# Making sense through art

A material-discursive approach to study urban environments



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# Abstract

In the last decades, the methodological interest in arts-based research and sensory ethnography has been growing considerably. Building on these two strands of research, in this doctoral thesis the potential of an aesthetic orientation to our physical surroundings is explored. Three empirical studies were carried out to investigate how we can, through exploring a changing neighbourhood, recast our methodological ways of thinking about collecting, analyzing and disseminating research findings.

The <u>first part</u> of this doctoral dissertation involves a mapping exercise of the use of arts-based research in community-based projects and contributes to a furthered understanding of this emerging and expansive field of research. <u>Chapter 1</u> presents the findings of a scoping review that covers arts-based literature published over a twenty years' time span. It encompasses community-based scholarship wherein art is used in one or more phases of a research process, with an active involvement of the researchers in the process of art-making or in guiding research participants in creative processes. The chapter provides a descriptive analysis of the field of arts-based research focusing particularly on community building initiatives, and offers guidance to future researchers and practitioners that want to adopt creative methods in their projects. In <u>chapter 2</u>, one specific segment of the included articles of the scoping review is scrutinized in detail. The available photovoice studies, a specific arts-based methodology that reflects the critical pedagogy tradition and combines photography with grassroots social action, are critically investigated. The paper draws attention to the positioning of authors and the conceptualizations of 'voice' and empowerment within photovoice studies targeting female participants.

In light of the findings of this mapping exercise, the <u>second part</u> reports on three empirical studies. The specific setting in which these methodological explorations took place concerns a Flemish urban neighbourhood in transition, the Vaartkom. These studies describe how adult residents, art students, and youngsters were invited to 'turns on' their senses to identify the multiple lived and experienced aspects of places. <u>Chapter 3</u> presents a study with adult residents that walked together with the researchers in the urban area and shared their lived experiences during sensory go-along interviews. The chapter builds on the substantial body of literature on the sensory revolution and on walking methodologies. By providing thematic findings and reflective notes, this paper delves into the implications of using a sensory research approach. <u>Chapter 4</u> discusses a study in which art students were involved in a research activity that incorporated the creation of a design as a form of expression of their sensory experiences gathered from walking through the neighbourhood. The study was set up to explore how art works produced in the context of a sensory research project can be seen as data, and how they can contribute to articulating the kind of city its dwellers want. The paper proposes a material-discursive framework to analyze the research creations produced by participants. <u>Chapter 5</u> presents a study in which youngsters, artists, youth workers and researchers were engaged in a series of collective sensorial walks throughout the changing urban landscape, in upcycling art workshops, and in a public exhibition in the particular neighbourhood. It offers a theoretical reflection on how the elements of a response-able pedagogy sparked the researchers' wonderings about public spaces and participatory work.

The <u>general conclusion</u> provides a reflection on the contributions and limitations of this dissertation, including suggestions for future research. In this conclusion, the necessary connections between theoretical, methodological and empirical work are acknowledged, since disruptive frictions on one of these dimensions have inevitably implications for the other dimensions.

# Samenvatting

De laatste decennia is de methodologische belangstelling voor artistiek geïnspireerd en sensorisch etnografisch onderzoek aanzienlijk toegenomen. Voortbouwend op deze twee benaderingen onderzoekt dit proefschrift het potentieel van een esthetische oriëntatie op onze leefomgeving. Drie empirische studies werden uitgevoerd om te onderzoeken hoe we, door het verkennen van een veranderende buurt, onze gangbare manieren van denken over het verzamelen, analyseren en verspreiden van onderzoeksresultaten hebben uitgedaagd.

Het eerste deel van dit proefschrift omvat een inventarisatie van artistiek geïnspireerde studies en draagt bij tot een beter begrip van deze methodologische benadering. Hoofdstuk 1 presenteert de bevindingen van een verkennende literatuurstudie over het inzetten van artistiek geïnspireerde methoden in gemeenschapsgericht onderzoek. Deze systematische literatuurstudie bevat een uitgebreid overzicht aan studies waarin kunst werd ingezet in één of meerdere fasen van het onderzoeksproces. Deze studies werden gekenmerkt door een actieve betrokkenheid van de onderzoekers bij het artistieke proces of bij het begeleiden van onderzoeksdeelnemers in artistieke processen. Het hoofdstuk biedt een beschrijvende analyse van het veld van artistiek geïnspireerd onderzoek dat zich met name richt op gemeenschapsinitiatieven. Het biedt richtlijnen voor toekomstige onderzoekers en praktijkwerkers die creatieve methoden in hun eigen projecten wensen te gebruiken. In hoofdstuk 2 wordt een specifiek segment van de studies uit deze systematische literatuurstudie onder de loep genomen. De aanwezige photovoice studies, die rapporteren over een specifieke participatieve methode waarbij onderzoeksdeelnemers aan de hand van fotografie hun wereld in beeld brengen en in dialoog gaan met beleidsmakers, worden onderworpen aan een kritische analyse. Het hoofdstuk vestigt de aandacht op de theoretische uitgangspunten van deze methode en brengt in kaart hoe onderzoekers die dergelijke photovoice studies uitvoeren zichzelf positioneren binnen hun onderzoek en invulling geven aan de noties van 'voice' en 'empowerment' van kwetsbare deelnemers.

In het licht van de bevindingen van deze literatuurstudie, rapporteert het tweede deel over drie empirische studies. De specifieke setting waarin deze methodologische experimenten plaatsvonden, betreft een Vlaamse stedelijke buurt in transitie, de Leuvense Vaartkom. Deze studies beschrijven hoe buurtbewoners, kunststudenten en jongeren werden uitgenodigd om hun zintuigen aan te zetten om de meervoudige beleefde aspecten van plaats te identificeren. Hoofdstuk 3 presenteert een studie waarin buurtbewoners samen met de onderzoekers in het stedelijk gebied wandelden en hun ervaringen over en visie op hun buurt deelden tijdens zintuiglijke wandelende interviews. Het hoofdstuk bouwt voort op recente literatuur over zintuiglijk onderzoek en over wandelen als zintuiglijke onderzoeksmethode. Aan de hand van citaten uit de interviewtranscripten, beeldmateriaal en persoonlijke reflecties van de onderzoekers worden de implicaties van de sensorische onderzoeksbenadering besproken. Hoofdstuk 4 bespreekt een studie waarbij studenten van de plaatselijke kunstopleiding betrokken werden. Het ontwerpen van een kunstwerk maakte deel uit van een zintuiglijke exploratie van de veranderende stedelijke omgeving. In deze studie wordt nagegaan hoe kunstwerken die in het kader van sensorisch onderzoek werden geproduceerd, beschouwd kunnen worden als onderzoeksdata en hoe ze kunnen bijdragen aan het articuleren van het soort stad dat bewoners beogen. De paper stelt een materiaal-discursief raamwerk voor om de onderzoekscreaties van deelnemers te analyseren. Hoofdstuk 5 presenteert een participatieve studie waarin jongeren, kunstenaars, jeugdwerkers en onderzoekers deelnamen aan een reeks collectieve zintuiglijke wandelingen doorheen het veranderende stedelijke landschap, aan upcycling-workshops en aan een publieke tentoonstelling in de buurt. Het hoofdstuk biedt een theoretische reflectie over hoe de elementen van een 'response-able pedagogy' de onderzoekers hebben uitgedaagd om hun case te

herdenken. De implicaties van deze pedagogische invulling voor participatief werken in de publieke ruimte en ethisch handelen worden besproken.

In de algemene conclusie wordt ingegaan op de bijdragen en beperkingen van dit proefschrift, van waaruit suggesties voor toekomstig onderzoek worden geformuleerd. In deze conclusie wordt de noodzakelijke verbinding tussen theoretisch, methodologisch en empirisch werk benadrukt, omdat spanningen op één van deze dimensies onvermijdelijke gevolgen hebben voor de andere dimensies.

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# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

More than twenty years ago, the groundbreaking work of pioneers like Elliot Eisner (1997; 2008) has cultivated a rich tradition of arts-based inquiry in educational research and beyond (Barone, 2006; Brazg, Bekemeier, Spigner, & Huebner, 2010; Conrad & Kendall, 2009; Hannula, Suoranta, & Vandén, 2005; Hornsby-Miner, 2007). Under a variety of alternate labels, such as arts-related, aesthetically-based, arts-informed, arts-informing research and a/r/tography, growing numbers of (educational) scholars have explored the possibilities of inquiry approaches that are artistic in character and that bring together scholarly inquiry and creative processes. In these approaches, the expressive qualities of form are used to convey meaning (Barone & Eisner, 2012).

In some cases, art forms are considered as research data in their own right, for instance when images, sculptures or collages replace the traditional interview excerpts or observational data or support the interpretation process of the researcher. In other cases, art forms are used as a vehicle to translate and disseminate research findings, hereby replacing a traditional research report and moving away from the traditional focus on textual accounts of phenomena under investigation (Foster, 2012). The findings may present themselves as a drama or dance performance, as an exhibition of images or as a visual representation, an artifact or a collage (Bach, 1998; Bagley & Concienne, 2002; Gray et al., 2000; Harrington & Schibik, 2003; Saldana, 2003).

These arts-based approaches offer opportunities to disrupt dominant discourses in research that are often *"abstract, reductive, cognitive, and verbalized"* (Leavy, 2015, p. 20). Hence, driven by imperatives for interdisciplinarity, the arts-based paradigm provides an openness for diverse ways of doing research and diverse ways of knowing. The arts engender aesthetic ways of knowing, which are best understood as sensory, emotional, perceptual, kinesthetic, embodied, and imaginary knowing (Dewey, 1934; Leavy, 2015).

Based upon the original meaning of the term 'aesthetic' (Bull, Gilroy, Howes, & Kahn, 2006), many arts-based approaches thus recognize that senses and sensations play an important role in how we make sense of the world. This emphasis on sensory ways of knowing is not only acknowledged by proponents of the arts-based tradition, but also by advocates of sensory ethnography. As a different but related - and even sometimes overlapping field of scholarship - sensory ethnography

pays explicit attention to sensory experiences (Pink, 2009). Building on the 'sensory' or 'sensorial turn' in scholarship (Howes, 2005), it starts from the assumption that the senses are fundamental to our daily experiences. Moreover, like arts-based research, sensory ethnography extends the way we think about research. Informed by an understanding of the interconnected senses - with no one sensory modality dominating - attention is given to visual, auditory, tactile and other sensory dimensions of experience (Hurdley & Dicks, 2011). Sensory ethnography incorporates methods to go beyond listening and watching, using multiple media that foreground for instance touch, taste, smell and sound. It builds on the idea of participation as producing multisensory and emplaced ways of knowing. It implies joining participants in embodied activities such as walking, that tune participants and researchers into their sensory experiences (Pink, 2009; Springgay & Truman, 2018).

Arts-based and sensory methodologies are very popular in participatory and community-based research. These methodologies may seem a natural fit because of their emphasis on reciprocal relationships with participants as co-researchers and their openness to explore other means of communication that are not limited to the written or spoken word. Moreover, both approaches are particularly appealing to study everyday life in the context of urban development and to facilitate place-making, public pedagogy and civic engagement in the city.

More recently, in response to arts-based research that *"simply fold 'art' into its midst"* through combining art practice with qualitative research methodologies (Springgay & Zaliwska, 2017, p. 136), critical responses to arts-based research have been influenced by post-humanist new materialism. This emerging movement, also referred to as the ontological turn in social inquiry (Rosiek, 2018), decenters some of the traps of humanist qualitative inquiry - including many arts-based research projects - that builds on: binaries between nature and culture, mind and body, subject and object; a fixed understanding of individuals or groups of individuals; a linear understanding of time in which we move from the past to the present to the future; and a belief in pre-formed methods and pre-set goals in research and education (Leibowitz & Naidoo, 2017; Springgay & Zaliwska, 2017). This concept of the posthuman can be seen as a *"gesture to the so-much out there"* (Tsing, 2015, p. viiii), generating new modes of being in the world and a sensitivity towards the entanglement of people, things, sensations, discourses, and place itself (Barad, 2007).

**Research aim**

This doctoral research is a methodological oriented study that builds on the insights from arts-based research and sensory ethnography (Harris & Guillemin, 2012; Pink, 2009; Powell, 2010). In this dissertation, we searched for a synergy between both approaches each of them calling for attention to the sensorial dimension in research. We investigated how to explore the relationship between people and a neighborhood in transition.

At its moment of inception, the purpose of this dissertation was to contribute to the emerging field of arts-based research. This strand of research presented itself as an exciting but complex field of inquiry that pushes the boundaries of standard research practice, as it provides ways to interrupt dominant research discourses (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2014). The doctoral study departed from an extensive literature review on the field of arts-based research. The intention with the review was to provide a systematic overview of the field, focusing more specifically on community building research initiatives in the broad area of social and educational research, to describe gaps in the literature, and to provide guidance to future researchers and practitioners for choosing appropriate arts-based methods for their own projects.

This broad inventarisation of arts-based practices sparked our further interest in *doing* this kind of research. Hence, the meta-synthesis agenda of the doctoral project was extended with an empirical study component. Building on this extensive review of the literature we learned that arts-based methods can give relevant access to research phenomena because all people give shape and meaning to their lives from the interplay of the various senses. This interplay of sensory relations may not always be directly accessible through discourse, words and numbers. We also learned that most arts-based studies in community-based research used visual methods. This is no surprise, since vision is claimed to be the major sense through which we 'receive' relevant information (Prosser & Loxley, 2008; Smith, 2004).

This led us towards an empirical exploration of the potential of using multiple senses in the different phases of a research cycle. The following research question was posited as the main guide for the empirical studies:

**What is the potential of an aesthetic orientation to our physical surroundings and how can we, through exploring a changing neighbourhood, recast our methodological ways of thinking about collecting, analyzing and disseminating research findings?**

With the empirical studies presented in this dissertation the aim was to break open the visual dominance by exploring the potential of a sensory methodology in community-based inquiry that

seriously takes into account the sensory experiences of everyday life in a changing neighbourhood. It was an opportunity to extend the inquiry process from a dialogue between researchers and participants to, what Anderson, Adey, and Bevan (2010) call, a 'polylogic' approach (p. 589), thereby stretching our cognitive understanding and attuning to the material and sensorial manifestations of the place under research. This active orientation to place  implied including other actants (non-human actors) that influence place, for instance the landscape, weather, buildings and so on.

The emphasis on the intersection between discourse and the material dimension of environments that gradually developed throughout the writing of the chapters led to the final title of this PhD: *"Making sense through art: A material-discursive approach to study urban environments"*. It refers to a sense- and artmaking process in studying urban neighbourhoods, and the move that was made to rethink the balance between verbal and other type of 'data': matter is always part of meaning.

The specific setting in which these methodological explorations took place concerns a Flemish urban neighbourhood in transition, the Vaartkom. It is the old industrial site in the city of Leuven. For centuries it has served as the economic heart of the city. The local brewery Stella Artois and related activities played an important role in the development of the area. With the disappearance and relocation of the traditional industry, the district lost its original function and became a desolate post-industrial area. To date, it is one of the largest urban renewal areas in Flanders, undergoing significant transformations. Between 2015 and 2017, three experiments were set up in this area. Various stakeholders, including adult residents, youngsters, and art students were invited to explore this urban neighbourhood from a multisensory perspective.

This urban context was chosen because of its specific dynamic character. It is an interesting area in full expansion, in which old residents, new residents, people working in the area and visitors are still searching for a way to (re)connect with this place; a place in the making. We envisioned a meaningful engagement with this particular place, in which the urban environment was more than the setting or background of the study.

In the experiments we strived for a balance between a theoretical-methodological research emphasis and the creation of a better understanding of the relationship between people and their changing environment.

**Dissertation outline**

As will be outlined in this overview, the main body of this doctoral research consists of five manuscripts, published (or sent in for publication) at different points in time. They are introduced from a similar background, however also contain traces of how our thinking advanced during the doctoral trajectory. Our way of thinking about research has inevitably changed throughout the process of writing these chapters and thinking with theory and methodology.

*Part I: Scoping the field*

The first part of this doctoral dissertation involves a mapping exercise of the use of arts-based methods in community-based research and contributes to a furthered understanding of this emerging and expansive field of research. An extensive scoping review was therefore conducted as the starting point of this dissertation. Afterwards, we highlighted a subset of included studies to engage in a more detailed analysis of photovoice; a specific arts-based methodology that reflects the critical pedagogy tradition and combines photography with grassroots social action.

*Chapter 1*

The first chapter synthesizes the available literature on the use of arts-based methods in the broad area of community-based inquiry, covering literature published over a twenty years' time span (1993-2013). It encompasses scholarship wherein art is used in one or more phases of a research process, with an active involvement of the researchers in the process of art-making or in guiding research participants in creative processes. As an emerging approach to research, a consistent overview of which arts-based methods are used, for which reasons and how this methods base is applied in community-based research practice was lacking. With this chapter, we provide insights on various options available to researchers in this field. We identify different types of arts-based methods and report on the rationales, benefits and limitations. Moreover, we clarify some of the main challenges that are inherent in working on the thin line between art and research for scholars interested in education in, through and for communities.

*Chapter 2*

The second chapter builds further on the systematic review presented in the first chapter, where we witnessed a particular scholarly interest in the use of photovoice, a methodology founded on feminist theory, Paulo Freire's critical educational approach and a participatory approach to

documentary photography. In this chapter, we zoom in on this specific methodology and explore how it has been applied in studies focusing on the target group women. We critically evaluate the potential of this methodology to 'give' voice and investigate how sensitive scholars are to the tenants of feminist and empowerment theory that have originally inspired photovoice. We examine how researchers have conceptualized these premises in their own studies and whether they are able to pull them through in their implementation phase. We outline how female voices can manifest themselves in different phases of a research process and present types of empowerment that can potentially be reached through photovoice.

**Part II Empirical and methodological explorations**

In three small-scale experiments in the Vaartkom, a Belgian neighbourhood in transition, we challenge features and procedures of our own established methods base in order to provoke our thinking: How could we subscribe to the, mostly non-linguistic, non-cognitive, sensory aspects of place experiences in a research context? Methodological experiments combining research and creative practices offer potential *"to admit the fleeting, the tacit, the mobile, chaotic and complex"* (Back, 2012, p. 29).

*Chapter 3*

Chapter 3 draws on of our first experiments in the Vaartkom area. Eight adult residents from the area were asked to walk together with the researchers in their own city while 'opening up' their senses and sharing their lived experiences during go-along interviews (Kusenbach, 2003). The participants received a photo camera to take pictures along the route. In this chapter, we situate our experiment in the existing body of literature on the sensory revolution and provide more detail on walking as a sensory research methodology. Using a combination of thematic findings and reflective notes, we draw attention to some of the implications of a sensory research approach, based on our own research experiences. The chapter demonstrates how a sensory research approach changed our research practice and what can potentially be learned from there.

*Chapter 4*

Chapter 4 discusses a second experiment that was set up to challenge ourselves to rethink the balance between the discursive and the material. We involved four art students from the Interdisciplinary Studio of SLAC (the art academy and music conservatory of the city of Leuven) in a research activity that incorporated the creation of a design as a form of expression of their

sensory experiences gathered from walking through the neighbourhood. We shift our attention from an analysis based on written interview transcripts to a more sensory way of analyzing research creations produced by participants. The objective of this chapter is to expose readers to the analytical apparatus we developed to increase our understanding of (a) the relationship between people and places and (b) how the production of art in the context of place-based research may evoke an articulation of the kind of city we aspire. In this chapter, we illustrate the application of this lens on the works of art created by some of the participants involved.

*Chapter 5*

A final chapter presents a theoretical reflection on a co-creative experiment in the Vaartkom area, called Magnificent Rubbish, that was set up in close collaboration with youth workers from a local centre of expertise for socially vulnerable youngsters and two upcycling artists. The research project was embedded in a school alternative educational programme of the centre and focused on youngsters between 15 and 18 years old. It involved the engagement of youngsters and the research team in a series of collective sensorial walks throughout the changing urban landscape, in upcycling art workshops, and in a public exhibition in the particular neighbourhood. The experiment was our first exposure to the use of arts-based methods in this doctoral project. In retrospect, we look back at the challenges encountered that led us into questioning our own methodological and epistemological approach. By means of a diffractive analysis - in which our primary units of analysis are material/discursive practices - we articulate a move beyond an anthropocentric research perspective and beyond traditional understandings of public pedagogy, towards a response-able pedagogy (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017). The chapter discusses how the elements of a response-able pedagogy sparked our wonderings about public spaces, participatory research and the ethical implications for a pedagogy beyond the classroom or university.

**Personal statement**

At first glance, many dissertations appear to be the result of a coherent and deliberate process in which the outcomes seem to logically follow the initial intentions outlined by the researcher. Following the well adopted 'Introduction – Methods – Results – Discussion' pattern, they seem to be conducted in an almost mechanistic way. We know, however, this mostly isn't the case in reality, as many projects are in fact subjected to false starts and persistence, and processes are rather messy and non-linear. In what we write for a broader public, we tend to reconstruct our messy logic where possible, in the standard format a reader would expect. For some chapters, this was easier than for others. For some of the methods and reflections our imaginary capacity to visualize what this reconstruction could look like fell short.

*Positional stance*

More than six years ago, I started this doctoral study as a young female researcher in her late twenties. Growing up in a small Belgian city, I was raised in a socially engaged family as the eldest daughter of two social workers. In the eighties, my father was involved in founding CEMUVO (the Socio-Cultural Organization for Worldwide Awakenening) as part of his internship and civilian service. An organization founded to raise awareness of the local community about North-South relations. Afterwards my father worked for decades in a public centre for social welfare. He was also actively involved in grassroot projects focusing in particular on social housing for refugees, young migrants, and people with financial and psychological problems, and he is an active member of the public trade union for the local and regional services. My mother is a careworker in special youth care where she worked for years in a residential setting fostering the well being of youth at risk. Currently she guides young people in closed facilities to prepare for their return and reintegration in society.

This family background informed my study choice in higher education. I obtained my Master's degree in Educational Sciences (social pedagogy). Later on, I worked for a while with young adolescents in special needs education and afterwards as a community worker and staff member of a non-profit organization situated in the broad area of community-based practice (also known as 'Samenlevingsopbouw' in the Dutch speaking part of Belgium).

In 2013, I returned to the university. My previous experiences working in this non-profit organization; setting up community projects with youngsters and elderly, doing many door-by-door home visits to residents in a particular area to explore and familiarize myself with a neighbourhood and the people, and making inventories of 'succesful' participatory methods developed and tested

by community workers to share with other colleagues in the field, eventually led to the start of this PhD.

It sparked my interest in working in deprived and transitioning neighbourhoods, and in searching for innovative ways to engage diverse populations in place-based practice. It became a search for methods that are not limited to the spoken or written word. My personal interest in art and art making processes is reflected in my own participation in part-time art education for years. Since my childhood, I followed general visual art courses as well as a specialisation course in drawing.

In the past six years, I literally and figuratively followed different pathways (and sideways). I resided for instance in different university buildings; I initially started my PhD in the Methodology of Educational Sciences Research Group and later on travelled between two faculties and two research groups: the Laboratory for Education and Society (Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences) and SoMeTHin'K (Social, Methodological and Theoretical Innovation / Kreative (Faculty of Social Sciences). Due (or thanks) to my nomadic scholarly nature, the fieldwork I conducted was very much opportunity based. I could easily move along with initiatives that enfolded during the PhD trajectory, including a collaboration with people from Vizoog vzw (an artistic organization specialized in creative upcycling), with a local division of Arktos vzw (a Flemish centre of expertise for vulnerable children and young adults) and with PiLoT[1] (a project organized by the University of Leuven bringing together scientists and artists from the local art academy).

*Philosophical stance*

The arts-based and multisensory approach adopted for this doctoral dissertation was initially informed by a constructionist paradigm, which assumes a pluralist position and a belief that knowledge is constructed through interchanges between people and shared objects and activities (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The focus was on dialogical procedures and meaning negotiation with the involved participants in trying to define the identity of the neighbourhood under study and to share and negotiate this with others. In addition, the study was informed by an experiential vision of knowledge. Participants created their own meaning and interpretation of their surroundings, based on the experiences that were elicited through sensory walks, photos and art works. Researchers and participants were regarded as co-constructors of knowledge. The participants were central to the research process and involved in as many steps of the project as possible. I intended to create a research context where participants would voluntary decide on the

limits of their involvement in the research project (Ross, Renold, Holland & Hillman, 2008). Like most arts-based studies, it was also influenced by postmodern thinking which became evident in the way I conceived of knowledge as partial and temporal. Under the influence of further readings on the senses during the analysis and writing process, a gradual move from a constructionist towards a new materialist paradigm took place. This allowed me to better take into account the sensuous and material environment and the different actors involved. This is apparent in the literature used in the second part of this dissertation (including scholars like Barad and Bennett, to name a few). It is also reflected in the way I went into a diffractive analytical mode and started to perceive ethics in terms of responding to an entanglement of humans and more-than humans in the final chapter.

*Role of the researcher and multiple voices in this dissertation*

In most of the chapters, first person self-references (mostly through the use of 'we') were used when referring to the research process, sometimes switching to third person ('the researchers') when distinguishing between the particular role of the researchers and other actors (artists, art students, youth workers, …) involved. Through the use of 'we' it becomes clear that this dissertation is the result of a joined effort. It involved collaborations with other academics (including my supervisors, master students and research colleagues) and also actors other than academics (including artists, art students, youngsters, and youth workers). Therefore, the 'voices' in this dissertation are multiple, as it is the result of a collaborative thinking process with several parties. Ideas gradually arose while thinking *with* various people, places, artefacts, and theory. As a doctoral researcher this collaborative - and in some experiments transdisciplinary - mode of working offered many possibilities to share ideas, think together, and discuss different point of views. It also offered me the possibility to wear different hats, often simultaneously; being not only a researcher, but also an educator, a mentor of students, a facilitator. In every chapter, the role of each of the contributors in the research consortium is therefore explicitly acknowledged.

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# PART I. SCOPING THE FIELD

# CHAPTER 1:

# RESEARCHERS UNDER THE SPELL OF THE ARTS:

# TWO DECADES OF USING ARTS-BASED METHODS IN

# COMMUNITY-BASED INQUIRY[1]

## ABSTRACT

In the last decade, we have witnessed a growing number of published articles featuring arts-based methods. These methods have been picked up by researchers interested in education in, through and for communities. This scoping review focuses on the use of arts-based methods in community-based research. It was undertaken to provide an overview of how these methods are applied in research practice. Different databases were systematically searched, covering literature published over twenty years (1993–2013). We identified different types of arts-based methods. We described the reported rationales, benefits and limitations, and presented a definition of arts-based methods as used in community-based inquiry. Four challenges were reported: the need to support researchers to explore alternative analytical approaches, the need for methodological reflections, the need to reflect on the voice-component in this work, and the need to push the boundaries of what counts as 'the' academic standard. Despite the challenges involved in working on the thin line between art and research, the learning curve it creates for researchers, its value in terms of creating understanding and its capacity to engage participants makes it a worthwhile endeavor to invest in.

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**Introduction**

Since the early nineties, the interest of researchers in the use of arts-based methods as a research approach has grown substantially. The term arts-based research (ABR) was first coined by the educationist scholar Elliot Eisner during an educational event in 1993 to explore educational research that integrated creative work (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

In the last two decades, researchers from various disciplines have successfully adopted ABR methods in their work. These have been recognized as legitimate research approaches in artistic and design research (e.g. Hannula, Suoranta, & Vadén, 2005) and in the broad field of humanities including social and cultural sciences, public health and educational sciences (Brazg, Bekemeier, Spigner, & Huebner, 2010; Conrad & Kendall, 2009; Hornsby-Miner, 2007). From its very beginning, it has been picked up by researchers interested in education in, through and for communities. The use of arts-based methods in community-based settings may seem a natural fit due to its participatory nature and openness for different ways of understanding.

However, a consistent overview of which ABR approaches are used, for which reasons and how this methods base is applied in community-based research practice is lacking. In addition, there is no shared vocabulary that can facilitate the communication about what constitutes ABR in community-based research. We conducted a scoping review to synthesize the literature on the use of ABR methods in this area of research and in order to clarify the challenges that are inherent in working on the thin line between art and research (Pham et al., 2014). We covered the literature reporting on the use of arts-based methods in the area of community-based research practice. We selected papers reporting on 'art in research' type of projects. In these projects art is used in one or more phases of a research process, with an active involvement of the researchers in the process of art-making or in guiding research participants in creative processes.[2] The review was inspired by a social pedagogical lens to inquiry, hereby cutting across disciplines such as sociology, social welfare and educational sciences.

*Arts-based research*

Traditionally, ABR methods have been applied either as a data collection technique or as a dissemination technique. In the first case, the art forms are considered as research data in their own right. Images, sculptures or collages replace the traditional interview excerpts or observational data or support the interpretation process of the researcher. In this case, art is used as a medium that

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[2] In our classification framework, we *"distinguish between (a) research about art, where researchers are studying art or artistic topics without an intention to (re)create various forms of artwork; (b) art as research, where the creation process of an art object is subjected to further investigation, leading to a better understanding of what the art form is and what it can do; and (c) art in research, where artistic forms are actively applied in a research process aiming to study a particular social or behavioral phenomenon"* (Wang, Coemans, Siegesmund, & Hannes, 2017, p. 7).

allows research participants to 'communicate' with researchers about their situation, experiences, concerns, challenges or obstacles in daily life. In the second case, ABR methods are used as a medium to translate an outcome of a particular research project, replacing a traditional research report and moving away from the traditional focus on textual accounts of phenomena under investigation (Foster, 2012). In this case, the art form is considered the vehicle for dissemination of research findings. The findings may present themselves as a drama or dance performance, an exhibition of images or a visual representation, an artifact or a collage (Bach, 1998; Bagley & Concienne, 2002; Gray et al., 2000; Harrington & Schibik, 2003; Saldana, 2003).

Researchers using ABR methods are often situated within the qualitative research tradition, many of them questioning the triumphs of science and rationality (Butterwick, 2002). They are motivated to challenge existing conventions and assumptions about what constitutes research. Not surprisingly, the whole debate on the place and role of ABR methods in scientific and academic inquiry has been fueled by paradigm shifts such as the emergence of the postmodern period welcoming a more pluralistic attitude towards research (Leavy, 2009).

### The review case

A scoping review was conducted to synthesize available research evidence (Pham et al., 2014). Although there is no one agreed upon definition for scoping studies, they can broadly be defined as projects that are exploratory and map the literature available on a topic hence identifying the key ideas and gaps in a systematic way (The Canadian Institute of Health research). This mapping involves displaying "*the ideas, arguments and concepts from a body of literature*" (Hart, 1998, p. 162). Because their aim is to provide a snapshot of the existing literature, scoping reviews typically don't include a quality assessment of the included studies (Armstrong, Hall, Doyle, & Waters, 2011). Their goal is to provide an overview of the state of the art in an emergent research field. This mapping exercise of the arts-based literature serves as the starting point for an in-depth study exploring the potential of multisensory methods for place-based and community-based research, traditionally dominated by visual methods (Ingold, 2000).

### Study rationale and research questions

As more researchers become interested in using ABR methods, more overviews of the literature have become available. Pain (2012) reviewed the literature on the use of visual methods in a wide range of disciplines focusing on articles featuring visual research methods only. Fraser and Al Sayah (2011) and Boydell, Gladstone, Volpe, Allemang, and Stasiulis (2012) reviewed the literature on the

use of ABR methods in health care. A review from Hergenrather, Rhodes, Cowan, Bardoshi, and Pula (2009) assessed the use of ABR methods in community-based participatory research, but only focused on photovoice as one visual research technique applied to health and disability topics.

Our review project differs from these projects by: (a) taking a social pedagogical lens to inquiry that defines the disciplinary boundaries for the review and (b) including a broad variety of different ABR methods and techniques. The review addresses ABR projects in the area of community-based research targeting vulnerable populations. The community focus was inspired by the fact that many of the researchers working in this field are trained to unlock the potential of the often vulnerable populations they work with. Traditional research methods have not always been able to fully engage with particular groups in society. This is certainly the case for vulnerable people, for instance those who have limited language abilities or those who suffered major trauma's or severe life circumstances that are difficult to verbalize (Cosenza, 2010; Mullen, Buttignol, & Diamond, 2005). In summary, this scoping review provides a descriptive insight into ABR projects in community-based research. The following research questions were addressed as part of the mapping exercise:

1. What are the given rationales for using ABR methods in working with vulnerable populations in community-based research?
2. What type of artistic methods are used in community-based research?
3. How do the authors describe ABR methods?
4. What do the authors report as the added value and limitations of these ABR methods?

**Method**

**Search procedures**

To identify appropriate articles, comprehensive literature searches were conducted in databases that cover the broad fields of social sciences and education. The following electronic databases were systematically searched: ERIC, Francis, Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS), Sociological Abstracts (SA) and Social Services Abstracts (SSA). Relevant theses and dissertations were included. For practical reasons, the studies had to be written in English. Moreover, the search covered literature published between 1993 and 2013. Our choice to limit our time span to 20 years was motivated by the fact that the term ABR was officially launched by Barone and Eisner in the year 1993 (Barone & Eisner, 2012). The idea

to focus on decades also facilitates future updates of this review. A comprehensive set of keywords was used in the different databases. [3]

The first search string consisted of terms that allowed us to characterize the concept of ABR methods. We not only included articles that promote their work as ABR but also included those written by researchers that do not categorize their work as arts-based but feature techniques or methods that correspond to our definition. The second search string was related to terms that captured the vulnerable populations we were interested in. The third search string represented the research setting under review. An example of the type of search strings developed can be found in the protocol (Coemans, Wang, Leysen, & Hannes, 2015).

### Study inclusion and exclusion criteria

A list of screening criteria was formulated to identify relevant studies. First, the researchers in the included studies had to work explicitly with or in a community. Research projects that targeted individuals only were excluded from this review. In line with Israel, Schulz, Parker, and Becker (1998), we did not exclusively define 'community' as a geographical area or neighbourhood where the research takes place. Communities could also refer to groups of people sharing a particular identity, cultural heritage, language, belief, shared fate or interest.

Second, only qualitative primary research articles were included. This idea was mainly inspired by a preliminary scoping exercise that revealed that most quantitative studies portrayed the role of the researcher as an 'outsider' to the community-based research process instead of an 'insider' with an active role. We expected little benefit from including studies in which the role of the researcher was limited to evaluation. We also excluded reviews, theoretical, opinion and methodological papers.

Third, included studies had to feature an artistic element in at least one of the phases of the research process. As already discussed, we made a distinction between *art in research, art as research* and *research about art*. Only articles that met our definition of *art in research* were included in this search. Furthermore, we focused on studies that explored educational and social practices through the arts. Articles on art therapy or medically inspired projects were excluded. We moved beyond the therapeutic approach and presented research projects oriented towards "*collaborative participatory practice and social-change*", with the purpose to improve the lives of the participants by tackling contemporary problems and stimulating people to take control over their lives (Clover, 2011, p.

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[3] The full search strategy can be retrieved at
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1747938X17300301#mmc1

14). Articles discussing health related prevention initiatives were included because we felt that there is a very thin line between health care and social pedagogy when it comes to discussing the place of prevention from a disciplinary point of view.

Fourth, only studies that worked with a vulnerable population were included. A vulnerable group of people was defined as those who are "*impoverished, disenfranchised, and/or subject to discrimination, intolerance, subordination and stigma*" (Nyamathi, 1998, p. 65). This definition justifies our choice to include different sampling groups including ethnic minorities, immigrants, the homeless, women, people with disabilities but also elderly, children and youth. We realize that the classification of elderly, women and youth as vulnerable is an area of debate. However, we decided to include them because they are often marginalized in an adult and male dominated society to a large extent, thus experiencing unequal power relations (Punch, 2002).

The screening form developed to separate studies relevant to our review from those irrelevant can be retrieved in Appendix A. It was used in all screening phases outlined below.

### Study selection

A three-step screening strategy was used to select studies that were relevant for inclusion. An initial screening of study titles was undertaken by the lead reviewer to determine whether or not a study fell within the scope of the review. A second screening was conducted by two reviewers independently, based on the abstracts and bibliographic information, using the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Disagreements between the reviewers were solved by discussion with a third reviewer. A third screening was based on the full-text reading of the articles that had been labeled as relevant or unclear based on the abstract.

### Data-extraction and synthesis

The data extraction process mirrored the guidance outlined in the supplemental guidance of the Cochrane Qualitative Research Methods Group (Noyes & Lewin, 2011). We started with an initial reading of five studies to form a classification scheme. We conducted a descriptive, within-case analysis of each of the included articles followed by a cross-case analysis looking into differences and commonalities across studies. We opted for the extraction of a limited, core set of items that were mainly informative and descriptive, including: year of publication, country, participant characteristics, setting, sample, research design, rationale for using ABR methods, methods for data collection, data analysis and dissemination, and the strengths and limitations of the applied ABR approach.

The data were extracted using a standard MS Excel sheet. The data extraction form was trialed on the first five studies and then refined. It was conducted by two independent reviewers. The extraction phase was followed by a descriptive analysis of data presenting percentages for the content generated in the different extraction categories. This was supplemented with a narrative synthesis of the dominant rationales for conducting ABR, the limitations and strengths of the approaches. This mapping allowed us to identify significant research gaps.

**Results**

**Study retrieval**

After eliminating duplicates, the comprehensive search strategy identified 6750 unique articles. These publications were judged against the criteria for inclusion. Out of those published articles, 1712 studies were excluded after a first screening based on the title, leaving 5038 potentially relevant publications. In the second screening, the abstracts of the remaining papers were assessed and 4634 more irrelevant articles were excluded. A total of 403 full text articles were scrutinized. In this phase, 273 were eventually excluded for various reasons including: not meeting our definition of *art in research* ($n = 98$) or our definition of primary research ($n = 61$), not being community-based ($n = 36$) or not involving a vulnerable population ($n = 17$). In addition, a number of studies were excluded based on the content ($n = 14$); they did not provide insight into social-pedagogical practices through the arts. We also excluded studies based on language ($n = 5$) and studies that did not provide enough information for data-extraction (e.g. studies without any methods or results section; $n = 12$). Moreover, some studies were excluded because we could not retrieve the full text after contacting the authors ($n = 30$). This led us to 131 studies (appendix B) for inclusion. An overview of the retrieval process can be found in *Figure 1.1*.
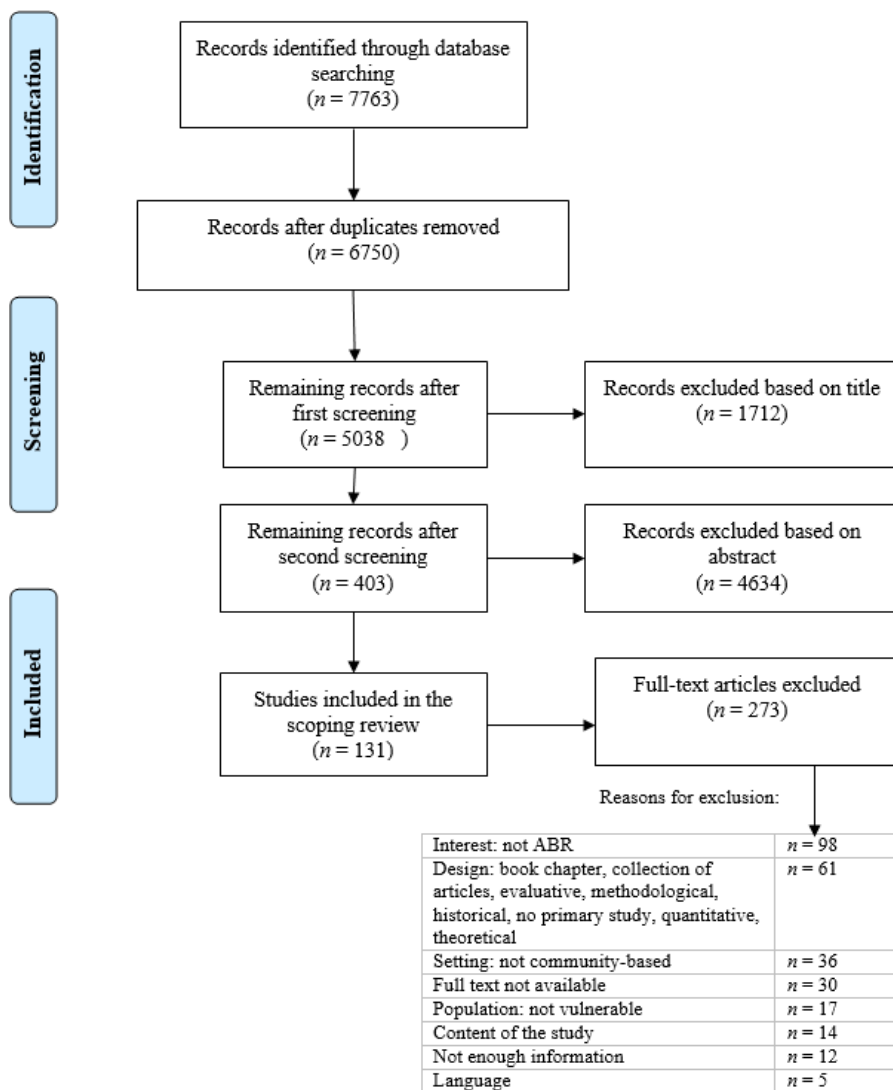
*Figure 1.1* Results of the search and retrieval process.

