also “observes” and develops the ability to “listen to, feel and smell”, then one can gather a mine of valuable information (Flick: 2002:199-216).²⁶ Interview processes were, therefore, not just sources of text generation but also occasions of my immersion into the life-experiences, convictions and standpoints of the interview participants.

I present below an initial number of interviews divided according to regions:

India	17
Germany	11
Migrants in Germany	1
Total number of Interviews	29

Table Two: Number of Interviews

A List of all the transcribed interviews with the detailed characteristics and variables attributed to each interviewee is presented in an excel table form (See Appendix Two at the end of this chapter and Section 1.10.1 below). Referring to this table will help readers situate any particular interview in context and learn about the interviewee in greater depth. The complete text of the transcribed interviews is, however, owing to their length, si not included in this text. *The text, though, is available with me and, on demand, can be made available for interested researchers.*

²⁶ „Die Fähigkeit zur Beobachtung ist neben den in Interviews genutzten Fähigkeiten, zu sprechen und zuzuhören, eine weitere Alltagskompetenz, die in qualitativer Forschung methodisch systematisiert und verwendet wird. Dabei werden nicht nur visuelle Wahrnehmungen, sondern auch solche, die auf Hören, Fühlen und Riechen beruhen, einbezogen” (p. 200). Flick refers to the following two works as sources for further reading on the methods and tips on observation/Beobachtung; Adler, P.A. & Adler, P. “Observational Techniques”. In: N. Denzin & Y:S: Lincoln (Eds.). *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. London: Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage, 1998: 79-110.

1.7.1.2 Observations as Facilitator of Transnational Workshops and Anti-bias Trainings

Observations during the Indo-German Solidarity Workshop that I conducted on a transnational basis on S-N issues, and the video report of it, provide interesting observations and ground realities which promote the idea of learning from grassroots activists in the South.²⁷ In a similar vein, observations and experiences as a trainer of numerous multicultural groups in Germany in the last three years using the anti-bias method also flowed into my theory formulation (Reddy, Prasad in Kasiske, *et al*, 2002:33-39).²⁸ Detailed reports of the content and process of these trainings made by the participants themselves supplemented my personal notes and spreadsheets.

Personal and professional experience while working on similar transnational development projects added to the conceptual density of my text. The project “Learning from the South” which I co-ordinated between the years 1999-2002 for an NGO in Berlin served as a practical example of how transnational advocacy actually functions. The evaluation report of this project also shows up some of the arguments that I raise in this study. My own role as a participant and the subsequent notes that I made in various research workshops and Social Justice Trainings on developmental and educational themes served as secondary sources in forming and constantly modulating my hypothesis.²⁹ My observations and reports regarding my involvement with the International Dalit Solidarity Network also provide ample indications as to the importance of the need for an improvement in educator activism and transnational advocacy based on S-N justice and equality. Experiences and observations of my seminar participants at the Department of Intercultural Learning, Faculty of Education and Psychology at the *Freie Universität*, Berlin also raised critical issues related to the research topic.³⁰ Another important source for the constant re-

²⁷ Meine Welt ist jetzt offener: Ein Film über die interkulturelle Solidaritätswerkstatt mit Indien und Deutschland. (Bonn: Missionszentrale der Franziskaner, 1999). VHS-Video, 30 min.

²⁸ In the same publication see, Reddy, Anita et al. “Der Weg in den Süden führt über den Osten”: 28-32.

²⁹ Notable among them are: Politische Partizipation und Protest Mobilisierung im Zeitalter der Globalisierung. International Conference, Berlin: WZB, 30 June-July 1, 2000. Organised jointly by the Wissenschaftlichenzentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung, AK Soziale Bewegungen der DPWV, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung and the Otto-Brenner-Stiftung.

-Empowerment Training (1st -3rd November, 2002) offered by Phoenix e.V. and Social Justice Trainings (4th-5th July 2003) by the Alice Salmon Fachhochschule, University of Applied Sciences, Berlin.

³⁰ In the Winter Semester, 2001-2 I conducted a Seminar titled: “Förderung statt Ausschluss: Alltägliche Diskriminierung von MigrantInnen erkennen und abbauen”. Later, in the Summer Semester 2003, I conducted a further course titled: “Social Suffering, Socialisation and Critical Learning”. I am thankful to the

structuring of my hypothesis was my participation in the inter-facultative exchange programme of doctoral students under the theme “Internationale Strukturpolitik” which involved visits and discussions with the BMZ, WTO, World Bank, various UN Bodies and IMF functionaries in Berlin, Washington and New York.³¹

1.7.1.3 Publicity Material, Occasional Publications and Websites

Various aspects of working on a S-N basis are reflected in the flyers, documents, posters occasionally published by various, governmental and non-governmental funding agencies and NGOs located in the North.³² I chose some of these and related samples of website content from such organisations to reflect the kind of ideas, theories and images they project regarding the South. Some mailing lists and proceedings of international conference invitations also provide interesting assumptions about the South and the resulting dealings of the North with the South.

