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A Reflection on Dialogic Diving Boards and Decolonising School Art: The African Mask Project

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Abstract

In this paper, four colleagues working in teacher education reflect on a conversation. The conversation in question was a tangible discussion documented through frequent and purposeful email exchange, exploring traditionalist school art curricula through reference to lived experience, academic theory, and professional anecdote. The primary objective of this dialogic self-enquiry was informal critical analysis of the cultural diversity and positioning of art objects that populate classroom curricula in English schools, starting with the 'African mask'. The secondary objective of our conversation was exploration of how complex talk on culture and curriculum might be modelled for schoolteachers yet to initiate similar conversations in their own professional contexts. We each provide reflections on the success of our conversation against these objectives and find that while email exchange provided some formal advantages for the structure of our discourse, this was not as we might have expected. The dialogue facilitated a rhizomatic deepening of our individual questioning of culturality in the classroom, which while nourishing was arguably unproductive in instrumental terms. Collectively, our reflections suggest that dialogue may be a critical catalyst for the latter, inherently private work of decolonising one's own critical teaching praxis.

Keywords

art education, culturality, curriculum, decolonisation, dialogue, self enquiry

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Introduction

We are four colleagues working in initial teacher education (ITE) at a large English university – each with distinct but intersectional roles, responsibilities and funds of identity. In this article, we relay our critical reflections on a shared conversation – a tangible dialogue documented through purposeful email exchange, exploring traditionalist school art curricula through reference to our lived experiences, academic theory and professional anecdote.

The nominative objective of our conversation was collective analysis of the cultural diversity and positioning of visual artefacts in English schools. This was initiated on recognising a shared frustration in our common encounter with troubling school art projects centred on 'African mask' aesthetics (where we use this term – recurrent in English schools – we do so in quotation marks to highlight it as post-colonially problematic, an essentialising phrase ignorant to rich continental diversity). Through email exchange, we hoped to foster new understanding, exploring why in our practice we continue to encounter school art curricula that disingenuously and dangerously 'others' global 'culturality' (Abdallah-Pretceille 2006, 479). Esteban-Guitart and Moll (2014, 37) describe funds of identity as 'historically accumulated, culturally developed, and socially distributed resources that are essential for a person's self-definition, self-expression, and self-understanding'. As ITE colleagues, we hoped that our different racial, gendered and cultural identities and experiences (see Figure 1) might collectively provide new, useful professional insight on this issue.

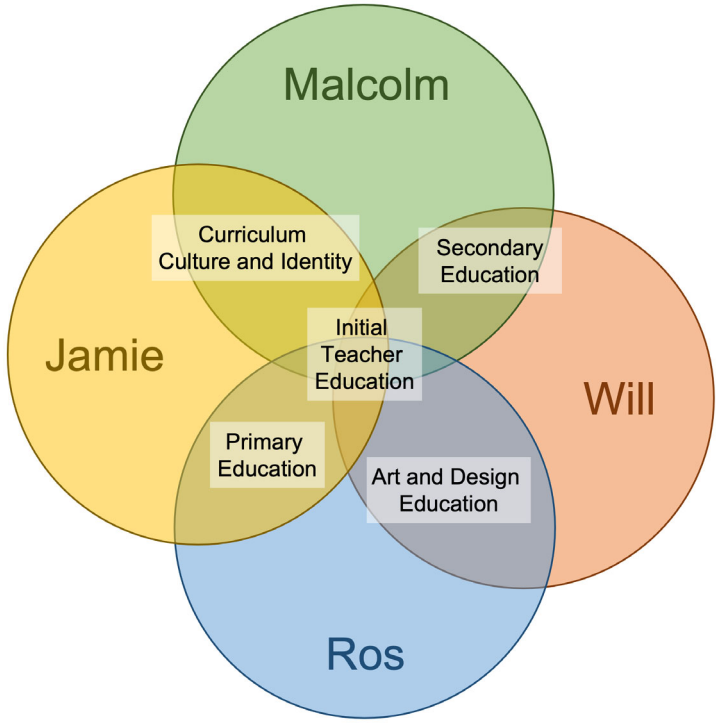

Figure 1
Leveraging Overlapping Academic Concerns.