**Descriptive numerical findings**

An overview of the descriptive characteristics of the included studies are displayed in Appendix C and D. A summarization of the analysis of these characteristics is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1.1 Numerical findings

| Characteristics | Main findings | Number of studies (in %) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year of publication | 2004-2013 | 90% |
| | 1994-2003 | 10% |
| Country of the studies | US | 39% |
| | Canada | 23% |
| | UK | 14% |
| | Others: Australia, South-Africa, China, New Zealand, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Tanzania, Kenia, Scotland, Spain | |
| Author's disciplines | Education | 39% |
| | Social sciences, social work and sociology | 18% |
| | Health | 13% |
| | Psychology | 7% |
| | Others: arts, geography, anthropology, environmental studies, communication studies, multidisciplinary studies | |
| Community settings | Neighbourhoods, cities, rural areas | 42% |
| | Local schools and educational centers | 25% |
| | Others were based on shared interest, heritage or identity: e.g. homeless community, single-parents community, Muslim community, LGBT community | |
| Research participants | Young people | 53% |
| | Female participants | 34% |
| | Others: e.g. residents, immigrants, refugees, transgenders, elderly, people with disabilities | |
| Sample size | 1-10 participants | 41% |
| | 11-20 participants | 33% |
| | 21-40 participants | 17% |
| | >40 participants | 9% |
| | Sample size was reported in 85% of the studies | |
| Research Design | Action research | 39% |
| | Ethnography | 19% |
| | Participatory research | 12% |
| | Case-study | 8% |
| | Narrative research | 4% |
| | Phenomenology | 2% |
| | The reported design was unclear or not mentioned in 16% of the studies | |

The main characteristics of the included studies show us that the interest in ABR has steadily increased within twenty years (*Figure 1.2*).
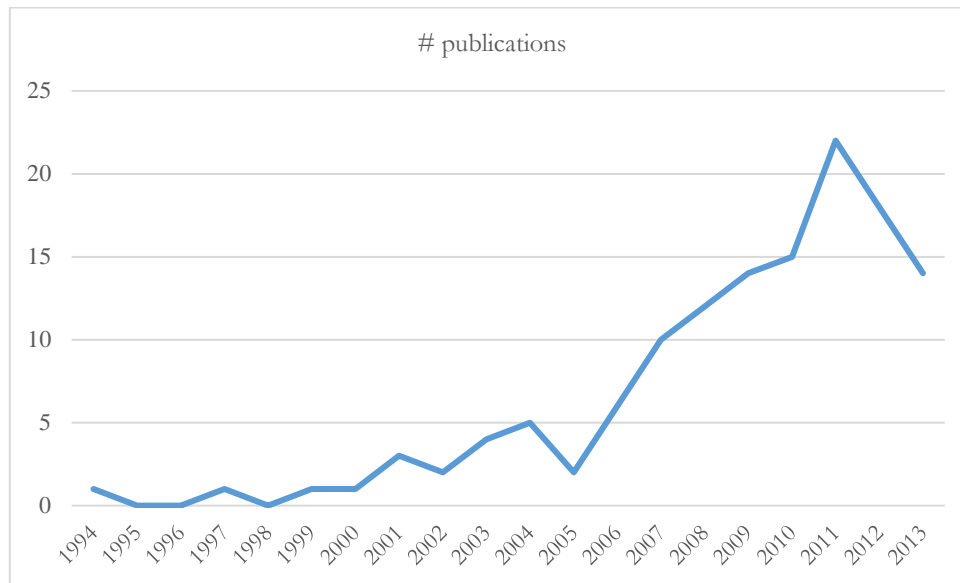


*Figure 1.2* Year of publication.

The majority of the studies were conducted by researchers from the US, Canada and the UK. Various academic disciplines were represented, including three broad categories: education, social sciences/welfare and (public) health. Most community settings reported in these articles were geographically defined including neighbourhoods, cities, rural areas, as well as local schools and educational centers. The use of arts-based methods in this review was most popular in working exclusively with young people and female participants. The number of participants in the studies varied.

In addition, a variety of ABR approaches were used, including visual art, performing art, literary art and a multiple methods approach. Visual art forms incorporate visual images to "*provoke, evoke, and express nonverbal or preverbal knowledge*" (Leavy, 2017, p. 208). Visual art forms include still images (e.g. photography), moving images (e.g. video) and 3D artifacts (e.g. quilts). Performing art forms embody "*aesthetic, critical and participatory modes of knowing*" through performance (Chilton & Leavy, 2014, p. 410), including for example theatre and dance. Literary art forms "*rely on written language*" (Leavy, 2017, p. 199) and include expressive, evocative and engaging texts that readers can connect with, including poetry, fiction, novels, short stories, etc. (Chilton & Leavy, 2014). A multiple methods approach refers to combining different art genres. Table 2 shows that the most popular visual art form was photography, whereas theatre and poetry were the most used performing and literary art forms.

Table 1.2 Arts-based methods

| | |
|---|---|
| **Visual art** | **64%** |
| Still images | |
| - Photography | n = 81 |
| - Drawing | n = 19 |
| - Collage | n = 9 |
| - Painting | n = 7 |
| - Graffiti | n = 2 |
| Moving images | |
| - Video | n = 11 |
| - Digital animation | n = 4 |
| 3D artefacts | |
| - E.g. quilts, mosaics, masks, life-size marionettes | n = 9 |
| **Performing art** | **19%** |
| Theatre/drama | n = 31 |
| Dance | n = 3 |
| Music | n = 2 |
| Puppetry | n = 1 |
| Live art | n = 1 |
| Writing on the body | n = 1 |
| **Literary art** | **2%** |
| Poetry | n = 10 |
| Creative writing | n = 4 |
| Reader's theatre | n = 1 |
| **Multiple methods approach (i.e. combining different art genres)** | **15%** |

Participatory (action) research and ethnographic research were the most common research designs. In the majority of the reviewed literature, traditional qualitative research methods such as observation and interview techniques were described as the collected data. The arts-based techniques were merely used to support this process. The analysis was mostly based on textual information. In photography studies, thematic analysis ($n = 23$), constant comparative analysis ($n = 9$), content analysis ($n = 8$) and group analysis ($n = 8$) were mostly used. In four articles, the researchers referred to SHOWeD; a structured analytical technique specifically developed for photovoice. A visual analysis was only performed in four studies. Other reported analytical procedures included inductive analysis, interpretive analysis, phenomenological analysis and conceptual mapping analysis. A considerable number of photo studies did not or vaguely report the analytical procedures ($n = 15$). In the majority of the theatre studies, the analytical procedures

were unclear (*n* = 15). Other more commonly used techniques included thematic analysis (*n* = 6), discourse analysis *(n* = 3) and narrative analysis (*n* = 2).

More than half of the authors (*n* = 74) included arts-based representations in the final article. In most of these studies, the artistic content was merely used as an illustration to support the narratives. The majority of the included studies (*n* = 94) reported some form of public dissemination. Common dissemination forms included organizing the following events: art exhibitions/installations, theater play, multimedia performances, community forums and workshops. In addition, some authors distributed their findings online via the creation of their own website, blog or Facebook page. Others contacted the media and presented their findings in the local newspaper, television or on the radio. Through public dissemination, these authors reached a varied audience including friends and families of participants, local residents, community representatives, young people, politicians, youth workers, social workers, parents, educators, health care providers, police officers and lawyers.

### Narrative synthesis

In this part, we discuss the underlying rationales for using arts-based methods and the reported strengths and challenges of the methods according to the reviewed literature.

#### *Rationale*

Authors described various reasons for implementing arts-based methods in their research. A frequently cited reason was that they were used to challenge the limitations of conventional language-oriented research methods (e.g. Banks, 2007; Daniels, 2003; Kelly, 2010; Mattingly, 2001). Consequently, arts-based methods were used to counter, enrich or compliment traditional qualitative approaches. Artistic techniques were used to overcome power imbalances between researcher(s) and the subject being researched, by conducting research with participants rather than on them (e.g. Fenge, Hodges & Cutts, 2011; Gordon, 2011; Henderson, 2006). Authors assumed that these methods would give a voice to their participants (e.g. Conn, 2013) enabling them to better articulate participants unique experiences (e.g. Coholic, Cote-Meek, & Recollet, 2012; Liebenberg, 2009) and facilitate richer reflection and dialogue (e.g. Morgan et al., 2010; Nowell et al., 2006). Moreover, arts-based methods would be particularly useful in working with more vulnerable groups; groups that are less often heard in an academic research setting such as young people (Green & Kloos, 2009; Ho et al., 2011). Authors engaging in arts-based methods hoped that by using these methods, they would be able to explore more complex or sensitive issues that

are difficult to verbalize such as identity or community (e.g. Holgate, Keles, & Kumarappan, 2012; Noor, 2007). Another reason reported was that arts-based methods were seen as an interesting tool to motivate individuals to participate in a study as these methods could increase the participants' interest (e.g. Peddle, 2011; Santo, Ferguson & Trippel, 2010). Authors often mentioned that art was used both for research as educational purposes as it was implemented to develop specific skills (Levy & Weber, 2011), to influence social policy (McIntyre, 2000) and to facilitate change (Irwin et al., 2009; Sajan Virgi & Mitchell, 2011). A last important rationale for using arts-based methods is their ability to communicate findings to a wider audience and to share knowledge beyond academic communities (Mattingly, 2001; 0'Neill & Giddens, 2001).

Although most authors gave multiple reasons for adopting arts-based methods in general, they were less explicit in arguing why exactly they chose a specific technique. There were some exceptions including the study of Emme, Kirova, Kamau, and Kosanovich (2006) that described doubts between the choice for photography and drawings.

*Strengths*

In the reviewed literature, numerous benefits of ABR were highlighted. Many of these strengths are in line with the reasons they provided in advance for using these methods.

   *Participant-driven.* Arts-based methods seemed particularly suited as participant-driven methods (e.g. Bradley, Deighton, & Selby, 2004; Daniels, 2003). Daniels (2003) for example argued that there was less distance between the researcher and the participants reducing the unequal relationship between both. Hence, arts-based inquiry offered a safe space for people to foster dialogue and express themselves, especially about difficult/sensitive issues (e.g. Feldman, Hopgood, & Dickins, 2013; Francis, 2010). Moreover, arts-based methods had a transformative power. This transformation took place on different levels. We borrowed the three types of transformation as described by McKean (2006) to situate our findings. Firstly, many scholars referred to *personal transformation* of the participants. Hence, the use of arts-based methods led to empowerment in many studies. Several times, participants described a marked change following their participation. They mentioned feelings of pride and increased wellbeing and confidence after participation (e.g. Bader, Wanono, Hamden, & Skinner, 2007; Clover, 2011). Researchers also described how arts-based methods helped participants to develop particular skills (e.g. Clover, 2011; Foster, 2007). Secondly, *institutional transformation*, that involves policy change, was also mentioned as a result of the arts-based inquiry (e.g. Mc Kean, 2006; Sutton-Brown, 2011). Thirdly, some scholars described *audience transformation* (e.g. Feldman et al., 2013; McKean, 2006) as a result

of the arts-based inquiry; the arts-based performances changed the way the audience thought about a particular issue and gave them new insights.

*Interesting type of data.* Scholars reported that it led to an interesting type of data, in comparison with traditional interview or observation methods. They described arts-based data as rich (e.g. Fink, 2012; Lee & De Finney, 2005), authentic (e.g. Holmes, 2008; McIntyre, 2000), evocative (e.g. Foster, 2007), more personal (e.g. Daniels, 2003), imaginative (e.g. Fu, 2009; Kendrick & Jones, 2008), illuminating subtleties and fostering multiplicity (e.g. Emme et al., 2006). Additionally, researchers argued that it led to 'other' data (e.g. Alcock, Camic, Barker, Haridi, & Raven, 2011; Holmes, 2008). Tolia-Kelly (2007) argued for example that it captured "*alternative vocabularies and visual grammars that are not always encountered or expressible in oral interviews*" (p. 340). Kaptani and Yuval-Davis (2008) mentioned that traditional interviews tend to produce either detailed chronological life stories or normative perceptions whereas arts-based methods produced experiential and emotive moments. A number of studies that used photovoice in particular described how the method highlighted positive aspects and strengths instead of deficits (Green & Kloos, 2009; Kinloch, 2007).

*Appeal of arts-based methods.* In sum, these strengths make arts-based methods appealing for research participants as well as for a broader audience: (a) For participants, because these are accessible methods, especially fitted in working with more vulnerable participants such as children or young people. They are comfortable and fun, which can heighten the interest to participate (e.g. Fenge et al., 2011; Gray, 1997); (b) Beyond academia, because the subject matter of arts-based studies often resonates with the experiences of a non-academic audience (e.g. Feldman et al., 2013; Pratt & Johnston, 2009). As Pratt and Johnston (2009) argued: "*it engages the audience in ways that few of academic writers anticipate, producing an emotional attachment to and identification with some of the characters and stories*" (p. 124)

*Limitations*

Although most articles focused on the potential and strengths of arts-based methods, it also brought significant challenges for many researchers. We identified some general challenges in qualitative research concerning the accessibility of methods, the lack of methodological reflection in research reports, the need to empower participants in community-based research and ethical and practical issues that researchers are confronted with. Apart from this, some specific challenges related to ABR were reported including the analysis of arts-based data and dealing with academic conventions.

*The accessibility of arts-based methods.* While these methods have been described by some scholars as accessible and especially useful in working with vulnerable participants, they have been questioned by others. For some participants, these methods can be challenging. Findholt, Michael, and Davis(2011) described the problems they had when undertaking a photovoice study with young participants: "*youth tended to take pictures of family and friends rather than community features and had difficulty understanding the idea of themes and selecting photographs to represent themes*" (p. 190). In two other photovoice studies the researchers noticed that the task of creating art through photography can be too demanding for participants; some participants were too frightened to take photographs (Capous-Desyllas, 2010; Ho et al., 2011). Consequently, the idea of being involved in an artistic project may hinder rather than facilitate participation.

*The lack of methodological reflection.* Authors noted that it could be interesting if more ABR researchers report their own experiences as a researcher(e.g. Howard, 2004; Rydzik, Pritchard, Morgan, & Sedgley, 2013). Discussions about the process and about implications of the methods could be very helpful for other researchers in the field. For researchers working with more vulnerable groups, this methodological reflection is particularly crucial. It involves taking a closer look to one's own position as researcher in this type of inquiry. Lee and De Finney (2005) argued that this critical lens is necessary, otherwise expressive approaches are at risk of replicating certain oppressive structures and problematic representations.

*The notion of empowerment.* ABR methods were often used to *give* voice and to empower more vulnerable participants and communities. However, many authors described their struggle with bringing these ideas to practice (e.g. Harding & Gabriel, 2004; Sloane & Wallin, 2013). Tensions were described, concerning the inclusion of participants' voices in the collection, analysis, reporting and dissemination of the findings. In addition, McKean (2006) suggested that researchers should be realistic about the long-term effects of an arts-based project: "*it would be naïve to think that one project alone can radically transform either the individual or the system within which they have to operate*" (p. 10).

*The ethical issues.* Using arts-based methods poses new ethical challenges in conducting research. Some of these ethical concerns were identified in this review: i.e. anonymity, ownership, representation and emotions. A first ethical issue is protecting the privacy of those involved. This relates to the importance of voluntary informed consent and informing participants about the extent to which anonymity and confidentiality can be guaranteed in the publication, as well as in the re-use of data (Rydzik et al., 2013). In photo-studies, it also involves guaranteeing the privacy of identifiable people on the photographs (Ho et al., 2011). A second ethical issue is ownership. When participants produce works of art, should their authorship be acknowledged or does this

have the risk to expose participants? Moletsane and colleagues (2009) were confronted with this question of ownership in their own research:

> If we subscribe to the notion of acknowledging, publicly, the authorship of the texts produced, how do we then ensure the safety and autonomy of the participants in this context? […] For example, what if the use of video documentaries with women posing questions that are seen as challenging the 'cultural' traditions and breaking taboos set to regulate their behavior in their communities leads to sanctions (including violence) against them by the powerful members of these communities (men and community leaders)? (p. 327)

A third ethical concern involves representation. In ABR, researchers have the power to decide how people are interpreted. Researchers noted that it is therefore important to ensure that vulnerable participants are not further stigmatized or marginalized (Guerreo & Tinkler, 2010; Moletsane et al., 2009). The last reported ethical challenge relates to the danger of arts-based methods for unlocking certain emotions for participants (e.g. Kaptani & Yuval-Davis, 2008), but also the significant amount of emotional labor for the researchers involved in such projects (Salazar, 2009).

*The practical limitations.* Using ABR methods may demand long term processes and an increased amount of time, training and resources. A lack of time was described as a limitation of many studies (e.g. Findholt et al., 2011; Levy & Weber, 2011; Mampaso, 2010). The fact that these inquiries are often time-consuming can also challenge researchers to find participants that are willing to dedicate enough time in the research project (Capous-Desyllas, 2010). Researchers described that more training was needed to prepare facilitators or participants in an arts-based study. Howard (2004) reflected in his study using performance methods that how without the necessary training or guidance of beginning facilitators, the focus of the study can shift. Moreover, practical costs were mentioned, including equipment of good quality such as digital cameras, projectors, colour printers and laptops (e.g. Mampaso, 2010; Peddle, 2011) but also costs related to organizing an exposition or collaborating with artists or facilitators.

*The analysis of arts-based data.* It appears that researchers were often struggling how to analyze the data. Researchers described how they were overwhelmed with the amount of data generated (Green & Kloos, 2009). Additionally, the materials collected were often diverse and multi-layered (Mattingly, 2001). Consequently, what counts as 'data' was often not clear: Are the arts-based products data in itself? Can the process be considered as data? Or are the interview transcripts following the arts-based workshops considered as the primary data? Furthermore, conventional modes of analysis seemed not always appropriate to interpret the collected data. This often led to

messy analytical processes. When analyzing data in community-based research, another challenge that occurred was the involvement of participants in the analytical process. In the reviewed literature, different analytical practices could be distinguished. Some researchers involved their participants throughout the whole analytical process and aimed to leave the interpretation ultimately to the participants themselves while others believed that the researchers had to enact a formal analysis in the end to organize the data in a "presentable way" (e.g. Bishop, Robillard & Moxley, 2013). Both practices are not without consequences. On the one hand, there is the danger of stereotyping and overgeneralizing when interpretation is left completely up to participants and/or the audience (Lee & De Finney, 2005). On the other hand, there are limitations in how the researcher can interpret what is observable. This can as well lead to a fixed perspective and stereotyping (Jordan, 2008; Lomax, 2012).

*Dealing with academic conventions.* As stated by Boydell and her colleagues (2016), our traditional academic culture values a certain way of knowing. We noticed that this is a challenge for many academics involved in ABR. Scholars reported their struggle to include their arts-based data within the current conventions of journals and dissertations (e.g. Contreras, 2007; Green & Kloos, 2009). To establish a publication record, arts-based researchers need to meet the academic requirements. This raises tensions, for instance: What form can their creative representations take to meet these requirements? (e.g. Capous-Desyllas, 2010). Problems with ethical commissions were also described, for example in the study of Pratt and Johnston (2009):

> Academics have ethical and professional commitments to represent those whom they study fairly and in all of their complexity. Verbatim and documentary theatre trades on this truthfulness, and staging that departs from the original context compromises its honesty. However, theatre and social science prioritize different kinds of responsibility to different kinds of subjects - theatre's foremost responsibility is to the audience, while social sciences is to those studied - and this is reflected in the translation process. (p. 126).

Furthermore, obtaining grants from conventional social science funding agencies is a challenge when conducting ABR. The nature of arts-based inquiry does not allow to know all the details of the process, conclusions or possible impact in advance. As Valentine (2006) stated, funding agencies "*may find research of this kind uncomfortably unpredictable*" (p. 5). In addition, traditional criteria of objectivity and validity cannot be used to judge the quality of this type of research (e.g. Skinner & Masuda, 2013). Several frameworks for assessing the quality of ABR have been proposed, promoting a broad variety of criteria, including incisiveness, concision, coherence, generativity, social significance, evocation, illumination, public positioning, aesthetic power and resonance (e.g.

Barone & Eisner, 2012; Lafrenière & Cox, 2013; Leavy, 2017; Norris, 2011; Piirto, 2002). Some question whether the field will ever achieve a consensus on how to judge the quality of ABR projects, or whether it is even desirable to strive for such consensus (Wang, Coemans, Siegesmund, & Hannes, 2017).

**Discussion**

The primary aim of this scoping review was to map the use of ABR methods in the area of community-based research over a timespan of twenty years. The reviewed literature provided information about the following research questions: How do the authors describe ABR methods? What type of artistic methods are used in community-based research? What are the given rationales for using ABR methods in working with vulnerable populations in community-based research? What do the authors report as the added value and limitations of these ABR methods?

*Terminology used to describe arts-based methods*

The concept ABR was labeled by educators as an interesting methodology in the early 90's. The reason why it grew rapidly in various distinct genres (Bresler, 2011), is that the use of creative research methods is not new. Artistically inspired methods have been used in research for many years but have not always been labeled as ABR.

With the enormous growth, a "*confusing plethora of terms*" (Chilton, 2013, p. 459) was introduced to describe ABR. This is characteristic for an area still in development and in full expansion. The umbrella term ABR was only used in a very limited number of the reviewed studies. Other terms used were arts-informed research, arts-informed education, a/r/tography, image-based research, performative research, photovoice, photo-elicitation, photonovella, theatre of the oppressed, popular theatre, playback theatre, image theatre, found poetry, reader's theatre, participatory video etc. As a result of an outbreak of different concepts, we found no generally agreed upon definition of ABR. The development of a shared jargon is an important area of scientific development in itself. It can assist researchers in communicating with colleagues working in different disciplines and potential funders for a specific type of research. Based on the characteristics inventoried in this review, we currently define arts-based methods in community-based inquiry as:

*The use of artistically inspired methods by researchers and participants in a collaborative research environment where members of the community are actively involved either in creating art in the search for meaning or in providing a critical, situated response to artistically inspired formats of research dissemination from others.*

There are many diverse arts-based methods in use. Although we acknowledge the fact that arts-based researchers are hesitant to fully prescribe their methods (Andrews, 2009), the development of clear typologies that classify certain methods based on commonalities and/or differences can help researchers to frame their specific study within their research field. Valuable attempts are the typologies created by Frayling (1993), Savin-Baden and Wimpenny (2014) and our own classification framework (Wang et al., 2017).

To facilitate the information retrieval process, we encourage ABR researchers to use broad as well as specific key-terms in the indexation of their articles or to link specific art techniques such as poetry or dance to the broader area of *arts-based methods* or *arts-based research* to increase the likelihood for the article to be found by those most interested in applying ABR. Furthermore, we suggest researchers to consider a key-word combination of methodological ABR terms (e.g. photovoice, photo novella, cartography, ethno-cinema, theatre of the oppressed, participatory video, reader's theatre) with types of arts-based research (e.g. art in research, art as research, research about art) and/or research phases (e.g. artistic data collection, artistic data analysis, artistic dissemination).

In addition, review authors could play a role in the development of specific methodological search filters to tease out relevant articles. Such filters can be compiled and tested in terms of their sensitivity (do they retrieve all articles?) and their specificity (do they retrieve the right articles?). Information specialists already designed specific filters to identify qualitative and quantitative research studies. These filters worked well for what we now consider conventional approaches to research and review. As far as we know, specific filters to retrieve ABR studies have not been developed yet, nor tested.

### Art forms used in community-based research

There are many diverse ABR methods in use including visual art forms, performing art forms and literary art forms. These arts-based practices are developed for different phases of the research process, i.e. data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation (Leavy, 2009).

Several visual art forms were reported in the reviewed literature, i.e. photography, drawing, collage, painting, collage, video, digital animation and making of artefacts such as quilts, mosaics, masks, glass and life-size marionettes. According to our review, photography and drawing were the most popular visual art forms in community-based research. This is confirmed by a similar review that focused on health-related articles (Fraser & al Sayah, 2011). This falls within our range of expectations. The use of photos has a long history in social sciences such as anthropology.

Likewise, photovoice has been documented very well as a visual methodology in the broad area of educational research. Additionally, drawings have been used as a therapeutic device in working with children in psychology for decades. So apparently, it is more easy for scholars to imagine working with methods that have been around for a while which somehow provides a safety net for researchers.

The most common performing art form in community-based research was theatre. The use of theatre has a long tradition in education, inspired by amongst other authors Boal's theatre of the oppressed. As is the case with photovoice, domains that have been theorized in academia, have more easily been picked up by the ABR community involved in academic research.

In contrast with visual and performing art, literary art was not that prominent in our reviewed literature. However, it would be wrong to conclude that the use of literacy forms is insignificant in the field of educational sciences more broadly.

### Rationales and the added value of using arts-based methods

We identified different reasons for adopting arts-based methods in the reviewed literature: to overcome the limitations of conventional qualitative research approaches as a way of addressing power imbalances between researcher(s) and researched, to give (more vulnerable) participants a voice, to enrich reflection and dialogue, to investigate issues that are difficult to verbalize, to heighten the interest of participants and to share the findings with a broader non-academic audience. However, researchers could be more explicit in describing why a specific arts-based method was preferred in their research context. It would be interesting to know whether these choices are theoretically or more pragmatically inspired. Pragmatic choices could relate to the level of familiarity with the arts-based approach of the researcher, or participants' preferences for a certain technique. Theoretically inspired choices though, would allow us to develop more solid guidance on what approach might work, for whom, in which circumstances under which conditions and why.

The same elements that were found as reasons for using an arts-based method were also reported as the strengths: it engages participants, reduces the unequal relationship between researchers and participants, fosters dialogue, encapsulates a transformative power and it leads to an interesting type of data. However, it was unclear whether these statements were actually informed by the data collected and by an evaluation of the process. Few articles in this database specified outcomes or evaluation procedures. Therefore, we assume that many of these statements are perceptions of the

authors instead of results from evaluations. We need more evaluative studies to judge whether researchers live up to their own expectations.

**Challenges**

Based on the reported limitations, we identified the following research gaps: (a) the need to support researchers interested in ABR to explore alternative analytical approaches where form is not necessarily inferior to text, (b) the need for methodological reflections in upcoming ABR reports, (c) the need to reflect on the voice-component in ABR projects, (d) the need to push the boundaries of what counts as 'the' academic standard.

*The need for alternative ways to analyze data in ABR*

According to our review, analyzing data in ABR appeared to be one of the biggest challenges. A first problem relates to what we consider as data in the first place. Although in many of the included studies researchers experimented with artistic techniques with the idea to go beyond the conventional interview or focus group, many researchers remained close to traditional ways of analyzing qualitative data (i.e. analyzing data that are textual oriented in the first place and that demand interpretation). This was evident in what was defined as data (i.e. the interview transcripts, field notes) and what was reported as analytical techniques (i.e. thematic analysis, content analysis). Therefore, we assume that for many researchers data are still considered as passive 'first-order' materials that are waiting to be analyzed by researchers (Koro-Ljungberg & MacLure, 2013).

Analyzing arts-based data was also identified as a problematic issue in the review of Fraser and al Sayah (2011). They argued that scholars need to think about more appropriate ways of analyzing artistically inspired data, however, suggestions about what 'appropriate' then means or good practices were not provided. We suggest that researchers should not be bound by established forms of academic literacy such as numbers and narratives (Hannes & Coemans, 2016). Instead, we should question more deeply our relationship with research data. Researchers working in the area of community-based research could for example engage with the intrinsic qualities of the medium they use as well as the anecdotal evidence that is produced. For the area of visual research these intrinsic qualities could refer to aspects such as movement, contrast, balance and repetition (Riddett-Moore & Siegesmund, 2005). This creates opportunities to let the art pieces speak for themselves. Also, collaborating more deeply with artists in all the phases of the research process (including the phase of analysis) would enable us to disrupt our traditional modes of thinking and acting in analytical practice and "*break down the barriers that artificially divide artistic practice and scientific practice*" (Hannes & Coemans, 2016, p. 49). Working in, what Michel Callon has called, hybrid

research collectives (Callon, Méadel, & Rabeharisoa, 2002) demands a shift in thinking about knowledge, research and art.

*The need for more methodological reflections*

Arts-based methods are becoming increasingly popular to engage communities in research projects. They have been considered as *"innovative, accessible and exciting approaches"* (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014, p. 58). Although this makes it very appealing for researchers, we need to be careful with blindly following popularized methodological trends. Attention in reporting therefore needs a shift from a focus on content to a focus on potential process related benefits and harms in order to help researchers understand this emergent field and learn from other colleagues.

Firstly, there is a need for more information about the stance of the researcher(s) towards the method of study. This includes arguments related to the choice of a particular method (for instance drawing vs. photographs) and descriptions of earlier research and artistic experiences. A challenge when working at the intersection of art and research is: Can we expect from researchers without artistic background that they are methodologically equipped to guide these arts-based processes? The potential necessity or non-relevance of the entanglement of researcher and artist roles in community-based research could further be explored.

Secondly, we suggest to evolve to publishing process-oriented articles in addition to primary studies that focus on the findings itself. Those process-oriented articles can respond to certain challenges that researchers have experienced while conducting the study. This can open up the debate and can lead to a more nuanced view on the added value and limitations of ABR.

*The need to reflect on the voice-component in arts-based projects that engage with communities*

One of the most common arguments for using arts-based methods in community-based inquiry is its potential to 'give' voice and to empower more 'vulnerable' participants and communities. Previous studies have investigated whose voice exactly was heard in studies that include a strong voice giving component such as photovoice studies (Evans-Agnew & Rosemberg, 2016; Coemans, Raymakers, Vandenabeele, & Hannes, 2017). The voices of women involved in visual research were often mediated and interpreted by other voices (including male translators, facilitators and researchers). There was also little detail on how the involvement of participants in choosing the format, in making decisions about the content, and in the dissemination itself was stimulated (Coemans et al., 2017). Based on the reviewed literature, we suggest that authors should provide clarity about their particular intentions to 'give' voice.

*The need to push the boundaries of what counts as 'the' academic standard*

In academia, we are used to produce reports to describe our research phenomena in an accurate way (Pinola-Gaudiello & Roldàn, 2014). With the rise of ABR methods, communicating study findings primarily through verbal language or through numbers cannot longer be considered as the *only* valuable way. The reviewed literature suggests that we are still forcing us into a textual logic because we, as researchers, are not used to communicating our research findings in a different way. Although many of the reviewed studies included arts-based materials in their final research reports, they were often at the background, as supplementary materials subservient to the written text. This is enforced by the requirements of academic journals and ethical commissions that have their ideas about what counts as 'valuable' research and how findings should be communicated within academia.

Nevertheless, as ABR becomes more common, we notice an increasing interest in peer-reviewed journals for this type of scholarship. Peer-reviewed journals are starting to move away from the traditional journal article format and are offering a more dynamic format to present research findings. "Liminalities" (the journal for performance studies), the "Journal for Artistic Research" (JAR) and "Art/Research International: A transdisciplinary research journal" provide for example opportunities to authors that traditional journals currently don't offer. The editors of these journals allow researchers to combine text with image, audio and video. Some of the published research documents come close to a visual 'exposition', supporting scholarly dissemination of research findings with a more artistic experience provoked in end-users.

**Conclusion**

This scoping review provided an overview on the use of arts-based methods in community-based research over a time span of twenty years. It enabled us to investigate the amount, amplitude and nature of ABR activities as well as to determine research gaps in the existing body of literature through mapping previously published studies (Levac, Colquhoun, & O'Brien, 2010). Many of the examples provided in this review show that community-based research is collaborative, participatory, empowering, and transformative (Hills & Mullett, 2000). This makes it an interesting research context for educational researchers. ABR offers potential for educational researchers and practitioners working in a community-based context. One of the main reasons why ABR methods have been picked up by researchers in this field, is the fact that traditional research methods have not always been able to fully engage with particular groups in society. This is certainly the case for vulnerable participants, for instance those who have limited language abilities or those who suffered

major trauma's or severe life circumstances (Cosenza, 2010; Mullen et al., 2005). They are harder to reach, but also less able to raise their voice. ABR methods may be able to overcome at least a fraction of these problems, by reducing the focus on the written word and looking at other means of communication, not only to gain access to deeper layers of meaning, but also to address power relations in research processes (Foster, 2012). In line with our findings, we expect that the interest in this type of research will further increase in the upcoming years. Best practice examples and the redrawing of a number of academic conventions will logically follow from here. A core questions that we left unanswered is whether a shared vocabulary is possible or even desirable in an artistic field characterized by its resistance toward the idea of being boxed in and its drive to permanently redefine itself. From an educational perspective the (sometimes) uncomfortable marriage between art and research creates learning potential. Both knowledge systems have their own identity and characteristics that can strengthen each other. It is the discomfort felt in learning each other's language that is perceived as a challenging endeavor. Nevertheless, working at the intersection of both knowledge systems is promising. It would be interesting to repeat this review within a decade to re-examine a number of trends we observed and to evaluate whether scholars are more attentive to motivating their choices.

**Limitations of the study**

Both ABR and community-based research were ambiguous terms at the start of this review project. The lack of a consistent jargon complicated the development of clear inclusion criteria for this review project, hence we engaged in a fully iterative process in which working definitions of both terms were constantly refined based on new elements that we encountered. We believe that a protocol subjected to an iterative logic of deciding on relevant in- and exclusion criteria has merit in emergent research areas such as ABR (Hannes, 2016).

*The first author of this article was involved in all stages of the review process. She wrote the protocol. During the screening stage, she was the main reviewer for all the retrieved studies. Because of the large amount of retrieved studies, we included three second reviewers; Qingchun Wang, Joyce Leysen and Anne-Leen Raymakers also participated in the screening of the abstracts of the retrieved papers. They alternately served as second reviewers and each of them screened a subset of the articles to check afterwards with the first author/reviewer whether studies met the inclusion criteria. Disagreements between the main reviewer and the second reviewers were solved by discussion with a third reviewer, in this case the second author of this article. The first author screened the full articles of the included studies and conducted the analysis. She wrote this paper under the supervision of the second author.*

## Acknowledgements

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# CHAPTER 2:

# EVALUATING THE EXTENT TO WHICH SOCIAL RESEARCHERS APPLY FEMINIST AND EMPOWERMENT FRAMEWORKS IN PHOTOVOICE STUDIES WITH FEMALE PARTICIPANTS: A LITERATURE REVIEW[4]

**ABSTRACT**

In the last decades, we have witnessed a growing interest for the use of photovoice, also referred to as participatory photography, as a visual research method, particularly in social sciences. In this systematic review of the literature we seek to explore how the methodology has been applied in studies that focus research with, on and about women. We critically evaluate the potential of photovoice to 'give' voice to and empower female participants. Nineteen relevant articles were identified and analyzed using a descriptive within- and cross-case analysis. Several authors claimed their study was inspired by feminist theory, however few were convincing in the way this was implemented in practice. Empowerment claims were made by many, however seldom evaluated at the end of the studies. We outline how female voices can manifest themselves in different phases of a research process and present types of empowerment that can potentially be reached through photovoice.

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**Introduction**

The use of photography in research has a long-standing tradition in fields like anthropology (Collier, 1957). Photos were used both as illustrations to support other findings and as a medium to document the social reality from the researcher's point of view (Schnettler, 2013). In the last decades, there has been an intensification of projects in and outside the social sciences that apply a more collaborative approach of photography (Davey, 2008; Hannes and Parylo, 2014). Possible explanations for this growing interest include the increasing importance of visual data in a fast digitalizing society and the limitations of non-visual research methods, such as semi-structured interviews and surveys in studying topics focusing on vulnerable populations (Mason and Davies, 2009). Over time, many labels have been assigned to studies using photography as a method for data collection, -analysis and dissemination (Hurworth, 2003) (Table 1).

Table 2.1 Overview photography as a research method

| Researcher driven photography | *Documentary photography*<br>Photographs shot by researchers. The resulting pictures are often used to portray<br>historical events or everyday life. |
| --- | --- |
|  | *Photo-interviewing or photo-elicitation*<br>Use of photographs (existing photos or taken by the researcher):<br>- to elicit responses from participants<br>- to obtain an insiders' perspectives to a particular research phenomenon<br>- to facilitate mutual understanding between participants and the researcher.<br>(Heisley and Levy, 1991) |
| Participant driven photography | Participants shoot the photos, often based on a set of instructions provided by the researcher. |
|  | *Auto-driven photo-elicitation*<br>Photographs taken by the participants instead of the researchers as stimulus for<br>conducting the interviews (Samuels, 2004): "the interview is 'driven' by informants<br>who are seeing their own behaviour" (Heisley and Levy 1991, p. 261). |
|  | *Photo novella*<br>Coined by Wang & Burris (1994). After the participants shoot the photos, a dialogue takes place between participants, discussing their life conditions as they see them. |
|  | *Photovoice*<br>Coined by Wang & Burris (1997). Photovoice has three main goals:<br>- to enable participants to elicit their own voices<br>- to create critical consciousness by performing group discussions<br>- to attain policy change. |

Although initially introduced as 'photo novella' by Wang and Burris (1994), the concept of photovoice was first coined in 1997, in the context of a research project that invited rural Chinese women to portray their everyday realities and influence the policies and programs affecting them (Wang and Burris, 1997). Since then, the use of photovoice has been promoted for exploring the

needs of diverse vulnerable populations, including homeless people (e.g. Wang et al., 2000), people with an impairment (e.g. Jurkowski and Paul-Ward, 2007; Booth and Booth, 2003) and people with HIV/AIDS (e.g. Hergenrather et al., 2006; Teti et al., 2013). The method has substantially been applied in projects focusing on the lived experiences from vulnerable women (e.g. Teti et al., 2012; Walsh et al., 2010.)