To co-ordinate and see the connection between all the above main aspects, I used the software *MAXqda* for qualitative data analysis and maintained a doctoral research diary, contextual field notes and cards. The research diary contains a short commentary about the nature of the interview material, peculiarities of the case and difficulties in interpretation, a note of methodological mistakes, unfinished questions, and contradictions in the material. Peculiar problem constellations and extraordinary happenings are highlighted here. Throughout the maintenance of the field notes, the diary and the cards were constantly updated, crosschecked and analysed and my findings were accordingly re-formulated.

1.8 Sampling

The participants in the research interviews and Southern authors were the main experiential experts on the phenomenon being studied. While sampling technical literature and interviews in the field, the purpose was to combine my own ideas as a person “external” to the exploited classes vis-à-vis *dalits* and the ideas of others and myself as a person,

course participants for their co-operation and readiness to explore new areas of learning leading to learning from the perspective of the poor.

³¹ Conducted under the aegis of the Landwirtschaftliche -Gärtnerische Fakultät of the Humboldt University and BMZ in Berlin, April - October 2004.

³² For a good description of interpreting pictures and posters see Bohnsack, Ralf. Rekonstruktive Sozialforschung, *ibid.*, pp. 155ff.

“internal” to the exploited classes: in this case, the migrants.³³ To this end, I chose activists and theorists involved in the field of S-N justice work, *dalit* issues and those involved with education around such issues. ”This combination of experience and commitment allows one to see for whom such knowledge is intended, ...the base groups themselves...such a concept of experience recognises that there are two types of animators or agents of change: those who are external and those who are internal to the exploited classes. Both types are unified in one sole purpose-that of *achieving the shared goals of social transformation*”(Fals-Borda, 1991:4).

Following the “Criterion Sampling” used by Katz (cited in Rudestam & Newton, 2001:92), I selected some participants some of whom closely match the criteria and some others who do not match the criteria being examined in the study. The dividing line for the choice of candidates for the interview was closeness and distance to advocacy and justice work and also to *dalit* issues. In this way, I strategically chose both theorists and activists related to this field. Using both inclusionary and exclusionary criteria, I chose persons who apparently meet and do not meet the criteria of the study. This allowed for a diverse and representational sample of women and men (*dalit*-non-*dalit*/theorists and activists/Southern and Northern etc.).

The inclusionary and exclusionary criteria in choosing the interviewees were: involvement with *dalit* issues (preference was for *dalit* women and men), research and action around grassroots movements and experience on a transnational level and development of educational material around such issues. Most interviewees came from NGOs and Universities with whom I have been associated with while I was living and working in India and, since 1998, in Germany. Further, researching over the Internet on *dalit* issues led me to choose relevant activists and theorists in the current *dalit* movement. Finally, my contact persons in various NGOs and Universities in India and Germany also recommended further activists and theorists involved with the issues under consideration. This variety of interview partners contributed to the texture of the data, the subsequent theory building and complexity of the issues. While selecting interview partners in

³³ More about *dalits* will be presented in further parts of the dissertation. Here, I only wish to say that *dalits* are the traditionally oppressed and excluded sections of Indian society and I do not belong to such a class and therefore I am, in this particular case, a person “external” to this particular exploited classes.

Germany, I maintained the similarity of criteria with that of Indian interview partners so that it serves for comparison and connectivity while analysing the interview content.

Owing to the inductive nature of *GT* techniques and considering the fact that theory evolves as data is collected and explored, it was not possible in advance to set a precise sample beforehand. In the end, it emerged that in India I interviewed 22 persons. I had to subsequently delete 5 from among them due to bad recording quality. In Germany while I actually interviewed 15 persons, I had to delete 4 from among them due to bad recording quality. Although two migrants in Germany were interviewed, I had to delete one due to bad recording quality.

1.8.1 Rules of Transcription and Anonymity of Interview Participants

The tape-recorded interviews were transcribed with uncomplicated rules of transcription. My research does not involve complicated, linguistic analysis or studies in depth psychology. Even in such studies strict rules of transcription are used only in exceptional cases as advised by Strauss (1991), the co-initiator of *GT* (Flick, 2002: 253).³⁴ Flick considers, and I concur with him, that the opinions, the change of speakers, pauses, sentence breaks are some of the important aspects to be remembered while re-checking interview transcripts and anonymising the data: names, places and time. Large amounts of linguistic and para-linguistic symbols can be avoided: they can be reduced to indications about laughter, pause in discussion etc. (For a list of transcription rules used in this dissertation see Appendix Three at the end of this Volume) Replacing their real names, I coded the interviewees in India under the pseudonym as “Southern Voice” (SV1-SV17), the interviews in Germany as “Northern Voice” (NV1-NV 12) and the migrants interviewed in Germany as “Southern Voice in the North”(SVN 1).

