Developmental Considerations in University-School Collaborative Research

Barbara L. Carlozzi
Oklahoma State University, carlozz@okstate.edu

Alfed F. Carlozzi
Oklahoma State University

Steven R. Harrist
Oklahoma State University

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Abstract

Some common complications that arise in collaborative research between school and university researchers, as well as some conditions for successful collaboration are described in this report. Difficulties possibly attributable to developmental levels of the researchers are discussed utilizing Kegans (1982) theory of constructive developmentalism. A collaborative, qualitative study of needs for independence and inclusion in two fifth grade classrooms is described to illustrate the importance of attending to issues of differing perspectives and experiences that may be related to development. The authors suggest that researchers carefully consider issues of role, status, and contextual differences, as well as the developmental maturity of those with whom they engage in collaborative research.

Keywords

Collaboration and Developmental

Developmental Considerations in University-School Collaborative Research

Barbara L. Carlozzi, Alfred F. Carlozzi, and Steven R. Harrist
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, USA

Some common complications that arise in collaborative research between school and university researchers, as well as some conditions for successful collaboration are described in this report. Difficulties possibly attributable to developmental levels of the researchers are discussed utilizing Kegan's (1982) theory of constructive developmentalism. A collaborative, qualitative study of needs for independence and inclusion in two fifth grade classrooms is described to illustrate the importance of attending to issues of differing perspectives and experiences that may be related to development. The authors suggest that researchers carefully consider issues of role, status, and contextual differences, as well as the developmental maturity of those with whom they engage in collaborative research. Key Words: Collaboration and Developmental

Collaborative researchers face many challenges, particularly when the researchers are public school teachers and university faculty. Issues of power, status, and authority may emerge, as do ethical dilemmas when perspectives differ or results reflect unfavorably on local institutions. Relational issues become important when researchers fail to understand each other's perspective or when one voice becomes dominant. Perspectives may vary among university and school based collaborators for a variety of reasons. Differences in the personal goals and research expertise of the researchers, and differences in the social/political contexts of school and university, can contribute to differences in perspective. Another possible influence on the varying perspectives held by research collaborators involves factors that are intrinsic to their personalities, most notably their level of development. Little attention has been devoted to the developmental level of research collaborators. The purpose of this paper is to discuss how collaborative research may be impacted by several external and internal influences, including the developmental level of the researchers.

Kyle and McCutcheon (1984) suggest that collaborative research evolved from and has features of action research and qualitative research. Collaborative research focuses on problems relevant to practitioners, involves intensive investigation of a natural setting, and incorporates more than one perspective. In the field of education, collaborative research typically involves a university faculty member and a public school teacher. Frequently, the university faculty member initiates the research, but increasingly teachers are assuming the role of initiating research and designing the research questions. Teachers and university faculty cooperate in the data collection and analysis. Several examples of this kind of collaborative effort between faculty and teachers have been described in the professional literature (MacDonald, 1995; Ulichny & Schoener, 1996; Vare, 1997). MacDonald (1995) conducted research on a teaching practicum with two

elementary school teachers. Ulichny and Schoener (1996) collaborated in a study investigating ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction. Vare (1997) engaged in collaborative research with other faculty members and small groups of 10-20 public school teachers to enact educational reform.

Characteristics of Successful Collaborative Research

Reimer and Bruce (1993) have identified important considerations for successful collaborative research. Relationship issues include allowing sufficient time to build the relationship, particularly if the collaborators do not have a pre-existing relationship, adopting a willingness to discuss disagreements and negotiate agreeable outcomes, and working to achieve parity in the research relationship. The issue of parity requires clarification. Perceived power and knowledge differences between school-based and university-based collaborators can work against equality in relationships, as do differing expectations for research involvement at schools and universities. Therefore, a goal of parity in the relationship seems more reasonable than a goal for equality. Parity requires that each have roughly equal authority and influence in the research. Design and implementation of the study and authorship of the report on the study may be shared in some manner agreed upon by the partners in the research venture, or partners may divide responsibilities according to time, interest, and ability. Regardless of differences in degree status, each must value each other's contribution to the research activity and each bears responsibility for the process and outcomes of the investigation.