We also held a secondary intent: to review email communication as an appropriate medium for art teachers' discussion on potentially sensitive issues of culturality, appropriation and identity. We felt, as expanded upon in the *Process* section below, that the depth of discussion required to unpack departmental curriculum's cultural positionality is difficult within the staccato rhythm of a working school, and that conducting this dialogue through email exchange might facilitate critical reflection otherwise maligned.

The design of this project and the qualitative reflections recorded in this article relied on a theory of knowledge that transparently recognised our individual and collective funds of identity. Teacher educators have established a convention of self-enquiry (Hamilton & Pinnegar 2009; Garbett & Ovens 2016) proved fruitful for reflection on subjective issues such as social justice (Griffiths *et al*. 2004) and professional identity (Peercy & Sharkey 2018), and we borrowed from this tradition to structure our process. In particular, we looked to Guilfoyle *et al*.'s (2007, 1109) positioning of professional dialogue in ITE *as* methodology, where individual researcher's ideas are 'met with reflection, critique, supportive anecdote, or explanation and analysis whereby competing, modified, or deeper supportive response can follow'. Guilfoyle's methodological dialogue was a good fit not only for our intentions but also for our shared values; to varying degree, we all consider ourselves critical pedagogues – interested in the central tenets of a Freirean education. We might clarify this as belief in dialogue as crucible for 'acts of creation and re-creation' (Freire 2013, 43) wherein cultural reality is negotiated, and where horizontal talk can be seen as vehicle for democratic interaction – both between interlocutors and as learners 'read' the world (Freire 2014). Such a belief stands in contrast to pedagogic acts that demand the learner adapt their reality, accepting fixed cultural concepts through transmission of unproblematised curricula. In the context of our email exchange, Freirean concepts were visible in both function – exploration of art education's potential to perpetuate sociocultural inequity – and form – our application of dialogue in an attempt to encourage critical, collaborative knowledge construction (Gadotti 2017).

Despite the inherently collaborative nature of our dialogue, we first present individual reflections below rather than a synthetic summary, to authentically recognise and relay the plurality of interpretation inevitable when the object of interest is a social construct (such as curricula or cultural stereotype), addressed by colleagues with diverse identity. Doing so facilitated a second layer of reflection, wherein we could analyse the interface between our shared activity and our existing, individual, professional priorities. Focused on human interaction, the results of our dialogic inquiry unapologetically 'exist in an inconclusive state' (Guilfoyle *et al*. 2007 1110): our conversation continues.

Context

The 'school art style' or orthodoxy was first characterised in a mid-20th-century North American context as faux-expressive artmaking, superficially aping a Modernist formalist function but presenting only the symbolic illusion of freedom within otherwise authoritarian educational conventions (Efland 1976). Gude (2013) argues convincingly that such orthodoxies of 'style' carry beyond Efland's context, both temporally and geographically, and are an inevitable outcome when artmaking meets suppressive models of schooling. So ubiquitous was this orthodoxy in England at the end of the last millennium, Hughes (1998) noted it quashing all radical intent among new art teachers, while Wild (2011) argues that curricular

superficiality, and stasis, has since been exacerbated by the risk-adversity of our accountability and surveillance era.