³⁴ Giving sound advice about transcription rules, Flick writes: „Auch hier lässt sich die Frage nach der Angemessenheit des Vorgehens stellen. Abgesehen davon, dass sich darüber durch die Hintertür Ideale naturwissenschaftlicher Messgenauigkeit in die interpretative Sozialwissenschaft einschleichen, verleitet die Formulierung von Transkriptionsregeln häufig zu einem Fetischismus, der in keinem begründbaren Verhältnis mehr zu Fragestellung und Ertrag der Forschung steht...Sinnvoller erscheint, nur soviel und so genau zu transkribieren, wie die Fragestellung erfordert“. See Flick, *Qualitative Sozialforschung*, *ibid.*, 253.

1.9 Using Literature

Literature makes one theoretically sensitive to the conditions that influence the experiences and identities of the persons interviewed. It also helps one to develop strategies to deal with the experiences and the consequences of such experiences (Strauss & Corbin, 1999: 54ff). However, as my study basis itself on real-life experiences of theorists and activists in India (South) and Germany (North), all the texts that I read had to be checked and crosschecked with interview findings. It is a theoretical sampling based on the interviews. Literature helped me to see the link between experience, strategies and the consequences on persons working around the themes of educator activism and learning from the South.

1.10 Using Interviews: Variables, Coded Segments and Complex Kinds of Retrievals

In the process of my research on this project in the last four years I discovered that it is not just telling about the world, but humble “knowing” about it while making it an adventure. It was an adventure supported also by my co-searchers, the interview participants in Germany and India. They were very co-operative and appreciative of the themes under study and were curious to know the results of my research. During the process, I tried to capture as much of the complexities and movement in the real world that is possible, while knowing that I would never be able to grasp all of it. In doing so, it was important to remember that the interview partners themselves were informants of my Study. Researching from the perspective of the actor attained a new importance in the light of the “theory of individuation” (Beck, 1986) and also the theoretical propositions of *PAR*. The informants themselves became interpreters of their own biographical experiences.

Using the analytical software *Maxqda* I developed the following 13 variables to provide further information on each of the interview participant.

1.10.1 Profiles of Interviewees through Variables

The purpose of allocating variables was to situate the interviewees’ opinions in relation to their understanding of the various aspects of educator activism, learning from the South and related educational processes. The variables were also formulated in such a manner as to understand the biographical processes of the interviewees on their way to combining or not combining theory and praxis in their work and lives. Below I briefly explain the meaning and content of each variable.

Variable 1. **Identity:** *T=Theorist/A=Activist/EA=Educator Activist*. *T* denotes persons who are theorists pursuing research or teaching appointments without enough exchange with activists in the field. *A* denotes persons who are exclusively involved with NGOs or grassroots activities without much concern for theoretical analysis or are, in certain cases, hostile to institutional, educational and theoretical pursuits. *EA* denotes persons combining theory and praxis in their life and work. This combination can be deduced from the reading of the interview: for instance, they maybe politically involved with the grassroots movements and, perhaps, also co-operating with NGOs in doing action-oriented research.

Variable 2. **Age:** *A45=Above 45. B45=Below 45*. This age differentiation is meant to signify and separate the opinions of younger and older interview participants. After transcribing the interviews I observed commonalities shared by the younger participants' opinions and experiences. Similarly, there were commonalities shared by senior participants.

Variable 3. **Sex:** *F=female/M=male*. It was of major importance to evaluate also the gender dimensions involved in the discussions and viewpoints on "development" and the difference in socialisation of women and men in the field of advocacy, education and activism. Most NGOs in the North and in the South, for instance are male dominated.

Variable 4. **Caste:** *D=dalit/ND=Non-dalit*. The dalit movement, its mobilisation strategies and the life-stories of significant people in this movement form an important part of my research project. The inclusion of caste in the list of variables, therefore, was an obvious choice. While noting that caste, as a system, exists only in India and not in Germany, the variable "caste" here is meant to denote the voices of oppressed individuals.

Variable 5. **Education:** *PhDYes / PhDNo*. Since I also examined educational encounters between Southern and Northern individuals and groups in the field of advocacy, it was important to note the level of (formal) education of the interview participants. It contrasts the high level of formally educated southern participants whose projects are decided and evaluated by there not so highly, formally educated northern counterparts. Interviewing

various *dalit* PhD level intellectuals and activists holding a PhD also breaks down the cliché that exists in the North of an intellectually backward and uninspired South.

Variable 6. **Professors:** *ProfYes / ProfNo*. This variable helps to show-up the contrasts in views expressed by those who are professors and working in the university and those although holding a PhD and yet are not/choose not to become professors at Universities. This also highlights the differences in views expressed by professors involved in the field and professors who pursue teaching and research in isolation from actual grassroots happenings and contacts.

Variable 7: **Alliance:** *GO=Governmental/NGO=Non-Governmental Organisation/SG=Semi-Governmental*. This complex variable highlights the differences between the critique voiced by individuals who are aligned to a governmental agency, those who are aligned to a non-governmental agency or semi-governmental agencies like funding agencies. The views of those “working” on behalf of their government, for instance, are often guarded and very diplomatic in answering questions regarding “developmental aid” for the South.

