



An On-line Journal  
for Teacher Research

## Editorial Introduction to Volume 9 (1)

### Catherine Compton-Lilly

The *Meaning Makers* (Wells, 1985) was one of the first professional books that captured my imagination and drew me into the world of educational research. At the time, I was a first grade teacher in a school that was involved in a “teacher as researcher” project with the local university. The year was 1987 and I was not even sure what teacher research was but I went ahead and signed up for the program. Gordon’s book was one of many volumes that had been added to our school’s professional library as part of that project.

I remember turning the pages and reading the words of young children as they learned to speak and wondered at the remarkable accomplishment of capturing their journeys. A few years later, I was invited to join the review board for *Networks* and I have been working with Gordon ever since. I suspect that all of our readers are aware of the wonderful contributions Dr. Wells has brought to the field. His book on child language was groundbreaking as are his volumes exploring classroom inquiry; they encourage not only teachers to become researchers, but students as well. In particular, I remember attending one of his conference presentations focused on Vygotskian theory and having to stand in the back of a crowded room with many others; we didn’t mind.

Gordon Wells is the founder of *Networks* and has served as our editor for eight volumes (AKA eight years). He has kindly agreed to continue to serve to the review board and continue to act as a mentor to myself as I take

on the new responsibility of editing this online journal.

The transition has taken some time, much more time than I had hoped, but I suspect that the time was well invested. With a lot of help from a phenomenal group of people here at the University of Wisconsin Madison, we have been able to use the Open Journal System to post the journal and to handle the submission process. This system is a extremely helpful in handling submissions and tracking those submissions through the review process. It is with great humility that I commence my tenure as editor. I have learned many lessons from Gordon and am happy to provide a forum for teacher researchers to share their work. I would also like to thank the many individual who served on our review board as we prepared this current edition.

I suspect our readers will find this current issue of *Networks* to be engaging and informative. We feature an article by Kimberly Bilca entitled, “Taking Action in Elementary Science Teaching:

A Reflection on Four Teachers’ Collaborative Research Journey.” In this article, Bilca describes how a team of four teachers make powerful changes in their science programs based on their classroom observations as they engage in collaborative problem-solving. By taking risks together, these teachers learned about their students and themselves.

Andrea Davy and Willow Brown explore the potential of show’n’tell in “Turning Show’n’Tell into Democratic Dialogue.” They reveal the

possibilities that emerge when genuine dialogue and discussion are encouraged in an elementary, second language immersion classroom. While issues of language diversity are central to their discussion, their paper provides powerful messages for all of us.

Based on his own work with pre-service teachers, T. G. Ryan examines the role reflexivity plays in the process of becoming a teacher in his article, "The Reflexive Classroom Manager: A Required Pre-Service Mode." Ryan describes how reflexivity can inform the decision-making of teachers, particularly in relation to classroom management. This position piece clearly defines the role of reflection in teaching and reminds all of us of its power.

Maya El Shareef provides us with "Tips for First Time Teaching Assistants." This paper is based on Shareef's own experiences as a novice teaching assistant and aptly explores the complexities and potential hazards that accompany a teaching assistant position.

Finally, I review one of my favorite books on teacher research and Cynthia A. Lassonde provides us with a rich list of books and online resources for teacher researchers. Remember, we are always looking for interesting and well-written teacher research articles. Please consider sending your work to [comptonlilly@wisc.edu](mailto:comptonlilly@wisc.edu).