According to Wang and Burris, photovoice is founded on three overlapping core principles: Feminist theory, Paulo Freire's critical educational approach and a participatory approach to documentary photography. First, feminist inquiry had an important influence on the conceptualization of photovoice. It promotes a strategy focusing on research 'by and with women instead of on women' and countering the imbalance between the voices of women and men (Weiler, 1988). It is emphasized as an inherently political- and action-oriented theory (Kuratani and Lai, 2011). Second, Paulo Freire was an important inspiration source for the development of the method. The Brazilian educator used dialogue to support a more egalitarian approach to education from literacy work (Freire, 1970). His theory on empowerment education is built on the belief that people themselves are the experts of their own lives. Through critical reflection people come to see how conditions in their lives are socially and politically constructed, which can potentially lead to social change (Peabody, 2013). This has been a source of inspiration for many social workers working with vulnerable populations. Freire's theory is incorporated in the principles of photovoice by: developing critical consciousness during the photographic process, motivating people to take pictures of their concerns, sharing with others the meaning of these photos and eventually identifying community needs. Moreover, advocacy is promoted by encouraging participants to develop strategies to change policy. Third, the photovoice approach has been informed by documentary photography. The term itself refers to portraying significant historical as well as everyday life events through the language of pictures. Documentary photography has already proven its relevance for social research and policy change in the last century. It has for example been applied by social reformers at the turn of the 20th century to call attention to social issues such as child labor. It eventually led to policy reform and the foundation of social services (Hu, 1998, in Russell and Diaz, 2013). Wang and Burris modified this approach into participatory documentary photography and encouraged vulnerable populations to share their subjective experiences (Graziano, 2004).

Photovoice offers opportunities for social researchers and social welfare practitioners. It is an approach that not only focuses on the needs of a particular individual, but also takes into account the broader context, the history and power processes people are exposed to. Photovoice is promising for the field of social work as it has a long history in empowerment practice. Some of

the desired outcomes in the field of social research and professional practice are linked to reducing powerlessness and encouraging actions that affect people's lives (Molloy, 2007). Social workers have a well-established tradition in facilitating group processes and engaging people in group work. The group work component of photovoice – it brings community members together and focuses on relationship-building - turns it into an excellent research tool for those working in and studying socio-cultural practice. In addition, photovoice can humanize research findings and give more in-depth meaning to experiences, which makes it more applicable in practice and appealing for policy makers (Russell and Diaz, 2013). Although the values and practice of photovoice are in line with the principles underpinning social work practice, specific references to the field of social work in publications on photovoice are scarce (Peabody, 2013).

### *Objectives and research questions*

A number of literature reviews have been written focusing on photovoice as a research approach (Catalani and Minkler, 2010; Hergenrather et al., 2009; Kuratani and Lai, 2011; Lal et al., 2012; Purcell, 2007). Our review differs from previously conducted reviews because of its explicit focus on how the methodology has been applied in research projects with female participants. We examine photovoice studies in the broad field of education, social sciences and social welfare topics, including prevention. We have a particular focus on areas relevant to social workers: community development, inclusion of people with disabilities in society, youth work, care for homeless people, international development, environmental topics and so on.

This review investigates how sensitive authors are to the tenants of feminist and empowerment theory that have originally inspired photovoice. We study how researchers have conceptualized these premises in their own studies and whether they are able to pull them through in their implementation phase. The following research questions were developed:

- How did the authors position themselves within their study?
- How did they conceptualize women's voice?
- How did they conceptualize women's empowerment and was it reached at the end of the research process?

### *Researchers' portrait*

The study was conducted by four female researchers: two female students from the educational department and two female professors working respectively in the faculty of social sciences (social research methodology) and educational sciences (social pedagogy). Two members of this research

team conducted an extensive literature review on arts-based methods with vulnerable participants. The interest for the research topic arose from the many discussions we had around whether or not women should be considered as a vulnerable population and the consequences for this target group in terms of stereotype thread or stigmatization from such categorization. A considerable number of articles in this extensive review focused explicitly on doing research with female participants. Based on this observation, and considering the feminist and empowerment perspective from which the photovoice research approach was originally developed by Wang and Burris, we focused on the underlying premises of the methodology. What is at the core of our concern is trying to identify and label the techniques of women's empowerment.

**Methodology**

This review is part of a broader scoping review that presents an overall picture of the use of arts-based methods in the field of community-based research. Communities were defined as groups of people sharing a particular identity, cultural heritage, language, belief, shared fate or interest. In the context of this scoping review a comprehensive database of articles in the field of arts-based research was compiled, including visual studies, performative studies and narrative studies. The criteria that were used to decide whether articles should be in- or excluded from the review currently presented are outlined below. Details on the inclusion and exclusion criteria used in the scoping review have been published elsewhere (Coemans et al., 2015).

*Searching and screening for relevance*

We selected articles that involved some key features of photovoice: the women had to take photographs themselves and had to engage in a dialogue about their thoughts and problems displayed in these images. Articles that used photovoice in combination with other creative data collection techniques (e.g. the creation of poetry, drawings) were excluded. Only qualitative primary research articles were selected. Furthermore, articles had to be written in English, French, German or Dutch and had to be published between 1994 and 2013. The year 1994 marks the publication of the Wang and Burris paper.

The search strategy within the database compiled from the scoping review was based on a three-step screening strategy. The first screening was conducted by one reviewer and consisted of a quick title screening to decide whether an article was potentially relevant. The second screening focused on the content of the abstract and was performed independently by two reviewers. A screening instrument was developed based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, which guided the reviewers during the screening phase. Articles were included if they met all the criteria. In the third screening

phase we sought the full text from articles with abstracts labeled as 'unclear' and from the articles that passed the first two screening phases. A final decision was made based on a consensus between members of the research team.

### Data extraction and synthesis

First, a descriptive within-case analysis was conducted, looking at sub-units of every article (Baxter and Jack, 2008), including: year of publication, country of the study, author's discipline, setting, participants, recruitment strategies, sample size, research design, methods for data collection, data-analysis and public dissemination. Second, a cross-case analysis was undertaken, looking for differences and similarities across all of the sub-units (Baxter and Jack, 2008). To answer the research questions, we conducted a thematic analysis that involved recovering patterns or themes within our data (Van Manen, 1990). A holistic approach was adopted to look beyond the isolated phrases and reflect on the elements of the whole text (Longacre and Hwang, 2012).

### Results

### Study retrieval

As can be seen in *Figure 2.1*, the comprehensive search strategy of our broader scoping review identified 6750 unique articles as potentially relevant. However, for the present review, we focused on the set of articles that described the use of the photovoice methodology. This narrowed the initial dataset of potentially relevant articles to 88. From this pool of studies, 31 articles were conducted with women. Twelve articles were eventually excluded in this phase for various reasons: articles could not be traced (N=2), they didn't match our definition of primary research articles (N=4), they discussed therapeutic projects (N=1), or they included other creative methods than only photovoice (N=5). Finally, 19 articles met our inclusion criteria (listed in Box 1). An overview of the retrieval process is outlined below.
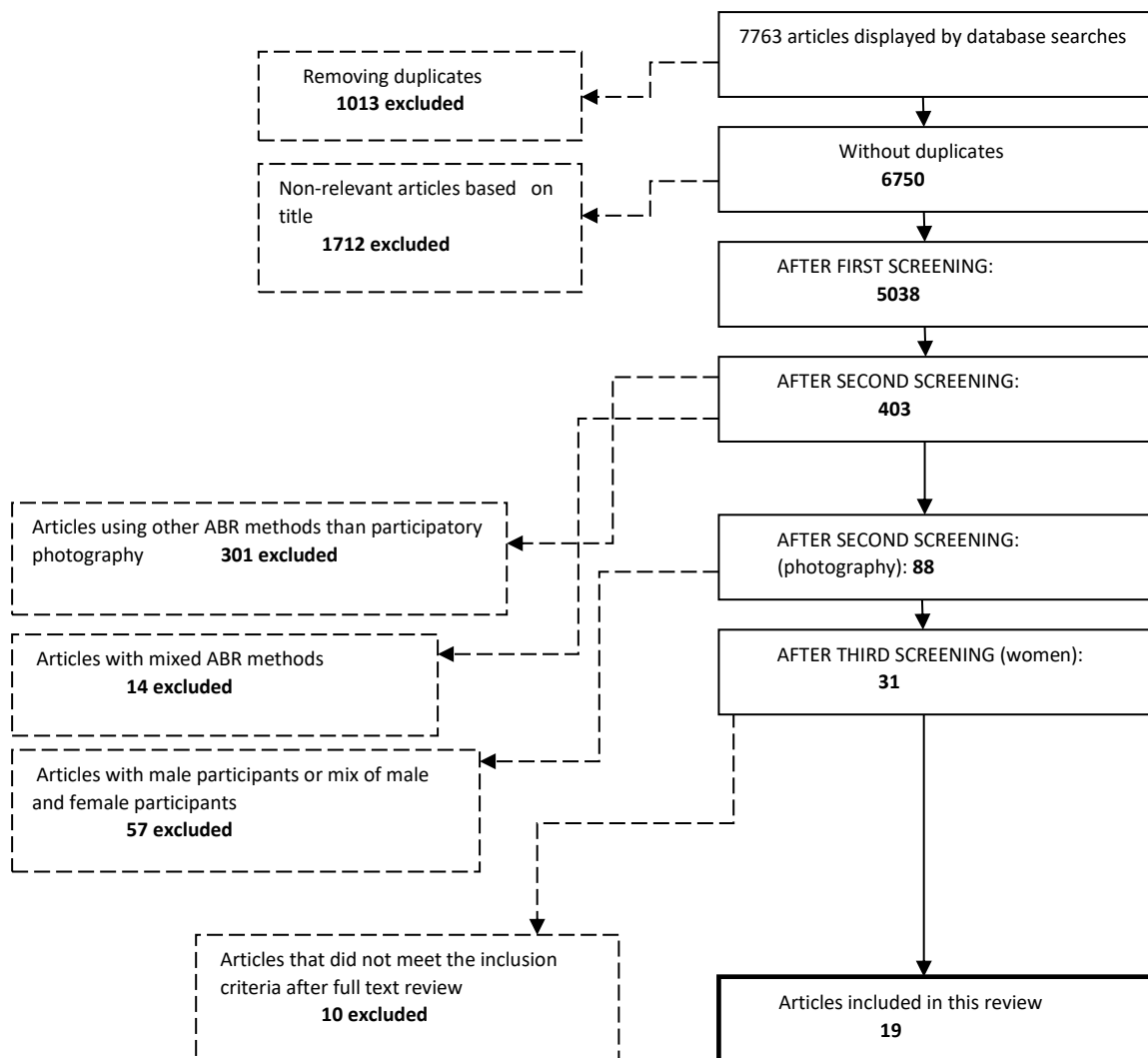
*Figure 2.1* Search and retrieval process

## **Descriptive findings**

A summarization of the main characteristics of the 19 included articles can be found in Table 2. (main characteristics) and Table 3 (methodological characteristics).

## Box 1: Final set of included studies

1.  Adams K, Burns C, Liebzeit A, Ryschka J, Thorpe S and Browne J (2012) Use of participatory research and photo-voice to support urban Aboriginal healthy eating. *Health and Social Care in the Community* 20(5): 497-505.

2.  Bell SE (2008) Photovoice as a strategy for community organizing in the Central Appalachian coalfields. *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 14(1): 34-48.

3.  Bishop J, Robillard L and Moxley D (2013) Linda's story through photovoice: Achieving independent living with dignity and ingenuity in the face of environmental inequities. *Practice: Social Work in Action* 25(5): 297-315.

4.  Bukowski K. and Buetow S (2011) Making the invisible visible: A photovoice exploration of homeless women's health and lives in central Auckland. *Social Science & medicine* 72: 739-746.

5.  Capous-Desyllas M (2010) *Visions and voices: An arts-based qualitative study using photovoice to understand the needs and aspirations of diverse women working in the sex industry.* PhD Thesis, Portland State University, US.

6.  Duffy L (2011) Step-by-step we are stronger: Women's empowerment through photovoice. *Journal of Community Health Nursing* 28(2): 105-116.

7.  Kwok JY and Ku H (2008) Making habitable space together with female Chinese immigrants to Hong Kong. An interdisciplinary participatory action research project. *Action Research* 6(3): 261-283.

8.  Liebenberg L (2009) The visual image as discussion point: Increasing validity in boundary crossing research. *Qualitative Research* 9(4): 441-467.

9.  Lykes MB (2010) Silence(ing), voice(s) and gross violations of human rights: constituting and performing subjectivities through photopar. *Visual studies* 25(3): 238-254.

10. Mcintyre A (2003) Through the eyes of women: Photovoice and participatory research as tools for reimagining place. *Gender, Place and Culture* 10(1): 47-66.

11. Meija AP, Quiroz O, Morales Y, Ponce R, Chavez GL and Olivera y Torre E (2013) From madres to mujeristas: Latinas making change with photovoice. *Action Research* 11(4): 301–321.

12. Morgan MY, Vardell R, Lower JK, Kinter-Duffy VL, Ibarra LC, Victoria L and Cecil-Dyrkacz JE (2010) Empowering women through photovoice: Women of La Carpio, Costa Rica. *Journal of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research* 5(1): 31-44.

13. Nimmon LE (2007) Within the eyes of the people: Using a photonovel as consciousness-raising health literacy tool with ESL-speaking immigrant women. *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 98(4): 337-340.

14. Packard BWL, Ellison KL and Sequenzia MR (2004) Show and tell: Photo-interviews with urban adolescent girls. *International Journal of Education & the Arts* 5: 1-19.

15. Strawn S and Monama G (2012) Making Soweto stories: Photovoice meets the new literacy studies. *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 31(5): 535-553.

16. Sutton-Brown C (2011) *Women's empowerment in the context of microfinance: A photovoice study.* PhD Thesis, Georgia State University, Atlanta.

17. Thompson J (2009) I am a farmer: Young women address conservation using photovoice around Tiwai Island, Sierra Leone. *Agenda Empowering women for gender equity* 23(79): 65-69.

18. Valera P, Gallin J, Schuk D and Davis N (2009) Trying to eat healthy: A photovoice study about women's access to healthy food in New York city. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work* 24(3): 300-314.

19. Wang CC and Burris MA (1994) Empowerment through photo novella: Portraits of participation. *Health Education Quarterly* 21(2): 171-186.

Table 2.2 Main descriptive characteristics of the articles selected for data extraction and synthesis.

| No. | Year of publication | Country of study | Author's discipline | Setting | Sample | Participants' characteristics |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2012 | Australia | Health prevention | Urban Aboriginal Community in Geelong | N = 10 | 20–30 years, half were sole parents, immigrants |
| 2 | 2008 | United States | Sociology | Coalfield Cabin Creek Community | N = 15 | 15–69 years |
| 3 | 2013 | United States | Social work | Disability community | N = 1 | 70 years old, woman with mobility limitations |
| 4 | 2011 | New Zealand | Health prevention | Homelessness "streetie" Community | N = 6 | 21–39 years, homeless women |
| 5 | 2010 | United States | Sociology | Sex workers community in Portland | N = 11 | 18–52 years, sex workers |
| 6 | 2011 | Canada | Health prevention | Single parents community | N = 4 | Lone mothers |
| 7 | 2008 | China | Multidisciplinary: sociology, anthropology, architecture, and planning | Urban Sham Shui Po district | N = 10 | Chinese immigrants |
| 8 | 2009 | South Africa | Social sciences | Sub-economic community in Cape-town | N = 5 | 15–19 years, teenage mothers |
| 9 | 2010 | Guatemala | Social sciences | Indigenous Mayan community | N = 20 | 16–65 years |
| 10 | 2003 | Ireland | Education | Monument Road working class Community | N = 9 | 24–40 years, working class women |
| 11 | 2013 | United States | Health prevention | Latina community in North Portland | N =5 | 25–35 years, mothers, immigrants |

Table 2. Continued

| No. | Year of publication | Country of study | Author's discipline | Setting | Sample | Participants' characteristics |
|-----|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------|--------|-------------------------------|
| 12 | 2010 | Costa Rica | Education | La Carpio community | N = 7 | 20–60 years, immigrants |
| 13 | 2007 | Canada | Education | The inter-cultural Association of Victoria women's group. | N = 5 | 35–80 years, immigrants |
| 14 | 2004 | United States | Education | Low-income ethnic minority neighbourhood "Urbantown" | N = 14 | 13–19 years, urban adolescent Girls |
| 15 | 2012 | South Africa | Education | Soweto community | N = 30 | – |
| 16 | 2011 | Mali | Education | Financial borrowers community | N = 6 | Poor West-African women |
| 17 | 2009 | Sierra Leone | Education | Rural community | N = 7 | 16–36 years, poor young mothers, wives and farmers |
| 18 | 2009 | United States | Health prevention | Low-income neighbourhood Central-Harlem | N = 9 | 20–45 years, ethnic and racially minority mothers |
| 19 | 1994 | China | Education | Rural laborers community | N = 62 | 18–56 years, rural laborers |

Table 2.3 Methodological characteristics of the articles selected for data extraction and synthesis.

| Nr. | Design | Data collection | Data analysis | Data dissemination |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs<br>Group discussion<br>Individual interviews | Thematic analysis | Exhibition, website |
| 2 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs<br>Group discussions<br>Writing photostories | Thematic analysis | Exhibition |
| 3 | Case-study/participatory action research | Taking photographs, individual Interviews | Interpretive, holistic analysis | Exhibition |
| 4 | Explorative, participatory Research | Taking photographs, individual interviews, follow-up interviews | Thematic content analysis<br>Software QSR NVivo | Exhibition<br>Festival<br>Public library |
| 5 | Arts-based research, participatory research | Taking photographs<br>Group discussions, individual Interviews | Interpretive phenomenological analysis, participatory analysis<br>Within-case and cross-case Analysis | Use of collages<br>Exhibition<br>Media (news publication, television interview) |
| 6 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs<br>Group discussions | Thematic analysis | Exhibition<br>Media |
| 7 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs<br>Group discussion | Three layers of meaning | Exhibition<br>Media |
| 8 | Case study (phenomenological design) | Taking photographs, individual interviews followed by taking new Photographs<br>Group discussion | Grounded theory analysis - Software ALTAS.ti for both text and image-based Data | – |
| 9 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs, individual photo-Narratives<br>Group discussion | Group analysis guided by thematic categories, re-analysis by the researcher | Media<br>Photonarratives |

Table 2.3 Continued

| Nr. | Design | Data collection | Data analysis | Data dissemination |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs (two different types of cameras)<br>Group discussion | SHOWeD-technique | Exhibition |
| 11 | Participatory action research | Discovering issues, concerns via discussion taking photographs, Collective storytelling | Content analysis | Community stakeholder event |
| 12 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs, group discussion | Interpretive inquiry | Media |
| 13 | Participatory research | Individual interviews, group discussion Taking photographs | Thematic analysis | – |
| 14 | Case study/participatory research/image-based research, arts-based Research | Taking photographs, individual Interviews | Case-study analysis | Exhibition |
| 15 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs, Discussions in small groups<br>Individual conversations<br>Writing stories | Individual and group analysis | Exhibition<br>Website |
| 16 | Participatory research | Taking photographs (several photo assignments)<br>Group discussion | SHOWeD-technique | Forum<br>Playwriting manuscript to present the findings |
| 17 | Participatory research, arts-based research | Taking photographs, individual Interviews | Interpretive inquiry | Found poetry |
| 18 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs, group discussion | Content analysis | Letters to policy makers |
| 19 | Participatory action research | Taking photographs, group discussion | Group analysis | Exhibition |

*Main descriptive characteristics*

The articles were all published in the past ten years, except for two articles dating from 2003 to 1994. The latter was conducted by Wang and Burris. It was meant to draw attention to the method (*Figure 2.2*).
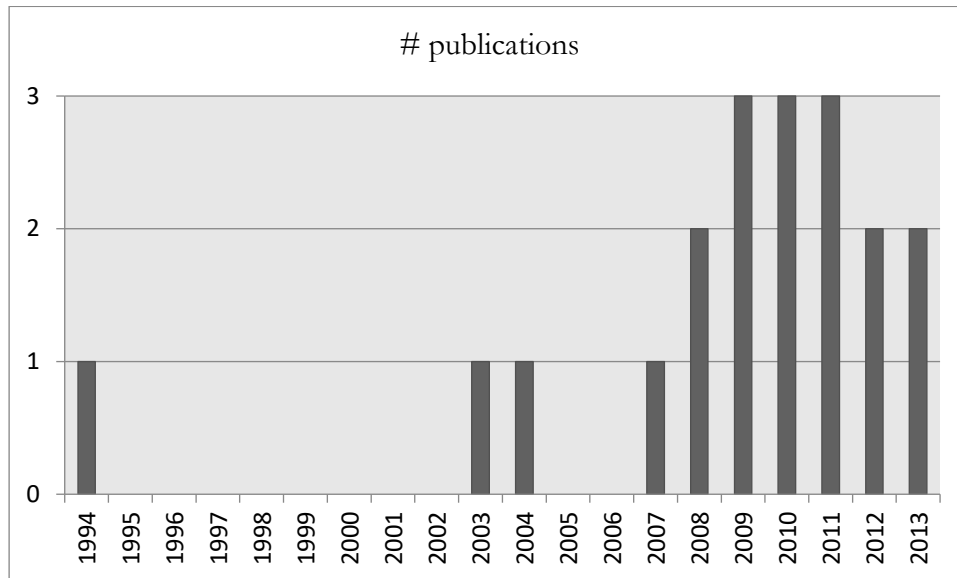


*Figure 2.2* Year of publication of the included articles

The studies were conducted in 12 different countries. Most of the articles (N=10) originated in North America. Four projects were conducted in Africa. The authors' disciplines varied among the studies and included the field of education (N=8), social sciences (N=6), and health prevention (N=5). Sample size was reported in all of the articles and ranged from one to 62 women.

In the majority of the articles (N=13), authors reported a relatively small sample size, ranging from one to ten women. Several articles also mentioned other demographic characteristics such as marriage status, parenthood, education, work, race, immigrant status and living situation. All researchers described specific characteristics of their participant group, such as working class women, homeless women, mothers, immigrants, sex workers and a disabled woman.

A partnership with community organizations was mentioned in the majority of the articles (N=16). These organizations were mostly local agencies, including community workers, teachers and volunteers. Three articles did not report their recruitment strategy. Those who did, described it as: snowball, purposive or peer sampling, a poster display, the use of flyers, mailing, online methods, media advertisement or the involvement of a community worker to assist in recruitment.

*Methodological characteristics*

Overall, the research design used in the studies was consistent and in line with the design proposed by Wang and Burris (1994): most articles framed their study as participatory research (N=18). Twelve of these articles explicitly referred to participatory action research. Other designs included case studies, ethnographic research and arts-based research.

All articles in this review combined photography with other qualitative data (e.g. interview transcripts, field notes). Almost all women were in charge of making the photographs (except for a study featuring a woman with a disability that needed assistance for data collection).

More than half of the studies explicitly mentioned a form of technical, artistic or ethical training as part of the research process. Technical trainings included for example basic camera operations and functions, how to work with the camera and photographic rules. These trainings further informed the women about the photovoice method in general and engaged them in a discussing on ethical issues concerning photography. Although authors often mentioned that the women gave their informed consent to use the photographs in publications and during conferences, explicit guidelines about taking pictures of other people and asking informed consent when taking someone else's photograph were seldom reported on.

Thematic and content analyses were the most frequently reported analytical techniques (N=7). Other reported techniques were: individual and group analysis, interpretive inquiry, analysis based on the principles of grounded theory and case study analysis. A minority of articles (N=2) applied a software program to support their analysis.

Public dissemination is organized for raising awareness and as a form of advocacy that would directly benefit the women. Half of the authors used a combination of dissemination activities. These activities consisted for the most part of organizing exhibitions for community members, stakeholders and policy makers at local venues or on a more national level such as conferences and festivals. Two articles didn't report any dissemination activities.

**Analytic findings**

*How did the authors position themselves in the study?*

In more than half of the articles we find no positioning of the researcher(s) (N=10). The researchers who do incorporate a positional stance towards the method and topic of study included details on their race, gender, age, education and/or earlier research experiences. Some of the authors further clarified how their background relates to the background of the women in their study (e.g. Bukowski & Buetow; 2011; Capous-Desyllas, 2010; Liebenberg, 2009; Mcintyre, 2003).

Although the majority of the articles were written by women, only half of the researchers (N=10) explicitly mentioned the use of a feminist framework. Three out of these ten studies failed to explain its relevance for their study (Packard et al., 2004; Strawn & Monama, 2012; Valera et al., 2009). Subsequently, only a minority of the authors motivated their interest in feminist research and reported their beliefs and previous experiences in this theoretical area. Capous-Desyllas (2010) for example does explain how her interest in research with sex workers was based on her initial interest in feminist debates on the topic. She described her involvement as a volunteer in and a member of several organizations related to the topic and her belief in a rights-based approach. Mcintyre (2003) motivated her interest in gender and feminist participatory research by referring to her previous experiences as a feminist activist teacher and a union organizer.

Most authors, however, preferred '*to speak from the position of a "woman", which is not the same as speaking from the political perspective of a feminist*' (Grant, as cited in Lazar, 2007: 145). Conducting research as a 'woman' means to know from the perspective of the structure of gender, while taking a feminist standpoint as a researcher involves having a critical meaning about gender, women's positions in society and towards the own identity as a female researcher.

Although the photovoice method shares some common characteristic with feminist methodologies, i.e. to overcome biases in research, bringing about social change, displaying human diversity and acknowledging the position of the researcher (Bird, n.d.), references to the various feminist movements (e.g. liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, cultural feminism, postmodern feminism, cyberfeminism, ecofeminism, postfeminism) are practically non-existent (Maerten, 2002). An example of a study included in the review that did make its framework explicitly is that of Sutton-Brown (2011), guided by Mohanty's transnational feminist framework.

*How did the authors conceptualize women's voice?*

Stimulating the voices of women within a society that is still dominated by other, more powerful voices is one of the underlying principles of photovoice. We believe it is important to explore how voice is exactly given to these women. Women's voice was found as a particular focus in respectively the analysis of the data, the public dissemination and the reporting of the findings. We borrowed the conceptualization of voice from Evans-Agnew and Rosemberg (2016) to structure this paragraph.

*Women's voice in the analysis of data.* More than half of the articles explicitly reported women's involvement in the analysis of the data (Adams et al., 2012; Bell, 2008; Bishop et al., 2013; Duffy, 2011; Mcintyre, 2003; Meija et al., 2013; Morgan et al., 2010; Packard et al., 2004; Strawn and Monama, 2012; Sutton-Brown, 2011; Valera et al., 2009; Wang and Burris, 1994). This included

women's selection of the photographs and identification of themes that cut across the photographs. In the remaining articles it was not clear whether the women actively contributed to the analysis of the data. Interpreting the findings and situating the data in a broader societal context was almost exclusively conducted by the researchers (N=18). The most common analytical approach adopted was coding segments in the data and categorizing codes into themes. In five studies, women's involvement in this phase of the process was mostly limited to their participation in member checks to validate the researchers' analytical statements (Capous-Desyllas, 2010; Liebenberg, 2009; Nimmon, 2007; Sutton-Brown, 2011; Valera et al., 2009). An exception is the study of Bishop et al. (2013) where the woman who was involved in the project was assigned the role of a co-researcher in all the steps of the research project, including the production of the end-report. Another interesting finding relates to the potential interpretation bias introduced by having male interpreters translate women's contributions into research findings (Sutton-Brown, 2011; Morgan et al., 2010; Thompson, 2009). Whether or not this influenced the conclusion of the studies is subject to further research.

*Women's voice in the reporting of the findings.* In only one project participating women were given a central role in preparing for the journal publication. Bishop et al. (2013) assigned a role as co-author to the woman involved in their project. We assume that this particular woman had a choice over which photographs would be published. The majority of author teams (N=15) incorporated photographs made by the women in the final article, including self-portraits of the women and representations of their everyday life. We assume that these were mainly used as supporting material for the identified themes and selected by the authors themselves. Citations or participant-selected captions from women were often used in conjunction with the photographs. The number of photographs taken by women portrayed in the articles was relatively low: nine out of fifteen articles included less than five photographs in their publication. Some authors referred with a link to the full and original photostories (as assembled by the participating women) (Bell, 2008; Nimmon, 2007).

*Women's voice in the dissemination of the findings to a broader public.* In almost half of the articles it was unclear what the specific involvement of the women was in the public dissemination phase (Adams et al., 2012; Bukowski and Buetow, 2011; Liebenberg, 2009; Lykes, 2010; Thompson, 2009; Valera et al., 2009; Wang and Burris, 1994). Two studies explicitly reported that the researchers were in charge of the dissemination process. Sutton-Brown (2011) mentioned that she was the one who ultimately created a slideshow for dissemination. Although she shared the results with the women beforehand, minor changes were made by the women. Kwok and Ku (2008) reported that in their study researchers and social workers were the ones in charge of disseminating the views of

the women via several public exhibitions, press conferences etc. In the other studies researchers described how the women were actively involved in the dissemination phase. Their specific role varied from selecting photographs for an exhibit, creating accompanying narratives, planning the specific data, searching for possible locations, promoting the event, to presenting their work.

*How did the authors conceptualize women's empowerment and was it reached at the end of the research process?* Empowerment gives meaning to the multiplicity of the underlying process of 'giving voice' and goes into meaningful conditions. It can be seen as the interactive process between individuals and their environment. Throughout this process *'the sense of the self as worthless changes into an acceptance of the self as an assertive citizen with socio-political ability'* (Sadan, 1997: 75). Hence, empowerment can be seen as an active process, changing human activity from a passive to an active state (Sadan, 1997). We adopted the main categories of the typology of Zimmerman, reflecting empowerment's multilevel nature (Zimmerman, 1990, in Speer et al., 2001) to structure this paragraph.

*Individual empowerment.* Several articles in the dataset focused on the intrapersonal component of individual empowerment, including self-perceptions concerning 'domain-specific perceived control and self-efficacy, motivation to control, perceived competence, and mastery' (Zimmerman, 1995: 588). Several authors exemplified how the participatory research projects led the women to self-acceptance and self-confidence. Nimmon (2007) for example described that the women indicated that they often felt minimized in the broader society. After participating in the project they expressed feelings of importance and increased confidence when seeing themselves depicted in the photonovel. In the article of Morgan et al. (2010) the women articulated that they took pride in the fact that this project was about them. These examples refer to empowerment as a process of internal change, which relates to the women's beliefs in their abilities to make decisions and to solve their own problems.

As an interactional component, empowerment addresses the way individuals understand and relate to their social environment. It addresses their ability to develop a critical understanding of their own community (Zimmerman, 1995, in Kasmel, 2011). There are several articles that mentioned photovoice as a means to achieve critical awareness. Lykes (2010) articulated that the Mayan women created critical stories about living in a war zone. Capous-Desyllas (2010) stated that women could get a critical perspective on their own lives, by articulating and dissociating themselves from their own photos. Meija et al. (2013) described that the Latina mothers developed critical reflection strategies during the photovoice project and began to see shortcomings in their neighbourhood.

As argued by Parsons (1988, in Sadan, 1997), empowerment is also a process of external change (i.e. the ability to act and implement knowledge, skills, information). As such, the behavioral component of empowerment refers to taking actions that can influence outcomes. This implies participating in policy discussions at a community level. Although fifteen articles referred to the principle of policy change of Wang and Burris, only five articles reported that change actually occurred. In the study of Bell (2008) for example, the women indicated that they '*moved from seeing themselves as victims of change to agents of change'* (p. 41). In doing so, they became engaged with the political system: they contacted legislators to express their opinions and informed them about certain community issues. They also started fundraising actions for community improvement activities. The women in the project of Valera et al. (2009) came up with their own answers to overcome food insecurity and informed local policy makers about the findings. In a considerable amount of articles, it was not clear whether policy makers were actually involved in the project (N=8). Some authors (for example Capous-Desyllas, 2010) reported explicitly that policy makers did not attend community exhibits. Moreover, if policy makers were involved, it was not always clear to what extent the women were actively involved in the policy discussions (Kwok and Ku, 2008).

*Community empowerment.* In this review we included a broad view on community as 'a partial, temporary and dynamic unit that originates in the human need for a sense of togetherness and identification of others' (Sadan, 1997: 133). Several articles reported on achieved levels of community empowerment in specific geographical areas. An example is the study of Morgan et al. (2010) who empowered women of La Carpio (Costa Rica) through photovoice by photographing community life and critically reflecting on the images. Kasmel (2011), echoing Raeburn (1993), stresses that community empowerment is an interplay between individual and community change with a long time-frame, with regard to significant social and political change. A possible outcome of community empowerment is an increase in social capital (Zhou and Bankston, 1994, in Kasmel, 2011). Potential indicators suggested include social cohesion, social trust, reciprocity, social networks or support system at a group level and community involvement. Kwok and Ku (2008) mentioned that the project helped to establish informal support networks with other participants and community members. Nimmon (2007) noted that ESL-speaking immigrants didn't have an extensive social support system. As a result of engaging in a photonovel project, they created a new relational network.

**Discussion**

We acknowledge that we can only make assumptions based on what the authors have reported in their articles. Many times, authors are restricted by page limitations of journals and other publication related constraints beyond their control. This does not necessarily imply that authors didn't think about the important decision points we would like to see addressed in order to create a learning opportunity for those building on their work. It simply means that attention in reporting needs a shift from a focus on content to a focus on potential process related benefits and harms.

First, we suggest that authors provide clarity about their particular intentions to 'give' voice to women. Whose voice is exactly heard in these studies? We noticed that the voices of women in photovoice projects are often mediated and interpreted by other voices (including male translators, facilitators and researchers). There is little detail on how the involvement of women in choosing the format, in making decisions about the content, and in the dissemination itself was stimulated. Moreover, authors tend to be on the safe side in choosing the formats to report on their findings and emphasize the narratives instead. The visual content is often treated as an accessory; an illustration for the narratives. Since cameras were placed in the hand of the women as a powerful tool to give voice, we recommend to give enough weight to these pictures in the articles themselves. In addition, we noticed a lack of information on the positional stances of the authors that may have influenced the findings: '*we ask for revelations from others, but we reveal little or nothing of ourselves; we make others vulnerable, but we ourselves remain invulnerable*' (Behar, 1993: 273, as cited in Ashby, 2011). It is generally known that the life experiences and values of the author underpin the research process (Kralik and Van Loon, 2008). A critical reflection on whose voice is actually represented is therefore important.

Second, more information about the theoretical lens that inspires researchers' projects could be given. Adding a feminist stance and explaining the position one takes on gender is one way to incorporate the researcher's interpretive context when one works with a female participant group. Incorporating a theoretical lens into a photovoice project allows researchers to connect issues related to gender inequality and other cultural or structural social oppressive factors in a way that allows us to obtain a more comprehensive view and in-depth perspective. When working with women, plugging in feminist theory can make the findings more powerful. It can be used as a guard against '*the desire to create a coherent and interesting narrative that does little to challenge hegemonic discourses and (over)simplified knowledge claims*' (Mazzei and Jackson, 2012: 745). Without theory, the use of particular methods in photovoice projects is at risk of becoming a very instrumental practice that neglects many of the theoretical underpinnings that inspired the developers in the first place.

Third, the use of the concept empowerment is confusing. There are many definitions and measurable indicators proposed (Duffy, 2011). Authors need to unpack the often touted term empowerment or at least clarify what sort of empowerment is achieved in their study. Few articles in this database specified outcomes or evaluation procedures. Such evaluations should not be limited to an overall reflection of the researcher at the end of the process. Empowerment outcomes could be formulated by the women themselves (Rappaport, 1987). This implies asking women how the process of photovoice changed their thoughts or life situation and what sort of empowerment is achieved. Those building on photovoice methodology also need to be sensitive to potential negative outcomes of such procedures. Creating awareness about oppressive structures that have an impact on a life situation while simultaneously creating awareness about the fact that oppressive structures in society cannot be changed immediately, is therefore recommendable. If not, it can leave women feeling more underpowered than before (Purcell, 2007).

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this review was to examine the underlying theoretical and empowerment premises of the photovoice methodology. Nineteen photovoice studies targeting women were critically analyzed. The literature reviewed here suggests that researchers should: take into account the underlying theoretical premises of the methodology, provide sufficient evidence for the achievement of its core objective (empowerment), and illustrate what space for the authentic voice of women is created and how.

In order to improve the overall quality of photovoice studies we advise authors to reflect on at least the following aspects: (1) the nature of the research, (2) the nature of the researchers, (3) the nature of the research team, and (4) practical considerations. *Figure 2.3* includes a few questions that are helpful to consider when designing a photovoice study.
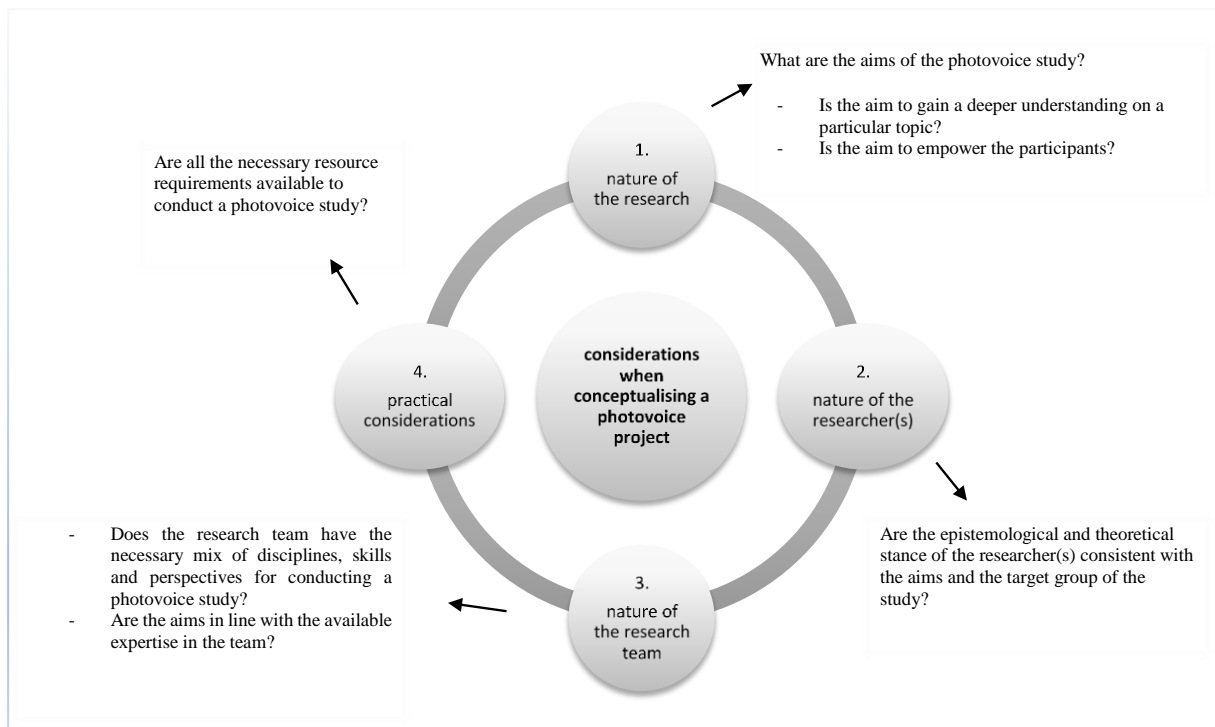
*Figure 2.3* Considerations when conceptualising a photovoice research project

A first consideration is the nature of the research: is the empowerment component, embedded in the photovoice methodology, part of the purpose of the study? In many studies, we noticed a tension between the purpose of the researcher and the empowerment purpose of photovoice. Although many researchers consider empowerment as an important goal, their main aim is to gain a deeper understanding about a particular research topic. Empowerment is often presented as a rationale; the photovoice methodology is chosen because it gives participants 'a voice' and promotes change. However, we do not always see this empowerment component reflected in the research questions or objectives. We assume that this is the reason why so many studies fail to evaluate the photovoice process. When aiming to combine a research and empowerment goal, it is important to conceptualize the specific type of empowerment one aims to achieve, to provide sufficient evidence for the achievement of the this empowerment aim,  or to reflect why this couldn't be accomplished.