Variable 8. **Religion:** *CB=Church-based/NCB=Non-Church based*. Historically, and currently, Church based funding agencies in the North played and still continue to play a decisive role in shaping the picture of the South in the North. There are positive aspects to the role played by Northern, Christian organisations in the South. However, there are also considerable calls to check the biases of Church based organisations in the North regarding non-Christian groups in the South. It was obvious from my conversations with many non-dalit activists that Christian funding agencies from the North mostly reach out to and help their Christian counterparts leading to animosity between Christian and non-Christian dalits.

Variable 9. **Employment:** *SE=Self-employed/E=Employed* by an Institution. Interesting differences were also evident in the opinions of interview participants who were self-employed or worked on a freelance basis and those who were employed at an institution and so were “bound” by bureaucracy and loyalty to the institution. Here the “source” of

income determines the intensity of critical and open expression of views regarding S-N work.

Variable 10. **Affiliation:** *Inst=Institutional/Indiv=Individual*. This variable does not merely indicate employment at an institution or not. It also denotes the level of freedom and flexibility with which “employed”, “self-employed” or “freelance” participants, respectively could express their views. For instance, those employed at the Universities were relatively free in expressing their critique as compared to those employed by governmental or nongovernmental institutions.

Variable 11. **University:** *Uyes / UNo*. This variable indicates the views and opinions of those employed or not employed at a University, a mainstream educational institution. It was useful to do so because my research also examines educational methods and the connection between formal and non-formal educational structures. Employing this variable was important to compare the views of University affiliated interview partners with those who were working outside university Structures.

Variable 12. **Origin:** *S=India/N=Germany/SVN=Migrant* in Germany. One of the central investigations in the dissertation is the S-N dimension in transnational advocacy. To that end this variable served to compare and contrast what Indian, German and Migrant participants had to say about various issues discussed.

Variable 13. **Transnational Experience:** *TNY=Yes/TNNo=No*. This variable specifically refers to the exposure and involvement of interview participants with transnational educational and “development” work structures. This could involve teaching or working experiences in the South or North on issues of advocacy, “development” and international co-operation.

1.10.1.1 Constructing a Profile

All the above variables were cross-connected and examined from various complex combinations using ten different forms (see the next footnote) of complex retrieval supported by *MAXqda*. This way, the danger was avoided at looking at the research questions only from a narrow, uni-dimensional perspective. Rather, it provided for a comprehensive, multi-dimensional perspective.

Combining all 13 variables, an example of reading the characteristics/profile of a particular interviewee, say SV7, will be as follows: SV7 is an interviewee who is an activist (Variable *Identity: A*), below forty-five years (Variable *Age: B45*) of age, female (Variable *Sex: F*), dalit (Variable *Dalit-Nondalit: D*), without a doctoral degree (Variable *Education: NoPhd*), therefore, also not a professor (Variable *ProfNo*). She is employed by (Variable *Employment: E*) a non- church based (Variable *Non- Church-Based: NCB*) Non-governmental Organisation (Variable *Alliance: NGO*), and so is institutionally bound (*Inst*). She does not work in the university (*UNo*) and is a person from India (*S*) with Transnational experience (*TNYes*). In a similar way reading the variables of each person gives one a useful profile of each interview participant, helping the reader/researcher to place the interview citations and references in context.

1.10.2 The Coding system

The above variables are further connected to various coded segments. I developed 35 codes and sub-codes to cover the three main themes of the interviews. The results of the coding and its interpretation process consisted primarily in my being guided by theory presented by the interviewees and the principle of openness. Both these were achieved by attributing various codes to various text segments from interview transcriptions and later retrieving relevant coded segments. Being guided by theory consisted in marking the text with keywords out of the questionnaire, for example: “theory”, “practise”, “identity”, “educator activism” etc. At the same time, through the principle of openness I strove to give relevance to the concepts/terms used by the interviewee that are termed “in-vivo codes” in GT terminology. This is a rather descriptive step, which helped developing an index of reference words indicating themes and stations in the exposed interview process. This codification helped while thematically working on particular interviews and thus produce

written formulations of the most important parts of the text. The final list of codes and sub-codes that surfaced are the following:

Code System
Dalits
Identity
Caste System
Education
Training
Material
Educator Activism
Theory and Praxis
Tasks
Identity
Identity
Gender
Person
Contributing factors
North
Western, aggressive, invading
South
Religion
Hinduism
Christianity
Islam
Buddhism
South
India
Learning from
Picture
Transnational Advocacy/Development Work
Remains of Colonialism
Lack of Grassroots Contact
Apartheid
Control over finances

Table Three. Codes, Sub-codes and Coded Segments

In total, as listed above, there have been 7 major codes and 28 sub-codes, comprising 857 coded segments retrieved from various interview transcripts.