Prominent among orthodox curricula that dominated and dominates our experiences of art education was superficial imitation of exoticised aesthetics of a geographically distant culture – Mexico's *Día de los Muertos*, Aboriginal *Papunya Tula* or the mask cultures of sub-Saharan Africa. The stubborn permanency of such content in many art departments is perhaps certified somewhere between modernist concern for ethnographic aesthetics and a benign late-20th-century multiculturalist agenda. Essentialising artworks as representative of homogenised regional cultures may be intentional pedagogic choice, simplifying the complex reality of culturality argued as beneficial for igniting learners' elementary knowledge of distant artistic practices, for latter nuanced understanding. It may also occur due to a teacher's limited cultural appreciation; if curricula remain static in art departments, then the inheritors of existing materials might well be teaching concepts and content beyond their specialism. Whyever essentialising 'cultural' project work remains in English art departments, we are concerned it provides space where reinforcement of stereotypes, and an entrenchment of outmoded Modernist hierarchies of artistic value (Cary 2011) are made possible. Where this is seen, we might imagine Bhabha's (1994, 125) 'double vision' of colonialist mimicry at work. Here, an ambivalent recognition of value in cultural objects from beyond the Western tradition legitimises them as worthy of study, but their 'partial presence' only reinforces a colonialist hierarchy between Western artworks certified through pedagogic focus, and the vague stereotypes of exoticising cultural projects.

The shared conversation of our study was ignited, specifically, by an open-access teaching resource shared among a community of teachers, in what 13 million users might consider a reputable online educational forum (Times Educational Supplement 2023). This resource exemplified our concerns: a presentational slide intended as visual aid to pupils constructing an 'African Mask'. Under the title *African Mask Making*, the slide included a sentence of instructional language, noting that the 'metal inlay' of these artefacts might be 'mimicked' through use of paper fasteners. Two photographs illustrate the instruction: the larger (bordered by gaudy geometric pattern) a troublingly racialised cardboard face decorated with straw, feathers, and braided twine hair; the other an image of a decontextualised cardboard mask of unidentifiable origin – synthetic red feathers stuck to the top edge while pattern formed crude facial features.

This resource's prominence in a public professional space, and the implication that it may be construed a valid tool for cultural education, alarmed us. Recognising this shared sensation was the 'diving board' into our first objective: collective analysis of our experiences of the cultural diversity and positioning of art objects in English school curricula, particularly the 'African mask'.

We agreed that this conversation – sensitive, complicated and urgent – needed unpacking in detail. At that moment, we also realised the synergy our situation shared with that of school art teachers – that there was apparent an interest and sense of moral purpose in addressing outmoded cultural curricula (Wylie *et al*. 2021; Runnymede Trust 2022), but rarely the time, resource (NSEAD 2016) or faith in one's knowledge required to do so effectively. This recognition informed our second objective: to model a dialogic approach that might prove applicable to curriculum planning processes among art teachers interested in wrestling with issues of culturality.

Process

The result was the establishment of an email quartet. While academics writing emails does not constitute a technological or conceptual innovation, we thought this a novel way to proceed for several reasons. We hoped (i) that the tangibility of the written word would allow us to hold the complexities of our discussion in place; reference and respond to each other with clarity, just as the writing of an academic article might facilitate cognition (Richardson 2000). The digital medium of email, democratic in delivery, and ubiquitously accessible, we hoped (ii) might alleviate the requirement for our calendars to cooperate while facilitating a sense of progression. (iii) The content of our talk we knew might benefit from the distancing of email; discussions on potentially controversial insensitivities can create anxiety for colleagues with uncertain feelings, upset professional dynamics or favour belligerent personalities. We recognised that dialogue can 'unearth conflicts that groups never knew they had' (Hammond *et al.* 2003, 128) and felt written correspondence may mollify conflict if it was to occur. We speculated that this social unease might be responsible for many otherwise collegiate and conscientious art departments operating with collective curricula blind spots; individuals unwilling to question shared, sensitive, schema. (iv) Finally, we thought that the reflective silence between contributions could deepen and moderate our conversation beyond that achieved through impulsive debate, creating an outcome more considered in its direction.

We added contributions to this email chain over the course of 2 months, organically – occasionally daily, often infrequently. Some contributions posited multiple 'potential issues' or open questions while others shared relevant reference materials, personal anecdote or samples of dialogue experienced in the art classroom. Most initial posts were dense description of individual concerns, but over time the discourse became more dynamic.