Despite what faculty and teacher collaborators agree are their roles and responsibilities, each must rely upon and respect the expertise each brings to the project. The teacher not only has personal knowledge of the classroom and student participants, but is also the resident expert who must be treated respectfully and sensitively by the faculty researcher. Likewise, students are experts regarding their own experiences in the classroom or school, and their rights and feelings must be protected. The latter is an important ethical responsibility of both the university-based researcher and school-based researcher working in collaboration.

Other considerations for successful collaborative research revolve around details of the research project itself, including the discussion of roles and expectations, use of a common language, and reporting the results. How will the research be reported (such as findings that, if revealed, would be harmful to an individual or individuals)? What specifics will be included or excluded? Under what conditions will results not be reported? How will different voices participate in the data gathering and reporting processes? Finally, Reimer and Bruce (1993) suggest that collaborative research is an organic process, characterized by growth and change, so a healthy attitude acknowledges the requirement for flexibility and adaptability throughout the research process. Such flexibility may call for renegotiations of decisions regarding data gathering procedures and any other aspect of the research in need of modification based upon changes that may arise in the living context of the school or classroom. An example of such a change occurs when researchers discover that observations or note taking or interpretations unwittingly create a subject/object dichotomy that is destructive to their collaborative efforts. Flexibility on the part of collaborators is a necessity when working in a context in which changes are endemic and cannot always be anticipated.

Another aspect of the research that requires good collaboration is the meaning or interpretation made of the results. This is also a point in the research process that can be affected by the perspectives of the collaborators. As long as varying "takes" on the meaning of the findings can be accepted, the interpretations leading to a discussion of the findings can be enriched by the multiple points of view of the researchers. One may see some meanings based upon a particular point of view, while the other may contribute other meanings from a different vantage point, and the resulting interpretation is, therefore, more complete and whole. Like the ancient Indian tale of the six blind men who encounter an elephant where each man describes the elephant from the part of the elephant he touched, limited perspectives in research fail to tell the whole story. Collaborative research provides distinct advantages over other forms of research; if for no other reason than it enlarges the light of meaning, we are able to shine on the results of our research.

Complications in University-School Collaborative Research

While the benefits of collaborative research sound positive in theory, in reality the process is fraught with complications (MacDonald, 1995; Ulichny & Schoener, 1996; Vare, 1997). Some of these include time constraints, ownership issues, skill/experience levels, role and expectation dilemmas, and cultural and relationship issues. MacDonald (1995) detailed the problems that occurred in her research with two elementary school teachers. When a research proposal was required for the teacher collaborators to obtain credit for their involvement in the research study, and the teachers were pressed for time, the faculty collaborator wrote the proposal. Retrospectively, the teacher collaborators reported that this set the tone for the research as one leader and two helpers. Still, the research continued to be a positive experience until the writing process began, at which point the researchers reported that collaboration broke down. They attributed the problems to issues of time, experience, skill level, ownership, and roles and expectations.

In MacDonald's (1995) study, time was a factor because the school teachers could only work on the research after their full teaching days were over, while the faculty researcher had time during her workday to be involved in the research project. Ownership and skill level became issues when the faculty researcher liberally edited a draft done by one of the teacher researchers, thereby offending the teacher. Experience played a role in eventual negative outcomes when the teacher collaborators did not know how to do what the faculty researcher did regarding submission of the research proposal to the institutional review board, applying for conference presentations, finding suitable professional journals for publication, and many other demands associated with writing. When pressed for time, the faculty collaborator would do the task herself, rather than share her knowledge with the teacher researchers and wait until the teachers had the time. Role and expectations similarly impacted the collaborative process in a negative way, especially because the faculty researcher was also the teachers' university professor and was responsible for evaluating them. This fact, combined with the tone set by the faculty researcher's initial writing of the proposal, shifted the balance of power in the project, which could in the end only loosely be considered collaborative.