1.10.2.1 Complex Retrievals

The variables, codes and retrieved segments helped to compare and contrast the interviews on the basis of ten different kinds of complex text retrievals.³⁵ One example of such a comparison and contrasting of text segments, codes and variables is as follows: A search of

³⁵ This analytic function is made possible through the complex types of retrieval function of the software mentioned elsewhere. The complex retrievals are the following: Logic: OR Combination, intersection, overlapping, only this code, at least, Difference (less), If surrounded by; If outside of; Followed by and Near. Using the above ten kinds of retrievals the interview texts can be thoroughly scanned, sifted and compared to extract maximum theoretical density.

the corpus of the transcribed interview texts with the variable combination *EA+B45+ProfNo*, for instance, will obtain results in the retrieved segments having the following characteristics: a female educator activist, above the age of forty five, who is not a professor. Similar combinations and complex searches and retrievals were used to evolve concepts and ideas from transcribed interviews.

1.10.3 The Interview Process

The main purpose of the interviews was to cull out the process of developing identities as educator activists, the aspects of learning from the south and the related pedagogical suggestions. The interviews focused, therefore, on three main topics: Identity of Educator Activists, Learning from the South and Pedagogical, Educational Methods to foster Community Mobilisation (See figure One below). These narrations also provided for an updated version of the views of theorists and activists in the field of transnational advocacy. These interviews were also meant to focus discussion between the interview partner and me, leading to textual rather than numerical material. To this end, the interviews were loosely structured and flexible. Although I did send an interview schedule in advance, the sequence and formulation of questions evolved in a process-oriented manner as the interview progressed. The questions finally addressed served as tools to lead the interview participants to reflect on their respective, personal experiences and their implications upon the trajectory of their lives.

My assumption in personalising the interviews was that theorists and activists often lack the time reflect on the meaning of their involvement in a way that would be helpful for others to benefit from their experiences. Therefore, I set a relaxed tone to the interview process. I always began by asking some general questions about their work and life at the time and only then did I switch on the tape recorder. These interviews needed to be flexible and spontaneous, allowing the interview participants delve deep into their memories, histories and experiences with discrimination and educator activism. Invariably all the interviews start with a description of the participant's personal experiences in the field of education, activism, advocacy and developing educational material related to these fields. Strong emphasis was laid on questions like "what were the personal influences for the choice of work you are doing?" "What were the experiences that led you to develop your identity in such a way: as a child, adult, as a professional, grassroots worker" and so on.

The philosophy behind such personalised approach also comes from my professional experience in conducting process oriented anti-bias trainings that always begin from the personal and move on to interpersonal, structural, and in the case of these interviews, transnational levels. Starting on the personal level gave the conversations an authenticity, which may not be guaranteed when questions are formulated merely to gather technical and impersonal information. Therefore probes like “what do you think, feel, do in this regard” were used to help interviewees dig deeper into their experiences and the meaning of such experiences.

1.10.3.1 Personal and Process Oriented Questions

Most interview participants described the process in which action and theory could be organised in a manner that supports educator activism. Once a deeper personal motivational background was reached, I used further probes to help interview participants describe their interpersonal relationship with other activists and theorists, linking them up to their international experiences. Here questions like “what kind of support structures do you have?” or “what keeps you going in this kind of work” were relevant. Such flexibility and spontaneity helped generate a “process” in each interview replacing a classical question-answer method. They were intended to be narratives from the field expressing personal, non-theoretical experiences. Sticking to an interview schedule would have not aided this purpose. Moreover, the informality of the *GT* process made the interviews intense and emotional. My interventions were restricted to keeping the discussion on track and to clarify some terms or complicated narratives. However, objective questions were also included to lead the participant from a personal and interpersonal level to a more structural and transnational level (See figure Two below).

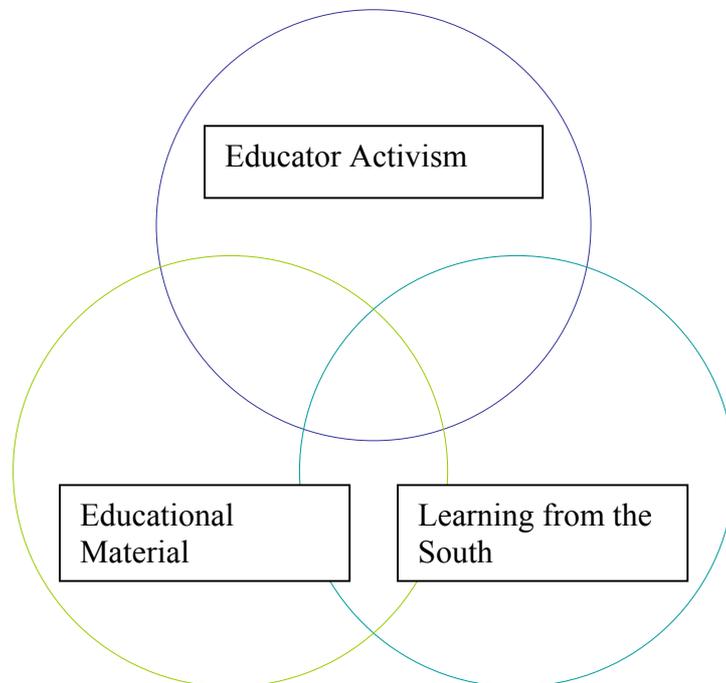


Figure One. The Three Central Components of the Interview

The overlapping of the circles shows the interrelatedness of all the three themes.