Author one's reflective commentary

I am a neurodivergent, Welsh teacher educator, whose understanding of the world is informed and continuously transformed by my professional and personal lived experience outside the global north. Although many questions were raised through this dialogic process, my personal reflections focused on epistemic relativism in becoming de-colonial (Fúnez-Flores 2022) rather than to decolonise *elements* of teaching and learning such as the 'African mask project'.

By reflecting on my own teaching experiences in the context of the English national curriculum, I recognised the intersectional knowledge lenses (Crenshaw 1989) I had employed in delivering a seemingly broad and balanced narrative on culturally significant masks such as those from the African continent. Rather than teaching in isolation, from my own knowledge base and position, I partnered with the arts councils, museums and other artists to deliver on the fundamental pledge to bring in expertise and knowledge that I did not have. This, after all, was celebrated as what the 'best schools do' (Department for Education, & Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2013) in providing a valuable cultural education (Tuck & Yang 2012).

As a result of our email exchange, my focus narrowed towards the epistemological centring of narratives used in my own classroom. No longer do I consider the narrative to be broad and balanced by simply including other voices. Partnerships alone fail to recognise and prioritise the location of knowledge creation. The

question moving forward, for me, is whose voice speaks (Spivak 1988)? For example, how is the influence of African mask artistry on European Modernism framed? To go further, why are masks from the African continent so frequently maligned as modern art in their own right? Their exclusion suggests the asymmetrical epistemic relationships (Hlatshwayo *et al.* 2022) inherent in the discourse surrounding artistic skill and expression. It propagates the hegemony of Eurocentric perspectives on and understanding of African cultural masks.

Synthesising knowledge from different sources alone fails to prioritise the location and form of knowledge used in the context of teaching and learning such as in the case of the 'African mask project'. Critiquing the form and location of knowledge creation must form part of ITE andragogy – the foundation for teachers to be de-colonial in all they do.

To truly value different forms of knowledge creation – de-centre disciplinary knowledge – and consider how language choices and knowledge sources function to generate meaning for and with learners, teachers need to engage in critical praxis. Using tools and devices that facilitate interpretation of axiological constellations (Jackson 2020) of value positions on topics such as the 'African mask project', educators might better understand different forms of knowing (Hlatshwayo *et al.* 2022). Perhaps email exchange among teaching colleagues is indeed a legitimate tool for such interpretive work, although our short dialogue arguably needs extended – and more concrete – application for such a process to be firmly advocated in a school context.

By embedding epistemic translation devices into teaching practice, particularly through ITE and ongoing professional dialogue, teachers can develop the value-driven gazes (Maton 2013) to critique all forms and locations of knowledge. The 'African mask project' would no longer need de-colonising, rather the teacher is de-colonial.

Author two's reflective commentary

I am a Black cis-heterosexual male. I was born in London to Caribbean (Guyana and St Lucia) parents of African descent and am an English and [English] Caribbean patois speaker. I am Rastafari. Advancement of an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) agenda, within a post-Colston HEI environment, can appear more akin to development of an industrial complex rather than enacting structural and institutional reform. There remains an inevitability that within such a space, I will be subject to interrogations, which require an accepted response to the most pertinent provocation – 'can the subaltern speak?' (Spivak 1988). The origins of the 'African mask project' remain closely tied to the pedagogical responses to inclusive education exemplified by a monocultural (white majority) framing. Troyna and Williams (1986) famously described this as the Three S approach: the proliferation of saris, steel-bands and samosas in school curriculum.

My counter story (Solórzano *et al.* 2000) as one Black teacher and teacher-educator of African descent and/or of the African diaspora, while distinctive to me, remains evidence of the inevitability of my interrogation within a context where statistically I will not be successful (in terms of progression, promotion, equitable pay, and most other industry metrics). I was born in Inglan (Kwesi Johnson 1980) to Caribbean (Guyana and St Lucian) parents of African descent. I am an English and [English] Caribbean patois speaker. I am a graduate of the African Caribbean supplementary school movement. I am Rastafari. On entry to academia, I was very conscious of the inevitability of dialogues in white-majority context which rely upon

perceptions and assumption of my articulation of Blackness (Gilroy 1993) to offer perspectives on how to give voice to the voiceless.