Furthermore, one should take into consideration one's own position as researcher. This implies a critical reflection on the epistemological and theoretical stance of the researcher. The researcher's role is not limited to identifying aspects that are important from the perspective of the participants. It is also important to assist participants in framing research findings into a broader context, while maintaining the study's integrity. Feminism is one particular lens that could be applied and has successfully been used in previous photovoice projects with women. Framing a photovoice study

as feminist-inspired does not mean that certain methodological components that characterize the approach cannot creatively be adopted in other contexts or used differently when working with other target groups. It does not imply that feminism is the only theoretical framework that can be used in a photovoice study. Depending on whose voice is presented, researchers may select different frameworks. These decisions should be made explicit in the report. In addition, it is commonly known that researchers vary in the amount of tolerance they have toward ambiguity in the research process. In photovoice, participants control much of the procedure of data collection and analysis. It is the role of the researcher to assist participants in moving individual storylines into a more in-depth and theoretically informed narrative.

Another important consideration refers to the nature of the research team. Does the research team have the necessary mix of disciplines, skills and perspectives for conducting a photovoice study? Apart from topical and methodological expertise, photovoice studies benefit from team members who have been trained to facilitate empowerment processes, who can focus on the group dynamics and who are successful in connecting with the participants, gatekeepers, language interpreters and so on. Social workers are generally well trained to take up this challenge. Research teams should therefore consider if they want to form an alliance with practitioners and if they have the necessary connections with the field or have the expertise for creating these types of networks.

Finally, one should take into account some practical considerations. Being involved in a photovoice research project requires a serious amount of time and effort. The researchers have to prepare the project in collaboration with their team. They have to invest in camera and ethical training of participants. They have to devote a serious amount of time to build up a good relationship with the participants, to work on the group dynamics, to think about actions that promote change, to translate the findings to a broader audience and so on. Moreover, funding is often needed, for instance to purchase cameras, to make copies of the photographs, to invest in good translators or to set up an exposition.

In ideal circumstances, we gain more than an understanding of our research topic when conducting photovoice projects. These projects can stimulate women in raising their voice and reaching their empowerment goals. It is important to be attentive to these goals when conceptualizing photovoice studies within the broad area of social-cultural work practice and research.

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*The first author of this article was the main reviewer of all the included papers. The second author was involved as a second reviewer of this particular subset of papers. As part of her master thesis she scrutinized this subset in detail under the supervision of the first author as her daily coach. Afterwards the first author further analysed this subset of studies. The third and fourth authors provided feedback throughout the writing process.*

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# PART II.

# TOWARDS A MULTISENSORY RESEARCH APPROACH IN STUDYING NEIGHBOURHOODS IN TRANSITION

# CHAPTER 3:

## WALKING THE SENSORY INTERVIEW: IMPLICATIONS OF USING A SENSORY RESEARCH APPROACH TO STUDY AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT IN THE MAKING[5]

**ABSTRACT**

This study builds on recent literature that calls for a renewed attention for the sensorial dimension in research. We examine the potential of a sensory research approach in studying the relationship between citizens and their living environment. We illustrate this by means of our own exploratory research in an urban renewal setting. Eight local residents were invited to walk together with the researchers in their own city while 'opening up' their senses and sharing their lived experiences. The sensory focus allowed us to tap into the concrete physical aspects as well as inner processes (feelings, memories, imaginations) related to the place under research. The paper draws attention to the implications of a sensory research approach. We propose a shift from static to more dynamic forms of interviews and illustrate how a stronger focus on the material dimensions of place can be achieved in analytical processes. We conclude with a number of challenges and directions for further research.

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**Introduction**

The sensory characteristics of urban environments, their sights, smells, tastes and sounds, play an essential role in shaping urban identities (Simmel, 1971). Nevertheless, social researchers who investigate the dynamics of urban environments seldom pay attention to the sensory characteristics of urban neighbourhoods. These are considered to be too 'microscopic' compared to processes that operate on a global scale. The lack of interest in research that explores urban development from within has been critiqued by Rhys-Taylor (2010); "*the preferred social scientific means to represent cities, and, to understand the life evolving therein, is to set up a lens at least 450 miles above an urban form*" (p. 7). Such generalised representations can indeed provide relevant insights into important mechanisms that shape urban life, including the social structure of everyday life in the city, its ecological and demographic characteristics, and processes of gentrification. However, it reveals little about the complex interaction between a living environment and the sensory, embodied experiences of local residents and passers-by that also shape urban life (Rhys-Taylor, 2010).

In recent years, there has been an upsurge in methodological interest in the senses, particularly in qualitative research (Mason & Davies, 2009). Researchers like Paul Rodaway (1994), Paul Stoller (1997), David Howes (2005) and Sarah Pink (2009) have contributed to this sensorial revolution and have given attention to visual, auditory, tactile, gustative, olfactory, and other sensorial dimensions of experience (Hurdley & Dicks, 2011). These scholars have been a source of inspiration for many qualitative researchers attending to the 'world-as-sensed' (Springgay & Truman, 2018).

Over the past three years, we worked intensively in an urban renewal context. Together we, researchers in close collaboration with student-researchers, studied the potential of a sensory research methodology to unravel the in situ sensory and embodied experiences from people exposed to a fast changing neighbourhood. Various stakeholders (including adult residents, youngsters, and art students) were invited to explore an urban neighbourhood from a multisensory perspective. Rather than inviting them for an interview about how they relate to their changing surroundings, we asked them to walk through their living and working environment and open up all their senses. In this chapter, we discuss an explorative student project conducted by Van den Nieuwenhuizen (2016) as part of her master thesis. Rather than providing insight in what the participants of this study have said or sensed, we illustrate how the sensory approach has changed our research practice and what can potentially be learned from there. In what follows, we will first situate the project in existing literature on the sensory revolution and provide more details on walking as a sensory research methodology. In the second part, we discuss some of the

consequences of engaging with this methodology, based on the experience of joining adult residents in sensorial walks in their local environment. Finally, we make some suggestions for future research.

### The sensory turn

In the past decade, the methodological interest in sensory research has been growing considerably. This 'sensorial revolution' (Howes, 2005) should be situated in a long history of methodological developments. The first turn was the 'linguistic turn', arriving in the 1960s and 1970s. This turn was, among other things, inspired by the linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure. Critic Roy Harris summarized Saussure's theoretical contribution and the linguistic turn as follows:

> Language is no longer regarded as peripheral to our grasp of the world we live in, but as central to it. Words are not mere vocal labels or communicational adjuncts superimposed upon an already given order of things. They are collective products of social interaction, essential instruments through which human beings constitute and articulate their world. This typically twentieth-century view of language has profoundly influenced developments throughout the whole range of human sciences (Harris, 1988, p. ix).

This linguistic turn was thus characterized by an increasing focus on language and the construction of reality (Howes, 2005). In the 1980s, several researchers adopted a 'turn to images'. Mitchell (1994) was the first to introduce the notion 'pictorial turn', hereby questioning the power of linguistics in research. This pictorial turn emphasized the role of visual imagery in communication. According to Mitchell, pictures form and transform our social reality. This turn contributed to the further growth of the field of visual culture studies. In the 1990s, two new turns were identified: the corporeal and the material turn (Howes, 2005). Researchers subscribing to the corporeal turn acknowledge the power of the subjective body and react to the modernist reductionist thinking model, which argues that corporeal affections and movements need to be translated into a language of scientific and social objectivity. However, according to proponents of the corporeal turn, recognizing the subjective body, *"helps us to see, hear, smell, move, and feel things anew, recovering and reaffirming the centre of our existence"* (Vermes, 2011, p. 5). The notion of 'embodiment' was introduced simultaneously with this corporeal turn. This refers to the idea that we experience and make sense of the world through our body (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). The material turn focuses on the physical infrastructure of the social world and has led to the rise of material culture studies (Howes, 2005). These studies are characterized by radically rethinking materiality and aim to explore the relations

between the natural, the human and the non-human (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008). These various turns have led to changes in our models of interpretation. According to Howes (2005), sensory research is not a new turn following the ones explained above. It can be rather seen as a revolution. This sensorial revolution embraces and builds on some of the insights of these different turns, but also tries to compensate their excesses: too much focus on the verbal in the linguistic turn, too much focus on the visual in the pictorial turn, and so on.

This turn to the senses has much to offer for qualitative researchers in social sciences, *"both in terms of its ontology (what is considered to be 'there' to research or to know about) and its epistemology (how it can be known)"* (Mason & Davies, 2009, p. 587). Hence, it has consequences for methodological practice. Walking methodologies in particular, are well placed to facilitate sensory investigations, since walking is closely linked to the bodily senses and the materiality of our surroundings (Middleton, 2010).

### *Walking as a sensory research approach*

Walking as a medium for research is not necessarily new. It has always attracted the attention of poets, visual artists, philosophers, social and educational researchers, among others who are interested in the dynamics of urban contexts. It is often linked with the tradition of 'flânerie'. The term 'flâneur' originates from the work of the French poet Baudelaire. Baudelaire described the flâneur as a (male) individual who wanders around in urban space. Although this image of the invisible and detached flâneur - a privileged man who is able to take visual possession of the city - is heavily critiqued in postmodern feminist discourse, many walking practices still refer to this figure. However, disrupting the occularcentrism of the flâneur implies an understanding of walking that is collaborative, embodied, and focused on sensory and material intensities (Springgay & Truman, 2018).

Scholars have reported on a variety of collaborative walking methodologies (e.g. Anderson, 2004; Carpiano, 2009; Kusenbach, 2003; Pink, 2009; Pink et al,. 2010; Springgay & Truman, 2018). These walks vary from informal conversations between the researcher and the participants during landscape walks to (semi-)structured walks intended to generate answers in (partly) predetermined places (Evans & Jones, 2011). In most studies, the walks are connected to at least one sensory modality, with the visual sense generally being more dominant but often considered in interaction with the other senses.

An example of a walking methodology that pays attention to what can be seen in the surrounding environment is the photography walking tour. In this case, walking is combined with taking photographs and the whole process has a participatory research flavor. The participants can for example decide which routes are taken during the walk. They can also decide what needs to be photographed during the walk, and the images can be taken by a professional photographer or by the participants themselves. A worked example of this method can be found in the research of Fink (2011), who employed photography walking tours to explore the everyday lives of female residents in a 'disadvantaged' neighbourhood. During the walk the women were encouraged to identify the value of their local environment and what was considered problematic in their surroundings. The tour identified *"the small details which reflect and promote positive experiences of place"* (Fink, 2011, p. 47). Studies like the one of Fink show that a photo camera can serve as an interesting activation devise that can rupture the walk and can encourage participants to reflect on their daily lives (Springgay & Truman, 2018).

The literature contains, albeit to a lesser extent, also examples of sound walks, referring to the practice of listening to and describing the city. Sound experiences have their own qualities that make us experience our daily life in a specific way (Allett, 2010). Or as Smith states: *"knowing the world through sound is fundamentally different from knowing the world through the vision"* (p. 1, in Bull & Back, 2003). Adams and colleagues (2008) made use of sound fragments to involve residents of an urban centre in research into sustainable urban environments. The authors invited residents to identify a walking route in their area on a map. The map was used as a guide during the soundwalk. During the walk, participants were recommended not to talk, but to concentrate on the senses. The researcher who accompanied the participants was wearing a microphone and a recorder to pick up the urban sounds. Afterwards, an interview with the participants was held, using the experiences of the walk as a starting point for further discussion.

Research experiments wherein the focus is on other sensory modalities, such as smell and taste, have been scarce. This suggests that researchers continue to favor the distance senses (i.e. vision and hearing) as vehicles of knowledge (Springgay, 2015). Vision is especially dominant, which gives us the unfair impression that it is the only sense through which we experience the world (Bull, 2001). The dominance of vision has its origins in the Enlightenment. Visibility was promoted as the purest sense organ and associated with reason and 'valid knowledge': the only way the world could and should be known was by seeing. *"Seeing is believing"* has been a popular credo (van Ede, 2009, 63). In contrast, the close epistemologies of touch, smell, and taste are often neglected because of their direct association with the body. As a result these senses are considered *"not as means of knowledge but of pleasure"* (Marks, 2008, p. 130, in Springgay, 2015).

Smell, however, has an important influence on how we perceive places. Smell is, according to Porteous (1985), a very emotionally charged and stimulating sense. For example, the typical smell of soap can bring a person back to his or her childhood at the boarding school. A touch of perfume can make a person reminiscing about a lost love. In other words, fragrances can bring to light memories that have already been forgotten. Moreover, smell and long-term memory are strongly connected, whereby associations of smell are retained for much longer than visual images (Engen, 1991, in Quercia, Schifanella, Aiello, & McLean, 2015). Nevertheless, smell is one of the least researched areas in qualitative research, and in urban studies in particular (Harris & Guillemin, 2012). One of the main reasons is that scents are difficult to record and analyse. According to Quercia and colleagues (2015) neglecting the significant role of smell in the city can have various consequences, leading to a one-sided collective image of the city. It can also result in the proliferation of sterile and controlled areas. Finally, scents also contribute to the formation of the socio-economic identity of a place. Macdonald and colleagues (2007, in Quercia et al., 2015) showed that there would be a clear connection between the smell of fast food restaurants and socio-economic disadvantage. If we do not have a clear view of the existing odours, this can lead to reinforcing certain socio-economic barriers. Quercia and colleagues (2015) then describe a study on smell walks. In several cities, participants were asked to walk around their city, identify smells and then take note of them. Smell-related words were classified in 'the first urban smell dictionary'.

To date, studies in which the sense of touch is used are rather scarce in the context of walking practices. Nevertheless, in-depth studies into how certain objects or textures feel may provide access to new and different storylines on how people relate to their living environment. This has been argued by Powell (2010), who collaborated with students on this matter in Panama. The students took part in walks and made their own mapping of the neighbourhood. Existing textures were mapped out by means of photographic close-ups of buildings, floors, streets and objects. The mapping reflected both a physical sense of place (e.g. the wood structures found in the eastern part of the neighbourhood, the coastline found in the southern part) as well as a subjective sense of place perception. Likewise, the 'SKIN: Surfaces of the city' project engaged participants in Montréal in a touchwalk that consisted of three stages. First, using the metaphor of the city as body, participants were asked *"what do the surfaces of the city – the skins of the city – reveal about the city?"* Then, the researchers changed the focus to bodies in the city, encouraging participants to bring attention to the flows and disruptions while moving through the city and passing by other people. Finally, participants were invited to pay attention to city textures while walking, through making a rubbing of a variety of surfaces in a booklet (Howes, Morgan, Radice, & Szanto, 2013).

Finally, there are few examples of the use of taste in walking practices. A taste walk designed by David Szanto provoked attention to place and taste and the relationship between them. 'Performative taste acts' - in which the potato served as a primary ingredient - were held at various locations in Montréal. Participants engaged in discussions about what the food tasted like and how the surrounding spaces contributed to the sensory experience (Howes, Morgan, Radice & Szanto, 2013). The above mentioned walking practices illustrate that many researchers opt to zoom in on one of the senses. In this exploratory project we opted for a multisensory approach, applying several sensory layers simultaneously to emphasize the dynamic, relational (inter-sensory) and conflicting nature of our daily engagement with the sensory world (Howes, 2005). Through our set of interview questions, participants were invited to open up all of their senses during the walks and to focus on the visual as well as auditory, olfactory and tactile dimensions of their experiences.

**The research case**

The project was located in the Vaartkom area. It is a former industrial site of about 30 ha, on the outskirts of the city center of Leuven (Belgium). The surrounding districts Tweewaters, Sint-Maartensdal, and Klein Begijnhof were part of the research area (*Figure 3.1*).

| Tweewaters | Sint-Maartensdal |
|---|---|
| The Tweewaters district is an area in which the idea of sustainability plays a central role in how it is physically shaped. The city developers want to commemorate life and living in such a way that the ecological footprint is kept to a minimum. The area used to serve as a production site for the brewery Stella Artois, but since the relocation of these activities space has been created for the development of a whole new urban district. The headquarters of the brewery is still there today. Buildings belonging to the historical patrimony here are the Mills of Orshoven with its silos. The former grain silos will be retained and will be redesigned as a living space. A new architectural masterpiece is the already built Balk van Beel. Assistance homes for elderly people will have to combat the social isolation of older residents. By 2024 the district should be in place. It will be a car-free district (Van der Schaeghe, n.d.).<br><br> | The Sint-Maartensdal district is a social housing estate close to the old center of Leuven. Initially designed by architect Braem as a green zone without traffic, it gave space to social services- and local and commercial businesses on the roofs and ground floors. A diluted version was eventually built due to changes and priorities in Leuven's politics and pre-existing regulations. Braem introduced two new and unique building types in the Belgian cityscape: the hexagonal concentrated tower and the long block in fish grate shape placed in geometric schemes based on light and sight. Between 1960 and 1971 the high-rise towers were built, providing 720 apartments for 2500 residents, mainly working class people. It provided them with modern housing in a green zone. (Van Herck, 2010). The central tower has an iconic 45-meter transmission mast on its roof, visible from far away. One road runs between the housing blocks, connecting the roads at the right and the left of the area. Also present is: a playground for the children, lawns with flower beds, some benches and a ball court (City of Leuven, 2014).<br><br> |

| Vaartkom | Klein Begijnhof |
|---|---|
| Characteric buildings in The Vaartkom district are the Entrepot and De Hoorn. Several buildings have been given a new function here: offices have become homes, the brewery and storage warehouse has been converted into consumption and/or office spaces. A number of new buildings have also been established, more specific social housing and rental housing that attracted (PhD)students who are now also populating the area. The commercial space on the ground floor creates a mix of users according to the city of Leuven (City of Leuven, 2011).  | The neighbourhood around Klein Begijnhof gives a very different impression than the three districts discussed previously. Instead of large industrial complexes, smaller houses can be found here in a maze of streets (Missotten & Desmet, 2010). Characteristic of this area is the abbey. In the 13th century, the women who served in the abbey lived here (City of Leuven, 2013). Nowadays, part of the houses are owned by private individuals and part are in the hands of a public social welfare centre.  |

*Figure 3.1* Overview area (Van den Nieuwenhuizen, 2016)

The Vaartkom was put into service in the 18th century for transport activities and small relating industries. The area housed among other things several beer breweries, saltworks, storage facilities, mills, carpenter sites and, unlike now, only very few residential places. Halfway the 19th century, the building of railroad tracks began in close vicinity of the canal, connecting the port to the rest of Belgium, including Charleroi, back then a thriving city of mining industry and steam engineering. During the Second World War, most of the buildings were destroyed and the area was under renovation until the 1960s, which explains the particular and uniform style of buildings that have remained. Due to the geographical characteristics, its shallow waterways, competition of road transport, and changing economic activities, from industrial to commercial, the area went into decline. This lasted for several decades, which resulted in many vacant industrial properties (Missotten & Desmet, 2010).

The many empty spacious buildings initially caught the attention of artists and creative individuals. The peripheral status of the neglected canal area provided opportunities for experimental enterprising, leading to the creation of a 'Thirdspace' around the canal zone. Gradually, this zone of experimentation gained the interest of a broader mainstream public. As a result, more and more creative entrepreneurs and businesses with financial capital also took an interest in the area (Dolèzal 2015). In 1998, the city of Leuven proposed a plan to change the industrial function of the area into an area of urban development, to turn the area into an economically profitable environment again. The plan was considered to be one of the largest urban development projects in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium (Missotten & Desmet, 2010). The plan included the option of

creating more green spaces and creating a mix of living, working and leisure activities. Today, twenty years later, these developments are still going on. A combination of private homes, social rental and owner-occupied homes, starter and student homes has recently been built to create a new vibrant environment by the water. In just a few years' time, more than 700 residents will have settled in the neighbourhood (A. Simeon, personal communication, 25 March 2016, in Van den Nieuwenhuizen, 2016).

The former industrial area grew into a post-industrial area where knowledge, innovation, design and creativity are becoming the central pillars. What used to be an abandoned part of the city is now turning into a creative and cultural hub *"where designers, starters, artists, production companies, cultural associations and craftsmen have a place to stay in affordable spaces ...."* (City of Leuven, 2011). Promoting the area as the creative 'lung' of the city that should attract further economic investments, artistic and intellectual capital is part of a strong city marketing strategy to strengthen the perception and positive image of the city (Debruyne, 2009).

The transformations in this city area create a total new atmosphere, in which the industrial history is less and less reflected in the new city structure (Missotten and Desmet 2010). The result of all this is that both the original population of inhabitants, local collectives and the material environment are subject to profound changes. People from social housing blocks that are currently in the process of being rebuilt have for instance been temporarily scattered across the city of Leuven, and this has lasted for a considerable amount of time. In the meanwhile, a new generation of students and inhabitants is re-populating the neighbourhood, in recently built student homes, and expensive apartments near the waterfront. This area in full expansion can be perceived as a site with 'presence'; a site where attentiveness to the dynamic interplay between humans and more-than-human things is at the core of how we should study environments and the place of humans in it.
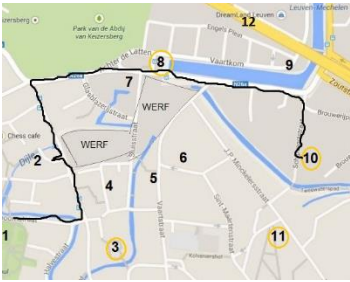
In the study, place is understood as an event, an open process, constantly in movement (Casey, 1996; Massey, 2005; Ingold, 2000). A sense of place is therefore not something static. It is something that is continuously created, recreated and renegotiated (Irwin et al., 2009). We used a sensory research approach to investigate how this process of change is experienced by its inhabitants and how it impacts on their relationship with their living environment. Van den Nieuwenhuizen (2016) took part in seven interview walks. In view of the exploratory nature of the project (Daniel, 2012), we worked with a relatively small sample. The composition process was carried out via convenience sampling (Patton, 1990). Recruitment took place in three ways: via the person in charge of the district (n=5), via addressing people directly on the street (n=1) and via a

letter that was delivered to local residents (n=2). Approval was obtained from the Social Ethics Committee to initiate the research project (Van den Nieuwenhuizen, 2016). An overview of the participants are set out in Table 1.

Table 3.1 Participants (Van den Nieuwenhuizen, 2016)

| Walk | Name | Age | Years living in the neighbourhood |
|------|------|-----|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Maria | 71 | 3 |
| 2 | Jos | 78 | >30 |
| 3 | Stefanie | 26 | 1,5 |
| 4 | Tom | 32 | 1 |
| 5 | Lien and Peter | 72 | 1,5 |
| 6 | Jan | 45 | 5 |
| 7 | Mark | 43 | 16 |

The walking interviews took an average of one hour. The student and researchers determined four anchor points in advance (i.e. location 3, 8, 10 and 11 in *Figure 3.2*). At the start of the walk, it was possible to negotiate about the exact route. This allowed participants to add a number of additional anchor points to the route. In order to include as much of the area as possible, a distance of about two kilometers was covered with six anchor points during the walk.

| **Sensory walk 1** | **Sensory walk 2** | **Sensory walk 3** |
|---|---|---|
| Monday 6 April 2015 | Monday 13 April 2015 | Wednesday 22 April 2015 |
| 11 a.m. – cloudy weather – 7°C – 1bft | 2 p.m. – sunny – 13°C – 2bft | 6 p.m. – sunny – 18°C – 2bft |
|  |  |  |

| Sensory walk 4 | Sensory walk 5 |
|---|---|
| Thursday 23 April 2015 | |
| 7 p.m. – sunny – 17°C – 2bft | **Sensory walk 5** |
| | Wednesday 1 July 2015 |
| | 1 p.m. – sunny – 32°C- 3-4bft |
|  |  |
| **Sensory walk 6** | **Sensory walk 7** |
| Wednesday 1 July 2015 | Thursday 21 January 2016 |
| 6 p.m. – sunny – 30°C – 3-4bft | 3 p.m. – partly cloudy – 3°C – 1-2bft |
| | Monday 25 January 2016 |
| | 2 p.m. – partly cloudy – 13°C – 3bft |
|  |  |

*Figure 3.2* Overview sensory walks

**Findings**

Apart from trying to make sense out of the sensory data collected, the explorative study with adult residents also provided us with a reason to think about the potential and implications of using a sensory research approach in generating sense 'data'. We sensed that the analysis was strongly interwoven with the way we collected 'data'. We therefore present this section as a combination of thematic findings and reflective notes on the implications of using a sensory research methodology. This puts a stronger focus in this paper on what the use of a sensory methodology does to us as researchers and to the involved participants, rather than what has been said about the phenomenon of interest. Building on the initial analysis from van den Nieuwenhuizen (2016), we will highlight two major shifts in how data are collected and analysed in sensory research. The two shifts we wish

to highlight are (1) the shift from a passive, static interpretation of interviews, unilaterally focused on human conversations to a more dynamic interpretation of interviews 'on the move', and (2) the shift from an analysis based on written transcripts to a more sensory analysis in which place is given a central role. We will explore the implications of each of the shifts from various angles: from quotations from the interview transcripts, from the particular research instruments used (interview guide, visual material) and from reflections of the researchers.

### Shift 1: Towards a dynamic interpretation of interviews

For a long time, interviews were regarded as passive and static in qualitative research. It was recommended that the interview took place in a room with as little background sound as possible because of the probable noise on the tape recorder. The interview was unilaterally filled in as a conversation, in which the focus was mainly on sitting and talking and on the role of the researcher as the person listening. However, in a standard interview setting interesting layers of information might be lost, since people are obliged to draw on their mental image of the issue at stake (Trell & Van Hoven, 2010). In our own research, we wanted to put forward a more active interpretation of the interview, based on the intention to be able to initiate the embodied, sensory participation of people in the environment. The idea of exploring the neighbourhood while walking took shape. After all, walking is a sensory affair: *"Walking is an accomplishment of the whole body in motion, as much the work of the hands and lungs as of the feet"* (Ingold & Vergunst, 2008, p. 2).

In a sensory research approach, attention is paid to the sensory details of the interview environment. During the interview, the interviewer and the participant together give shape to this shared place, in which not only verbal and social but also material and sensory components are brought together (Pink, 2009). During the walking interviews, participants and researchers used their whole body and tuned into a sensory investigation: feeling the ground while walking, feeling the rhythm of the movements, feeling the texture of the bench that we sat on at one of the interview locations, hearing the background noises and noticing the smells, temperature and the wind that were present in the neighbourhood, ... all helped to shape the shared interview experience in the Vaartkom (*Figure 3.3*).

*Figure 3.3* Bench (Picture taken by Caroline Van den Nieuwenhuizen)

Moreover, the choice for walking interviews also has an impact on the kind of interview guide we constructed for this study (Harris & Guillemin, 2012). During our walking interviews, we triggered participants' responses from different sensory modalities at different locations (anchor points). At these various locations, we asked what local residents experienced at the place under research and what this meant to them. A semi-structured interview guide with sensory-oriented questions was used to help shape this walking conversation:

> *What do you see? hear? smell? feel? How does this make you feel? What associations do you make? Which sensations are strong? What pleases or disturbs you?*

When we want to gain an insight into how people experience their neighbourhood in transition, it may seem strange to ask how the environment feels, smells, hears,... Nevertheless, these are very pertinent questions (Harris & Guillemin, 2012). After all, how the neighbourhood is perceived by the senses plays an important role in this experience and can serve as a starting point for further reflection on how one relates to his/her living environment. The walking interviews revealed for instance that there was an enormous amount of draught at one particular place. Consequently, people did not like to stay there. They labeled the place as 'unpleasant' and the possibilities for interaction between local residents were restricted:

*"That is really, what I would call a 'draught hole', always lots of wind. That's the problem with these high buildings, they catch a lot of wind. Not pleasant to cycle or to walk. It makes it difficult for pedestrians… Yes if you compare it with this side.. Here at least you can walk through it, you are protected from the rain, there is less wind.* (Stefanie, 26 years)

A simple question such as 'what do you feel here' opened a gateway to information about how the urban surroundings are perceived and what the consequences are for organizing public spaces. The example shows that the built environment heavily influences what Howes and colleagues (2013) call the 'breath of the city'. The design of the buildings, although probably not anticipated by urban designers, can expose or protect us, for instance from the wind.

This illustrates that through the senses we gain insight into "*the underrepresented, unproblematized realms of everyday, embodied experience*" (Paterson, 2009, p. 772). Walking in the urban environment makes places meaningful and evokes certain feelings or experiences that may not be reflected in a standard interview, focus group or observational setting. Locating events, stories and experiences in their spatial context can thus help to articulate thoughts (Clark & Emmel, 2009). Tom, a 32 year-old resident reflecting on the walking event, stated:

*"If you had asked the same questions at my home, I would never have said certain things. Then [...] I would have talked much more theoretically. You probably had much less to gain from it. I didn't know, for example, that I hated these red buildings because of its colour until I had been outside with you."*

Also for Lien, an older resident, the walking exercise made her more aware of her daily environment:

*"I paid more attention to certain senses of which I was less aware and which in fact did play a role [in my experience of the neighbourhood]... Also just the feeling of walking here, you feel that it gives another idea... things that I did not realize before."*

In addition, walking interviews can bring up issues that the involved participants had not anticipated beforehand. They may also uncover contradictions (Clark & Emmel, 2009). In one of the walking interviews the impression of a participant about one of the buildings changed during the walk:

*"There at Sint-Maartensdal, for example, I have always found this building horrible, but I have given it a closer look and now I am thinking, that tower doesn't look so bad after all. [...] So by not looking superficially, but in more detail..."* (Mary, 71 years)

A more detailed investigation of the building helped her to reflect on her less than sympathetic relationship with this particular building and what it was that disturbed her. This closer investigation made her change her mind. Walking interviews appear to have a transformative power. They encourage respondents to think more consciously about their living environment and invite them to make feelings explicit. This then enables them to change their perception. This process also became visible in a walk with Jan (45 years old), who stated:

> *"I've seen things I hadn't seen before and that have been there for some time. So I really liked that ... and it makes me think... maybe I should go out a bit more by bike or on foot to see what's present in those little corners and edges where you normally don't go to."*

A dynamic interpretation of interviews 'while walking' also made us reconsider the way we are accustomed to analyze research findings, because the physical dimension of place was given a more profound role in the conversations. This invited us into a second shift.

### Shift 2: Towards an analysis in which place and sensory categories are the central focus

Although place plays an essential role in researching social practices and historical changes, studies rarely use 'place' as a central focus in their analysis (Gieryn, 2000). The use of a sensory research approach, however, is also inextricably linked to assigning a prominent role to 'place'. Tuck and McKenzie (2015) argue in favor of this active orientation to place. According to these authors, it is important to illustrate how a chosen methodology and related research methods are able to bring place very explicitly to the fore in the analysis of data. Whereas oral techniques tend to provide more insight into abstract aspects of place, visual methods can provide access to concrete aspects of place (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). Walking interviews are an interesting method because they allow us to bring together both oral and sensory aspects of experiences (Anderson & Jones, 2009, in Tuck & McKenzie, 2015).

In the analytical phase of this explorative study, the conversations held during the walks were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Based on Cele (2006), we consider place experiences as multidimensional, including both physical and abstract processes. The concrete physical aspects related to the material characteristics of the environment that shaped people's experiences. These were further subdivided into four sensory categories: visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile aspects. Abstract aspects referred to the inner processes that the particular locations evoked, while walking past them or spending time at one of the anchor points decided on for the walks (Table 2).

Table 3.2 Physical and abstract aspects of place

| Physical aspects of place |
| --- |
| • Visual (green, water, buildings, infrastructure, …) <br><br> • Auditory (sound of birds, water, construction works, traffic, children,…) <br><br> • Olfactory (exhaust gases, malt of the factory, smell of grass,…) <br><br> • Tactile (sun, draught) |
| **Abstract aspects of place** |
| • Associations, appreciations, feelings <br><br> • Memories <br><br> • Dreams for the future, suggestions for improvement |

During the walk, the respondents were asked to take pictures. They served as supporting material during the analysis. In order to allow for a full sensory immersion of all researchers involved in the analytical exercise (including those who did not attend the walking interviews) we listened to sound fragments recorded while walking in the neighbourhood and visiting the anchor points. The interview recordings not only served as transcripts but also as soundscapes (Harris & Guillemin, 2011) and has been included in *Figure 3.4.*[6]

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[6] For more detailed analyses of the respondents' stories, we like to refer to the master thesis written by Van den Nieuwenhuizen (2016)
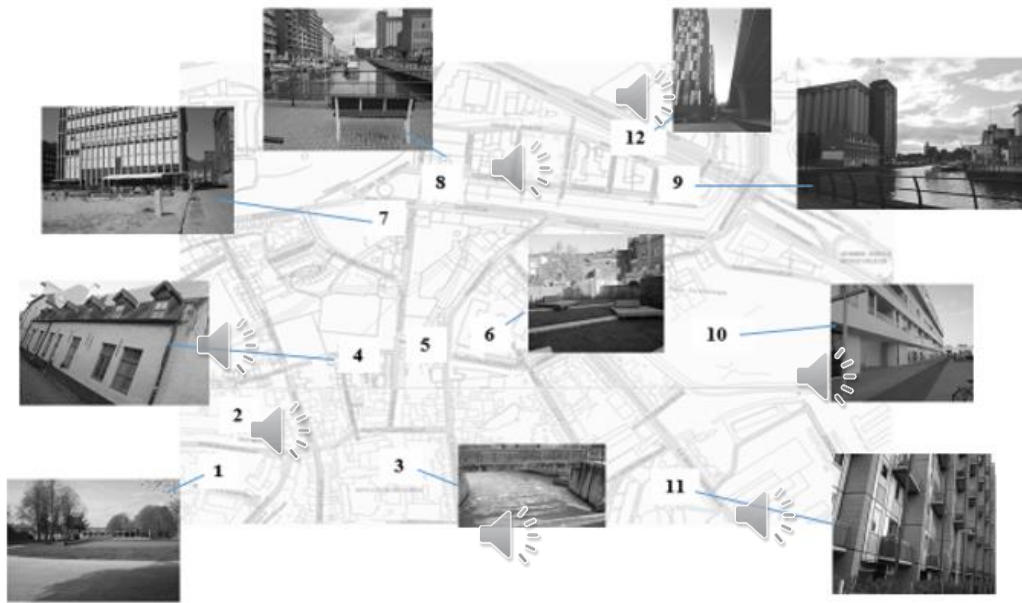
*Figure 3.4* Multi-layered map including anchor points, visuals and sound recordings

In *Figure 3.5*, we illustrate how the sensorial walks triggered our participants to think about their sensuous surroundings and how the physical prompts provided participants with a language to articulate their beliefs, feelings, and insights regarding the changing urban context (Harris & Guillemin, 2011).

| **Visual – building** | **Olfactory – malt** |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Appreciations | Memories |
| *"And if you compare for example [these older buildings with] this horrible building, horrible red building... I think it is also because of the shape of the building. It is so incredibly conformist. That super sleek design that comes* | *"When the wind comes from the east, I smell the malt of the Stella Artois factory. There are many people who cannot stand that odor. But I was born in Leuven. My grandfather worked at the factory and when we passed by the factory, my father always reminded me of that. That smell was the smell* |

| | |
|---|---|
| *back in all these buildings. It has no soul, I feel sad when I look at it".* (Tom, age 32) | *of grandpa for me. So for me that is a good smell, it's the smell of the neighbourhood."* (Peter, age 72) |
| **Visual – water**<br><br><br><br>Associations<br><br>*"Because what they are doing now is: you have Sint Maartensdal on this side.. the social... and then you go over the bridge and then suddenly you're in 'le grand-chic'. Because that's how people experience it. They divide it with a bridge and water. On this side of the water, you have the supermarket with rather cheap products and there you have the supermarket with more expensive products. I think that's just absurd."*<br><br>(Stefanie, age 26) | **Auditory – traffic**<br><br>Appreciations<br><br>*"I am often disturbed by the sounds of cars. They drive here very fast. So there is a lot of passage. Buses pass through. Trucks are coming through. That actually bothers me."*<br><br>(Stefanie, age 26) |
| **Visual – street lights**<br><br><br><br>Associations<br><br>*"Those street lights... what were they thinking… they look exactly like gallows. They should add some beautiful lanterns in between.* (Jan, age 45) | **Visual – green**<br><br><br><br>Suggestions for improvement<br><br>*"What I would do is provide some more green, more trees, along the water. Now there are only bricks as far as you can see."*<br><br>(Jan, age 45) |

| Auditory - playing children | Visual – buildings |
|---|---|
| Appreciations<br><br>*"Here you still have the sound of a city, of something that is alive. And especially the children playing, that's something you hear a lot over here."* (Tom, age 32) | <br><br>Associations<br><br>*"Then you turn around... and yes, you see this building, this sterile student house. It almost looks like a factory, a factory that produces students. I may be wrong, but for me it doesn't reflect 'critical thinking'".* (Tom, age 32) |

**Visual – spatial design**



Appreciations

*"For example, you can see this pathway [...] we were actually forced to… we came from there, and instinctively you start walking along the path, which is just stupid because you actually have to go to the other side. It probably has a reason why they made the pathway like this, but I would have let the path run diagonally. What do they want to achieve with this? No one goes for a walk like this [..]. This is really forcing people and deciding for them how they should walk, which route they should take. I think that is a pity. That's a complete contradiction with my view on how a city should be like"* (Tom, age 32)

*Figure 3.5* Quotes with accompanying photographs made during the walks

The photographs made in the context of our sensorial walks, and their accompanying quotes, show us that walking encouraged local residents to recognize their urban environment as a collective space in which residents, passers-by, buildings, benches, cars, hiking trails, birds, water, temperature, and wind together give shape to their surroundings. It enables us to see *"different material configurations [that] have different 'affordances' – they let us, or sometimes make us, do different things or use our body in different ways with or against the urban landscape. These affordances interact with your internal*

*state (how you are feeling) and external activities (what you are doing), setting up a dialogue between two skins, if you like"* (Howes et al., 2013, p. x). This dialogue between two skins is something one of the respondents (Tom) clearly felt when walking along the pathway and feeling forced to walk in a particular direction. Moreover, the examples also demonstrate that these configurations can enact a certain social ordening. Another respondent (Stefanie) made this very explicit when photographing the water and describing how the physical division of the area (with the bridge and the water) also creates a social division. This is something that was also reflected in the other interviews, where residents mentioned that they had the impression that the urban design mentally divided their neighbourhood into separate 'neighbourhoods'. For example, they talked about how the concentration of gloomy and tall apartment buildings in their neighbourhood feel like 'a separate city' in a city. The water that flows through the neighbourhood, which was meant to provide a connecting character, seems to be a dividing line between 'poor' and 'rich' residents (Van den Nieuwenhuizen, 2016).