Although the interviews were focussed on the three main issues mentioned above, the process was built in such a way that it proceeded from the personal characters, opinions, experiences to transnational views and outlook of each participant. Every interview was concluded with a summarising, open-ended question. The interviews evolved through a process that showed a particular pattern after I started transcribing them: starting with the personal level, the conversations moved to interpersonal, structural and transnational levels. Then the interview partner was urged to make objective and thematic observations on the experiences she or he described until then and conclude by summarising the various themes that appeared in the conversation. This process is graphically represented below:

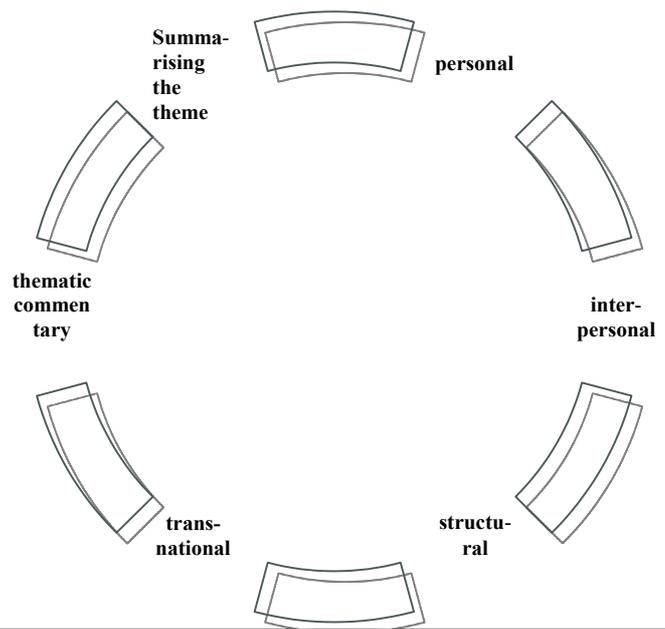


Figure Two. The Interview Process

The above scheme underlying the questioning process evolved on its own and this evolution of the process fits in well with the framework of the hypothetical model that was constantly updated (see Table Six in Chapter 3 below) and the conditional matrix that I wished to develop (see section 1.12 below). This model deals with the personal, interpersonal, transnational and objective elements of identity development. These personal views from the field also helped checking the validity of my observations and data depending on which I built up my theory.

1.11 From Text to Theory: Data Analysis Procedures and The Final Tale

As mentioned in section 1.4 above, the two main sources of my text were the data gathered from relevant technical and non-technical literature and text generated from interview-transcriptions. Together they form my field text. In the following section I explain how I further interpreted and analysed this field text to generate theoretical concepts.

1.11.1 Theoretical Sensitivity

Having analysed the interviews in detail, it was important to develop sensitivity to theory (Glaser, 1978). The greatest challenge thereby was to let the narratives from the grassroots and not the discoveries through my professional and personal experiences play a leading role. The attempt was to let theory evolve naturally and not let my biases creep into the evolving, theoretical process. It meant connecting the previously known and the hitherto unknown which constitutes the essence of scientific discovery. Sensitivity here consists on being able to modify, adding qualifications and being non-dogmatic about one's original hypothesis. This is a result of my wanting to be true to the experiences of others and not depend only on mine. This process of comparing and revising my original hypothesis to reflect the reality of the grassroots situation, and correspondingly fit data to my experiences and findings, was in-built into my whole dissertation. Another aspect was also to keep in mind already existing ideas about educator activism and check as to what I am adding to these existing corpuses of research and ideas. One concrete contribution was the systematic building up of the epistemological and theoretical basis for educator activism and learning from the South. I extended existing theory on development work and anti-discrimination to link "advocacy", activism and the related educational procedures. Therefore, the awareness of the subtleties of meaning of the various sources in my research was necessary. Theoretical sensitivity is an attribute of having insight and is acquired more in conceptual rather than in concrete terms.

1.11.1.1 Sources of Theoretical Sensitivity

As explained elaborately in earlier sections, the literature and the results of the interview analysis facilitated my theoretical sensitivity (Strauss & Corbin, 1990: 42ff). My professional and personal experiences in related fields served to "enhance" this sensitivity. Abundant personal experience led to a richer knowledge base and insight to draw upon in the research. However, personal experience can also blind one from seeing some things that have become routine or obvious. But there are ways to overcome this blindness (*ibid*: 75-95). Theoretical sensitivity around the issues that I was dealing was enriched through my background as an Indian, an ex-catholic priest, a trained philosopher and theologian and my experience in the field of transnational S-N "development" work. My experience as an Anti-Bias Trainer definitely sensitised me to the thought processes of both the white, black and colored populations living in Europe. I also had inkling to the assumptions,

inclinations and biases of the white population toward the South and the characteristics of internalised oppression among the migrant population. Drawing upon such personal experiences, I strengthened the basis for making comparisons that in turn stimulated the generation of potentially relevant concepts and their relationships pertaining to their hypotheses and experiences.