There are disproportionately few Black academic staff members at every level (Higher Education Statistics Agency 2022). This is particularly acute in English ITE, where less than 1% of academic staff identify as Black (Lander 2021). In contextual contrast, as we reflect on ITE, we need to consider our own positions on the 'African mask project's' capacity to deepen pupils' criticality within a contemporary superdiverse t Gilde & Volman 2021) schooling context. In my experience ITE continues to dismiss, ignore or obscure such criticality – perhaps we are reading the wrong books and therefore asking the wrong questions?

My initial response to our email exchange was to consider my own experience of the African Mask, as a student. Indeed, my earliest drafts of this counter story retold how, as my secondary school art teacher's response to multi-cultural teaching, we were encouraged to draw an African mask. I remembered that I was one of several Black students, whose heritage represented Britain, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Senegal, Colombia and beyond, trying to explain respectfully to our well-meaning teacher that there was no such thing as an African mask. Of course, our attempts to expand the identity of Africa to recognise the geographic, ethnic, linguistic, and political diversity were robustly rejected. This was then, to be expected, common with the experiences of many Black children in schools. A few days ago (at the time of writing), my daughter brought home her art homework. She said her secondary school art teacher had set the 'African mask project' for the forthcoming term. My daughter, the only student of African heritage in her class, tried to explain respectfully to her white English teacher that there was no such thing as an African mask. Her attempt was robustly rejected. She came home, told me she would complete the project and include an information sheet to explain the origins of her mask. Her initial research confirmed that she'd pick a mask from Benin, like the one in the FESTAC '77 poster, and include information on how the British Museum remains full of similar masks, looted during colonisation (British Museum 2023).

So – what is the likely response from my daughter's teacher when she completes this project? In this instance, a commendation citing her 'excellent effort' in Art lessons – and absolutely no feedback to her or us on her attempts to engage in a meaningful dialogue about her funds of identity which may disrupt teacher reproductions of Eurocentric and White-British histories (Moncrieffe 2020). It is to be expected because, of course, many teachers are taught that attempts to expand the identity of Africa to recognise the continent's geographic, ethnic, linguistic and political diversity should be robustly rejected.

Author three's reflective commentary

I am a white male teacher educator born and raised in the southwest of England, with experience teaching art and design in Secondary schools. Encountering the resource described in this paper's introduction was a threshold moment in my early teaching practice. Recognition that other teachers might seemingly be untroubled by the essentialising stereotypes of this *African Mask Making* slide worried me. I taught mask cultures with renewed thoughtfulness – recognising the mask as universal form with pluralistic purpose, engaging pupils with the performativity of the medium rather than the derivative, derogatory, lens of Modernist exoticism (Garber 1995). Still, I held some unresolved anxieties when reflecting on this

curricula content. Our email dialogue enabled me to delineate questions based on these anxieties.

First, the appropriateness of a white British teacher with no West African experience to teach through objects such as a Dogon mask. There was a lot our exchange problematised for me here – for example: recognising as Eurocentric the tradition of artistic attribution and devaluation of communal artistic cultures, differentiating between archaic and contemporary traditionalist cultural practices, and diversification of curricula while avoiding tokenism or normative colonial subjectivities (Acuff 2014). This last concern especially – encouraging curricular intent and implementation rooted in critical, rather than liberal, multiculturalism (May & Sleeter 2010) – came to the fore in our exchange, consolidating my belief that global art appreciation could be compatible with a progressive education. Desai's (2000, 120) suggestion that educators ask: 'what can we know about another culture', rather than 'how can we accurately. . .represent another culture', was a view echoed throughout our conversation.