Near the end of the research project described by MacDonald, one of the teacher researchers wrote in her reflective journal, "Now I would consider long and carefully

before committing myself to another collaborative research effort. I would demand that the roles, responsibilities and rights of each collaborator be carefully determined and understood by all involved (MacDonald, 1995, p 6)." One year after the project ended, one teacher researcher reported it had been a very positive experience, the other reported that the negative experiences outweighed the positive, while the faculty researcher expressed benefits, but also significant regret.

Ulichny and Schoener (1996) reported difficulties in their collaborative research about instruction in an adult ESL classroom. Ulichny, the university-based researcher, designed the study whereby she tape-recorded the classroom interaction and subsequently allowed Schoener, the ESL teacher, to provide the interpretation while they viewed the tapes. Like the experience in MacDonald's (1995) research, problems developed at the outset. Schoener later reported that she had only reluctantly agreed to participate, fearing the amount of time the research would consume, but particularly fearing the scrutiny and negative evaluation of her teaching practices. In retrospect, Schoener admitted to believing that the purpose of the research was to uncover the errors in her teaching, and she tried to uncover those errors before her collaborator could find them. Only by carefully observing the patterns of interaction and making adjustments in her role, was Ulichny able to encourage a more egalitarian relationship between the two collaborators.

Vare (1997) identified three complications characteristic of school-university collaborative research relationships. He described differences in workplace cultures between schools and universities, differences that engender varying goals and unequal status among school-university collaborators. In particular, universities value research and theorizing, while schools value practical applications and have little time for theorizing. Additionally, Vare described differing research agendas experienced by university and school personnel. University personnel, for instance, are often engaged in theory construction related to effective teaching, whereas school personnel are often trying to understand how teaching goals can be attained. Finally, Vare, like MacDonald (1995), noted the complication caused by dual relationships that may occur in school-university collaborations. Dual relationships are those relationships in which each person is involved in more than one role with the other. These relationships become problematic when one role implies a power differential that alters the relationship in the other role, and at the very least, adds confusion regarding the nature of the relationship between the two involved parties. A dual relationship in collaborative research occurs when the school researcher is a graduate student in a program in which the university researcher is responsible for evaluating the performance of her or his research collaborator.

Constructive Developmental Considerations

While power and status imbalances, fear of negative evaluation, differing goals, and dual relationship issues have been described as problems that can arise in collaborative research, little attention has been paid to how differences in personalities and developmental levels of the school based and university based researchers might contribute to successful or problematic experiences. Personality and developmental maturity has less to do with the more external distinctions in goals and the culture of the contexts between the university and the school, but may contribute to the more personal reactions related to power differences and fear of negative evaluation. Likewise, the

benefits of being able to resolve disagreements and to work toward parity in the relationship, as well as being able to be flexible and adaptable, may be more related to the developmental levels of the researchers than external conditions. Referring to the developmental level of the researchers takes us in a direction that is more intrinsic to the personalities of the individuals involved in the collaborative research in order to account for problems that may arise in these relationships.

One theory that sheds light on issues associated with developmental differences between people is the theory of human development postulated by Kegan (1982). Considered a theory of constructive developmentalism, Kegan (1982) maintains that human development centers on the process of meaning-making, a process of constructing our reality. He is inclined to define person as a verb, rather than a noun. The person is the process of meaning-construction, a process that takes place via our interactions with the environment. Our being evolves as we attempt to make sense of our world and our place in the world. From infancy throughout the lifespan, the individual is involved in this process of constructing meaning. Kegan's (1982) is a dialectical theory, which, according to Baxter (1988), involves the features of process and contradiction. Traditional science tends to analyze and categorize by compartmentalizing reality into polar opposites, whereas dialectical theory sees reality as in a constant state of change. Distortion occurs whenever we attempt to describe reality by forcing a stop-action on the process and describe what we observe, as if in a still frame. The quality of contradiction inherent in dialectics is the belief that all things exist in opposition to their polar opposite and cannot be understood in separation from that polar opposite.