Apart from my personal background as a researcher, the analytic process itself provided an additional source for theoretical sensitivity. As I interacted with the data, the insight and understanding about various phenomena increased. Collecting and making comparisons, thinking about what I saw, read and heard, making hypotheses, I developed small theoretical frameworks that Strauss and Corbin call “mini-frameworks” about concepts and their relationships. In turn, I looked again at the data. Often, one idea sparked another, directing me to look more closely at the data to draw meaning to words that seemed previously not to have meaning, and to look for situations that might explain what is happening here. This increasing sensitivity to concepts, their meanings, and relationships is why it is important to interweave data selection with data analysis. Each fed into the other, thereby, increasing insight and recognition of the parameters of the evolving theory.

When one orients research in the line of the theory generation process based on the postulates of GT, then the relation between theory and empiry becomes very important. In contrast to the traditional hypothetical-deductive and sociological naturalisms, the focus here was to bring theoretical concepts about the researched context, the day-to-day (common) knowledge of the researcher and the research questions into line with the sampling and evaluated data. This helped examine the interview participant’s normal language and method of representation to become relevant to the study. This led to correcting my biases and misunderstandings as the researcher, allowing for fresh ways of looking at things. Empirically based hypotheses were, in this way, strengthened through data. The theoretical codification, which helped in such strengthening process involved, both the “in-vivo-codes” mentioned in section 1.10.2 above, namely concepts and terms used by the interview partners and sociological constructs of interview participants. This codification was made possible when the usefulness and imagery of concepts that emerged from the data were exhaustively examined. In this complex process the qualitative analysis software *MAXqda* was of immense help.

1.12 Developing a Conditional Matrix around Educator Activism

After the codification process, the next step was to develop a conditional matrix related to the main themes in the field texts and interviews. Combining interview findings with findings from the perusal of relevant technical and non-technical literature helped me gradually move from text to theory formulation. An initial step in this direction was devising a “circle of conditional matrix” around educator activism. The circle of conditional matrix as suggested by Strauss (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 158-75) is represented by a “set of circles” that move dynamically between international, national, community, organisational and institutional levels, through group and collective interactions. This symbolic representation helped me suggest a process of identity formation of educator activists. Each circle in the conditional matrix refers to different aspects of the life-world of various interview participants. In developing this conditional matrix it was important to closely look at the biographical influences mentioned by the interview participants. Observing the web of inter-related conditions, actions, interactions, and consequences that pertain to educator activism, a specific pattern of identity formation was induced. In short, I developed the conditional matrix of educator activism using the results of interviews, textual research and findings from personal experiences. Although I studied educator activism and transnational advocacy on an international level, it has its conditional relationship to the local, grassroots level. The conditional matrix of educator activism has at its deepest core in the action and interaction, similar to the action-core of Strauss’ conditional matrix (Strauss & Corbin, 1990: 164). It helped me to see the “conditions” in which the identity of educator activism, learning from the south and suitable educational methods can best develop.

The Conditional Matrix of Educator Activism may be symbolised by the following diagram (adapted from Strauss & Corbin, 1990:163)

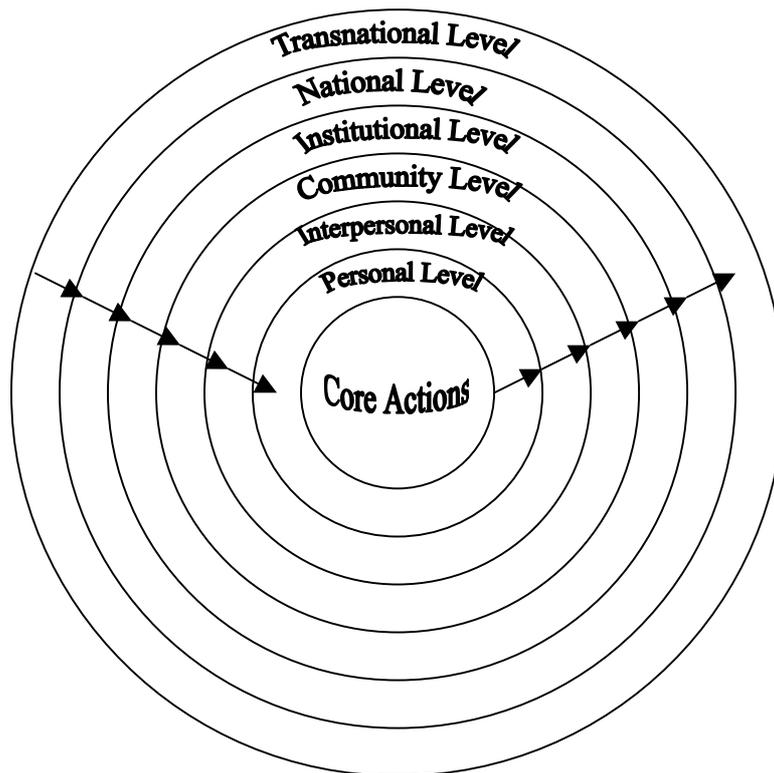


Figure Three. The Conditional Matrix of Educator Activism

Each of the circles in the above matrix is interconnected to all the other circles. While understanding the personality of the educator activists it is important to remember the principle that “regardless of the level within which a phenomenon (pertaining to the person’s life-history) is located, that phenomenon will stand in conditional relationship to levels above and below it, as well as within the level itself”(Strauss & Corbin, 1990:162).