Second, whether ITE could better prepare student teachers to present diverse art objects, not through teaching knowledge per se, but through introduction to ethical curricula design processes oriented to recognise artists' authentic purpose. When Eurocentric frameworks function as hegemonic curriculum, this systematically oppresses non-dominant cultural forms (Jay 2010). In my experience, student teachers are often inducted, through school placement, into orthodox pedagogies that 'celebrate difference' through the othering of global artworks. I realised, in exchange, that I too had participated in such practices, and in concurrent conversation with a student teacher (where she expressed anxiety about patronising minority demographics, through well-intentioned outsider attempts to explain their own cultural heritage back to them) that I had not fully explored this issue with ITE students.

I came to reconsider how, in my teacher-educator practice, I might promote pedagogies that prevent patronisation, of artworks *or* learners; championing curriculum that recognises pupils' lived experiences, or in the 'African mask project', analytical tools and activities drawn directly from the maker's culture. 'Decolonising' curricula is insufficient, diverse content must sit in an interconnected constellation of diversified teaching and assessment activity, to avoid sublimation into a homogenising epistemicide. I came to view our thin national curriculum (DfE 2013) anew, not as status deficit but opportunity for agency. Teachers can, and should, capitalise on lack of centralised policy to generate novel, inclusive, contemporary and creative artistic curriculum – through disciplinary discourse.

As predicted, email exchange reduced my inhibitions regarding dialogue – I had time to formulate questions, and the medium to pose them without discernible judgement. Thirty years ago, Boshier (1990, 51) connected email communication and Habermas' ideal speech situation, 'free of internal or external coercion, and characterised by equality of opportunity and reciprocity in roles'. While this reads as rather naïve given the manipulative potential of today's hyper-digital landscape, in our exchange I did experience an earnest, educational dynamic despite our differing expertise. The measured dialogic pace also allowed my thinking to mature and percolate subliminally into the background of other actions, igniting personal connections otherwise ignored.

While this process was illuminating, there were associated drawbacks to this medium. It felt as though our conversation lacked a locus –a material end point or a critical mass of collective attention. Arguably this is to be celebrated, leading to

iterative avenues of discussion rather than following premeditated sequence, but I felt at times lost among proliferating thematic threads – as though this dialogic diving board had cast me into a whirlpool. Indeed, each time a new exchange arrived, it felt additive as if building a repository or archive of problematisation, and while enjoyable for its own sake, a productive conversation has a different profile. Rather than growing, it might whittle the subject or shared interest into a sharper, useful product. Medium, terms of engagement, timescale or stated intent – perhaps if an aspect of our exchange was modified, a fitting space for discussing the complexities of inclusive artistic curricula could be built.

Author four's reflective commentary

I am a white female teacher educator with responsibility for preparing student teachers in art, with extensive experience in both primary teaching and teacher education. From this positionality, the debate around cultural appropriation has been of concern to me for many years. This opportunity for reflective dialogue was of great interest to me, suggesting that entry into such exchange might be attractive to other primary educators too.

In my experience, holding conversation on this sensitive area with primary colleagues in the past has tended towards the superficial, perhaps due to focus on decolonisation work in 'core' primary subjects. Art has been positioned as a niche, supplementary curricular concern to so many in the sector over the years (Hickman 1999) that its content has been diluted to include the minimum of theoretical input. Instead, the complex reality of artmaking – the ideation and iteration inherent to authentic practice – and the critical study of theoretical and disciplinary knowledge (Ofsted 2022) that might contextualise such practice, is frequently ignored. Artmaking instead is diminished to vehicle for a 'product' to be created following imitative step-by-step technical process. Too often, in my personal and professional experience, this focus on technical skill acquisition overrides any concern of cultural propriety and planning is instead predicated on the misinformation and cultural norms that have perpetuated colonialist frameworks for cultural study (Young 2008) – by those that hold the agency to effect system change.