**Discussion**

The exploratory research revealed that the sensory walks provided us with information about the experience of public spaces that we otherwise might not have obtained. In line with Cele (2006), we conclude that the sensory walks enabled us to reveal both concrete physical and abstract aspects (memories, emotions, associations, dreams of the future) of place and describe them in relation to each other. It is the concrete physical aspects of place and the way in which they give shape to memories, emotions and visions that often receive less attention in a 'standard' interview setting. The incorporation of a physical layer allows researchers to *"gain a degree of immersive, embodied experience of other peoples' situated knowledges"* (Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015, p. 22).

Moreover, we also gathered valuable information about how the sensory walks were experienced by the research participants and what the method did with the people involved in the research process. This study was more than an inventarisation of experiences or the application of a particular method. Instead, the walks slowed all people involved in the research endeavor down, they changed our gait, they provoked, they transformed. Hence, the walks can be considered as an affective practice of experimentation (Springgay & Truman, 2018).

A sensory approach offers many challenges and avenues for further research. First, in this exploratory project, there was still a fairly strong emphasis on the linguistic aspect; on verbalizing sensory experiences. The articulation of experiences related to the more close senses (e.g. touch)

proved to be a challenge. It invites us into developing a different type of jargon that does more justice to the sensory approach. We found that the photographs taken during the walks provided an interesting layer of content and process information. They added something to the verbal narratives provided during the interview. They also remind us of the 'unspeakability' of some images and as such give place to "*bodily responses that may lie outside verbal-semantic-linguistic representation*" (Le Blanc, 2018, p. 187).

Second, in our exploratory study in the Vaartkom, we used a fairly classical method of analysis. We transformed our walking interviews in interview transcripts and analyzed them. The sensory focus manifested itself mainly in the use of sensorial thematic categories in relation to a physical and abstract layer of place perception. However, we also did something more. Sensory awareness was incorporated in the analytical process, through listening to sound recordings and including visual materials of the neighbourhood. In the analysis we brought several ways of knowing together. In our ongoing work, we are still rethinking the balance between the verbal, cognitive, and the sensorial, embodied, affective (Coemans, Vandenabeele & Hannes, 2019) and we invite other researchers to experiment with this in their own research practices.

Third, a good point to start rethinking current practices is to engage in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research. Many researchers adopting walking methodologies turn to contemporary artists, not only for methodological inspiration but also for collaboration, for instance to artistically re-present participants' lived experiences (Springgay & Truman, 2018). An interesting example is the work of plastic artist Peter de Cupere, who works primarily in the field of olfactive art and is affiliated to the PXL MAD School of Arts in Hasselt (Belgium). His work focuses on the sensory exploration of the city. Exploiting the impact of smells in combination with visual images, he generates a kind of meta-sensory experience that goes beyond purely seeing or smelling (www.peterdecupere.net). One of the prototypes he designed, 'The Blind Smell Stick', gives participants the opportunity to explore the city's fragrances while walking. The walking stick detects smells and transports them from an object to the person through a complex system of filters and heat conduction. The olfactory experience is enhanced by wearing dark glasses. As the example illustrates, the technical options are there and they invite us into more inter- and transdisciplinary collaborations.

Presenting research findings from sensory research also remains a challenge. We recognize that our insights present themselves as a written account. From a simplistic point of view we could argue that this is what our universities expect us to do and that it is in line with the prevailing laws and standards for disseminating research. However, in the context of a dynamic and continuously

changing and technologically omnipresent 21ˢᵗ century, we are able to reconsider this option. The widespread availability of technological devises, including smartphones, cameras, audio and speech recorders, multimedia and graphic software as well as social media and the Internet, opens up a world of new possibilities for academia and public engagement in academia (Hannes & Coemans, 2016). This could be a third shift to study in future research.

Also, engaging ourselves with a sensory research approach presented us with a fifth source of challenges in terms of quality control. What do concepts such as credibility or reliability of findings and transferability of insights mean in a way of working that turns a neighbourhood into an event, a process in which place is experienced as an *"entanglement of persons, things, trajectories, sensations, discourses"* (Pink, 2009, p. 41). The sensory experiences of participants and researchers who live or move in that environment are not static. They are created and re-created on an ongoing basis, they are always in motion. This might mean that what is considered valuable today by a participant could already take on a different meaning tomorrow, precisely because a neighbourhood is always 'in the making'. In this sense, it may be more interesting to assess the quality of this kind of research against a number of other parameters. For example, does the use of a sensory walking interview allow people to look at their neighbourhood in a different way? Does it create a deeper connection with one's own living environment and with the others who are part of it? Does it set people 'in motion' to ask new questions or to perceive a new future for their neighbourhood? Does it encourage concrete action? In other words: Does it generate illumination? Does it enable generativity in terms of providing a trace of what things are and were in an ever changing socio-material world? Does it have any social significance at all? (Barone & Eisner, 2012). We consider the walking interviews in the Vaartkom as a concrete 'intervention' that has turned routine everyday walking into an attentive engagement with the urban environment (Ruitenberg, 2012). The sensory methodology revealed some interesting insights into broader social processes going on in the area, formerly a poorer working-class neighbourhood. Numbers on who moves in and out of the neighbourhood are available at a governmental city level. Falling back on participant Tom's comments on how the material dimensions of urban development influence people's perceptions of who is in and out in the Vaartkom, we believe this sensory approach has a lot of potential for studying social processes such as gentrification, which makes it an approach worthwhile to consider by sociologists and other researchers interested in investigating urban life (Van den Nieuwenhuizen, 2016). To achieve an understanding of what a neighbourhood means in this continuously changing context, we turned to a sensory methodology, as Parr (2010) states: *"Our bodies are archives of sensory knowledge that shape how we understand the world. If our environment changes at an unsettling pace, how will we make sense of a world that is no longer familiar?"* The sensory walks were for

researchers and participants a way of 'being in place' and to open up all senses. This is something that we are not used to do, but seems to play an important role in how a neighbourhood is experienced.

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# CHAPTER 4:

## MAKING SENSE OF A CHANGING NEIGHBOURHOOD: ART STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF PLACE EXPLORED THROUGH A MATERIAL-DISCURSIVE ANALYTICAL LENS [7]

### ABSTRACT

Sensory research approaches are often used to study the relationship between people and their living environment. The type of data collected in such research projects poses analytical challenges. How do we best make sense of a body of visual, auditory, tactile data? How do such data contribute to our knowing? In this paper, we propose and illustrate an analytical apparatus for studying the complex entanglement of discursive and material aspects of sensorial experiences related to place. Place-interactive methods such as sensory go-along interviews with art students and voice-giving procedures through the making of art works formed the basis for the analysis.

**Introduction**

How can a sensory research approach bring into account the material dimension of a changing neighbourhood? In the past four years, we explored the potential of such an approach in a number of small research experiments conducted in a Belgian urban renewal setting. We involved different groups of participants, including a group of adult residents living in the urban area, a group of youngsters following a school alternative programme in the neighbourhood, and a group of art students studying at the nearby art academy. In this paper, we focus on an experiment in which we engaged this last group, four art students, in sensory walks through the neighbourhood and in the process of making various art works (including sketches, paintings, photographs, and installations) based upon these walks.

The experiment was grounded in the research tradition of sensory ethnography. The academic interest in this ethnographical approach has been growing in recent years, as has the interest in visual, auditory, tactile, gustative, olfactory, and other sensorial dimensions of experience (Hurdley & Dicks, 2011). This is

> based on the understanding that human meaning does not emerge only from [verbal] language; it engages with the ways in which our sensory experience is pre-or non-linguistic, and part of our bodily being in the world. (Karel, 2013, p. x)

Sensory ethnography takes a critical stance towards research in which a dialogue with participants is detached from the place under study (Anderson, Adey, & Bevan, 2010). Instead, it reconceptualizes the interview as a "place-event"; *"a process through which verbal, experiential, emotional, sensory, material, social and other encounters are brought together"* (Pink, 2009, p. 95). The methodology implies the use of mobile, embodied, place-interactive research practices, for instance walking with participants while conducting interviews (e.g. Anderson, 2004; Carpiano, 2009; Kusenbach, 2003; Pink, 2007; Pink, Hubbard, O'Neill, & Radley, 2010). While traditional forms of interviewing can provide "*information on abstract orientations to place through information on participants' thoughts, memories, and feelings as they relate to place*" (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 99), "go-along" or walking interviews (Evans & Jones, 2012) allow researchers and participants to consider physical aspects of the place as well as how elements that can be seen, touched, heard, or smelled trigger new thoughts and experiences that affect understandings and actions (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). Sensory ethnography also opens up other possibilities than academic writing that go beyond text, focusing on the tacit and non-verbal. This can lead to engagements with arts practice (Pink, 2009).

While a lot of sensory studies provide their readers with information about the process of conducting sensory ethnography, detailed accounts of analytical procedures that engage with sense data are underrepresented in the literature. As Sarah Pink (2009) ascertains, analyzing "*experiential, imaginative, sensorial and emotional dimensions of ethnography is itself often an intuitive, messy and sometimes serendipitous task*" (p. 119). In this paper, we shift our focus from an analysis purely based on written interview transcripts or reflective notes of the researcher, to a more sensory way of analyzing art works made in the context of this study. In doing so, it is our intention to develop an awareness of how a variety of research materials can "*facilitate ways of being close to the non-verbal, tacit, emplaced knowledge that a sensory analysis seeks to identify*" (Pink, 2009, p. 130).

In our study, sensory research approaches were used to study the relationship between people and their living environment. The objective of this paper is to expose readers to the analytical apparatus we developed to increase our understanding of (a) how art works produced in the context of a sensory research project can be seen as data, and (b) how art works can contribute to articulating the kind of city its dwellers want.


**Theoretical grounding**

To investigate material, embodied, tacit dimensions of place experiences, we turn to John Dewey's pragmatic aesthetic inquiry (Dewey, 1934; Siegesmund, 2012; Siegesmund, 2017) for guidance. In his book, *Art as Experience*, Dewey refers to an aesthetic of immediate living within the everyday, which is an engagement with the world around us. This aesthetic "in the raw" (Leddy, 2016) starts from everyday events and scenes in which the interaction between humans and their environment plays a central role. This relation between humans and their environment is essentially organic. The world is not waiting there passively to be discovered by humans. It is through our human and material interactions that we experience and create our world (Siegesmund & Freedman, 2018). Through our direct experiences of the world, we absorb the aesthetic features of nature and recognize its qualities. As Johnson (2007) describes:

> I know my world by the distinctive light, warmth, and fragrant breeze of a spring day, just as much as I know it by the driving rain, cold winds, and pervading darkness of a stormy winter afternoon. I know you by the qualities of your distinctive eyes, your mouth, your voice, your smell, the character of your walk, and how you hold yourself. All of my thinking emerges within this qualitative world, to which it must return if it is to have any connection with my life. (p. 69)

These qualities of experience can be sensed, heard, smelled, and felt and they constitute our world. This sensory way of thinking is what Dewey calls a thinking in the relationships of qualities. Later on, the idea has been further conceptualized by Eisner (1972), one of the founders of arts-based research, as "qualitative reasoning." Eisner contrasted the notion of discursive intelligence (linked to language and symbolic systems) with qualitative intelligence (or non-discursive intelligence, thinking not limited to verbal operations). According to Dewey and Eisner, all experience and thought are based on pervasive qualities. In this way, both scholars critiqued our notion of thinking as being exclusively symbolic in nature (Siegesmund, 2017). Rejecting dualisms between doing and thinking, reflecting and acting, knowing and being, opens up a horizon of creativity in which the world is experienced by doing and undergoing (Baldacchino, 2014).

This line of thought served as the starting point for our urban walks with students from the art academy. It also assisted us as an interesting analytical pathway for the art works made in the subsequent phase of the research process. Following Dewey, the process of developing these art works can be seen as the *"process of making something out of physical material that can be perceived by one of the senses"* (Leddy, 2016, p. X). Works of art can be examples of an experience that entails sensory awareness, a doing and undergoing, and in which different elements are merged into a unity; a pervasive quality. In what follows, we introduce the research setting and outline the research process leading to the development of the material-discursive analytical apparatus.

**The Vaartkom**

Our research experiment was set up in the Vaartkom area, a former industrial site of about 30 hectares in the north of the Belgian city of Leuven, that is undergoing significant transformations. For centuries the area could be seen as the economic heart of the city. The area was put into service in the 18th century for transport activities and small relating industries, housing several beer breweries, salt works, storage facilities, mills, and carpenter sites and, unlike now, only very few residential places. Halfway into the 19th century the building of railroad tracks began in close vicinity of the Vaartkom, connecting the port to other cities in Belgium. During the second World War most of the buildings were destroyed and the area was renovated (Missotten & Desmet, 2010).

*Figure 4.1* The old industrial site. Photograph courtesy of Stadsarchief Leuven (SAL).

Because of its shallow waterways, competition of road transport, and changing economic activities, the area went into decline. In 2008, the city proposed plans to transform the area into a fully renovated urban district. Since then, everyday life in this area has been characterized by on-going building work. A combination of private homes, social rental and owner-occupied homes, starter, and student homes has currently been built to create a new vibrant, sustainable, environment by the water. What used to be an abandoned part of the city is now turning into a creative and cultural hub *"where designers, starters, artists, production companies, cultural associations and craftsmen have a place to stay in affordable spaces ...."* (website city of Leuven, https://www.leuven.be/vaartkom). It has the mission to "create" an urban neighbourhood or community by connecting different people within one particular area, an idea that has received much attention under the impulse of the "micro-urbanism" movement promoting *"the design and development of small-scale, distinctive neighbourhoods and settlements, recreating a small version of a city"* (Mandanipour, 2001, p. 172).

*Figure 4.2* Vaartkom anno 2017. Photograph courtesy of Tamara Lodder.

**The research process**

**The sample**

We investigated the experiences of four semi-professional artists studying at the Interdisciplinary Studio of SLAC (the art academy and music conservatory of the city of Leuven). Working with art students created an opportunity to explore the potential of communicating place experiences via an artistic creation, which in turn challenged us to develop an analytical lens that is material-discursive in nature.

For the purpose of this paper we illustrate our analytical endeavor on the basis of the sensory walks and art works of two of the participating students: Monik and Christiane. Monik combines different types of media in her artistic work, among which painting, engraving, and video. She mainly draws inspiration from personal experiences in the context of processes of urbanization. She is part of a committee of local residents studying the consequences of urbanization for their neighbourhood and its residents. Christiane has enjoyed seven years of painting lessons from many different teachers, making her a versatile painter with broad knowledge of her craft. More recently, she has broadened her repertoire to installations in combination with photography. She draws inspiration for her artistic work from self-recorded photographs of ordinary situations and from media or photos from the past that evoke memories.

**Outline of the study**

We used a five-stage research approach that consisted of the following steps: setting up the collaborative project, walking, creating, disseminating, and analyzing.

*Stage 1: Setting up a collaboration*

The research experiment was part of a broader collaborative project between the University of Leuven and the fine arts department of SLAC. The project, that was named PiLoT1, was launched in the academic year 2016-2017 and was part of the University's cultural policy plans. Researchers from several academic disciplines (including educational sciences, sociology, psychology, philosophy, criminology, neurosciences, biomedical sciences, physics, astronomy, and engineering) and advanced students from SLAC worked together on themes in which art and research could encounter one another and could be mutually enriching. The ultimate goal of this cooperation was not only the creation of a work of art but also the *"navigating, experimenting, testing and bridging of the two worlds"* (Catalogue PiLoT1). In October 2016, we presented our research plan on place-based research and multisensory methods during a first meeting with researchers from the university and art students from SLAC. Four students decided to work with us.

*Stage 2: Walking-connecting*

As a hybrid form between participant observation and interviewing (Kusenbach, 2003) sensory go-along interviews were held with the art students to explore the changing Vaartkom area. During these individual semi-structured interviews, we walked, talked and experienced the urban environment together (see *Figure 4.3*). The walking exercises encouraged sensory awareness and active attention to what was going on. The walks did not isolate a particular sense but tuned into the students' multisensory experiences. Attention was given to the material and atmospheric environment by sensory prompting; asking what the art students *in situ* saw, felt, touched, heard, smelled, etc. The journeys were audio recorded and transcribed afterward.

*Figure 4.3* The go-along route with some anchor points. Photograph courtesy of Tamara Lodder and Caroline Van den Nieuwenhuizen.

As Wylie (2005, as cited in O'Neill & Hubbard, 2010) pointed out, these kind of walking exercises allowed the participants to reflect on the more-than-rational: the *"shifting mood, tenor, colour or intensity of places and situations"* (p. 236). Such phenomenologies of place are rather difficult to represent *"without lapsing into the languages and practices of sedentary and rational social science* (O'Neill & Hubbard, 2010, p. 47). Therefore, we might need a language *"closer to the multidimensionality of the subject itself, that is a language operating in visual, aural, verbal, temporal and even tactile domains"* (Mc Dougal, 2005, p. 116, as cited in Pink, 2009). This search for a more embodied spatial practice led us to the making of art works in the context of the research project.

*Stage 3: Creating-responding*

The third stage of this study was highly informed by the tradition of arts-based research, which can be seen as a transdisciplinary approach, situated at the intersection of the arts and social science research (Chilton & Leavy, 2014). More specifically, our way of working can be categorized as a hybrid between "art as research" – which refers to an approach in which research facilitates the study of the artistic process - and "art in research" – where art is actively applied by research participants as a creative process in one or more phases of a research process studying social phenomena (Wang, Coemans, Siegesmund, & Hannes, 2017). In the context of this study, art students were invited to make a work of art based upon their experiences of the walk, in close collaboration with the researchers. Art students were involved as co-researchers in the process, whereby the act of creating was simultaneously the act of researching the urban renewal area. Art students and researchers gathered multiple times to discuss sensory scholarship, to talk about their

walking experiences, and to share interview transcripts, preliminary sketches, and images (see *Figure 4.4*).



*Figure 4.4* Collaborative process

The students also shared experiences using a blog to post links, memos, background information, photos of the neighbourhood or photos of their work in process. With the making of these art works, we not only aimed to record data (in terms of collecting visuals and other sensory materials that represent the neighbourhood in flux) but we tend to *make* data from an embodied engagement with the sensory qualities of the world (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2018). As such, the art works made in the context of the study were used to generate new data. These data can be considered as narratives of place experiences, narratives that are not verbal but that can "*take many forms, depending on the individuals involved and the contexts they derive from*" (Cele, 2006, p. 14). Depending on the student's artistic background, several creations were made, including photographic work, a video made out of still images, installations made out of recycled materials, paintings and drawings (see *Figure 4.5*).



Still shot of video, Patrick De Nys

Photo collage, Annemie Moriau



Installation, Christiane Aerts



Installation, Monik Myle

*Figure 4.5* Series of art works created in the context of the research. Photographs courtesy of the involved art students.

*Stage 4: Disseminating*

As Dewey argues, a work of art is something that is experienced. This experience is what the product created *does*. As such, a work of art, an artist and its audience form an important triad: for a work of art to be complete it needs to be experienced by an audience (Leddy, 2016). This study culminated in an exhibition at STUK (House for Dance, Image and Sound) in May 2017 in the city of Leuven. A selection of 21 art works that were made based on the research collaborations between art students and researchers involved in the PiLoT[1] project were displayed at this event. The works made in the context of our specific project were presented under the joined label "Si(gh)tes of necessary trouble." Afterward, our series of art works were displayed at the Library of Social Sciences, KU Leuven (June, 2017). Both dissemination events (see *Figure 4.6*) were meant to challenge traditional conventions on academic research writing that *"transform multi-register event-assemblages into the unidimensional medium of written text"* (Fox & Alldred, 2015, p. 173). Moreover, it enabled us to pull a diverse audience into the research assemblage.



*Figure 4.6* Expositions. Photographs courtesy of Annemie Moriau and Christiane Aerts

**Analyzing sense data from a material-discursive perspective**

In the aftermath of PiLoT1, we continued to work together with the art students to explore an analytical lens that would do justice to the material aspects of the research and how these were linked to the discursive evidence. We embraced a flattened research logic *"where discourse and matter are mutually implicated in the unfolding emergence of the world"* (MacLure, 2013, p. 660).

**Conceptualizing the analytical apparatus**

Inspired by the quality framework introduced by Dewey (1934), Eisner (1972), and further rephrased by Siegesmund (2012), we illustrate how art work qualities can be brought in as an equal player in analytical research exercises, rather than being put to the service of the discursive process, as is often the case in many research projects.

Art work qualities include elements and principles of the design. Elements are the foundational blocks of an art creation. They include shapes, forms, spaces, colour, texture. Colour and texture are for instance elements that engage the senses directly. Colours focus the attention on particular aspects of the work. They can be used to connect or disconnect different objects and make associations between them, which can create relations of harmony or conflict. The use of different textures can give visuals, for instance, a tactile or "touchable" quality. Textures can evoke smoothness, roughness, slipperiness, softness, and so on. These effects can be repeated or contrasted within the art works (Hook & Glăveanu, 2013). The principles of design refer to how the building blocks are used in the particular design. Examples of principles include balance, emphasis, movement, repetition, proportion, rhythm, variety, and unity.

During individual conversations with every art student, the lead author brought in the art work qualities as a material-discursive analytical framework. During these conversations, she asked the art student to reflect on the following qualities:

(1) elements such as lines, shapes, colours, textures,
(2) principles such as movement, balance, contrast, patterns,
(3) materials used, such as paint, wood, metal, and paper.

Students were asked to relate these art work qualities to the experiences he or she gained while being active in the neighbourhood. This framework brought in a vocabulary close to the materiality of the art work. It enabled us to develop a language that corresponded to the art students' felt somatic experiences (Hannes, 2018).

As a result, we could look at the art works in relation to the creative process that has been taken place, and in relation to the involved student and his/her experiences. This gave us a better understanding where the work came from and what the art student did with the material in response to the neighbourhood under research. As such, the material-discursive analytic lens allowed us to enrich, extend, or challenge the analysis and peel back deeper understandings of the art works (Hannes, 2018), combining the material and the discursive. The lead author also integrated insights from the walking interviews into the aesthetic storyline of the art works.[8] An illustration of this process is presented below.

**Applying the analytical apparatus**

In what follows we will apply the analytic lens developed on the works of art created by two of our participating art students. We use the elements and principles of design as the main framework for the analysis, hereby looking at art work qualities that demand our attention. This worked example illustrates how a close reading of two installations stimulated us to link matter to meaning and to render the changing city as a sensuous milieu (Manning, 2009). In doing so, we hoped to attend to configurations where diverse bodies, things, affect, desire, matter, and imagination collide to create new entanglements and also new possibilities for the city (Gannon, 2016). Member checks were achieved by having the involved art students validate the analysis.

*"Twisting tower"*

Monik created an installation wherein one question was of massive importance: Who has the authority to decide how others have to live their life? The main source of inspiration for this work is the Twist Tower, a "tower" built by architect Stéphane Beel in the "Tweewaters" district in the Vaartkom area. The Twist contains more than forty apartments and got its name through its "twisted" shape. By means of a refined nuance of the glass windows in the tower, the two façades look like each other's inverted mirror image (Tweewaters, 2012). Intrigued by this building, Monik started to explore what this building tells her about this part of the city and how this picture shaped her general impression of the neighbourhood. During the go-along interview, she argued that *"it is a fantastic area to photograph, the view is beautiful… it looks like a postcard… but you don't feel the people… I*

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[8] The transcripts of the go-along interviews with the artists are included in the analysis of the art works presented in this paper, but its detailed discussion is subject of a different paper.

*don't want to live here…"* For her, the tower didn't "twist" enough and the search for a different type of twist became central to her inquiry (Table 1).
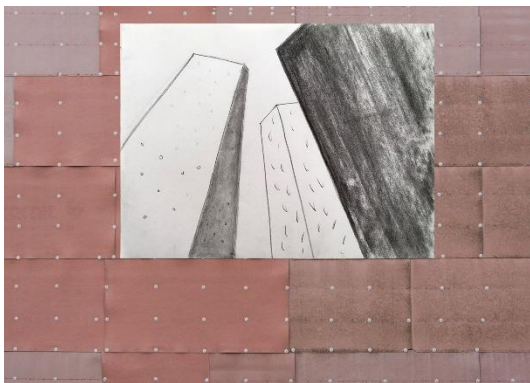


*Figure 4.7* Twisting tower. Photographs courtesy of Monik Myle.

Table 4.1

*Twisting Tower Installation  by Monik*

| | |
|---|---|
| Lines | The installation (see *Figure 4.7*) appears to be characterized by the use of vertical lines. The use of these vertical lines may evoke a certain aesthetic quality; stressing force. Monik already talked about this verticality during the go-along interview: *"it's this verticality and I don't really like it… it reminds me of Gothic art and I'm not really a fan of it. I'd rather prefer Romanesque art which is horizontal and in line with the landscape. But in Gothic art at least they used this verticality to worship God. But what's the use of this verticality here in the Vaartkom? Who is God here? I guess it is the money…"* One can interpret the verticality used in the installation to express a certain force that is also present when walking through the area across the high buildings: *"it feels like the buildings are always above my head, you just have to look up, you have to look at the sky…"* For Monik, this is rather an oppressive feeling. |
| Shapes | The shapes that were used are kept very simple. She attached two large rectangular strips (3,3 meters) of sandpaper to a wall. |
| Texture Material | To make the installation, she experimented with different types of materials. Sandpaper was eventually chosen because of its specific texture that reminded her of her walking experience. She associated the texture of the buildings and their colour with sandpaper: *"At a particular moment during the walk, I was asked to touch those new bricks... I immediately had the feeling that I did not want to do that, it reminded me of sandpaper so I didn't want to feel that. And yes, sandpaper also has a red colour."* The texture of the buildings triggered her to further reflect upon the neighbourhood and how she experienced the walk. She also associated this texture with goosebumps. Because the walk took place on a particularly cold winter day it was an excellent translation for the literal coldness she experienced during the walk. Moreover, thinking about the concept of goosebumps triggered a general feeling towards this neighbourhood: She felt that "human skin" was exactly the thing that was missing in this area. She argued that *"there is a lack of liveliness at the moment, you could say that there is no human skin (...) and I believe that the architecture must come from the people that live there... I understand that architects and city developers must exist, but there is the tendency to just drop people… too much planning involved."* So this lack of human skin was exactly the thing that she missed in this neighbourhood and what she wanted to portray in her creation. It was an attempt to give the towers a more humane character. She explored different types of sandpapers to remain close to her sensorial experience during the walk. A rough texture of sandpaper was eventually chosen: *"I chose rough sandpaper because soft sandpaper would not make any sense. For me, it is the awful feeling of this coarse texture."* |
| Colour | To choose the right colour for the sandpaper, she slightly deviated from what she saw during the walk: *"The red colour still matches the brick and still slightly differs from the goosebumps, the colour is between red, the colour of the bricks and pink, the colour of the skin."* |

| | |
|---|---|
| Material | Elaborating on this concept of skin she also added hair as an organic material to her installation, reinforcing the more humane character of the building: *"I've used hair to connect it with the people."* Monik bought the hair in the Matongé neighbourhood, an African quarter in Brussels characterized by its many local restaurants, cafés, and its African hair salons. It is an interesting choice since Monik already made a link to Africa during her go-along interview: *"for me, this neighbourhood looks a little bit absurd, here you see a bridge, there you see cars driving, there you see this gigantic building towers… but it seems like… it seems like there is no connection with the people. There is no central issue where things revolve around. If you compare this for example with Africa… When cities begin to develop, it always starts around someone who does something, for instance, someone who makes and sells tires, and then somebody else who sells gasoline and so on… That's how cities grow, they gradually develop. Here it just pops out of the ground."* |
| Contrast | Hence, we may look at the installation as a contrast that is being created by the use of roughness (the rough texture of the sandpaper) and softness (the use of hair). This may create a visual tension between what is and what ought to be. |
| Movement | Movement is another important component in the installation. Two ventilators were placed below the installation, bringing movement into the hair and circulating wind: *"I think movement is an important element because it's about a neighbourhood in motion, and the movement that it brings about in yourself when everything around you changes, whether this is a good or bad thing."* This idea of movement is always present in her art works. She draws inspiration from experiences in her personal life: *"Maybe movement is so important in my work because I had little roots in my personal life. I have always been drawn and pushed from here to there. A shortage of roots maybe ... I was born nearby the coast. I saw my whole environment changing. I actually grew up with the concrete and with construction works. They just attack your environment as a child. And I've experienced that."* The breeze that is created by the placement of two ventilators reminds the student of the draft she felt during the winter walk: *"Because it was windy and how else can you transfer wind visually? It was very cold during the walk, there was a lot of wind due to those high buildings."* Personal memories came into appearance when experiencing the draft: *"And I immediately thought of the moments in my life where I sat between high buildings, I worked in the film industry, we had to stand for days on set in the cold, and if you have towers, yes, that is a terrible journey. But also as a child, we lived nearby the coast and we had to climb on the slope with high walls and that was one hell of an experience."* |
| | Finally, interaction with the visitors of the installation is an important aspect for the creator: *"I intend to interact with the people, that they actually are the ones who have to turn on the ventilators."* By doing this, the artist is no longer the one in control. It refers to her general feeling regarding urban development projects and the consequences these invasive constructions can have on a neighbourhood and its residents: *"Yes, it is about the powerlessness that you have when decisions are made about a building, a neighbourhood, and in society. I do not like this. I'm in a neighbourhood committee and we* |

*had a meeting last night. And then you see that there is so little communication with local decisionmakers. Just the possibility of being able to accept open discussions and at least take inhabitants' suggestions a little bit into account."*

*"A new order"*

Christiane made multiple walks in the area. These strolls became searches for order in chaos, the chaos in the Vaartkom area, as she stated: *"The area underwent and undergoes changes, the area is in full transformation, with chaos as a result; rubble, buildings, familiar images that are disappearing, new greenery that still has to grow... How do we relate to those changes? How can we look at a neighbourhood in change?"* Specific spots caught her attention and triggered emotions or memories that she captured in images. In the artistic process, she intra-actively engaged with her photographs. Sketches (see *Figure 4.8*) were created that changed the essence of the original images through the use of compositional elements: amplification of colours, manipulation of size, intensity, tracing contours, replacement of elements (Hannes, 2018).



*Figure 4.8* Sketches. Photographs courtesy of Christiane Aerts.

She went back to her locations of interest several times. What followed was a tactile exploration of the changing neighbourhood, the objects, and materials she encountered during the walks. She collected objects that others discard or pass by carelessly. These were transformed into an art installation (see *Figure 4.9* & Table 2): *"Depending on the location I created something out of the ordinary elements available in the environment that normally don't catch human attention."* For this work, she made use of diverse materials that triggered her imagination: "*It is not the reality but the reality imagined, the imaginary overcomes and creates a new kind of order in the chaos.*"

*Figure 4.9* A new order. Photograph courtesy of Annemie Moriau.

Table 4.2

*A New Order by Christiane*

| Unity | Unity can be interpreted as being an overall important principle in the art installation, the order in the composition appears to give harmony to the global picture and to evoke a certain rhythm, with which she started to play: *"I tried to play with it, I have put the elements in different sequences, from small to large, from stones to branches..."* |
|---|---|
| Materials | All the materials she used came from the neighbourhood, including rubbish (ropes and cans that were left behind by people) and organic materials (such as stones, leaves, and wooden branches). With these materials she wanted to create something new: *"I'm going to extract elements, isolate, recover, rearrange, label, organize. The elements are removed from their environment and placed in a different context and, as a result, they obtain a new order."* For Christiane, the re-use of found materials was a way to cherish the past; to work with objects and things that were still there, before the trucks would have taken them all away as part of the urban renewal process: *"Once they start coming with lorries to take away the rubble, it might also be sorted. Stones by stones, wood by wood, iron by iron."* |
| Colour | Christiane worked with a variety of colours to create this new order. Every material she re-used was labeled with a particular colour: *"The wood received a blue label. For example, I painted a blue stripe on the wood, or I tied a blue rope around it, and these stones were labeled with an orange colour ... and these white because that's another kind of stones... and so I clustered them all together."* The repeated use of these colour elements was a crucial feature of the installation, it created a certain rhythm, a certain pattern, and associations as will be explained below. |

In the process of making the art work, several small creations were made that can be linked to particular locations she photographed. Christiane designed "visual image pairs" (Marin-Viadel, Roldan, Genet, & Whiston Spirn, 2015) that are composed of two images: the initial photograph taken at a specific location (the left picture as illustrated in *Figure 4.10*) and the photograph of her creation inspired by that particular location (the right picture as illustrated in *Figure 4.10*). They are joined to one another to construct an argumentation based on her sensorial experiences. Below we discuss one of the visual image pairs that was part of the installation in more detail (Table 3).
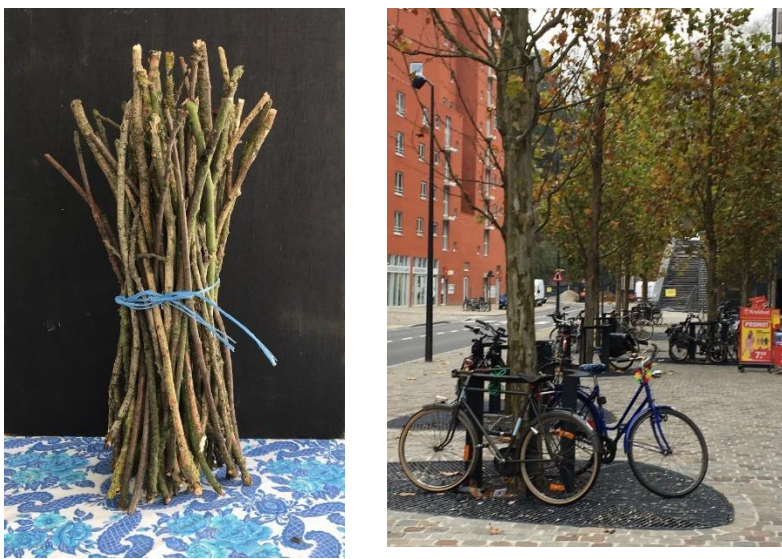


*Figure 4.10* Visual image pair (photograph courtesy of Christiane Aerts)

Table 4.3

*Visual image pair made by Christiane*

| Space emphasis | We could look at the photograph at the right as having a good figure-ground relationship. The most important aspect of the picture is clearly recognizably placed in the center of the photograph. The size of the figure and its contrast with the black background increases its recognizability. |
|---|---|
| Shape | One can interpret the photograph of the initial location at the left and the picture of the creation at the right as being clearly connected to each other. This appears to become obvious through the use of picture elements that are similar to one another in shape and colour. The figure in the second picture consists of a bundle of wooden branches. It has the same shape as the tree standing in the foreground in the left picture. The wooden branches are kept firmly together by a blue rope. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Colour | The colour of this rope appears to be important for two reasons. First of all, in her installation, she worked with a variety of colours to create a new order. Every material she re-used was labeled with a particular colour and clustered together based on these particular colours. Wood was labeled as blue in the installation. Second, the colour blue is chosen for a specific reason. It connects the creation with her original location. The colour blue is also visible in the first photograph of the investigated place, where a blue bicycle is visible at the front. Moreover, the table-cloth in the second picture does not only have the same blue colour as the rope, there is a similarity with the ground portrayed in the first picture: both have a clear pattern. The chaotic print of table-cloth may resemble the texture of the stones visible in the first picture. |
| Pattern | For the participant, this image resonates with her image of the city Leuven: *"It's so typical for Leuven, these bicycles that stand around that pole and that red building in the background... "*During the walk she talked about this: *"having a mix of old and young people also influences the street scene… in this city, everywhere you go you see bikes, bikes, bikes,… when you're older or with imperfect eyesight, that's a problem…it really hinders pedestrians."* |
| Texture | The trees in the picture also caught her attention*: "…when I looked more closely at the trees I got the idea that these trees needed to be trimmed. So that's what I wanted to portray in my creation. That's why I used pruning wood that I found in the area."* When literally feeling these wooden branches and making this composition, it also reminded her of her childhood: *"In the past, people would never leave good branches like these laying on the streets. They would tie an iron wire around it. That was the stock for the firewood. To stir up the fire. So when I came home with all those branches after my walk in the neighbourhood I started to bundle them all together. For good old's sake"* |

## Discussion

In this paper, we described a sensory research project in which the potential of a material-discursive analytical apparatus was explored. Cutting across matter/ meaning (Fox & Alldred, 2015), we used a variety of approaches in different stages of the research process. In each of these phases, we, the researchers, or the artists alternately took the lead.

First, we introduced go-along interviews that would allow us to focus more easily on the physical aspects of the place under research that were triggered by what can be seen, touched, heard, smelled, etc. We walked the Vaartkom area in the company of four student-artists, focusing on the mundane, often ignored features of the streetscape (O'Neill & Hubbard, 2010). The diverse elements in the urban environment, such as the wind, the smell, buildings, wood, stones, branches, bicycles, cars, and ropes possessed an affective, vibrational force. They acted, as Taylor (2017) argues, *"in a kaleidoscopic confederacy [that] create[d] the texture, atmosphere, mood and affects"* (p. 8) which

condition what a changing neighbourhood is and means, but also what it does and how it is experienced.

Second, this interaction between material and discursive dimensions of understanding place experiences also became central in the creation-responding phase. In this stage, the art students were in charge and created a response based on their sensory experiences of the walks and the transcripts produced by us. The art students' encounters with material things during the walks left an affective mark on them, which invited them into an act of creation. This phenomenon, where things are considered to have agency is explained by Bennett (2010) as the power of things. According to Bennett, things are not awaiting a response from humans but actually generate a response by issuing a call for attention. Recognizing the power of things, the art students allowed themselves to be amazed by what they saw, felt, heard, and smelled. They followed their senses in the exploration of the changing neighbourhood. The art works conveyed something of the feel of urban places and captured some of their sensory richness (Rose, 2016). The making of these works in the context of this research implies that we need to acknowledge the co-constituting character of inquiry; how the medium in which we work shapes us as inquiring subjects as much as we shape it (Rosiek, 2018). The device used is never neutral, as the examples of Christiane and Monik showed us. Photo cameras, paintbrushes, pencils... all played a particular role in the sense-making process (Siegesmund, 2018). Involved in a process of image iteration, Christiane for instance began to actively change the relationships of art work qualities in her installation, and in so doing facilitate the emergence of new perspectives.

Third, introducing material dimensions of place experiences also had its implications for data analysis. In this stage, we introduced our material-discursive lens in individual conversations with the art students to analyze the art works together. In doing this, we brought the art works to the center of the analytical process hereby attending to the fleeting, manifold, and affective intensities of the changing environment (Springgay & Truman, 2018). It resulted in an engagement to *be* with the creations (Clark/Keefe, 2014). Rather than distinguishing between language and matter, the analytical apparatus considered them in interaction (Taylor, 2017). Based on our experiment with this material-discursive apparatus, we argue that art works can do *more* than illustrate ideas produced through dialogical encounters between researchers and participants. They bring matter and its intrinsic qualities to the foreground, hereby recognizing that matter is always part of meaning. With the analysis presented in this paper we do not have the intention to provide a full translation of the meaning within the art works. We are fully aware that data are always made by participants and re-formed by researchers who search for patterns and display the data in a particular way to make a case for the research topic (Riddett-Moore & Siegesmund, 2012). What we do argue is that the

material-discursive analytical apparatus enables us to start a dialogue between the material and the human, grounding the interpretation in the created art work itself (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). Moreover, the material-discursive lens enabled us to look at the art works not only as expressions of what individual art students had experienced. The art works provided us with a particular language to speak about the studied environment and to open up a discussion about how it could evolve. Through this lens, the art works became ethnographic and political concepts that manifested collective issues (Siegesmund, 2012) relating to urban regeneration being experienced by many cities around the world. The art works expressed particular matters of concern. The way urban spaces are built or re-generated sensorially has an impact on how certain practices and people are in, or excluded from, the city life (Low, 2015). In the Vaartkom, these works presentend the often market-driven logic of urban infrastructural design that is now dominating neighbourhood development processes. This is often applied in a top-down manner by powerful decision makers, neglecting various human and non-human voices in a democratic debate about the kind of city we want. In both works portrayed in this paper, the "neglected voice" becomes visible. Christiane's work was, for example, an attempt to call attention to objects that others discard or pass by carelessly before they are removed as part of the urban renewal process. The lack of "human skin," a metaphor used by Monik to refer to a city without a soul, speaks towards the same theme.