The process of meaning-construction described by Kegan (1982) is organized around the tension between the two opposing forces of independence and inclusion. Inclusion, taken from Bakan's (1966) term communion, is the desire we have to be connected to something larger than ourselves, to be included. In the infant, this desire is to be near the source of comfort, affection, nurturance, and sustenance. For the mature adult this desire may be evidenced in our desire for companionship, love, belonging, even spirituality and generativity. Independence, on the other hand, is the desire to be separate, unique, autonomous, competent, responsible, and impactful. Independence propels the toddler toward forbidden objects despite parental disapproval. It motivates young adults to leave home and begin a life of their own.

Throughout our lives, in response to the tension between independence and inclusion, Kegan (1982) believes we tend to become over involved in one or the other of these two extremes. Kegan (1982) refers to this as embeddedness, meaning that while caught in one of these extremes, we are unable to recognize and see beyond our frame of reference. Movement to a new stage occurs as a reaction to the inadequacies of the current stage, and each new stage is more complex than previous stages. It is assumed that the individual is developing toward an ideal period where independence and inclusion are seen not as opposing forces, but as each facilitating the other, as two sides of the same coin.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to completely discuss all of Kegan's (1982) stages of development, but an abbreviated discussion is warranted. Kegan's (1982) first stage, 0, is the Incorporative Stage, in which there is no self from which to differentiate non-self; hence, we cannot assign to this stage a position relative to the independence/inclusion dichotomy.

Stage 1, the Impulsive Stage, begins once the child recognizes her existence as a separate being. In terms of the independence/inclusion contradiction, the stage 1 child is over involved in inclusion, assuming that her perceptions and impulses are the same as everyone else's. Although she differentiates between herself and other(s), the stage 1 child is still blind to her own frame of reference, which in this stage includes her perceptions and impulses.

In the next stage, the Imperial Stage, the world is viewed as existing for one's own benefit – if only one takes control. Kegan (1982, p. 89) describes the stage 2 child as "sealing up," meaning that "there comes as well the emergence of a self-concept, a more or less consistent notion of a me, what I am (as opposed to the earlier sense of self, that I am, and the later sense of self, who I am)". For the stage 2 person, I am my needs, my wants, and my interests.

The difficulty for the stage 2 person is that, sealed up as she is, and involved as she is in controlling her surroundings, she is unable to place her needs, wants, and interests outside of her self. Two of the authors remember their son as a young child when he became aware that his parents had less interest in baseball than he had, saying in painful seriousness, "If you don't like baseball, you don't like me." He was caught in a stage 2 frame of reference and could not own his baseball interest as something he possessed. Instead, the baseball interest was him. Kegan (1982) says that being stuck in one's own needs, wants, and interests means that we cannot participate in a shared reality. We have difficulty recognizing inner states in others and ourselves, cannot recognize our own subjectivity, and talk about our feelings. In time, the stage 2 child comes to recognize that others expect her to consider needs and wants as something she possesses, something outside her frame of reference, and she moves on to stage 3.

In Stage 3, the Interpersonal Stage, the nature of the self is defined by others with whom one is affiliated. If we think in terms of the adolescent or young adult, it is this embeddedness in inclusion, which makes the adolescent so dependent upon the peer group. It is also what compels these individuals to retreat so forcefully from the nuclear family. Because there is, as yet, no true individual identity and one's group determines identity, the person in the Interpersonal Stage must be very careful about which group he is aligned with. A person with a more developed personal identity would not feel that the family affiliation precluded a unique personal identity. On the other hand, a secure personal identity would not necessitate a strong association with a particular group.