Our world has been built on ideas that are being borrowed and continually exchanged. As an art teacher, I see circulation of diverse images and ideas among artists as a healthy practice; examining and interpreting visual concepts from diverse global voices in the classroom is an effective way of sharing concepts with intent to motivate novel ideation. When operationalised in a respectful and thoughtful way, such practice not only authentically represents the post-modern milieu of motifs that define contemporary artistic practice (Brown 2005) but also spreads understanding and awareness, confronts and reformats misconceptions and stereotypes. However, in my experience, non-specialist primary education ITE students are often anxious about their capacity to delineate where appropriation errs into cultural insensitivity or commodification, and resultantly deference to the safety of established, if knowingly flawed, curriculum orthodoxies occur. Initiating challenging conversations as ITE educators is perhaps our only opportunity to prevent such reproductive pedagogic acts; if we do not, our students will not have space to develop their ability to discern the acceptable from the unacceptable.

This email exchange focused on the problematics of the 'African mask project' enabled me to cogitate on my collaborators' views at length. It deepened my understanding on the relationship between how the presentation of the taught English curriculum during ITE study, and the perpetuation of insensitive school art

orthodoxies – unintentionally often, are maintained. It presented an opportunity to engage with complex ethical concerns in a neutral forum and identify how this strategy might open the potential for collaborative planning opportunities within schools.

Personally, I feel the project achieved both its aims. Despite – or perhaps because of – its modest scale and relative informality, our dialogue around cultural appropriation generated meaningful questions and curricula reflections, asking me to further my own thinking in this space. The medium of email was effective in providing a low-risk forum, with reduced urgency, risk of altercation or impulsive miscue.

Concluding remarks

A convergence of professional interests and expertise around a troubling teaching resource led to the establishment of an experimental email exchange. We hoped, holding conversation in this medium, that we might extend our capacity to cocreate understanding that transcended individual positionings and model a process applicable to the context of school art curriculum conversations. In schools, our experiences had suggested, discussion on sensitive issues of culturality, appropriation and identity in curricular content may otherwise be circumnavigated, a convention that encourages reproductive orthodoxy detrimental to authentic learning about diverse artefacts and aesthetic traditions.

The content of our independent reflections suggests moderate success against our intent to ignite collegiate analysis. We all recognised reflective nourishment although our foci were not necessarily convergent. Author Three's reflection was dominated by new questions for visual culture classroom practice. Author One, looking though an autobiographical lens, reflected on the voice, which might narrate educative activity – how decolonisation must be a project enacted by subjects, not on objects. Author Two lamented the reproductive paradigm inherent to a scholastic environment where underrepresentation and cultural homogenisation work symbiotically. Author Four made pertinent connection between an arts-impoverished English primary education policy framework, the resultantly narrow focus of ITE and the inevitability that important work on the cultural positioning of art objects remains underdeveloped.

Our dialogic method had educative merit – certainly if following Freire's (2013, 124) concept of education as 'the encounter of Subjects in dialogue in search of the significance of the object of knowing and thinking'. However, while we established a dialogic process with an object that we hoped to think about – the 'African mask project', the significance of this object was ascribed subjectively, and separately, according to our personal and professional priorities (Figure 1). We entered this email exchange anticipating a linearity of sequential inputs, our positions progressively harmonising as our overlapping experiences and expertise contributed to a collective coalescent of understanding. Instead, our discourse was wandering, rhizomatic, asking questions and answering questions unasked. This was a productive exercise if framed as deepening individual understanding of our extant positionalities, colleagues acting as purposeful mirrors against which to review our personal iterations of problematic.

However, we can't help but question whether our experience would offer transformational opportunity for school-based curriculum designers. In this context,

the medium of email might well provide some benefits beyond staffroom debate – purposefulness, contextualisation, neutrality (to some degree) – but the rhizomatic form of our discussion challenged our preconception that dialogue would organically produce prosaic outcomes for practical application. This is not to suggest that dialogue might not be a critical component in affecting curricula progression – as catalyst perhaps, for the difficult, and inherently private work, of first decolonising one's own critical teaching praxis.

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