Finally, in the dissemination phase, the art students were the ones in charge of the exhibition in close collaboration with the curator (for the STUK exhibition) and the researchers.

This approach, in which the pioneering role of researchers and art students alternated throughout the various stages of the research process, encouraged us to think about how researchers and artists can collaborate at the boundaries of their fields of practice that may already be interlinked (Pink, 2009). Artists and researchers working in urban neighbourhoods are often interested in the same type of questions; how do we live and how can the study of living help us to imagine new futures? While doing this, both give close attention to the empirical world. One of the main differences is that we as researchers are more used to distance ourselves from the world. Artists, however, are used to working directly in materiality and to think in terms of the medium:

> Artists understand what it means to negotiate with materials – with stone, metal, or ink pooling in absorbent paper. Advanced training in the arts – past the basic skills of technique and control – largely deals with strategies for negotiating with the non-human. Therefore, the arts may suggests way of thinking in material that could be fruitful to new ways of conducting post-qualitative research. (Siegesmund, 2018, p. 102)

As such, artists can help researchers to see interesting ways of looking at the world, explore possible modes of being or destabilize existing modes of being (Rosiek, 2018). Artists can show us ways to recognize aesthetic qualities. However, engaging with such qualities should not be the monopoly of artists. In line with Dewey's view on aesthetics, it should be much wider in scope. Thinking in terms of qualities does not necessarily start with connoisseurship, it rather starts with a reflection on how we live, interact and move in everyday life (Siegesmund, 2017).

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*In this paper several stages are described. The first author was actively involved in all the stages of the research process, together with the third author she set up the study, she organized group discussions with art students and she conducted individual interviews with the art students. She transcribed these group discussions and interviews and was also actively involved in the preparations for the exhibitions. She wrote this paper. The second and third author gave feedback troughout the writing process.*

*Master student Tamara Lodder was actively involved in the first stage of the process. She conducted go-along interviews with the art students and focused on the analysis of these interviews in her master thesis projects. She also attended the expositions. The first author was the daily coach of this master student and joined some of her walks. However, the analysis of these particular walks were not the focus of this paper.*

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# CHAPTER 5:

# CO-CREATIVE SENSORY RESEARCH PRACTICES AS A FORM OF RESPONSE-ABLE PEDAGOGY: REVISITING THE 'MAGNIFICENT RUBBISH' EXPERIMENT[9]

**ABSTRACT**

Transitional neighbourhoods demand 'attentiveness' to the dynamic interplay between humans and more-than-humans alike that make up such places as much as humans do. In this chapter, we draw on our involvement in 'Magnificent Rubbish', a sensory arts-based research experiment conducted in a former industrial area on the outskirts of a Belgian city that is now part of a prestigious urban development project. It is a site with 'presence' in which people are daily confronted with the messy materialities of everyday life. This messiness is characterized by ongoing construction works and unfinished spaces in the area.

Participating partners in the experiment were youngsters, researchers, artists and youth workers from a local centre of expertise for young adults for whom the connection with school, work and society appears less evident. The co-creative project invited youngsters to rethink their relationship with the changing city area. We invited them to walk and engage with discarded objects and 'the many skins of the city' (Howes, Morgan, Radice, & Szanto, 2013). We explored the surfaces, bumps, scrapes, scars, gaps, graffiti,… of this neighbourhood. Photographs, sound recordings and artefacts collected during the walks were gathered and re-assembled (Cameron, Gibson & Hill, 2014) in upcycling art workshops. This culminated eventually in a public exhibition in the neighbourhood.

Rather than promoting a human-centred ethics focused on *"utopic notions of emancipation, voice and agency"* (Springgay, 2016, p. 71), the experiment provoked a research ethos grounded in a dwelling with things (Introna, 2009) and a participative research process that acted as a form of response-able pedagogy. This opened up the potentiality to respond to what matters (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017). The experiment increased our awareness and sensitivity towards the entanglement of people, things, old and newly created artefacts and place itself (Barad, 2007).

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[9] Coemans, S., Vandenabeele, J., & Hannes, K. (2020). *Co-creative sensory research practices as a form of response-able pedagogy: Revisiting the 'magnificent rubbish' experiment*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

**Introduction**

What happens when the process of a participative research project and the outcomes achieved do not match the expectations of the research team? How should one respond to a project that tends to escape the many conceptual, epistemological and methodological boundaries determined up front? What sort of possibilities should one be looking for in collectives of people, things, ideas and spatial environments coming together?

This chapter presents a retrospective account of a sensory research experiment, called 'Magnificent Rubbish', that aimed to increase our understandings about how youngsters ascribe meaning to and develop a relationship with neighbourhoods in transition. The choice to focus explicitly on young people in this project was motivated by the fact that they still remain underrepresented in academic works related to understanding place. The interests of young people are not always acknowledged. Despite of this, youngsters are considered an essential part of 'urban spatialities', because they are the most frequent users of the streets and urban places (Skelton & Gough, 2013, in Diaz-Rodriguez et al., 2015). One of the aims of the project was therefore to add to the understanding of how youths' lives are restricted by adult conceived space and how they create their own space (Diaz-Rodriguez et al., 2015).

The experiment - a joint collaboration between researchers, artists, and youth workers - was embedded in a school alternative educational programme for youngsters between 15 and 18 years old. It involved the engagement of youngsters and the research team in a series of collective sensorial walks throughout a changing urban landscape, in upcycling art workshops, and in a public exhibition.

The project was framed as a community-based participatory project and could be situated within an empowerment framework. We focused on the inclusion of the much neglected voice of youngsters, mostly those deprived of influence in the debate on urban development. We made these youngsters co-researchers of our project and wanted to give them a say in different research phases. As in many participatory projects, participation was in the design of our research experiment rationalized as being non-hierarchical and collaborative (Springgay & Truman, 2018) The project was carefully protocolled in close collaboration with the involved artists and youth worker. Yet, somehow it broke with our initial expectations. Rather than the expected fixed group of youngsters we intended to work with during the project we found ourselves working with a population of youngsters in flux, moving in and out of the project at irregular time intervals. Conversations with the youngsters about their relationship with the changing neighbourhood, about the meaning of the sensory data they collected during collective walks in the neighbourhood, or even about the artistic pieces they created for an exhibition on the topic were challenging.

Consequently, we ended up with thin, almost meaningless textual transcripts without much potential for further analysis. In addition, the power mechanisms that we were pushing against were re-established rather than deconstructed during the art creation process. While the co-creative aspect worked in some of the preparatory workshops, in developing the exposition we were uncertain about whose voice was actually presented; the voice of the youngsters or the voice of the artists involved in the research collective.

We gradually started to wonder whether our established conceptual, methodological and epistemological framework had actually distracted us or prevented us from seeing the real potential of our research practice. We slowly turned our gaze towards a new materialist perspective to reconsider what had happened and how to relate to the whole situation at hand. Thinking from a new materialist perspective allowed us to reconsider our notion of public pedagogy through the concept of response-ability (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017). A response-able pedagogy incorporates a relational ontology that offers the capacity to respond to what matters and to render *each other* capable (Barad, 2007; Despret, 2004, 2016; Haraway, 2016). This is not only seen as a human ability but *"as a relational capacity by which humans and more than humans are co-constituted through their relationships with each other"* (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017, p. 64). Adopting this perspective gave us the opportunity to revisit our case. It allowed us to think *with* theory; to look back at our particular research case and to work both within and against - what we had already labeled as - a troubled project (Mazzei & Jackson, 2012). It invited us into a diffractive analysis, which *"open[ed] up the possibility of seeing how something different comes to matter, not only in the world that we observe but also in our research practice"* (Davies, 2014, p. 734). We were challenged to recast our presumed notions of data, participatory design, public pedagogy and the ethical implications that follow from this, a journey that we think is worth sharing with colleagues who work in similar research areas.

In this chapter, we first briefly outline the initial design of the experiment and provide more background information on the particular neighbourhood under study. Second, building on new materialist writings, we describe how these writings change our understanding of how to ethically position ourselves into configurations of matter and meaning arising during participatory research projects and the implications this has for our understanding of a public pedagogy. Then, we highlight critical events that initiated a shift in our perspective. We demonstrate how the perspective of a response-able pedagogy and its relational ontology informs our retrospective account and how it makes *"visible new kinds of material-discursive realities"* (Bozalek, Bayat, Gachago, & Mitchell, 2018, p. 52). Lastly, we conclude and discuss how a response-able pedagogy provokes an ethos grounded in a dwelling with things (Introna, 2009); an ethics that is accountable to the material world.

**'The Magnificent Rubbish' experiment: A brief outline of its context and what we sought to do**

The 'Magnificent Rubbish' research project was set up in the Vaartkom area, a former industrial site of about 30 ha in the north of the Belgian city of Leuven, that is undergoing significant transformations. For centuries the area could be seen as the economic heart of the city. The area was put into service in the 18th century for transport activities and small relating industries, housing several beer breweries, salt works, storage facilities, mills, and carpenter sites and, unlike now, only very few residential places. Halfway the 19th century, the building of railroad tracks began in close vicinity of the Vaartkom, connecting the port to other cities in Belgium. During the second World War most of the buildings were destroyed and the area was renovated. Because of its shallow waterways, competition of road transport, and changing economic activities, the area went into decline. In 2008, the city proposed plans to transform the area into a fully renovated urban district. Since then, everyday life in this area has been characterized by on-going building work. A combination of private homes, social rental and owner-occupied homes, starter and student homes has currently been built to create a new vibrant, sustainable, environment by the water (Missotten & Desmet, 2010). What used to be an abandoned part of the city is now turning into a creative and cultural hub *"where designers, starters, artists, production companies, cultural associations and craftsmen have a place to stay in affordable spaces ...."* (city of Leuven, 2011). The mission is to 'create' an urban neighbourhood or community by connecting different people within one particular area, an idea that has received much attention under the impulse of the 'micro-urbanism' movement that promotes the recreation of small versions of a city by designing small-scale outstanding neighbourhoods (Mandanipour, 2001).

To design the 'Magnificent Rubbish' study, we departed from three principles. First, we configured the study as a community-based research project, that was locally embedded in the transitional neighbourhood. This allowed us to work with youngsters who were at least physically connected to it. We were aware of the fact that some of the youngsters that would participate in the research project lived in the area, while others only came here temporarily to participate in the activities of the youth centre. We believed that this mix of young participants could give us valuable insights about how youngsters perceive the environment in which they live, play and hang around.

Second, since we thought it was important to explore youngsters' relationship with their environment properly, we had to move beyond the traditional interview and engage the senses. We drew on Sarah Pink's scholarly work on sensory ethnography (Pink, 2009). Informed by an understanding of the interconnected senses, with no one sensory modality dominating, sensory ethnography incorporates methods to go beyond listening and watching, using multiple media that

foreground for instance touch, smell and sound. This scholarship builds on the idea of participation as producing multisensory and emplaced ways of knowing. It implies joining participants in embodied activities such as walking, to become responsive to place and to tune participants and researchers into their sensory experiences (Pink, 2009; Springgay & Truman, 2018). Our data collection approach could also be situated under the rubric of arts-informed inquiry, which is a mode and form of qualitative research that is influenced by, but not based in the arts (Conrad & Sinner, 2015; Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2014; Wang, Coemans, Siegesmund, & Hannes, 2017). This led us to experiment with photo-walks and artistic workshops.

Third, we embraced the notion of co-creation as one of the central pillars of our research approach. According to Garrett (2013), co-creation involves having co-produced, networked research activities in which the power roles of the researchers are challenged and negotiated. This means that all actors have an important role in the study. It recognizes participants' contribution to knowledge production, and it promotes an open praxis research mode. The project was a joint collaboration with a local artistic organization and a training centre for children and young adults. An upcycling artist and a photographer from a local organization particularly focused on creative upcycling, were part of the research team and closely involved in designing the project and in the different activities that followed. The training centre was an organization focusing particularly on socially vulnerable youngsters for whom the connection with school, work and society appears less evident. The young people that would participate in the project were between 15 and 18 years old, following part-time education in combination with a school alternative programme of the centre. The programme provides a form of non-formal education, in which these youngsters can work at their own pace and together a meaningful way of learning and working is sought. It offers a combination of individual guidance, group and educational activities on a variety of themes. The research project was built in as one of their many activities. The local division of the centre is located in the middle of this changing city area and therefore it is daily confronted with the changing environment. Since interconnectedness - not only with other youngsters but also with their surroundings - is one of the central pillars of the centre, participating in the project was important, as the coordinator of the centre explained: *"The great thing about this project is that young people get in touch, literally and figuratively, with what happens in this neighbourhood and can act upon it"*.

Between September and December 2015, we engaged youngsters in a series of activities in the Canal zone. The activities were a further operationalization of the core principles we had decided on. After preparatory meetings with the research collective and some initial walks with the team through the neighbourhood, the following stages and list of activities were designed:

Table 5.1 Planned activities in the 'Magnificent Rubbish' project

| Stage | Timing | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Introduction | September 2015 | - Introducing the youngsters to the project<br>- Participating in daily morning routine of the programme to get to know the young people<br>- Asking their willingness to participate in the project<br>- Asking suggestions to further operationalize the different stages proposed<br>- Describing informed consent procedure |
| 2. Inventarisation | October 2015 | - Photo walk<br>- Flyering (inviting residents to donate artefacts)<br>- Sound walk<br>- Artefact walk |
| 3. Creation | November 2015 | - Upcycling workshops |
| 4. Re-presentation | December 2015 | - Public exhibition |

We first envisioned an introduction stage, in which the youngsters were introduced to the project and to the researchers and artists. The subsequent inventarisation stage included photo walks, soundwalks, and artefact walks in the neighbourhood. Then, we proposed a creation phase. This consisted of upcycling workshops with the youngsters, organized by the involved artists. This would be followed by a dissemination phase, in which the results of the previous phases would be disseminated to a broader public, in a public exhibition. Furthermore, we planned an evaluation of the project in the beginning of 2016, by means of follow-up interviews with youngsters, youth workers and artists.

As we moved along in the project, our 'planned research experience' started to deviate from the 'lived research experience' (Smythe et al., 2017). The many moments of 'research stuckness' (Kuby, 2019) we encountered initially paralyzed our thinking and acting patterns. However, they also opened up an opportunity to read things differently and to engage with a body of literature in the new materialist tradition that enabled us to rediscover the value of the research as well as develop a more response-able attitude in how to relate to the many human and more-than-human components involved in the process of doing research.

**A public pedagogy of response-ability**

Turning our gaze towards new materialism implies decentering some of the traps of the humanist way of thinking community-based research and public pedagogy into existence; a humanism that establishes binaries between nature and culture, mind and body, and subject and object. A humanism that promotes a fixed understanding of individuals or groups of individuals, a linear understanding of time in which we move from the past to the present to the future, and a belief in pre-formed methods and pre-set goals in research and education (Leibowitz & Naidoo, 2017). New materialist line of thought on the other hand, aligns well with the complex theory of agential realism promoted in the work of Karen Barad (2007), with the posthuman writings of Donna Haraway (2016), and with the Deleuzian materialism of Rosi Braidotti (2013), to name a few. It is not our intention to declare to be all knowing, nor to describe in detail all the important theoretical insights and concepts provided in these works or in the works of other scholars aligned with post-humanist prisms.

Instead, we draw on the ethical concept of response-ability extensively explored by new materialist scholars. Response-ability diffracts the anthropocentric and humanist obligation that makes the rational individual self responsible for its own conscious choices. This suggests an ontological move. For Haraway (2016), response-ability implies a move away from human beings 'speaking for' the other, to a *"response… in ongoing multispecies worlding on a wounded Terra"* (p. 105). Similarly, Latour (2016) describes a shift from Earth-as-a-décor to Earth-as-an-actor, in which *"humans are not on Earth – as on a décor from which they are detachable – but in Earth – among overlapping entities from which they cannot detach themselves"* (p. x). According to Barad (2014) response-ability is *"always already integral to the world's ongoing intra-active becoming and not-becoming"* (p. 18). The notion of response-ability is thus based on a relational ontology that foregrounds seeing the world come into being through multidirectional relationships between humans and more-than-humans. Humans and more-than-humans are not seen as separate but as inherently entangled and co-constituted through their relationships with each other. Hence, response-ability is about the ability to respond to what matters in our daily entanglements in the messy worlds we inhabit: *"to sense, feel, listen; to enable and to welcome response"* (Pihkala, 2018, p. 68).

This notion of response-ability provides some interesting thoughts for re-thinking our Magnificent Rubbish experiment, and our notion of public pedagogy. Whereas public pedagogy can be understood in various ways, we align with Biesta (2012) who connects it with programmatic interventions occurring outside of formal schooling practices, in the 'public' domain, in which the political and educational dimension come together. A public pedagogy brings forth the sort of actions and relationships that are possible in public space, which might challenge our view of the

city, interrogate prevailing norms and ideologies, and create new experiences and understandings. To articulate how a response-able public pedagogy can potentially move us out of the research stuckness experienced in the project, we briefly describe three forms of programmatic public pedagogy. We build on Biesta's typology in which he makes a distinction between a pedagogy *for* the public, a pedagogy *of* the public and a pedagogy that enacts a concern for '*publicness*'. Then, we propose how this third form, "*a public pedagogy as the enactment of a concern for the public quality of human togetherness*" (Biesta, 2012, p. 683), for which Biesta pleas, can be rethought when considering what relationality and pedagogy can mean beyond the capacities of humans.

First, Biesta describes a pedagogy *for* the public. This refers to pedagogical work conducted from the outside; how the state instructs the public "*what to think, how to act and, perhaps most importantly, what to be*" (Biesta, 2012, p. 691). Second, a pedagogy *of* the public addresses learning within democratic practices. Here, the educator receives the important task to bring about critical stances (Burdick & Sandlin, 2013) or what has been referred to as 'conscientization' by Freire. This liberatory nature of public pedagogy is focused on critical democracy, social justice, social change and individual freedom. Educators are in this view considered to be facilitators of learning (Biesta, 2012) that allure citizens to learn and apprehend knowledge. Biesta (2014) argues that this interpretation of public pedagogy in terms of learning has "*the tendency to turn social and political problems into learning problems so that, through this, they become the responsibility of individuals rather than being seen as the concern for and the responsibility of the collective'* (p. 23). According to Biesta, authors like Ellsworth (1988) leave these interpretations of pedagogy as instruction and teaching behind. In creating 'transitional spaces' individuals are stimulated to engage with the ambivalences in meaning they encounter. Here, the educator is not the one who 'gives' voice but the one that in these 'moments of learning' can stimulate new modes of perceiving and sensing in interactive and complex ways (Schuermans, Loopmans, & Vandenabeele, 2012). According to Biesta, this focus on practices of learning, however, still builds on an educational logic that moves in particular directions, that moves toward reflections of the individual. Biesta, however, proposes a way out of this 'learning regime' and proposes a third from of pedagogy in the interest of *publicness*. Instead of seeking for particular learning outcomes that are planned in advance, such pedagogical interventions start from "*a concern for the public quality of human togetherness and thus for the possibility of actors and events to become public*" (Biesta, 2012, p. 693). Biesta builds on the work of Arendt (1958) to describe how in this public sphere of human togetherness 'freedom can appear'. This freedom can never exist in isolation, only in action; it is based on the response given by others.

Here, instead of being an instructor or facilitator, the public pedagogue is an interrupter, that brings dissensus in the form of "*an incommensurable element—an event, an experience and an object—that can act*

*both as a test and as a reminder of publicness"* (p. 693). While Biesta's concept of publicness offers an interesting framework for public pedagogy, it is still rooted in the humanist tradition in which the human receives a central role in the pedagogical relationship (Burdick & Sandlin, 2013).

Bozalek and Zembylas' (2017) notion of a response-able pedagogy offers a valuable expansion to the kind of response described by Biesta. These authors describe how a relational and affective understanding of the posthuman notion of response-ability can contribute to a responsive pedagogy. According to these scholars, this does not imply that we need to completely throw away our traditional pedagogical understandings, but they suggest that incorporating a relational ontology can open up new possibilities. Or borrowing the words of Bozalek and Zembylas (2017):

> Response-able pedagogies are not "new" forms of critical pedagogies. […] Reponse-able pedagogies mark a valuable intervention in the broad domain of critical pedagogy by focusing more specifically on identifying and examining whether pedagogies evoke ethico-political responses that incorporate a relational ontology. What distinguishes [them] is their emphasis on materiality (i.e. embodied self-expression, the use of multiple media) that creates pedagogical opportunities for enriching response-ability (p. 81)

Whereas Bozalek and Zembylas (2017) adopt this critical framework for social justice in a higher education context, their elaboration on the notion of a response-able pedagogy also provides an interesting framework for educational work taking place beyond the classroom or university, such as on the streets and in youth centers. Hence, the notion of a response-able pedagogy sparked our wonderings about public spaces and our participatory work with youngsters as they provide us with a fresh lens to look at our case in retrospect.

**Response-able pedagogy in the context of 'Magnificent Rubbish'**

In what follows, we return to our research practice. We describe how we departed from a rather traditional notion of responsibility. We then present moments of potentiality identified in our case that invited us to engage in response-able practices. We also describe where we missed opportunities to bring a relational and material way of thinking into account. We close with an argumentation on what a move towards response-ability implies.

*Moving from a dis-engaged to an entangled relational ethics*

What does it mean to become response-able? In our study, plugging in tools like an informed consent form and a permission from the ethical review committee, consisting of a panel of

multidisciplinary experts of our university, needed to guarantee a strong ethical foundation for our research study. Trapped within this particular logic of regulating and legitimating our research practice based on some pieces of paper, we aligned responsibility in the first place with procedural concerns (Kuntz, 2016). With a growing emphasis on the formal governance of educational research, it is nowadays common practice to seek a written consent of young people (Goodyear-Smith, Jackson, & Greenhalgh, 2015). Hence, during one of our first meetings with the youngsters, we held an information session in which we talked about the informed consent procedure. This was off-putting to some of the young people, reminding them of their school context in which they are often buried under such papers, as one of the youngsters replied during the info session:

> *"Here, look at my bag, it is full of these kind of documents I still have to sign, I always forget to turn them in or I find them back several months later or it just gets lost."* (Charlie)

Some of them therefore chose to just sign the paper immediately, without paying a lot of attention to the meaning or value of the document. While others were more hesitant and postponed the signing of the document multiple times. Moreover, getting the consent from parents or legal guardians did also not run smoothly, due to several reasons: Some of the youngsters did not have a lot of contact with their parents, there was a language barrier for parents that did not speak Dutch and the formal character of the document appeared to complicate the approval.

Looking back in retrospect, our need to obtain these signatures turned it into an individual responsibility of each of the participants (Kuntz, 2016). Building on principles of 'voluntary' participation, confidentiality and anonymity, the consent form needed to inform youngsters about their rights, which secured us as researchers that they were fully informed about any possible discomfort they might experience in the project. However, what these signatures really did, was displacing our response-ability as researchers in the project, which resulted in a dis-engaged ethics (Greenhough & Roe, 2010). It formalized the research project.. It pointed to a linear view on doing research assuming that researchers and participants can know in advance what the process will be like.

Moving from this dis-engaged ethics to an entangled relational ethics (Taylor, 2018), in line with a reponse-able pedagogy, shows us that responsibility cannot be confined to procedural concerns or to individuals. Instead, it is about a shared responsibility, which "*begins from the acknowledgment that we are all part of the world and that we cannot distance ourselves from it or assume a stance of innocence in our relationships with others*" (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017, p. 68). From this point of view, it is not possible for researchers to disengage. What is at stake here is not informing participants about their rights at the beginning of a study. Building on Haraway (2016) and Barad (2007), Bozalek and Zembylas

(2017) argue that responsibility "*is ongoing and also never solely located inside disembodied subjects, in dualistic or human relationships but rather in multidirectional relationships including other species and more than human partners*" (p. 68). This transformation of the notion of responsibility also goes beyond the idea that research cannot harm the people involved, but requires an "*analysis of the relational modes of being generated between human and non human agents through particular ways of knowing.*" (Rosiek, 2018, p. 37).

### Being attentive to the urban skins of the city

Artists guided the first collective walk with youngsters, youth workers and one of the researchers. In this walk, cameras and photo frames were used as 'activation devices' (Springgay & Truman, 2018) to look carefully to the public space and to focus in particular on the urban skins of the city, including its bumps, scrapes, scars, gaps, and graffiti (Howes et al., 2013). What can these features tell us about a changing city area? (*Figure 5.1*). In doing so, artists invited us to give attention to cracks and surfaces that normally go unseen or unnoticed, thereby suspending our own concerns (Tronto, 1993, in Bozalek et al., 2018). It implied a careful looking and listening; it required an openness to our surroundings.



*Figure 5.1* Photo frames and cameras as activation devices

As such, instead of focusing on how youngsters experience this neighbourhood, we moved to exploring how we interacted with a transitional neighbourhood, with its (partly unfinished) building sites, and how we actively and creatively engaged with the 'messy' materialities of the changing neighbourhood (Kraftl, Christensen, Horton, & Hadfield-Hill, 2013). Rather than *capturing* the experience of the walk - which was our initial intention - these devices changed the walking practice to a tactile sensing of the cityscape. As Diaconu (2011) notes: "*it turns out that no sooner do we switch*

*our perceptive mindset to a "tactile look" that we discover innumerable examples of tactile features, such as textures, fissures or membraneous surfaces"* (p. X). In the photographs made by youngsters during the walk, we noticed this gradual shift; from merely 'representational images' that capture the view of the city whilst walking (*Figure 5.2*), towards images that suggest a different mindset and that focus on the cityscape as a tactile space (*Figure 5.3*).



*Figure 5.2* Representational images – capturing the view



*Figure 5.3* Tactile features of the cityscape

During the walk, the artists often paused to let us think about the present state of the neighbourhood in relation to its history. As such, we encountered particular scars of the city, for instance a remnant of an old railway line that ended abruptly in the city landscape and that led us to an old factory (*Figure 5.4*). These scars of the urban space make up the everyday intimacies. They carry some historical force (Nicollini & Pindyck, 2015).



*Figure 5.4* Encountering different scars of the city

During the walk, the youngsters also often interacted with the materialities of their surroundings; by climbing on the walls and touching the stones (*Figure 5.5*). These scars and physical cues invited us to go wandering, not presupposing that we already know who or what we will encounter.



*Figure 5.5* Climbing the walls

**Looking at things a-new; experimenting with waste materials**

Our upcycling workshops were preceded by a journey to find and gather repurposing items that were left behind by others. This journey of gathering discarded objects or waste materials disturbed some of the youngsters, as Farik made very clear during the preceding artefact walk: *"I'm not gonna pick that up, I'm not gonna touch that. It's dirt, it's mess that people no longer need"* (*Figure 5.6*)

*Figure 5.6* Left-overs encountered in the neighbourhood

This quote of Farik during our artefact walk reminds us how easily we dispose of those bodies and things that we all too conveniently designate as our others (Taylor & Ivinson, 2013). It urges us to rethink our relationships with society's leftovers *"challenging preconceptions about that what we throw away"* (Beer, 2017, p. 107). Especially in a world of waste and increasingly limited resources, this confrontation with leftovers encourages us to take a much greater responsibility for our capabilities as human. Consequently, upcycling - the creative re-use and transformation of useless or waste materials - provides opportunities for ecological and material thinking. It focuses on how discarded remnants, objects that people don't need anymore, invite us to embrace complex assemblages of human and 'more-than-human' things (Beer, 2017).

After the artefact walk, we used a workshop venue to create the artistic pieces for the exhibition. In this venue, the researcher, youth workers and upcycling artist were helping out the youngsters and in the meanwhile engaged in an informal chat with participants on their work. During these workshops, we brought several waste materials in and played with them. Some of these materials belonged to the public sphere of the neighbourhood, such as industrial pallets, rubbish and sand that were found during the artefact walk. Others were donated by residents, which gave us a glimpse into the lives behind doors in this area (*Figure 5.7*). The collected materials were characterised by a variety of shapes, colours, sizes, textures and invited a multisensory exploration.

*Figure 5.7* Flyer for residents 'donate your magnificent rubbish to our arts-based project'

We started the upcycling workshops with the assumption to make arts-based creations that would represent youngsters' feelings regarding the neighbourhood and that would allow us to interpret these. Instead, we now look back on how the workshops showed some potential to experiment with rather than to interpret the materials of the neighbourhood; thereby exploring the vibrancy of material encounters. We illustrate this with a collective work made by some of the youngsters in collaboration with the upcyling artist (*Figure 5.8*).
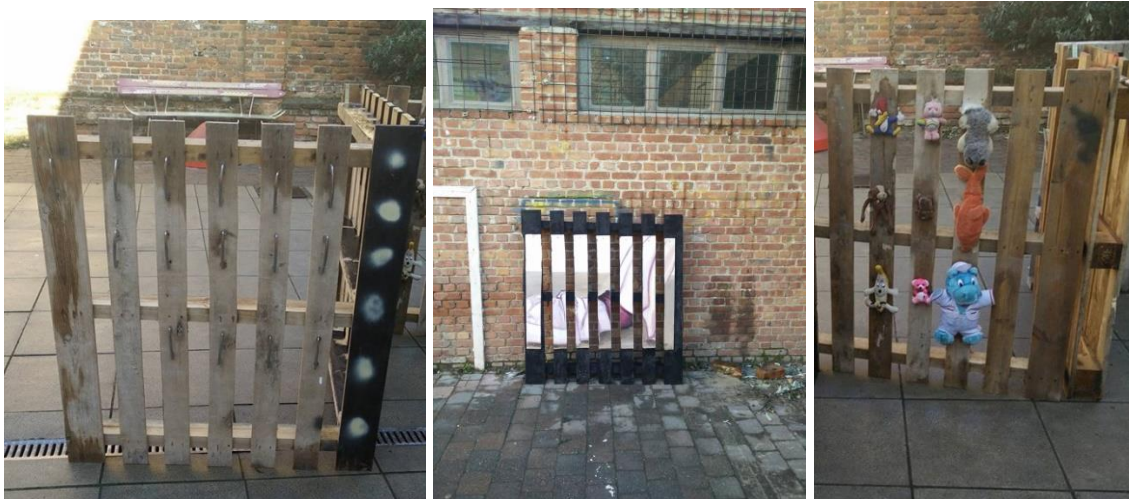


*Figure 5.8* Upcycled works out of industrial pallets

Farik, who initially was not a fan of searching for repurposing items, suddenly became enthusiastic when we came across some wooden industrial pallets that were left behind nearby construction

works in the area. Such industrial pallets are nowadays a very popular material to work with, their shape and texture allow for a continuous re-exploration of the material (Beer, 2017). They triggered the imagination to shine a new light on these manufacturing tools. They were transformed from industrial leftovers to one of the central art works for our public exhibition. Additional objects gathered during the artefact walk, such as a painting made by one of the residents, brackets and worn teddy bears, also found their way into the construction process.

At some point during the workshop, the artist asked about the meaning behind one of the pallets made by Louis and some other youngsters. In this pallet, brackets that we got from a local resident were attached to the pallet. A stripe of black with some white dots in it were also painted on the pallet. Louis told a story to the artist about how these brackets that we got from a local resident reminded him of door handles. He talked about how it looked a bit like the new apartment blocks that are being placed in the neighbourhood. The white dots that were painted on the pallet reminded him of the windows. When it gets dark, he says, you only see those white dots; the light that is visible in the rooms of people who are still wide awake and cannot sleep. The white spots also have a symbolic meaning. Sometimes things look depressed, but there is still something positive, there is hope. You should be able to see those bright spots in the darkness. Later on, when having a group conversation about the upcycled work Louis did not confirm his previous statement, stating *"I just did something, it doesn't mean a thing".* This statement from Louis reminds us that we need to be careful to overinterpret the intentions or meaning behind our upcycled creations. We were tempted to look at Louis as an active meaning-maker in which the task of us as researchers was to grasp the true meaning and purpose behind the creation. Odegard (2012) comes to a similar observation in her pedagogical exploration of junk materials with children. She notes that such materials, that have been rescued from the garbage bin and that lost their previous function, invite freed, creative and limitless experimentations. Hence, working with such materials can go in different directions but can also lead to nowhere. Junk materials resist any fixed categorisation or interpretation.

### Moving beyond in- and outside, beyond a representation of participation

Following our plans, the workshops culminated eventually in a public exhibition in the neighbourhood. The need to create something for a public audience was something that we, the researchers and artists especially, deemed important. Consequently, the project was focused from the start on working towards an end product. Visitors were residents from the neighbourhood, policy makers, friends and professionals working in other social organizations in the area. The youngsters helped with preparing for this expo and were there on the day itself, serving soup to

visitors and talking with people they know. These young persons - who are rarely involved in conversations about the neighbourhood - were able to present their project to several 'adult' actors, which could teach both the youth themselves and the larger public that they have a right to be there. Overall, this was a positive experience for those youngsters who attended this event, as one of the youth workers confirmed:

> *"Even though there weren't so many youngsters... those who did show up at the exposition they had a feeling of recognition... of 'look, all these people just come here to see us, because we participated in this project'. There was one guy, normally he never comes on Tuesdays to the programme because then he goes to school. But I called the school to tell them which of the youngsters participated in the project and the school agreed to let these youngsters come to the exposition. And that one guy, he chose to come and help setting up the exposition. The fact that he changed his [daily routine] and participated in the exposition, for me that says something... [...]. Some of the youngsters gained more self-confidence. I think that some of them were triggered and were made enthusiastic. A confirmation of... we can do something. We can be creative. Just giving a possibility, an openness to do something creative..."*

However, afterwards we felt some ambivalence towards the end product. Although we aimed to bring forward 'real' perspectives of youngsters, we ended up wondering whether the 'voices' that were portrayed at this exhibition were really authentic or rather represented what the involved artists wished to portray.

Moreover, we felt uncomfortable in the way the exhibition established an image of an in- and outside. As many participatory projects, the Magnificent Rubbish experiment was haunted from the start by this notion of the rational, autonomous and agentic citizen that can in a linear way be moved towards action (Kennelly, 2018). As such, we got caught up in this humanist tendency to think in terms of participation as something that can be represented; as an inclusionary practice, in which young people, via the means of an exhibition, can move from 'outside' (at the margins) to 'inside' (into the public debate) (Springgay & Truman, 2018). Nevertheless, in the end it was us – researchers, artists and youth workers - who decided where this exhibition would be held, who took the speakers' floor to introduce the project for the visitors. It was also us who decided where the exhibition would move to next (our faculty) and for how long. It was us who kept parts of the installation after it had moved to the faculty, and threw others away.

*Figure 5.9* Exhibition

**What a response-able pedagogy does: some implications.**

Revisiting our research case, we articulate some implications of incorporating a response-able pedagogy perspective. First, it situates public pedagogy within a framework of relationality. It is exactly because we as researchers are entangled in the research events that are being created, that we are responsible to question our research practice and to reconsider the way it was conducted (Odegard & Rossholt, 2016). Worlds are brought into being through our research practice and therefore we are responsible (Truman, 2019). Consequently, response-ability is not about duty ethics (Taylor, 2018). It is not something that can be planned or that can be reduced to procedural concerns such as filling in an informed consent form. We can never detach ourselves from it.

Second, this entangled relational ethics suggests an engagement with the world's differential becoming. Latour (2004) describes this as an articulation process where one learns to be affected by the many differences one is registering. It means to become sensitive to what the world is made of, or in other words, it is about bodies "*that learn to become more and more receptive to the world around, and to be moved, put into motion by other entities, humans or non-humans*" (Latour, 2004, p. 205). This attention towards the other can cultivate curiosity through unanticipated encounters (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017). During our collective walks, the urban skins and mobile cues - like the railway traces or a door without entrance - redirected our walks and affected how we moved in the research event itself (Springgay & Truman, 2018). The public space was thereby working towards us, as a space with its own force: "*as a responsive participant that acts as a live wire, a tangle of nerve pathways, touching and being touched by the bodies that congregate in it*" (Niccolini & Pindyck, 2015, p. 8).

Third, a response-able pedagogy framework implies looking at things a-new. Our initial expectation that removing waste materials from their context would spark youngsters' imagination and would

enable them to repurpose materials and develop storylines was only partially filled in. We gradually shifted the focus from what participants were saying to what participants were doing (Springgay & Zaliwska, 2017). In the absence of language, this opened up a perspective for inviting non-human agencies into the shared space and considering them as part of the process, precisely because they make us act and relate to each other differently. As a response-able practice, the making of upcycled art work could then be considered as an embodied and receptive engagement with a world full of thing-power (Bennett, 2010), that starts from the potential force within every material.

Fourth, a response-able perspective has consequences for participatory practices. Most participatory studies start from the intention to gather people with a shared interest and to achieve goals based on a mutual responsibility. Focused on the inclusion of vulnerable groups in society, the idea of an equal position is quite central to this process (Hendricks, Dierckx, Coemans, Mccaul & Hannes, 2019). In our research case, an exhibition that would be created and curated by youngsters was perceived as the ultimate manifestation of this inclusionary practice. One of the issues with this view on participation is that it departs from "*a unified, pre-existing and self determining subject who participates, which obscures the complex ways that human and non-humans intra-act*" (Springgay and Truman, 2018, p. 73 ). Along the way, we came to the conclusion that bringing in a relational ontology implies moving beyond the idea of participation as something that can be represented in an exhibition. It implies moving beyond fixed categories of in- and outside, oppressed and oppressive, and beyond the utopic notion of voice. It concerns a participation that begins with potentiality, in which the focus is not just on who participates but also on *what* participates (Springgay & Zaliwska, 2017). This allowed us to look at our exhibition - not as a portrayal of 'authentic' human voices - but as an intertwining of matter and meaning, as a composition of upcycled works, drawings, cameras, touch, sounds, sights, interviews and informal chats with visitors, and an exposition room.

To conclude, this lens of a response-able pedagogy offered a way of seeing ethics not in terms of relationships between educators and youngsters, between researchers and researched, between those who enable voice and those who receive 'power'. Here, the focus is no longer on general ethical or universal principles but on the here-and-now; on "*everyday practices and imaginative politics that rearticulate all kinds of relations*" (Blaise, Hamm, & Iorio, 2016, p. 32). Some describe this as a shift from an ethic of care to an ethic of concern (Taylor, 2018), others describe this as an ethos beyond ethics; an ethos grounded in a dwelling with things "*where being may be encountered*" (Introna, 2009, p. 37). It entails a concern for the public quality of human ànd more-than-human togetherness, a concern that demands a response.