In stage 4, the Institutional Stage, there is an over involvement in independence. The individual has an identity, but one that is like that of an institution in which there is a set of rules or principles to define it, and loyalty is demanded to maintain the identity. The individual is so over involved in setting up a clearly definable identity, that complexity and contradiction is avoided in favor of a clear, consistent self. Kegan (1982) believes this stage is inevitably ideological and is dependent upon the recognition of a group to come into being. The group might be based on class, gender, race, religious affiliation, etc. Individuals in this stage value commitment, autonomy, and self-reliance. When the individual in this stage begins to question this narrow focus in life and recognizes a need to connect with others, the move to the final stage begins.

The final stage of constructive-developmentalism is the Interindividual Stage, characterized by openness to complexity and contradiction, and the adoption of a dialectical, rather than dichotomous perspective. At this stage the individual recognizes

that reality is change, motion, and process, rather than something static. There is a necessary tension between independence and inclusion, but this tension is desirable, not something to be transcended. Relationships between systems are recognized, and the self is seen in relation to the rest of society, both present, past, and future. Intimacy is truly possible only at this stage of development when intimacy and autonomy are not seen as mutually exclusive, but instead are viewed as mutually enhancing.

Assessing developmental levels using Kegan's (1982) theory of human development is a relatively difficult and time-consuming task and one that requires a significant time commitment to learn. Assessment involves a lengthy interview, called the Subject/Object interview and few researchers, other than those particularly interested in Kegan's (1982) theory, may want to invest the time required to learn how to conduct and score the Subject/Object Interview. Short of a formal assessment, however, it may be advantageous for researchers to be knowledgeable about this theory and to recognize some of the hallmarks of the various stages. This information is likely to be helpful in avoiding some predictable problems that undermine relationships in general, and can be used to help build productive working relationships, specifically when conducting collaborative research projects.

A Study of Two Classrooms:
Illustration of Constructive Developmentalism Applied to Collaborative Research

The relationship between Kegan's (1982) developmental theory and collaborative research became evident during a qualitative study about issues of independence and inclusion in two fifth grade classrooms. Looking at differences in the expression of independence and inclusion, the first author spent approximately 40 hours in the first classroom, observing and interviewing a teacher and six randomly selected students.

The first author was involved in a qualitative research project examining differences in the expression of independence and inclusion. Built upon a constructivist philosophical framework, the research was informed by Kegan's (1982) theory of constructive developmentalism but was not designed to support or refute that theory. Instead, the researcher set out to discover how individuals differed in their expression (and presumed need) for independence and inclusion and how student-student and student-teacher differences interacted with one another and contributed to or detracted from the learning process.

The impetus for this project grew out of an experience the first author had while working in a public school as a special needs teacher. During one hour each school day this author had only two students and was pleased to have the opportunity to devote herself exclusively to these two students. The students, however, did not respond as anticipated and eventually requested permission to join another class with more students. Reflection upon the personalities of those two students and the educational environments in the first and second classroom settings, created questions in the author's mind about the relationship between personality and learning. Specifically, the questions were: 1) How do students differ in their expression of independence and inclusion? 2) How do the students and teacher deal with differing needs for independence and inclusion? 3) How do independence/inclusion-related interactions impact the learning process? Since this was an exploratory study examining individual differences in independence and

inclusion, no attempt was made to assign developmental levels to the participants and, therefore, no specific instrument was used to assess Kegan's (1982) theory of development. (At the time there was an instrument for assessing Kegan's [1982] developmental levels called the Subject-Object interview, but it was unknown to the first author and was still in an early stage of development). Using the underlying philosophy of Kegan's (1982) theory of a dialectical tension between independence and inclusion, this author conducted interviews with two teachers and six randomly selected students in the teacher's classrooms in two elementary schools, one in an upper-middle class Midwestern community of approximately 60,000 and the other in a small, rural Midwestern town of about 2,500-3,000 people, located about 20 miles from a major city. Both schools served the lower to middle class populations in their communities; the former school had approximately 800 students (fewer than 3% from minority cultures), and the latter about 600 students (only .5% minority). During the spring semesters of two consecutive years approximately 40 hours were spent in each fifth-grade classroom observing the interaction between students and between the teacher and her students. The university-based researcher knew no one at either research site or in the surrounding communities before the research began.