The outermost circle refers to the *transnational level*, which includes aspects of international experiences, opinions and critique about S-N advocacy and “development” co-operation, inter-governmental policies, globalisation and international politics.

The second level is the *national level* referring to national experiences regarding S-N development work; governmental and non-governmental policies; and networking between NGOs and governmental and formal educational institutions.

The next level is the *institutional-organisational level*, which refers to the interaction and the resulting positive and negative tensions between individuals and institutions involved in transnational work. Important to this level is examining the power relationships involved in institutional and governmental institutions and the limitations they put on individuals and NGOs involved in “development” work and related educational matters. Church related NGOs and funding agencies and their limitations also fall under this level.

On the *community level* the focus is on relationships between individuals involved in S-N “development work” work and their local community structures, which have other specific characteristics than those on national and international levels.

The *interpersonal level* entails the philosophy, knowledge and traits needed by individuals to be able to link up to and build human networks. Interview participants, for instance, expressly highlighted “empathy” and a “sense of social justice” as two of the important characteristics.

The *personal level* probes the influence of the biography, childhood experiences, family background and early school years on the possible formation of an identity as educator activists.

The deepest level of core *actions* pertaining to educator activism refers to the *core of educator activism* induced and nurtured through interaction with the grassroots and learning from the South. This refers to the characteristics and the future tasks of educator activists. These dimensions show the tasks that theorists and activists are faced with while building an identity for themselves as educator activists. They also show how they, in their life-process, relate with institutions relevant for their life-journey: family, university, school, religion, work place etc. Especially at the personal dimension it becomes evident as to how individual actors undertook responsibility for their biographical journey.

1.13 Intermediate Conclusion: Arriving at the Central Themes

The coding, de-coding, text retrieval processes and the development of the conditional matrix helped me build the central themes that marked the first, particularly theory generating step of interpretation. Thereby, thematically oriented ideas for interpretation depending on the questions/problems examined in the project were developed. A thematically oriented question/approach concentrates on issues like childhood experiences, family and school influences, national and international experiences and other specific contexts which made them to move from theory towards practise and, perhaps, towards educator activism. The central themes are the often occurring themes and reasoning in the narratives and dialog sequences. Identification of such themes was possible by using the modes: “frequency of codes” and “retrieval of coded segments” in *MAXqda* (see Table Three and section 1.10.2 above). Besides providing central themes for further research, this comparison of frequency of codes also helped me gauge the pulse and importance of certain themes in my research. Each central theme is summarised or concentrated into a central statement and connected to original text positions, paraphrases and analytical statements.

In a further step, the subjective contexts of the interview partners were examined for connections with the conditions surrounding the contexts made possible again by the text retrieval and comparison modes of *MAXqda*. This phase of analysis is the phase of axial coding: the listing of particular text positions related to the central themes. This was the first stage in theoretical concept building and the formulation of empirically rich categories and theoretical statements.

Although the central concept developed was of educator activists, between the different stages of interpretation and evaluation, an amount of repetition or crossover took place. The next step of evaluation aimed at systematically contrasting case-comparison. The cases are ordered according to the principle of “maximum and minimum contrasts”. This step of analysis served to develop central themes that stretch across all cases. Major themes, interesting problem-areas, cross-connections etc. were worked out here and recorded in the form of notes or Memos. The interviews are contrasted not only on the basis of different responses to the central themes. They were also connected to the theme of learning from the South and the educational approaches needed to inculcate such aspects into formal and

informal educational initiatives. In this way further core categories were developed that helped in formulating the required theoretical concepts.

At this level of interpretation and evaluation, certain results were already formulated. For instance, presentation of action-models and interpretive methods is situation-oriented. At this stage my aim was to analyse when and why individuals and groups shift from theory to practise or why they choose to work against discrimination. It was also aimed at developing typologies, which would help one to understand my concept of educator activism. It comprises the basic idea developed through re-analysis of the different interviews, and the data collected over the last five years, which helped in summarising a central thematic. In the context of my reflection on self-socialisation, or socialisation for educator activism, a sort of journey from being theorist to educator activist could be deciphered. Therein, I sketched the manner in which the interview participants interacted with institutions (like family, religion, governmental and NGOs) relevant to their biography; the coming to grips with their growing-up/developmental stages in life and occupation; the various interests and the resulting individual efforts and the situation-oriented balances in the overall occupational journey to reach a profile, so to say, a “personification of concepts”(Witzel, 1996:68).

The findings in the interviews and the literature perusal were then intensively validated for use in further steps of the project. Then followed the analysis of the whole text generated from technical and non-technical sources and the one generated from interview analysis. In the following chapters, I elaborate the results of the above described research process.