*The first author was actively involved in all of the stages of the experiment. She initiated the project and actively searched for and consolidated the partnerships with the involved organisations. She designed the study together with the third author (supervisor), the artists and the youth worker. Throughout the experiment one of these actors alternately took the lead. The artists guided the photowalk and the artistic workshops. During these moments, the first author joined these sessions, took observations and photographed the process. The first author guided the artefact walks in close collaboration with the youth worker. All actors prepared for and joined the expositions. The first author also conducted individual interviews with the artists and the youth worker and a focus group discussion with some of the youngsters. She wrote this paper. The second and third author gave feedback throughout the writing process. A group of students from the faculty of arts joined the public exposition. As part of their educational programme, they conducted interviews with the audience. These interviews were not used for this particular paper.*

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# GENERAL DISCUSSION

# General discussion

In the final part of this doctoral dissertation, we provide an integrative discussion of the contributions of this doctoral study. First, we provide a conclusion by outlining the main findings of each of the five chapters. Second, building on the strengths and limitations of this dissertation, perspectives for future research are outlined.

## Summarization of the chapters

### Part I: Reviewing the arts-based literature

We started this doctoral journey with an extensive scoping review on the use of arts-based methods in the area of community-based inquiry. Although some overviews of the literature were already available at that point in time, none of them focused on the use of arts-based methods in community-based projects in the broad field of social and educational sciences. As described in *Chapter 1*, six databases (ERIC, Francis, SSCI, IBSS, SA, SSA) were systematically searched, covering literature published over twenty years (1993-2013). Departing from more than 6000 publications, we compiled a database of 131 included studies. A descriptive within-case analysis of these studies was followed by a cross-case analysis. From this analysis, we learned that the terminology surrounding arts-based research is diverse and that there is no consensus on the definition. Therefore, a definition was proposed in this chapter based on the characteristics of the studies inventoried in the review. It was described as follows: "*The use of artistically inspired methods by researchers and participants in a collaborative research environment where members of the community are actively involved either in creating art in the search for meaning or in providing a critical, situated response to artistically inspired formats of research dissemination from others*". Moreover, from this scoping review we also gained insight in the different types of arts-based methods that are used in this field of interest, including visual art forms, performing art forms and literary art forms. Photography, drawing and theatre appeared to be the most popular art forms in community research initiatives. Further, we described several reported rationales for adopting these methods, such as to counter the limitations of conventional language-oriented research methods, to enrich traditional qualitative approaches, to overcome power imbalances, to better articulate participants' unique experiences, to facilitate reflection and dialogue, to explore more complex or sensitive issues that are difficult to verbalize such as identity or community, to communicate findings to a wider audience and share knowledge beyond academic communities. We also clarified some of the main challenges that are inherent in

working on the thin line between art and research, including: the need to support researchers to explore alternative analytical approaches, the need for methodological reflections, the need to reflect on the voice-component in this work, and the need to push the boundaries of what counts as 'the' academic standard.

This broad inventory of different arts-based components led to a descriptive but general overview of the main characteristics of the included studies. In *Chapter 2* we decided to look more in depth to one specific segment of the compiled database in order to further illustrate its potential for further research and to familiarize ourselves with the critical emancipatory perspective of photovoice research, a perspective that we later chose to expand with a new materialist underpinning (see chapter 5). We scrutinized the available photovoice studies and critically investigated how the methodology was applied in studies with female participants. Nineteen relevant articles were identified and analyzed. In line with one of the challenges identified in chapter 1, the potential of photovoice to 'give' voice to and empower female participants was evaluated. This chapter suggests that researchers should take into account the underlying theoretical premises of the methodology, as several authors claimed their study was inspired by feminist theory but few were convincing in the way this was implemented in practice. We argued that without a theoretical lens, photovoice is at risk of becoming a very instrumental practice that neglects many of the theoretical underpinnings that inspired the developers in the first place. Moreover, we noticed that empowerment claims were made by many, however seldom evaluated at the end of the studies. Hence, authors need to unpack the often touted term empowerment or at least clarify what sort of empowerment is achieved in their study. The analysis resulted in the identification of different types of empowerment, to reflect empowerment's multilevel nature. We scrutinized how the included studies in the dataset focused on the intrapersonal, interactional and behavorial component of individual empowerment and on community empowerment. In addition, we clarified how female voices can manifest themselves in different phases of a research process as we noticed that the voices of women in photovoice projects are often mediated by other voices. Little detail was provided in primary research articles on how the involvement of women in choosing the format, in making decisions about the content, and in the dissemination itself was stimulated. Also, we made a plea against treating the visual content as an accessory; an illustration for the narratives. We advised photovoice researchers to give enough weight to these pictures in the articles and followed up on our own suggestion in the fieldwork we conducted.

**Part II: Empirical studies**

What is the potential of an aesthetic orientation to our physical surroundings and how can we, through exploring a changing neighbourhood, recast our methodological ways of thinking about collecting, analyzing and disseminating research findings? By means of three empirical studies, this dissertation aimed to unravel this general research question.

The area under research is a former industrial site in the Belgian city of Leuven, that is undergoing significant transformations. Between 2015 and 2018, various stakeholders, including adult residents, youngsters, and art students, were invited to explore, together with the researchers, this transitional neighbourhood from a multisensory perspective. We experimented with a research environment that would allow participants to move beyond the spoken word to a multisensory expression (Tolia-Kelly, 2007). In addition to individual interviews and focus groups, photo walks, sound walks, artefact walks, creative upcycling workshops and installation art were integrated in the research processes to enable participants to express themselves through various formats, thereby stretching their cognitive understanding and allowing them to pay attention to non-verbal forms of knowing. In some of the experiments, this also led to public and academic expositions in order to engage with different audiences.

In these studies we scrutinized the boundaries of conventional data collection and analytical methods and invested in the search for alternative, or more progressive ways of dealing with challenges encountered in this dissertation. In each empirical trajectory we developed a response to the theoretical or methodological challenges experienced in previous empirical trajectories.

*Chapter 3* reports on a pilot project on the potential of the multisensory go-along interview as a qualitative research method. In 2015, eight local residents were interviewed during walks in the urban area. Using a combination of thematic findings and reflective notes, the chapter demonstrates how a sensory research approach changed our research practice and what can potentially be learned from there. First, we proposed a shift from a static interpretation of interviews that focus dominantly on conversations to a more dynamic interpretation of interviews 'on the move'. Sensory go-along interviews were held to trigger participants' responses from different sensory modalities at different locations. We described how our sensory interview guide opened a gateway to information about how the urban surroundings are perceived. Second, we argued for a more active orientation to place in the analytical process. We illustrated how a stronger focus on the material dimensions of place can be achieved in analytical processes, by focusing on both physical processes (related to visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile characteristics of the

environment that shape people's experiences) as well as abstract processes (related to the inner processes that the particular locations evoke). The sensory focus manifested itself mainly in the use of sensorial thematic categories in relation to this physical and abstract layer of place perception. Sensory awareness was incorporated in the analytical process, through listening to sound recordings and including visual materials of the neighbourhood. In the analysis we brought several ways of knowing together. The main limitation of this chapter was that we departed from a fairly conservative 'representative epistemology', in which we focused on collecting 'data' in the field and on bringing together the findings in a written analysis. Our analysis and argumentation were still mainly based on the spoken and written word. Hence, this trajectory stimulated us to look for a way to break the linguistic dominance in our academic work in order to do more justice to the sensory aspects that were central to the study.

In *Chapter 4,* we built on this analytical challenge again by rethinking the balance between the verbal, cognitive, and the sensorial, embodied, affective. Inspired by John Dewey's thinking in terms of qualities, we proposed an analytical apparatus for studying the complex entanglement of discursive and material aspects of sensorial experiences related to place. In 2017, four art students participated in go-along interviews to explore the changing neighbourhood. After the walks, the artists were invited to turn their olfactory, visual, auditory and olfactory sensations into an artistic creation instead of only trying to verbalize them. Consequently, the art works were brought to the center of the analytical process. We argued that art works can do more than illustrate ideas produced through dialogical encounters between researchers and participants. They also bring matter and its intrinsic qualities to the foreground, grounding the interpretation in the created art work. Moreover, we stated that the art works provided us with a particular language to speak about the studied environment and to open up a discussion about how it could or should evolve. Culminating in two exhibitions as the outcome of the study process, the experiment also provided the right context to emphasize the potential of different pathways into research dissemination. The study illustrated how the project served as an experimental platform that allowed researchers and artists to learn from each other's way of studying an urban environment and the jargon they use in these study practices.

In *Chapter 5,* we reflected on a co-creative project called 'Magnificent Rubbish' that took place between 2015 and 2016 in which youngsters were invited to rethink their relationship with the changing city area. It was a joint collaboration between researchers and artists from a local artistic organization specialized in creative upcycling and youth workers from a local centre of expertise

for young adults for whom the connection with school, work and society appears less evident. The involved partners and youngsters from the local centre were invited to walk and engage with discarded objects as well as with 'the many skins of the city'; its bumps, scrapes, scars, gaps and graffiti. The results of these walks (e.g. photos, sound recordings and artefacts) were gathered and re-assembled during upcycling art workshops and eventually portrayed in an exhibition in the neighbourhood. This final chapter aimed to look back on this research practice. The experiment opened up a way of thinking about participatory research practices, not in terms of their intended outcomes (Springgay & Truman, 2018) but in terms of pedagogical encounters where response-abilities are formed (Haraway, 2016). We explored what it means to become 'response-able' in a participatory research context and how this involves an entangled relational ethics. The chapter discussed how a post-human shift offers a way of seeing ethics not as relationship of humans towards other beings in which the other or otherness is valued (or not) but rather a way of dwelling where being may be encountered (Introna, 2009).

**Looking back and forth – future research agenda**

Our study trajectory began by describing the challenges involved in conducting arts-based research. We are confident that we attended to each of these challenges ourselves: we searched for alternative ways to analyse data in ABR, we included methodological reflections and reflections on the voice-component, and we did a modest attempt to push the boundaries of what counts as 'the' academic standard. Below we further build on and extend these challenges and give several suggestions for future research based on some of the contributions and limitations of this dissertation.

*Collaboration - On the need for transdisciplinary work*

In this thesis, we studied a neighbourhood in flux and explored arts-based and sensory approaches that are based on insights and concepts from different academic disciplines. We also collaborated with master students from different faculties, including psychology and educational sciences, social sciences and the arts. Furthermore, we worked with communities and participants outside of the academy. We involved community members and youngsters connected to the urban area. We worked with contemporary artists to guide arts-based workshops and sensory walks, to translate lived experiences in a material form and to set up exhibitions in and beyond the university.

Overall, we can argue that the art works made in the context of this dissertation served as 'boundary objects'. Such boundary objects are used across disciplines and are created to engage with various groups; researchers, practitioners and local people. They hold both individual as well as common meanings (Trompette & Vinck, 2009, in Steelman et al., 2018).

Studying neighbourhoods in transition offers a possibility to cut across disciplinary boundaries. Transdisciplinary collaboration is necessary to make sense of the complexity of the urban condition, wherein, the entanglement of both physical and social characteristics of place are strongly visible (Hannes & Huybrechts, 2018). This dissertation shows the possibilities of working beyond disciplines and scholastic/artistic borders (Harris, Hunter & Hall, 2015). Although the emphasis in this thesis was on articulating and improving methodological practices, more transdisciplinary work is necessary that really sets the stage for change while engaging various partners in order to enable cross-fertilization of ideas through integrating different types of knowledge, including aesthetic, sensory, theoretical and ethical (Brown, Harris & Russell, 2010; Steelman, et al., 2018).

**Collaboration - Rethinking participatory design processes**

There is also a need to rethink participatory design processes in relation to the changing notions of place and community. The complexity of the urban condition and the entanglement of economic interests and physical and social characteristics of place challenge our current notions. Whereas the role of place in research has traditionally been reduced to the setting or location where data are collected (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015), this dissertation aligns with the growing academic interest nowadays in place as the soil for very different actants. Instead of considering place as localities with particular qualities that are considered to be independent, concrete, static entities, no matter if or by whom or what they are occupied (Agnew, 2011; Pink, 2009;), place can be considered as dynamic and interactive in nature, constituted by the "*sensuous interrelationship of body-mind-environment*" (Howes, 2005, p. 7).

This understanding of place has consequences for our definition of a community, which becomes less associated with a homogeneous uniform entity linked to a particular static area. It also has consequences for doing participatory research. In the first chapter, we departed from a constructionist understanding of participation as something that can result in transformation on different levels, including personal, institutional and audience transformation. Personal transformation of the involved participants did occur to some extent, in the sense that some participants described feelings of confidence and pride after participation. Although other effects such as institutional or audience transformation might be possible, we did not focus our attention on measuring the impact in this dissertation.

Gradually, participation as something that is predefined needed to make place for an interpretation of participation as an already ongoing activity. This notion of participation as 'potentiality' cannot be reduced to acts of individual human actors, instead participation needs to be conceptualized as an assemblage, an entanglement of people, things, discourses, artefacts and place itself (Springgay & Truman, 2018). As we discussed in chapter 5, the perspective of a response-able pedagogy provides opportunities as it suggests a relational stance towards inquiry through engagement with the world's becoming. Important questions that need to be addressed are: How can we do justice to the entanglement of social and material dimensions of place? How can we give shape to a participatory research process where the different actants of place are acknowledged? And how can art practices be considered as thinking-making trajectories that unlock possible modalities of urban existence? (Trafi-Prats, Castro-Varela, & Fendler, 2019).

When we started our experiments, the Vaartkom area, and especially the new Tweewaters project, was presented as an 'outstanding sustainable community', making room for more than 5000 new inhabitants. In the years that followed, the former industrial site was further being transformed to a viable, green, ecologically sustainable neighbourhood. It is built on the same strategies as sustainable communities elsewhere in the world; whereby sustainability is explicitly linked with a comfortable way of living, for instance via the use smart meters, home delivery lockers, compact building, acoustic comfort, maximum waste sorting, and a decentralized energy generation. This holistic strategy brings into account the used space, materials, energy, waste, and so on. It promotes a new way of life and sets the scene for what it means to be living in and for the future (Sustainable cities, 2013). According to Kraftl (2004), it is an attempt to govern life itself, since it departs from a particular notion of 'liveability', which may be resisted by practices of inhabitation by residents living in such sustainable communities. A video made by one of the art students in our study illustrates the kind of feelings such an urban development project can evoke:

*"This is a building that was demolished a few weeks before the exhibition. I was able to photograph something that two days later wasn't there anymore. A place unmasked... not a pleasant experience... (...) not a place where you want to wake up. I actually thought this building had its charm...That feeling of a dead-end street... the end of a story...The dark is the courage of people who experience such an environment.*
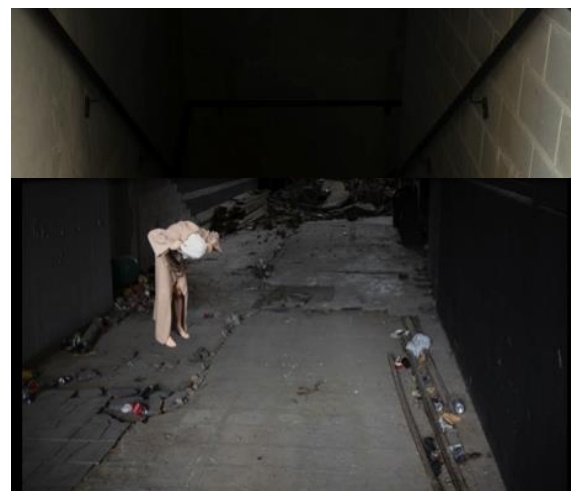
*Yeah, they're not excited, are they? This phase is the beginning of the rebellion, of the sabotage, of discovering that you do not agree."* (Patrick)

It would be interesting to further investigate how this planned 'liveability' from urban developers will resonate or dissonate in the upcoming years with everyday lives lived therein, or how it can 'become lively' (Kraftl, 2004).

### Dissemination - On the need for academic valorization of multimodal research reports

In this thesis, we used different gateways to disseminate the findings of our research experiments, including an exposition in the neighbourhood to communicate with the broader public and expositions in the library and the entrance hall of the Faculty of Social Sciences to communicate with research colleagues. Hence, we fulfilled the idea to share knowledge beyond the university, which was one of the main challenges reported on in our systematic review. With no additional funding and a limited amount of resources we set up these expositions and we invited residents and important stakeholders. For future research, we suggest that dissemination should be a fully-fledged part of a research cycle and that we should therefore exempt sufficient resources for this. Additionally, in line with the prevailing formats and standards for disseminating research, the communication with peers was mainly limited to a written account in this dissertation. Researchers are still struggling to effectively incorporate the arts in their published work as editors and publishers often expect 'translations' from arts-based research outputs into a written, text-based form (Harris, Hunter & Hall, 2015). If we think and communicate in terms of sounds, smells, touch, movement, qualities,… this might mean that we should reconsider standard academic dissemination practices to cater for multimodal dissemination formats drawing on a multiplicity of modes that contribute to meaning making, including the visual, gestural, sensory, three-dimensional, and so on. In the context of a dynamic and continuously changing and technologically omnipresent 21st century, we are able to consider this option (Hannes & Coemans, 2016).

In the field of arts-based research, this is already evidenced by the rapid interest in peer-reviewed journals that move away from the traditional journal article format and that offer a more dynamic format to present research findings. Liminalities, the journal for performance studies, publishes for example multimedia 'articles', hereby offering opportunities to authors that traditional journals currently don't offer. JAR, the Journal for Artistic Research, allows researchers to combine text with image, audio and video. Such research documents come close to a sensory 'exposition', supporting scholarly dissemination of research findings with a more artistic experience provoked in end-users. The idea that there are other possibilities to disseminate research findings is not

restricted to the field of arts-based research. JoVE (Journal of Visualized Experiments) for example, is a peer reviewed scientific video journal and focuses primarily on publishing scientific research findings in a visual format. Academic valorization of multimodal research reports will further enable researchers to transfer information about their research procedure more dynamically.

***Evaluation - On the need to challenge existing evaluation criteria for qualitative research***

If we move towards more creative formats of research dissemination that do not necessarily serve the printed page but come in different forms, this will also have consequences for how we are accustomed to evaluate academic research. It will challenge the existing use of evaluation criteria. If research does not longer aim to capture an already existing reality, but instead creates multiple realities, the main question will no longer be if the research is reliable or valid, but concerns how research can open up possibilities (Cameron, Manhood, & Pomfrett, 2011) and what can and should be brought into being (Law & Urry, 2004).

In chapter 3 we already opened up the discussion about the applicability of conventional qualitative approaches for assessing creative and sensory processes. Building on Barone and Eisner (2012), we argued that other parameters such as incisiveness, concision, coherence, generativity, social significance and evocation might be better suited to judge the quality of this type of research. Similarly, Joe Norris (2011) also developed a worthwhile framework building on the interrelated concepts of pedagogy, poiesis, politics, and public positioning to design and examine creative research formats. In the first chapter we demonstrated that few articles specify evaluation procedures. Although we did not explicitly mention this in each chapter, we included a moment for debriefing at the end of each experiment described in this dissertation. This moment was used to evaluate the research process. Participants were asked to reflect upon the process and upon the methods being used. We used for instance the holistic framework of Norris in our evaluative interviews with partner organizations in the aftermath of the project presented in chapter 5. Both Barone and Eisners' and Norris' work display generic models that strongly underline the broader pedagogical, societal or philosophical aspects. In the assessment of research projects, both frameworks not only look at the created work itself, but also take into account its societal impact (Wang, Coemans, Siegesmund & Hannes, 2017).

As arts-based and sensory scholarship pushes against any singular or universal methodological standard for assessing creative and artistic processes, there are various views on the merit of such parameters and what the impact could be of such a 'standardisation' or 'institutionalization' of the

field (Capous-Desyllas & Morgaine, 2018; Springgay & Truman, 2017;). In order to further spark this lively debate on quality markers and evaluation criteria, continuing research could engage in a transdisciplinary dialogue to rethink existing criteria and investigate what these criteria install. A 'natural' outcome of these conversations is a debate about how arts-based research should be evaluated and whether there should be standards akin to traditional qualitative research criteria. The Global Arts-Based Research Network, in which I am a member of, is currently working on this challenge.

### Ethical considerations

Arts-based and sensory scholarship poses ethical challenges. In this dissertation, we received ethical approval from the university's ethic board (SMEC). University's regulations about how participants need to be informed were followed in all studies. In all experiments, informed consents were used to discuss the aims, practicalities and possible discomfort experienced through participation. Participants gave permission that the results of the study can be used for scientific purposes and may be published. We secured participants that their name won't be published and that the confidentiality of the data was guaranteed at every stage. We also explicitly asked permission to use photos of the creations made in the context of the experiments in research publications. All participants knew that they retained the right to terminate their participation in the studies at any time. In addition, a moment for debriefing after participation was built in in all the experiments. Although following all these official regulations, future research could further investigate the ethical implications for this type of scholarship. As we discussed in chapter 1, the extent to which anonymity and confidentially can be guaranteed, for instance when incorporating public exhibitions in the research process is an important issue of concern and should be discussed with participants involved.  Further research could also think about issues of owernship. In the experiment reported in chapter 4 participants for instance preferred not to work with pseudonyms, to acknowledge their work as artists. This offers challenges for researchers, it poses the question if they can guarantee the safety and wellbeing of participants involved, especially when working on delicate or political topics. As described in chapter 5, we also believe it is important for future research to not define ethics solely in institutional terms but to think in terms of an entangled relational ethics.

### Reviewing - On the need for rethinking systematic reviews

We introduced this dissertation by arguing that our way of thinking about research has inevitably changed through thinking with theory. Therefore, we end this discussion with going back to our

beginning point and by providing some suggestions related to rethinking the research agenda in systematic review methodology.

A first suggestion related to undertaking systematic reviews is rethinking the idea of narrow protocols for review projects. We started this dissertation with the development of an a priori protocol to assist us in the preparation of the scoping review process. The development of such protocols is widely encouraged. Commonly used arguments to promote protocol development include the need to standardize review practice, to increase transparency and to prevent from data dredging. It can assist reviewers in the preparation of a complex review process that comprises many judgments and decisions. Hence, it is often argued that it would lead to review processes that are *"as well-defined, systematic, and unbiased as possible"* (Hammerstrøm, Wade, & Jørgensen, 2010, p. 2). Moreover, the publications of such protocols can stimulate collaborations between researchers aiming to conduct the same type of review, reducing duplication of efforts (Shamseer et al., 2015). However, based on our own experiences with reviewing literature in an emergent research area and the subsequent research process that followed from there, we question the hegemony of review protocols and challenge the idea that protocoling systematic reviews is necessarily a good thing for all sorts of review topics studied, especially for review authors studying emergent research fields.

In an emergent field where definitions are constantly changing, a-priori defined criteria may hamper rather than facilitate the review procedure. We suggest that revising the protocol during the review work is crucial to obtain a certain degree of conceptual clarity if one wishes to do a literature search in research fields with flexible boundaries. A protocol may offer a sense of security for the researchers, however the content can most likely not rigidly be applied in emerging fields, instead one should learn to deal with a level of ambivalence. We believe that a protocol subjected to an iterative logic of deciding on relevant in- and exclusion criteria has merit. As such, review authors can anticipate on elements that were not fully known beforehand.

A second suggestion on the review level has to do with the need for the development of 'living' databases for review projects. We might need to extend traditional approaches to conduct and present evidence synthesis. What our methodological experiments taught us, is to challenge certain normative constructs about the meaning of data, collecting data and presenting data. If we argue that this arts-based and sensory scholarship seek to *"democratise, and enliven, both process and product of qualitative research"* (Horsfall & Titchen, 2009, p. 147), this also provides food for thought on a meta-level. It would mean that we have to install new principles of research collaborations and move for instance towards review projects that involve more stakeholder engagement (see for instance the work of Haddaway, et al., 2017). Hence, can we think about a literature review as something that

is not static, but always in flux? What would it imply if we integrate the idea of blurred authorship and ownership from creative methodologies to the development of review projects? Since 'lively' data need 'lively' databases, it would be worthwhile to explore how a variety of stakeholders can continually engage with the databases, respond to data and databases themselves and incorporate or create new data and further updates of the review work.

## Epilogue

Writing this dissertation, we engaged in a *"honest struggle with the knotty methodological dilemmas"* (Gallagher, 2008, p. 2) that presented themselves along the way. We learned to acknowledge the necessary connection between theoretical, methodological and empirical work, since disruptive (and productive) frictions on one of these dimensions had inevitably implications for the other dimensions. It made this dissertation also a 'living' trajectory, where both the beginning and end point were ambivalent and open for different possibilities.

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# APPENDICES

# Appendices chapter 1

### *Appendix A*

*Screening Tool*

| Criteria | Yes | No | Unclear |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. DESIGN/STUDY TYPE**<br>• **Inclusion: Qualitative primary research study that includes a methods and findings section**<br>*Exclusion: Quantitative study, study that only conduct an evaluation of an arts-based research practice (from an outsider point of view), review of the literature, theoretical and methodological study, non-empirical study, such as an editorial and an opinion paper* | | | |
| **2. INTEREST**<br>• **Inclusion: Art in research: Study that uses an arts-based method in any or all the steps of the research process** (formulating research question, generating data, analyzing data, presenting research results)<br>There is an active involvement of the researcher in the process of 'art-making' and/or in the guiding of research participants in the (interpretation and/or dissemination of the) artistic research process.<br>*Exclusion: Art as research[10], research about art[11]*<br>• **Inclusion: Study that explores educational and social practices**<br>*Exclusion: Art therapy or medically inspired project (however, health related prevention initiatives are included, because prevention is considered a social rather than a clinical practice), art used as didactic technique for teaching purposes, rather than as a method in a research context.* | | | |
| **3. POPULATION**<br>• **Inclusion: Study with a vulnerable population as its target group.**<br>Vulnerable populations are defined as those who are in some way subject to discrimination, intolerance, subordination and stigma. We | | | |

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[10] Where the aim is to gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon through the systematic study of the artistic process by the researcher(s)

[11] Where the aim is to study topics related with art, without artistically interfering with the subject under study

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| include ethnic communities, immigrants, sex workers, the homeless, gay men and lesbians, homeless, vulnerable, refugees, minority groups, children, youth, elderly, women, people with disabilities. | | | |
| 4. **SETTING**<br><br>• **Inclusion: Community-based: The community has to be actively involved in the research project.**<br><br>To be considered as a community, a group of people should share a particular interest defined as a state of common concern or curiosity, a topic of importance for that community, a particular cause.<br><br>There has to be a shared benefit of the research project for the researcher and the researched.<br><br>***Exclusion:*** *Study that shows no sign of active involvement of the target group, e.g. members of a community that are interviewed about phenomena of concern in their community but have no further role or interaction with other members in the context of the research, projects that are not meant to share or feedback findings to the community* | | | |

**Appendix B**

*List with 131 included studies*

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|---|---|
| 1 | Adams, K., Burns, C., Liebzeit, A., Ryschka, J., Thorpe, S., & Browne, J. (2012). Use of participatory research and photo-voice to support urban Aboriginal healthy eating. *Health and Social Care in the Community, 20,* 497-505. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2524.2011.01056.x |
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| 3 | Bader, R., Wanono, R., Hamden, S., & Skinner, H. A. (2007). Global youth voices: engaging Bedouin youth in health promotion in the Middle East. *Canadian Journal of Public Health, 98,* 21-25. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41994866 |
| 4 | Banks, O. (2007). *Decolonizing the body: an international perspective of dance pedagogy from Uganda to the United States* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10150/193853 |
| 5 | Batada, A., Chandra, A., & King, S. R. (2006). Urban African American adolescent voices on stress: the "shifting the lens" project. *Prevention Researcher, 13*, 3-7**.** Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ793236 |
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| 12 | Bukowski, K., & Buetow, S. (2011). Making the invisible visible: a photovoice exploration of homeless women's health and lives in central Auckland. *Social Science & medicine, 72,* 739-746. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2010.11.029 |
| 13 | Capous-Desyllas, M. (2010). *Visions and voices: an arts-based qualitative study using photovoice to understand the needs and aspirations of diverse women working in the sex industry* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1022&context=open_access_etds |
| 14 | Clover, D. (2011). Successes and challenges of feminist arts-based participatory methodologies with homeless/street-involved women in Victoria. *Action Research, 9*, 12–26. doi:10.1177/147675110310396950 |
| 15 | Coholic, D., Cote-Meek, S., & Recollet, D. (2012). Exploring the acceptability and perceived benefits of arts-based group methods for aboriginal women living in an urban community within |

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| | North Easthern Ontario. *Canadian Social Work Review, 29,* 149-168. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1442988611?accountid=17215 |
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## Appendix C

*Main Characteristics of the 131 Included Studies*

| Author (Year) | Country[12] | Author's discipline(s) | Setting | Participants | Sample size *(n)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adams et al. (2012) | Australia | health | aboriginal community | women 20-30 years | 10 |
| Alcock, Camic, Barker, Haridi, & Raven (2011) | UK | psychology | housing estate | young people (boys) 9-14 years & older. adults (women) 65-80 years | 26 |
| Bader, Wanono, Hamden, & Skinner (2007) | Canada (Israel) | health | 2 communities | students (boys and girls) 14-15 years | 20 |
| Banks (2007) | USA | education | 2 community-based organisations | students (high school) | - |
| Batada, Chandra, & King (2006) | USA | social sciences | school | young people | 26 |
| Bell (2008) | USA | sociology | community | women 15-69 years | 15 |
| Berbes-Blazquez (2012) | Costa Rica | environmental studies | volcan river watershed | residents of 4 neighbourhoods | 34 |
| Bishop, Robillard, & Moxley (2013) | USA | social work | city | disabled woman 70 years | 1 |
| Bisping (2011) | USA (Guatemala) | art | village | young people (students in guatemala) families (indigenous residents) | 33 |

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[12] In this table, country refers to the country where the university of the research team was situated. When this differs from the country where the field study took place, the latter is added in parentheses.

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bradley, Deighton, & Selby (2004) | Australia | psychology | rural town | young people (at risk) 12-19 years | 10 |
| Brunk, Gould, Sivak, Spencer, & Walsh-Bowers (1999) | USA | education | 5 different school settings | Students | 13 |
| Bukowski & Buetow (2011) | New Zealand | health | homelessness community | women (homeless) 21-39 years | 6 |
| Capous-Desyllas (2010) | USA | sociology | sex workers community | women (sex workers) 18-52 years | 11 |
| Clover (2011) | Canada | education | social service agency in a city | women (homeless) | 20 |
| Coholic, Cote-Meek, & Recollet (2012) | Canada | social work | city | Women | 16 |
| Conn (2013) | New Zealand (Uganda) | community health development | region in eastern uganda | women 15-19 years | 15 |
| Conrad (2005) | Canada | education | rural community | students (at risk, high school) | - |
| Contreras (2007) | Venezuela | english literature | school | students 11-15 years | 18 |
| Cushing (2008) | Canada | psychology | Canadian region | women (white mothers of biracial children) | 6 |
| Daniels (2002) | South Africa | education | community | women | 16 |
| Daniels (2003) | South Africa | education | a non-formal education program | Women | 16 |
| Davis (2003) | USA | anthropology | rural and urban environments | women 11-20 years | - |
| De Finney (2007) | Canada | youth care ; human and social development | city | women 14-17 years | 6 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Duffy (2011) | Canada | health | single parents community | women (lone mothers) | 4-7 |
| Dumbrill (2009) | Canada | social work | not clear | parents (refugees) | 11 |
| Emme, Kirova, Kamau, & Kosanovich (2006) | Canada | education | school | children (immigrant) | 3 |
| Feldman, Hopgood, & Dickins (2013) | Australia | health | city | women 'older women' | 58 |
| Fenge, Hodges, & Cutts (2011) | UK | multidisciplinary | school | young people (with special needs; girls) 13-14 years | - |
| Findholt, Michael, & Davis (2011) | USA | health | region union county | young people 15-18 years | 6 |
| Fink (2012) | UK | social policy | neighbourhood | women (working class) | 2 |
| Foster (2007) | UK | social work | government funded initiative | women (poor, working-class) | - |
| Francis (2010) | South Africa | health | school | students 16-17 years | 21 |
| Fu (2009) | China | politics | chinese ngo | women (migrants) | 10 |
| Fulmer (2008) | USA | social work | city | women (african american) | 8 |
| Gordon (2011) | USA | arts | school | young people 17-19 years | 9-12 |
| Grace & Wells (2007) | Canada | education | community-based education project | young people (sexual minority) 18 years or older | 25 |
| Gray (1997) | Australia | arts | a town | young people (at risk) | 250 |
| Gray (2011) | Canada | anthropology | school | young people 23-28 years | 3 |
| Green & Kloos (2009) | USA (Uganda) | psychology | a displacement camp | Students | 12 |

| Greene, Burke, & Mckenna (2013) | USA | education | a city | young people (women) 14-16 years | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Guerrero & Tinkler (2010) | USA (Colombia) | education | 3 informal education programs | young people (refugees) 12-18 years | 19-60 |
| Halverson (2010) | USA | education | a youth organisation | young people 14-20 years | 25 |
| Haque & Eng (2011) | Canada | health | a town | residents (immigrant) 18-68 years | 27 |
| Haque & Rosas (2010) | Canada | health | a neighbourhood | residents (immigrant) 18-65 years | 17 |
| Harding & Gabriel (2004) | UK | education | community-based organisations in london | elderly and young people | 15 |
| Harris (2011) | Australia | education | school | women (sudanese, refugees) 18-25 years | 16 |
| Henderson (2006) | South Africa | anthropology | school | young people 14-22 years | 31 |
| Ho, Rochelle, & Yuen (2011) | China | social sciences | a neighbourhood | young people 12-17 years | 54 |
| Holgate, Keles, & Kumarappan (2012) | UK | sociology | city | kurdish diasporic workers | 5 |
| Holmes (2008) | UK (Africa) | education | school | children (speaking a minority language) | - |
| Howard (2004) | USA | communication studies | school | students 17-29 years & women | 6 |
| Ikeda-Vogel (2008) | USA | social welfare | city | transgenders | 16 |
| Irwin Et Al. (2009) | Canada | education | city | families (immigrant) | 8 families |
| Johnson & Guzman (2013) | UK + Spain | social sciences | city | transgenders | - |
| Jordan (2008) | UK | cultural studies | community based arts and educational centre | elders (african somali) | 47 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kamper & Steyn (2011) | South Africa | education | school | students (south-african) | 8 |
| Kaptani & Yuval-Davis (2008) | UK | sociology | 4 community organisations in london | refugees | - |
| Kellock (2011) | UK (New Zealand) | education | school | children (from a range of ethnic backgrounds) 8–10 years | - |
| Kelly (2010) | Canada | education | african-canadian community | senior men and women | 8 |
| Kendrick & Shelley (2008) | Canada (Uganda) | education | school | young people (girls) | 44 |
| Kinloch (2007) | Usa | education | school | students (from poor and working-class background) | 2 |
| Kwok & Ku (2008) | China | multidisciplinary | district | women (immigrants, chinese) | 10 |
| Lally & Sclater (2012) | UK | multidisciplinary | virtual communities | young people 15-18 years (group 1: foster care; group 2: young people) | 10 |
| Landay, Meehan, Newman, Leonard, & King (2001) | USA | education | school | students (high school; recently arrived in us) | 30 |
| Lawton (2010) | USA | education | organisation for homeless people / school | young people (homeless) | - |
| Lee (2006) | Canada | human and social development | city | young people (girls, ethnic minority) 14-18 years | 10 |
| Levy & Weber (2011) | Canada | education | community centre | young people (women, pregnant) | 8 |
| Liebenberg (2009) | Canada (South Africa) | social sciences | community in cape town | young people (teenage mothers) | 5 |
| Lomax (2012) | UK | sociology | neighbourhood | Children | 14 |
| Lozowy, Shields, & Dorow (2013) | Canada | sociology | a region | young people | 12 |
| Luttrell (2013) | USA | education | school | young people (racially and ethnically diverse group) | 34 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lykes (2010) | USA (Guatemala) | social sciences | indigenous mayan community | women 16-65 years | 20 |
| Mabala, Allen, & Bagamoyo (2002) | Tanzania + Kenia | arts | 4 districts | young people (out-of-school) | - |
| Mampaso (2010) | Spain | education | neighbourhood | Residents | - |
| Markus (2012) | USA | health | city | young people 18-19 years | 6 |
| Mattingly (2001) | USA | geography | neighbourhood | students (high school) | 6-13 |
| Mcintyre (2000) | USA | education | school | young people 11-13 years | 24 |
| Mcintyre (2003) | USA (Ireland) | education | working class community | women 24-40 years | 9 |
| Mckean (2006) | UK | arts | prison | Women | 17 |
| Mejia, Quiroz, Morales, Ponce, Chavez, & Olivera Y Torre (2013) | USA | health | latina community | women (immigrant mothers) 25-35 years | 5 |
| Mitchell & Ouko (2012) | New Zealand | education | small Congolese community | refugee parents | 18 |
| Moletsane Et Al. (2009) | South Africa + Canada | education | rural community | mostly women | 7 |
| Montero (2009) | Venezuela | psychology | art classes in a city | children (living in poverty) 3-15 years | 10-50 |
| Montero (2012) | USA | education | School | students (ethnically diverse) | - |
| Morgan Et Al. (2010) | Costa Rica | education | Community | women (immigrants) 20-60 years | 7 |
| Nelson (2011) | USA | education | School | students (of colour; at risk) 14-20 years | 24 |
| Nimmon (2007) | Canada | education | women's group | women (immigrant) 35-80 years | 5 |
| Noor (2007) | Australia | education | muslim community | young people (muslims in london and new york) 17-19 years | 5 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nowell, Berkowitz, Deacon, & Foster-Fishman (2006) | USA | psychology | 7 neighbourhoods | residents (of 7 distressed neighbourhoods with heigh poverty rates) | 31 |
| O'neill & Giddens (2001) | UK | multidisciplinary | not clear | Prostitutes | - |
| Packard, Ellison, & Sequenzia (2004) | USA | education | Neighbourhood | young people (girls) 13-19 years | 14 |
| Paivinen & Bade (2008) | Canada | health | City | women (with histories of substance use and addicted) | - |
| Peddle (2011) | Canada | communication studies | 4 communities in a city | young people 12-18 years | 14 |
| Peters (2003) | USA | social work | School | students (high school) | - |
| Pratt & Johnston (2009) | Canada | geography | 2 festivals | filipina domestic workers | - |
| Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, & Bradley (2011) | USA | multidisciplinary | neighbourhood | young people (high school and college students 14-20 years | 20 |
| Rhodes Et Al. (2009) | USA | multidisciplinary | urban housing communities | men (immigrant, latino) | 9 |
| Robison (2012) | USA | education | School | gay and bisexual male college students | 9 |
| Rydzik, Pritchard, Morgan, & Sedgley (2013) | UK | tourism inquiry | not clear | women (migrant) | 11 |
| Sajan Virgi & Mitchell (2011) | Canada (Mozambique) | education | School | young people (girls, living in poverty) 10-14 years | 10 |
| Salazar (2009) | USA | education | School | young people (immigrant) 12-14 years | 6 |
| Sanders (2004) | USA | education | school | all members of the class, including teachers and students students (talented minority youth) 14-17 years | 9 |
| Santo, Ferguson, & Trippel (2010) | USA | geography | neigborhood | young people (2 groups of african american teens) 16-18 years | 14 |
| Shannon (2012) | USA | education | local facility (ngo) | young people (men; incarcerated) 17-18 years | 3 |