In both schools teachers were given the choice to participate and they signed informed consent forms. The respective school boards and principals and a university institutional review board approved the research. In the first case, which was a pilot study for the second, the principal presented the research to the teachers in the school and asked for volunteers. The research was described as a study of individual differences in children's emotional needs and the interplay between emotions and learning. The teacher who volunteered to participate was told that the researcher would be watching classroom interaction. In the second school a colleague suggested a particular teacher, and after the research was explained to the teacher in question, she agreed to participate. This teacher in the second study was given the research proposal, which explained that the research would focus on how independence and inclusion in the classroom impact social interactions and academic functioning.

Being a novice at qualitative research, the author failed to realize the impact her research role would have on the classroom, particularly on the teacher. The significant discomfort in the relationship between the classroom teacher and the researcher in the first study resulted in the researcher modifying the research design for the second study. The teacher in the second study was given the opportunity to participate in a more collaborative role (more parity) than the first teacher, and the university researcher assumed this would be a more comfortable role for the teacher than seemed to be the case in the first study. In retrospect, this latter assumption appears flawed, primarily because issues related to the personality or developmental maturity of the teacher were not considered, but became increasingly evident as the study proceeded. More detailed descriptions of the nature of the collaborative relationship, the teacher-researcher, classroom, interpersonal interactions, developmental considerations, outcome of the collaborative process, and reflections on the experiences in both of these studies are provided.

Collaborative Research Case 1

Nature of the collaborative relationship

The teacher in the first school, who will be fictitiously referred to as Ms. Smith, was told that the research was about individual differences in children's emotional needs and the interplay between emotions and learning. She was also told that a more complete disclosure would be presented once the data was collected, at which point she hoped to enter a more collaborative role with the teacher during the interpretative phase. More experienced researchers will immediately recognize some difficulties inherent in this approach. There was unequal access to information. The university-based researcher initiated the project and had more investment in the research, and certainly had more control over the direction of the research. Furthermore, because of the foregoing factors and the status differences between school and university based professionals, there was a power differential in the relationship that worked against collaboration and that was not mitigated by other factors.

Teacher-researcher

Mrs. Smith had an inner city teaching background (of indeterminate length), but had been out of the field for eight years, except for the previous year when she had taught in a preschool. She said the principal had contracted her when he had two fifth grade vacancies in his school and asked her to consider the position. She volunteered that she decided to see "how the other half lived." Throughout the research, Ms. Smith remained quite reserved. Ms. Smith did not appear to be a very social person. She never introduced the university-researcher to her class and only once introduced her to anyone in the school. Only rarely was she seen communicating with other school personnel, and on those rare occasions when she was socializing, it was usually with only one other teacher.

Classroom

Ms. Smith organized her classroom around an economic model, in which students were paid for work done, fined for misbehavior, and "employed" in various capacities within the classroom. There was a real estate agent who was responsible for seating arrangements within the classroom; a custodian, responsible for keeping the room neat; an attendance clerk, who took roll each day; even a personnel clerk, who was responsible for keeping track of these and nearly twenty other positions held by students. The students in Ms. Smith's class assumed primary responsibility for their academic tasks, recording their assignments in notebooks each day, completing the assignments individually or in small groups, and individually consulting with their teacher about their assignments. Her classroom arrangement had a strong orientation toward independence with its emphasis on responsibility and goal-oriented behavior. She was never seen presenting a lesson to a small group or the class as a whole. Instead, the lessons were organized to be done individually, rather than by groups, and incentives for academic work and behavioral conformity were also administered individually. Desks were

arranged side-by-side around the perimeter of the room, all facing toward the outside walls.

Interpersonal interactions

Among students, or between students and teacher, differences in needs for independence and inclusion were either unrecognized by Ms. Smith or were not considered particularly important. Emotions, in general, were not addressed by Ms. Smith. If students snickered at one of their fellow student's incorrect response, nothing was said about it. Over the 40 hours the university researcher spent in her classroom, only once did she ever see the teacher address an interpersonal issue. Ms. Smith never spoke about the relationship between her behavior as a teacher or the way she organized the classroom and the behavior of her students. When discussing her concerns about the constant bickering of her students and issues of fairness that developed between the boys and the girls, she was baffled. She did not ever mention the individualistic orientation in her classroom and its impact on students' needs for inclusion.

Most of the teacher-researcher's conversations with the teacher were about the students, their academic performance, discipline issues, or special problems. Almost as numerous were comments about the research and the researcher's role. Other than a couple of brief conversations about Ms. Smith's parents, there was no disclosure about her emotions or feelings. Similarly, with her students she did not discuss emotions or feelings, either theirs or hers. She did talk about a recurring theme of fairness between the boys and girls in her class, where even the order in which she called up the students for conferencing became a bone of contention between the boys and the girls.

Developmental considerations

Although we cannot assign a developmental level to Ms. Smith, observations recorded during this research project did indicate a strong independence orientation. Her classroom arrangement and interactions with students suggested that individuality and control were highly regarded while little attention was paid to issues of relatedness and interdependence. There was no discussion about the needs and wants of her students, especially in relation to herself and her classroom organization. Together, the promotion of independence, a lack of attention to emotional needs, and the discouragement of inclusion and communion, suggest a highly independent orientation, an emphasis on control and competence, and little interest in internal states. In retrospect the university-researcher must acknowledge that the withholding of some information from the teacher and the control exhibited over the conduct of the research could have contributed to a struggle for control, albeit subtle, on the part of both collaborators.

Outcome of the collaborative process

Although Ms. Smith never expressed dissatisfaction with the research process, the university researcher began to experience uneasiness in their relationship when it became more and more difficult to find a time when the teacher and researcher could meet to discuss the research. By the time the data collection phase ended, the relationship was

still cordial, but once the observations and interviews were complete, Ms. Smith became unavailable to discuss the research.

Reflections and lessons learned

What went wrong? Arguably, with no direct input from Ms. Smith, we can only surmise what undermined the collaborative process and what sorts of actions might have led to a better outcome. The university-researcher, however, vowed never again to engage in a study in which the terms of the collaborative effort were not more clearly spelled out in advance. It is possible that Ms. Smith felt researched upon because there had been some seemingly embarrassing moments observed when Ms. Smith conflicted with one particular student. Additionally, there came a time in the research when Ms. Smith asked for specific journal articles related to the research and was asked to wait until the data was collected because the researcher was concerned about contaminating the research field. Although Ms. Smith agreed to wait, the university-based researcher suspected that she had felt used. Another realization that came as a result of this experience in "collaborative research," was the importance of making certain that there is some parity between the university and school researchers and that each has a similar understanding of the goals of the research. Likewise, each needs to understand and embrace the importance of being open to whatever emerges in the course of the research, rather than feeling compelled to withhold information or distort the meaning of experience to protect the self or protect the research.

Finally, an understanding and accounting of each researcher's needs and goals for inclusion and independence as assessed within Kegan's (1982) developmental framework would do much to clarify how to enhance the research process with particular collaborators. Formally or informally assessing the developmental levels of the researchers using Kegan's (1982) theory of constructive developmentalism might provide a springboard for consideration of differing needs for independence and inclusion. Ignoring the developmental goals/needs/orientation risks undermining the collaborative process, which in turn may undermine whatever research or intervention the initiator of the research is trying to implement.