  
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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Singhal & Rattine-Flaherty (2006) | USA (Peru) | communication studies | amazon community | children + women | 15 |
| Skinner & Masuda (2013) | Canada | environmental studies | City | young people (aboriginal) | 8 |
| Skovdal & Onyango Ogutu (2012) | Norway + Kenya | health | district | children 12-17 years | 48 |
| Slade (2012) | Canada | education | education program | immigrant professionals | 14 |
| Sloane & Wallin (2013) | Canada | education | school | refugees (adults and youth) | 33 |
| Steaffens (2011) | USA | anthropology | neighbourhood | young people (low-income, mexican-american) | 6 |
| Strawn & Monama (2012) | South Africa + USA | education | community | women no age range | 30 |
| Strickland, Keat, & Marinak (2010). | USA | education | School | children (immigrant) 3-5 years | 15 |
| Suffla, Kaminer, & Bawa (2012) | South Africa | psychology | 2 low income communities | young people 13-15 years | 20 |
| Sullivan Et Al. (2008) | USA | environmental studies | neighbourhood | residents 12-64 years | 10-14 |
| Sutton-Brown (2011) | USA (Mali) | education | financial borrowers community | women (poor west-african) | 6 |
| Sylvester & Bojuwoye (2011) | South Africa | psychology | Suburb | boys mean age: 15 years | 10 |
| Thompson (2011) | Canada (Sierra Leone) | environmental studies ; education | communities in sierra leone | women, men, youth and elders in seven communities | 28 |
| Thompson (2009) | Canada (Sierra Leone) | education | rural community | women (poor young mothers, wives and farmers) 16-36 years | 7 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tolia-Kelly (2007) | UK | geography | lake district national park | 2 groups:<br>women / men (migrated residents)<br>30-50 years<br>+<br>art group (mixed group)<br>21-60 years | 40 |
| Trafi-Prats (2012) | USA | education | School | children (latino)<br>8 years | 15 |
| Tucker-Raymond, Rosario-Ramos, & Rosario (2011) | USA | education | neighbourhood | students (from 2 projects in the same neighbourhood)<br>12-14 years | - |
| Valentine (2008) | Scotland | social sciences | nationwide lgbt community | lgbt community nationwide | - |
| Valera, Gallin, Schuk, & Davis (2009) | USA | health | neighbourhood | women (mothers, low-income)<br>20-45 years | 9 |
| Vaughan (2010) | UK | psychology | hiv-prevention projects | Young people | 31 |
| Vaughn et al. (2013) | USA | health | Philadelphia collaborative violence prevention center | young people<br>10-16 years | 6-12 |
| Walsh, Rutherford, & Kuzmak (2009) | Canada | social work | City | women (homeless)<br>22-64 years | 20 |
| Wang & Burris (1994) | China | education | rural laborers community | women (rural laborers)<br>18-56 years | 62 |
| Whitzman, James, & Poweseu (2013) | Australia + Papua New Guinea | geography | country | people with disabilities | 6-15 |
| Winn (2010) | USA | education | playwriting and performance program | young people (incarcerated girls) | - |
| Yonas, Burke, & Miller (2013) | USA | health | housing community | young people (who lived in a publicly subsidized housing community<br>8-15 years | 13 |
| Zenkov (2009) | USA | education | school | students (with high school dropouts)<br>middle and high school | 93 |

**Appendix D**

*Methodological Characteristics of the 131 Included Studies*

| author (year) | art genre | design | data collection | data analysis | public dissemination | arts-based representation in the publication |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adams et al. (2012) | visual (photo) | action research | photovoice | thematic analysis | photo exhibition website television show | - |
| Alcock, Camic, Barker, Haridi, & Raven (2011) | visual (photo) | ethnography: case study | photovoice | thematic analysis - negative case analysis | photo exhibition | - |
| Bader, Wanono, Hamden, & Skinner (2007) | visual (photo) | action research | photovoice in combination with surveys | others: inductive qualitative analysis | videopresentation photo exhibition powerpoint presentation | - |
| Banks (2007) | performing (dance) | ethnography: dance ethnography/auto-ethnography | author developed the term 'body data': combining the methods of observing, moving and teaching  combined use of: video recordings, photos, field notes | thematic analysis*  others: study of kinesthetic semiotics: an analytical apparatus for understanding dance | performance | photos of the dance classes |
| Batada, Chandra, & King (2006) | visual (drawing; video) | Unclear | questionnaires audio journals pile-sort activities personal social support network maps (drawings by the participants) | constant comparative analysis* | video discussions with groups of local community members, parents, and health advocates | link to a website with the video one example of personal network map |

| Bell (2008) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | thematic analysis | photo exhibition participants decided to continue organizing community activities addressing some of the problems highlighted in the study photo calendar + greeting card | photos ($n = 9$) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Berbes-Blazquez (2012) | visual (photo) | community- based research | photovoice in combination with a modified transect walk | showed analysis | Unclear | photos ($n = 4$) |
| Bishop, Robillard, & Moxley (2013) | visual (photo) | case-study (participatory) action research | photovoice | others interpretive holistic analysis | photo exhibition | - |
| Bisping (2011) | performing (theater) | action research* | adapted version of forum theatre procedure | others 'performance analysis' | Performance | photos of the ft workshops and final performance |
| Bradley, Deighton, & Selby (2004) | performing (theatre) | action research | procedure influenced by theatre of the oppressed and public conversation group | thematic analysis | performance | - |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brunk, Gould, Sivak, Spencer, & Walsh-Bowers (1999) | performing (drama) | unclear | collective drama workshops: drama games group discussions script writing and topic selection individual interviews | unclear | performance | - |
| Bukowski & Buetow (2011) | visual (photo) | explorative participatory research | photovoice | thematic analysis | photo exhibition | photos (*n* = 3) |
| Capous-Desyllas (2010) | visual (photo, collage) | arts-based research participatory research | photovoice | interpretive phenomenological analysis  others: reflexivity through collage-making (researcher) | photo exhibition media (news, television interview) | artistic representation of the analysis process and the themes artistic representation to capture the reflective process of the researcher photos taken by participants (*n* >10) |
| Clover (2011) | visual (collage, painting, mask making, bead work, miniature mosaics, upcycling, quilt, a mural, a life-size marionette, a decoupage on wood)  + literal (poetry) | arts-based research action research | art workshops: individual artworks: masks, poetry, collages, paintings, bead work, miniature mosaics, upcycled rubbish collective works: a quilt, a mural, a life-size marionette, a collage, a decoupage on wood, and a tile mosaic. | thematic analysis* | art exhibitions | artworks (*n* = 3) |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coholic, Cote-Meek, & Recollet (2012) | visual (collage, drawing, painting, mask making, decorative boxes) + literal (poetry) | 'arts-based methods' exploratory, qualitative, research | artworks: constructing masks, poems, pictures, paintings, collages, decorative boxes | constant comparative analysis* | Unclear | - |
| Conn (2013) | visual (drawing) + performing (drama) + literal (writing) | narrative research | workshop: working in small groups and individually video training making drawings + aspirational writing theme selection making of performance (video presentation) | narrative analysis | video presentations | drawings ($n = 2$) |
| Conrad (2005) | performing (theatre) | participatory research ethnography (auto-ethnography) performative research | theatre of the oppressed auto-ethnography: re-collection of a number of artefacts from the researcher's youth and retelling the stories | discourse analysis | unclear | excerpts of script |
| Contreras (2007) | visual (photo, drawing, maps, diagram) + performing (puppetry) | participatory research narrative research ethnography image-based research emergent design approach | participant observation informal interviews research journal visual methods (photography, images, drawings, maps, diagrams) personal narrative interpretation of documents and other cultural artifacts use of drama through puppetry | others: 'reading, re-reading, selecting, coding, linking, sorting of the transcripts' (based on barton & hamilton) use of charts, diagrams and concept maps to categorize data | planned: a photo exhibition + creation of a local museum to preserve the collective memory of the people of the community | photo poem, collage, photos ($n > 10$) |
| Cushing (2008) | visual (photo) | qualitative research | adaptation of photovoice (photographic journaling) | constant comparative analysis* | Unclear | - |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Daniels (2002) | visual (drawing, photo) | narrative research | interviews observation photography in c-ollaboration with drawing | thematic analysis* | community workshops | - |
| Daniels (2003) | visual (drawing, photo) | not explicit. reference to ethnography and participatory research | photovoice in combination with drawing | thematic analysis* | Unclear | photos (3x3), drawings (*n* = 5) |
| Davis (2003) | visual (photo) | ethnography participatory research | photovoice in combination with photographic journaling and surveys | individual and group analysis | photo exhibition forums | - |
| de Finney (2007) | visual (photo) + performing (theatre) | (community based participatory) action research | popular theatre (including theater of the oppressed) in combination with survey and photo drama | others: development of the interpretive spiral model | theatre and conference presentations media and website productions | excerpts of the play |
| Duffy (2011) | visual (photo) | (community-based participatory) action research | photovoice in combination with likert schale to rate level of empowerment | group analysis | photo exhibition 2 visits to the local public transportation director invitations to university classes | - |
| Dumbrill (2009) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | thematic analysis* | Unclear | photos (*n* = 6) |
| Emme, Kirova, Kamau, & Kosanovich (2006) | visual (photo) | performative research arts-based research | photonovella | group analysis | sharing the photonovella with other children | photos (*n* = 7) (revised because of ethical concerns reviewers) |
| Feldman, Hopgood, & Dickins (2013) | performing (theatre) | narrative research research-based theatre | community-based theatre in combination with group discussions | narrative analysis | theater performance | excerpts of the script |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fenge, Hodges, & Cutts (2011) | multimedia?? performing (theatre, music) + visual (film, online materials) + literal (poetry) | ethnography arts-based research | forum theatre in combination with visual methods and new media | planned: thematic analysis* | collaborative multimedia 'performance' | - |
| Findholt, Michael, & Davis (2011) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice in combination with keeping a notebook (to record where and when the pictures were taken and why) | thematic analysis* | photo presentation | - |
| Fink (2012) | visual (photo) | participatory visual research arts-based research | photography walking tour (professional photographers are involved in taking the pictures) | unclear 'analysis of the visual data during the photography walking tour' | Unclear | photos (*n* = 6) |
| Foster (2007) | visual (photo, collage, video) + literal (creative writing) + performing (drama) | (participatory) action research | surveys interviews set up of creative writing, short-film making, visual arts, and drama groups, open to anyone in the local community to attend | thematic analysis* | drama women's poetry was read, the short films were showed, and the visual art was displayed. | collages *(n = 2)* pictures of the performance (*n* = 3) |
| Francis (2010) | performing (theatre) | unclear | theatre of the oppressed | unclear | drama | excerpts of the theatre |
| Fu (2009) | performing (theatre) | unclear | theatre of the oppressed | unclear | unclear | narrative (?) excerpts of the theatre |
| Fulmer (2008) | visual (photo) | unclear | interviews digital still photos during the interviews (made by the researcher) | unclear 'looking for patterns' | photo exhibition | photos (including portraits and pictures of the exhibition; *n* = 5) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gordon (2011) | performing (theatre) | (participatory) action research | theatre of the oppressed | unclear | performance + video journal | excerpts of the scenes |
| Grace & Wells (2007) | visual (photo, artefacts) | case study arts-informed research | photography making an art installation using different media interviews using art works as prompts | unclear 'iterative process' (participants and researchers worked together to correct and interpret interview drafts) | public art installation photo exhibition | artworks (*n* = 4) |
| Gray (1997) | performing (theater) | unclear | scripting and performing a theatre piece (in)formal interviews | unclear | performances | - |
| Gray (2011) | visual (photo) | (community-based participatory) action research | photovoice | unclear | unclear | photos |
| Green & Kloos (2009) | visual (photo) + literal (creative writing) | (participatory) action research | photovoice in combination with creating writing | unclear 'analysis with nvivo' | website photo exhibitions | photos (*n* = 3) |
| Greene, Burke, & McKenna (2013) | visual (drawing, photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice in combination with drawing conceptual maps | content analysis relational analysis | conversations with policymakers (not clear) | - |
| Guerrero & Tinkler (2010) | visual (photo) | ethnography | photovoice | thematic analysis | photo exhibitions | photos *(n* = 2) |
| Halverson (2010) | performing (theatre) | case study | developing theatre scripts interviews | narrative analysis discourse analysis thematic analysis | theatre performance | excerpts of the storytelling sessions |
| Haque & Eng (2011) | visual (photo) | action research case study arts-based research | photovoice | content analysis | community forum and photo exhibition | photos (*n* = 2) |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Haque & Rosas (2010) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice in combination with concept mapping (to sort and rate the photos on a 5-point likerttype scale) | concept mapping analysis hierarchical cluster analysis | unclear | figures of the cluster analysis are shown (including photos) |
| Harding & Gabriel (2004) | visual (video) | participatory design | combining life-history interviewing with communicationtechnologies to produce audiovisual outcomes video: filming, editing and researching additional images and music | unclear | exhibition website (video was displayed via the website) | - |
| Harris (2011) | visual (documentary) | ethnography performative research | ethno-cinema | unclear | documentary | - |
| Henderson (2006) | performing (theatre) | ethnography | documents of meetings ongoing home visits open-ended interviews group workshops to produce a play | thematic analysis* | unclear | stories of different participant are shown together with interviewtranscripts, the content of the play is sketched |
| Ho, Rochelle, & Yuen (2011) | visual (photo) | unclear | photovoice in combination with questionnaires | constant comparative analysis* | unclear | photos (*n* = 17) |
| Holgate, Keles, & Kumarappan (2012) | visual (photo) | participatory research | photovoice in combination with comparing between pictures taken by an outsider of the community (photojournalist) and insiders | unclear 'analysis of individual interviews and focusgroup interviews' | photo exhibitions | photots (*n* = 3) |
| Holmes (2008) | performing (drama) + visual (drawing) | ethnography | theatre of the oppressed in combination with drawing | unclear | performance | drawing |
| Howard (2004) | performing (theatre) | ethnography | theatre of the oppressed | thematic analysis* | forum | - |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ikeda-Vogel (2008) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research visual narrative inquiry | photovoice in combination with survey | showed analysis relational content analysis constant comparative analysis* | photo exhibition | Photos |
| Irwin et al. (2009) | visual (photo, video, artefacts) | a/r/tography as a methodology aesthetic cartography | interviews photos made by the researchers group discussions making of artworks narrative videos walking method | others: aesthetic cartography applied to text. | cartographic installation photographic banners exhibition at the museum | photos of the artworks/installations (*n* = 5) |
| Johnson & Guzman (2013) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | combination of photovoice and photo-elicitation | thematic analysis | photo exhibition | photo (*n* = 1) |
| Jordan (2008) | visual (photo) | (collaborative) ethnography | portraiture: researcher takes photos (self-portraits) of the participants interviews | unclear | photo exhibition book of photos and texts based on the exhibition blogs | polyvocal essay, combining text, voices and images |
| Kamper & Steyn (2011) | visual (photo) | unclear | photovoice | thematic analysis* | unclear | photos (*n* = 8) |
| Kaptani & Yuval-Davis (2008) | performing (theatre) | action research | playback and forum theatre | discourse analysis | conference | - |
| Kellock (2011) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | thematic analysis* | staff workshop | photos (*n* = 7) |
| Kelly (2010) | performing (theatre) | unclear multi-modal research | semi-structured interviews document analysis development of a script: group discussions to determine how the interview data might be best used in a play format | thematic analysis* | play | - |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kendrick & Jones (2008) | visual (drawing, photo) | visual anthropology | drawings group discussions photography | visual analysis based on dyer (1982) and hamilton (2000) | unclear | drawings (*n* = 3) + photos (*n* = 3) |
| Kinloch (2007) | visual (photo) + literal (ryhm books?) | ethnography | rhyme books videotaped community documentaries surveys interviews photography mapping | unclear 'shared analysis discussion' | unclear | Excerpts |
| Kwok & Ku (2008) | visual (photo, (visual simulation modelling) | (participatory) action research | photovoice in combination with visual simulation modeling workshops | unclear: 'three layers of meaning' | exhibition | photos (*n* = 12) |
| Lally & Sclater (2012) | visual (photo, digital storytelling, film-making) | unclear | forum theatre in combination with virtual reality | content analysis | unclear | pictures from virtual life |
| Landay, Meehan, Newman, Leonard, & King (2001) | visual (photo) + performing (dance, drama) | unclear | photos group discussions translation of visual images into printed text | visual analysis* | display of photographs and accompanying poems, letters and stories multimedia performance by the participants (photos are combined with music, dance and theatrical performance) | Photos |
| Lawton (2010) | visual (quilt making) | ethnography narrative inquiry | quiltmaking interviews | unclear | showcase of the narratives and artworks | photos of the quiltmaking process (*n* = 7) |

| | | | observations | | (paintings, drawings, sculpture, installations, and poetry) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lee (2006) | visual (photo) + performing (theatre) | (community-based participatory) action research | theatre of the oppressed in combination with photo-narration and journaling | others: 'a collaborative process of probing, expanding, and questioning through different types of languages, images, and rhetorical processes' | performances | the introductions, written by participants, and a short excerpt from each skit are outlined |
| Levy & Weber (2011) | visual (photo, collage, video) + performing (writing on the body) | visual research methodology | photovoice in combination with making collages, writing on the body, object pocket portraits | unclear | exhibition | photos (*n* = 10) |
| Liebenberg (2009) | visual (photo) | case study phenomenology | individual photo-elicitation interviews group discussion | constant comparative analysis | unclear | photos (*n* = 3) |
| Lomax (2012) | visual (photo) | (participatory) ethnography | photos ethnographic filming of the fieldwork | unclear | unclear | Photos |
| Lozowy, Shields, & Dorow (2013) | visual (photo) | phenomenology image-based research | photovoice | visual analysis | photo exhibition | photo (*n* = 1) |
| Luttrell (2013) | visual (photo) | ethnography | photovoice* | others: 'collaborative seeing' | photo exhibition | photos (*n = 4*) |
| Lykes (2010) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | group analysis re-analysis by the researcher | media (radio) photonarratives | photos (*n = 4*) |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mabala, Allen, & Bagamoyo (2002) | performing (theatre) | action research | popular theatre | others: 'transformation of the analysis into performances' | theatre | - |
| Mampaso (2010) | visual (photo, video) | participatory research | photos videos interviews | thematic analysis* | documentary | - |
| Markus (2012) | visual (photo, drawing) | (participatory) action research | photovoice in combination with drawing | others: analysis based on the four phases of bell's (2010) model of storytelling for social justice | photo exhibition | photos ($n = 8$) |
| Mattingly (2001) | performing (theatre) | ethnography | interviews attending community events attending rehearsals and performances leading workshops orchestrating the construction of an exhibit | unclear | the play: language from the interviews was woven into the play's script: the words spoken by the chorus were directly taken from videotaped interviews with community members | - |
| McIntyre (2000) | visual (collage, photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice* in combination with creative techniques (collage making, storytelling, symbolic art) | constant comparative analysis | art exhibition | photos ($n = 4$) |
| McIntyre (2003) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice (adaptation: taking photos with 2 different cameras) | showed analysis | photo exhibition | photos ($n = 8$) |
| McKean (2006) | performing (theatre) | unclear | interviews explorations of historical materials during workshops performances | unclear | community theatre | - |

| | | | post show discussions questionnaires pre- and post-production feedback | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mejia, Quiroz, Morales, Ponce, Chavez, & Olivera y Torre (2013) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice (adapted version 'mujerista model') | content analysis | community stakeholder dissemination event | photos ($n = 4$) |
| Mitchell & Ouko (2012) | visual (drawing) | community research interpretive research | group discussions questionnaire drawings | thematic analysis* | discussion of the research report at a community meeting | drawings ($n = 2$) |
| Moletsane et al. (2009) | visual (video) | participatory research | participatory video in combination with group discussions | textual analysis based on fiske's (1989) 3 levels | unclear | excerpts from the documentary |
| Montero (2009) | visual (collage, drawing, painting) | action research | art activities guided by an arts instructor at the end of every activity individuals and subgroups present their work special activities as art exhibitis are discussed, planned, organized by researchers and participants, and presented by participants | content analysis of the narratives iconic analysis of the artworks | art exhibitions | - |
| Montero (2012) | visual (drawing, graffiti) + literal (poetry) | unclear | poems group discussion "traveling scrawled walls": poetic responses, graffiti, and drawings | content analysis | traveling walls displayed in the school and at a community event | pictures (one word poem + wall) ($n = 2$) |
| Morgan et al. (2010) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | thematic analysis* | media (news publication, interviews) | photos ($n = 6$) |
| Nelson (2011) | performing (theatre) | ethnography | development performance: interviews observations based on: | unclear: 'triangulating analysis of | play script creation by the researcher from the words of the | - |

| | | | improvisation, group and individual monologue creation; scene work, movement, games, music | multiple data sources' | students, scenes, and movement pieces | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nimmon (2007) | visual (photo) | participatory research | photonovel | thematic analysis* ( based on colaizzi) | unclear | - |
| Noor (2007) | visual (digital animation) | participatory research | production based audience research methods | unclear | unclear | text voiceover and descriptions of the video (information about moving image and still images) |
| Nowell, Berkowitz, Deacon, & Foster-Fishman (2006) | visual (photo) | phenomenology | photovoice | phenomenolog ical analysis | unclear | photos (*n* = 3) |
| O'Neill & Giddens (2001) | performing (live art) | (participatory) action research ethno-mimesis | life stories ethnographic work | unclear | ethno-mimesis: representing women's stories through art forms:  video and 2 movement based performances<br><br>photo exhibition | photos (*n* = 6) |
| Packard, Ellison, & Sequenzia (2004) | visual (photo) | participatory image-based research arts-based research case study | photovoice* in combination with surveys, interviewing peer-participants, journal writing, poetry, and song as expressive mediums | thematic analysis* | art exhibition | photos (*n > 10)* |
| Paivinen & Bade (2008) | visual (collage, drawing, painting, paper mache, mask | case-study | artistic methods: poetry, paper mache, masks, collages, self-portraits, digital art, pen/paper drawings and paintings) and interviews | others: interpretive analysis* | conference presentations art exhibition | artworks (*n* = 4) + poem (*n* = 1) |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | making) + literal (poetry) | | | | | |
| Peddle (2011) | visual (photo) | action research | photovoice | constant comparative analysis* | unclear | photos |
| Peters (2003) | undefined (combination of visual artefacts, audio,…) | action research | questionnaires peer-to-peer interviews collection of anti-gay graffiti on lockers and desks in the schools creation of artworks | unclear | conference where artwork and visual artifacts were displayed group performed a theatre piece developed from the peer-to peer interview transcipts | - |
| Pratt & Johnston (2009) | performing (theatre) | unclear | interviews | unclear | theater | • transcripts of debates of audience members • excerpts of a scene |
| Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, & Bradley (2011) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research arts-informed research | photos | group analysis | unclear | reference to websites for more info |
| Rhodes et al. (2009) | visual (photo) | (communicaty-based participatory) action research | photovoice in combination with survey | constant comparative analysis* | unclear | - |
| Robison (2012) | visual (photo) | critical qualitative methodology | photovoice | constant comparative analysis* | unclear | photos ($n > 10$) |
| Rydzik, Pritchard, Morgan, & Sedgley (2013) | visual (painting, photo, glass fusion) + literal (poetry) | action research arts-based research | interviews group discussion individual workshops/artwork –reflection | others: participants interpreted their artworks, 'decoded' them and 'verbalised' | art exhibition conference | photos of the exhibition |

| | | | artworks (painting, photography, glass fusion, poetry,…) | their thinking) described by collier (2001) as highly productive 'indirect analysis' | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sajan Virgi & Mitchell (2011) | visual (photo, drawing) | unclear | photovoice in combination with drawing | thematic analysis | photos were reported in unicef's 2011 child poverty and disparities in mozambique report | photos ($n = 3$) |
| Salazar (2009) | visual (photo, video) | ethnography | mapping locations (google maps) photo-essays documentary videos interviews | interpretive visual analysis* | unclear | photos |
| Sanders (2004) | performing (theatre) | (participatory) action research | image theatre in combination with questionnaire | unclear | display to family members, neighbours,…. | excerpts of the place |
| Santo, Ferguson, & Trippel (2010) | visual (drawing, photo) | case study | survey drawings digital photo-maps blog/journal | unclear | presentation of their ideas to the city's division of parks services | photos ($n = 3$) + photomap ($n = 1$) |
| Shannon (2012) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | thematic analysis* | photo exhibition | photos ($n > 10$) |
| Singhal & Rattine-Flaherty (2006) | visual (drawing, photo) | unclear | photovoice in combination with drawing | unclear | unclear | - |
| Skinner & Masuda (2013) | visual (photo, graffiti, mixed media) + literal (poetry) + | (participatory) action research arts-based research | place mapping use of hip hop forms (rap, dance, poetry, photography, painting/mixed media) individual + group discussion | constant comparative analysis* | unclear | photos + artworks |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | performing (dance, rap) | | | | | |
| Skovdal & Onyango Ogutu (2012) | visual (drawing, photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | thematic (network) analysis | unclear | photos (*n* = 2) |
| Slade (2012) | literal (reader's theatre) | ethnography arts-informed research | interviews | textual analysis | unclear | reader's theatre: 70% of the text is taken verbatim from the interview transcripts: while the dialogue is from the transcripts, the voices of the characters are filtered through the researchers own analytic lens |
| Sloane & Wallin (2013) | performing (theatre) | (participatory) action research arts-based research | forum theatre | unclear | theater | - |
| Steaffens (2011) | visual (video) | visual anthropology (film-based) ethnography | digital video storytelling | unclear | the videos were distributed at a community screening event website | videoprojects are made available online |
| Strawn & Monama (2012) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | individual and group analysis | photo exhibition website project presentations | photos (*n* = 5) |
| Strickland, Keat, & Marinak (2010). | visual (photo) | case-study | observations interviews photos | thematic analysis* | Unclear | - |
| Suffla, Kaminer, & Bawa (2012) | visual (photo) | (participatory) asset-based approach | photovoice | thematic analysis* | photo exhibitions | - |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sullivan et al. (2008) | performing (theatre) | (community-based participatory) action research | forum theatre | constant comparative analysis* | Theatre | photos of the play (*n* = 6) |
| Sutton-Brown (2011) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | showed-analysis content analysis | forum (with slide-show) | playwriting manuscript to present the findings + photos of the photographic process in the publication |
| Sylvester & Bojuwoye (2011) | visual (collage) | explorative qualitative approach | observation individual interviews group discussion collages | thematic analysis* | Unclear | - |
| Thompson (2011) | visual (photo) | (participatory) arts-based research ethnography | photovoice | textual analysis | photo exhibition | photos (*n* = 6) |
| Thompson (2009) | visual (photo) + literal (poetry) | participatory research arts-based research | photovoice | others: interpretive inquiry found poetry | Unclear | poetry + photos (*n* = 7) |
| Tolia-Kelly (2007) | visual (drawing, painting) | unclear visual methodology | drawing/painting walking in group (to record, using paint and paper, their responses to their experience) | others: analysis of the paintings made by an artist based on his interpretations of the group's responses | exhibitions conference | paintings (*n* = 3) |

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| Trafi-Prats (2012) | visual (video) | unclear | video self-portraits | thematic analysis* | no broader dissemination | photographic composites of participants' video self-portrait (*n* = 2) |
| Tucker-Raymond, Rosario-Ramos, & Rosario (2011) | literal (poetry) | action research | field notes<br>videotapes<br>poems | discourse analysis | production of a show : performance of the poems and dances | poems in combination with photos |
| Valentine (2008) | visual (multimedia) | action research<br>performative social science | multimedia storytelling (selection of images, comic strips, multiple identity posters, masked performance, …)<br>oral history interviews<br>group discussion<br>writing | unclear | exhibition<br>theatre | photos of the process |
| Valera, Gallin, Schuk, & Davis (2009) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photovoice | content analysis | presentation at health conference<br>letters to policy makers | photos (*n* = 7) |
| Vaughan (2010) | visual (photo) | Unclear | photovoice | thematic analysis | exhibitions<br>symposium<br>facebook page | - |
| Vaughn et al. (2013) | visual (digital animation) | participatory research | focusgroups<br>vignettes<br>voice over sessions | -<br>(article focused on the phase of dissemination of the findings) | comic/cartoon/animation<br>creation of facebook page | examples of digital dissemination |

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| Walsh, Rutherford, & Kuzmak (2009) | visual (photo,, design charrette) + literal (poetry) | participatory community-based research | photovoice in combination with design charrette and creative writing | constant comparative analysis* | unclear | photobook is available via a link in the article |
| Wang & Burris (1994) | visual (photo) | (participatory) action research | photo novella in combination with survey | group analysis | photo exhibition | photos (*n* = 2) |
| Whitzman, James, & Poweseu (2013) | visual (photo) | participatory research | photovoice in combination with walkabouts | thematic analysis* | unclear | - |
| Winn (2010) | performing (theatre) | ethnography | theatre of the oppressed | unclear | public performance in a theatre | - |
| Yonas, Burke, & Miller (2013) | visual (painting) | action research arts-based research | Painting participatory writing group discussion | thematic analysis* | dissemination forums | paintings and photos of the process (*n* = 10) |
| Zenkov (2009) | visual (photo) | Unclear | photovoice* | content analysis | unclear | photos |

**FULL PUBLICATION LIST**

**Articles**

Coemans, S., Vandenabeele, J., & Hannes, K. (2019). Making sense of a changing neighbourhood: Art students' experiences of place explored through a material-discursive analytical lens. *Art/Research International, 4*(2), 505-534. doi:10.18432/ari29462

Coemans, S., Raymakers, A., Vandenabeele, J., & Hannes, K. (2019). Evaluating the extent to which social researchers apply feminist and empowerment frameworks in photovoice studies with female participants: a literature review. *Qualitative Social Work: Research and practice, 18*(1), 37-59. doi:10.1177/1473325017699263

Coemans, S., Vandenabeele, J., & Hannes, K. (2018). Een sensorische onderzoeksmethodologie : Implicaties en illustraties vanuit exploratief onderzoek in een Leuvens stadsdeel in ontwikkeling. *Sociologos, 39*(1), 23-47.

Wang, Q., Coemans, S., Siegesmund, R., & Hannes, K. (2017). Arts-based methods in socially engaged research practice: A classification framework. *Art/Research International, 2(*2), 5-39. doi:10.18432/R26G8P

Coemans, S., & Hannes, K. (2017). Researchers under the spell of the arts: Two decades of using arts-based methods in community-based inquiry with vulnerable populations. *Educational Research Review, 22*, 34-49. doi:10.1016/j.edurev.2017.08.003

Coemans, S., Wang, Q., Leysen, J., & Hannes, K. (2015). The use of arts-based methods in community-based research with vulnerable populations: Protocol for a scoping review. *International Journal of Educational Research, 71,* 33-39. doi:10.1016/j.ijer.2015.02.008

**Book chapters**

Coemans, S. & Hannes, K. (2020) *Emplacement.* Manuscript in preparation.

Coemans, S., Vandenabeele, J., & Hannes, K. (2020). *Co-creative sensory research practices as a form of response-able pedagogy: Revisting the Magnificent Rubbish experiment.* Manuscript submitted for publication.

Hannes K., Coemans S. (2016). The (app)sense of numbers and narratives in social science research. In: V. Achten V., G. Bouckaert, E. Schokkaert (Eds.), *'A truly golden handbook': The scholarly quest for Utopia* (pp. 480-493). Leuven: Leuven University Press.

**Book reviews**

Hannes, K., Dierckx, C., Canoy, N., Schoffelen, J., Anthoni, E., Coemans, S., Hendricks, L., van de Oudeweetering, K., Segers, R., Tzouva, P., Vrebos, H., Hannes, K. (in press.). From bubbles to foam, a nomadic interpretation of collaborative publishing: a review of Jorge Lucero and colleague's article in art education. *Art/Research International.*

**Conference Proceedings**

Coemans S., Vandenabeele J., Hannes K. (2018). Compositional ethnography: Enriching our understanding of a changing neighbourhood through an aesthetically inspired approach. In: Nomadic inquiry (41-51). Presented at the European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Leuven, Belgium, 06 Feb 2018-09 Feb 2018. ISBN: 9789067842082.

Coemans S., Wang Q., Hannes K. (2015). The ultimate irony of developing an a priori, systematic review protocol for studying the literature on arts-based research methods in the area of community-based research. Presented at the Conference on Arts Based Research and Artistic Research, Porto, Portugal, 28 Jan 2015-29 Jan 2015.

**Abstracts/Presentations/Posters**

Coemans, S., Vandenabeele, J., Hannes, K. (2020). Methodological implications of conceptualizing place 'from within' in multisensory research projects. Abstract accepted for the European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Malta, 3-7 Feb 2020.

Hannes K., Coemans S., Bengough T., Dierckx C., Hendricks L., Seutin A., Wang Q. (2019). Cutting across the matter/meaning divide with artistic inquiry: An argument and an illustration of a material-discursive analytical apparatus that moves beyond numbers and narratives. Presented at the Visual Science of Art Conference, Leuven, 21 Aug 2019-24 Aug 2019.

Coemans S., Vandenabeele J., Hannes K. (2019). Upcycling as a co-creative sensory research methodology. Presented at the European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK, 13 Feb 2019-15 Feb 2019.

Hannes K., Coemans S. (2019). Multisensory research methods from a creative analytical perspective. Pre-conference workshop given at the 3th European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Edinburgh, 12 Feb 2019.

Coemans S. (2018). Exploring sensory and arts-based research approaches to make 'sense' of place. Presented at the PhD Methods Seminar, Architectural Engineering, Leuven, Belgium, (professional oriented).

Coemans S., Hannes K. (2018). Working on the thin line between artistic practice and community-based research: Challenges and directions for advancing the research agenda. Presented at the European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Leuven, Belgium, 06 Feb 2018-09 Feb 2018.

Coemans, S., Siegesmund, R. (2018). Approaches to visual analysis in arts-based research. Pre-conference workshop given at the 2nd European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Leuven, 05 Feb 2018.

Wang Q., Coemans S., Siegesmund R., Hannes K. (2018). Families and forms of arts-based research: A classification framework. Presented at the European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Leuven, 06 Feb 2018-09 Feb 2018.

Coemans S. (2017). Exploring sensory research methods to make 'sense' of place. Presented at the Exchange program Faculty Social Sciences & Masters Theatre Academy, Maastricht, Leuven, België, 11 Dec 2017-11 Dec 2017.

Coemans S. (2017). The way we (make) sense. Exploring multisensory research methods in a Belgian neighbourhood in transition. Presented at the Gastles in het kader van het vak Reflexiviteit en reflexief handelen in de sociale wetenschappen, Leuven, België, 28 Apr 2017-28 Apr 2017.

Coemans S., Raymakers A., Vandenabeele J., Hannes K. (2017). Evaluating the extent to which social researchers apply feminist and empowerment frameworks in photovoice studies with female participants. Presented at the European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Leuven, Belgium, 07 Feb 2017-10 Feb 2017.

Coemans S., Van den Nieuwenhuizen C., Hannes K. (2017). Exploration of the Multisensory Go-Along Interview in a Neighbourhood in Full Development in Leuven. Presented at the European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Leuven, Belgium, 07 Feb 2017-10 Feb 2017.

Coemans S. (2016). Een introductie in artistiek geïnspireerde onderzoeksmethoden. Presented at the Gastles VUB, Brussel, België, 13 Dec 2016-13 Dec 2016.

Coemans S., Hannes K. (2016). Applying a multi-sensory methods base in collaborative research practice: Solid 'Dare it' (y). Presented at the TISSA Phd & Plenum Conference, Ghent.

Hannes K., Coemans S. (2016). Co-creation as a decentralized method of research: lessons from the 'Magnificent Rubbish' upcycling project. Presented at the Seminar series Method meets Art: 'Bric-à-brac - the art and science of co-creation, Leuven, 03 May 2016-03 May 2016.

Hannes K., Coemans S. (2016). Worked examples of methods to make sense out of place and place out of the senses. Presented at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Champaign, 16 May 2017-20 May 2017.

Hannes K., Coemans S. (2016). Invited presentation. Scoping reviews: Worked example on the use of arts based methods in community based research. Presented at the Systematic Reviews in social sciences. Mixed methods and qualitative research reviewed., Ghent, 21 Mar 2016-22 Mar 2016.

Hannes K., Coemans S. (2016). Invited Presentation. Situating Reviews!. Presented at the Systematic Reviews in social sciences. Mixed methods and qualitative research reviewed., Ghent, 21 Mar 2016-22 Mar 2016.

Hannes K., Coemans S. (2015). Multi-sensory Mapping of a Neighbourhood in Development part I: The what and the why. Presented at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, USA, 20 May 2015-23 May 2015.

Coemans S., Wang Q., Hannes K. (2015). The ultimate irony of developing an a priori, systematic review protocol for studying the literature on arts-based research methods in the area of community-based research. Presented at the 3rd Conference on Arts-based and Artistic Research, Porto, Portugal, 28 Jan 2015-30 Jan 2015.

Coemans S., Hannes K. (2015). Multi-sensory Mapping of a Neighbourhood in Development part II: A short but fairly interesting Snapshot into our Fieldwork. Presented at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, USA, 23 May 2015-25 May 2015.

Coemans S., Hannes K. (2015). Beyond voice: Bridging the gap between art & science through a multisensory research approach. Presented at the Undisclosed issues in qualitative research, Brussels, Belgium, 09 Apr 2015-10 Apr 2015.

Coemans S. (2014). Reviewing the literature on using arts-based research methods in working with vulnerable communities. Presented at the ECS-forum of the Education, Culture & Society Research Group, Leuven, Belgium, 16 May 2014-16 May 2014.

**Science Outreach**

Coemans S., Hannes K. (2016). *Kunst IS wetenschap: over de uitbreiding van onze wetenschappelijke toolbox.* KU Leuven blogt.

**Creations in the Arts or Design**

Coemans S., Hannes K. Lodder T. (contr.), Aerts C. (contr.), De Nys P. (contr.), Moriau A. (contr.), Myle M. (contr.) with Coemans S. (curator), Hannes K. (curator) Lodder T. (other role), Coemans S. (other role), Hannes K. (other role) Aerts C. (visual artist), De Nys P. (visual artist), Moriau A. (visual artist), Myle M. (visual artist) (in)SI(gh)T(E)S of necessary trouble: A compositional ethnography of the Vaartkom region in Leuven. (Exhibition). Venue: Library Faculty of Social Sciences edition:1 location:Leuven date:1-10 June 2017, 29 May 2017-09 Jun 2017.

Coemans S., Van Craesbeeck J., Van Meert L., Shaw C., Vikram I., Zaboli J., Dehertog H., Hannes K. with Shaw C. (curator), Vikram I. (curator), Zaboli J. (curator) Dehertog H. (educator) Coemans S. (other role), Hannes K. (other role) Van Meert L. (photographer) Magnificent Rubbish. (Exhibition). Venue: Faculty of Social Sciences location:Parkstraat 45 date:1-14 May 2016, 01 May 2016-14 May 2016.

Coemans S., Dehertog H., Van Craesbeeck J., Van Meert L., Hannes K. with Dehertog H. (educator) Coemans S. (other role), Hannes K. (other role) Van Meert L. (photographer) A rt van Arktos. (Exhibition). Venue: OPEK/Faculty of Social Sciences location:Vaartkom Leuven/Parkstraat 45 date:12 December 2015/May 2016, 01 Aug 2015-01 May 2016. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JF9yCUYAhoQ ).