Collaborative Research Case 2

Nature of the collaborative relationship

In response to the communication breakdowns with Ms. Smith, the research in the second classroom was organized to allow for a more collaborative relationship with the classroom teacher. It was assumed that a more collaborative working relationship between the university-based and school-based researchers would prevent some of the problems that occurred at the previous site. The teacher, whom we shall call Mrs. Everland, was given the choice of participating in the same manner as Ms. Smith, or participating more as a collaborator with more shared responsibility and ownership. This was not an easy choice for her. She was uncertain and asked which role the university-researcher preferred. After a good deal of indecision, she finally decided to act as research collaborator. In this collaborative research effort, the teacher was given full

disclosure about the research purpose and was asked to maintain a log of her research-related feelings and experiences. She was very good about allotting time to talk about the research and verbally shared a good deal of information, and she contributed significantly throughout the research process, but did not really become a collaborator. Although she contributed a few pages of notes about some of the students, she never maintained a log of her experiences during the study.

Teacher-researcher

Ms. Everland was a relatively young teacher who had been teaching for at least three years. Her principal described her as in a state of transition, due to her previous, somewhat difficult experience with a student teacher who required less structure in her classroom than had Ms. Everland. Privately, Ms. Everland agreed that she was struggling over the amount of freedom to allow in her classroom, although she said she needed it quieter than it had been with the student teacher. She said she was the only one in the school who allowed her students more freedom, but also said that the school organization prevented her from visiting with teachers in the younger grades and discovering for herself just how different she was from others.

Classroom

The contrast between the classroom environment in Ms. Smith's classroom, and that in Ms. Everland's was dramatic. In Ms. Everland's classroom almost all class work was done together in a group and anyone who worked faster than the others was admonished to stay with the group. Students' grades and other academic evaluations were public information. Ms. Everland orally reported the names of students missing assignments or not doing well on assignments. When Ms. Everland addressed the class, she called them "class." She did not address them as "students" or "boys and girls" or any other term that would imply a collection of individuals. Once when a student complained that a story they were reading was boring, Ms. Everland admonished him with, "T, what kind of tone do you think you just set for the rest of the class?" She then said that growing up involved keeping your negative thoughts to yourself.

Interpersonal interactions

The relationship between Ms. Everland and the university-based researcher also was very different from the relationship with the first teacher. On the first visit Ms. Everland introduced the researcher to the class and allowed the students time to introduce themselves. She was thoughtful about providing appropriate seating, and talked easily about the events that took place at her school. In her classroom she practiced the Golden Rule and expected her students to do the same. She did not value dissension, one time asking students, "What is my favorite saying?" Her students knew it was, "If you can't say something nice about someone, don't say anything at all." She was always amicable with the university-researcher, and communicated her agreement, but did not follow through with her expressed agreement to provide her individual perspectives during or after the study's completion.

Developmental considerations

Ms. Everland was oriented toward inclusion and she was capable of expressing her feelings and recognizing her students' feelings in the classroom. She expressed values like the Golden Rule and was considerate of the needs of others. She clearly demonstrated many of the hallmarks of an inclusive orientation where collectivity is valued and individuality is undermined. This was reflected as well in her expressed willingness to share individual experiences with the university-researcher but ultimately failing to provide her individual perspectives. It is difficult to successfully resolve differences, if there are some, with a person for whom interpersonal concordance at the cost of individuality is their modus operandi. In this case, the university-researcher encouraged the teacher to express her point of view, indicating that it was fine with her if they held different points of view or outright disagreed, but this teacher indicated her agreement often and ultimately left most or all of the responsibility for the research to the university-researcher.

Outcome of the collaborative process

Ms. Everland was willing to share her thoughts and feelings in a way that promoted more intimacy than Mrs. Smith, but she never entered into the research as a collaborator. What concerned her most was not being accepted at her school. She described cliques that did not include her, and she was especially concerned about her relationship with the principal, a relationship that had become strained after the principal objected to the teaching style of Ms. Everland's student teacher. The final discussions about the study never materialized with Ms. Everland because she left the school and left no number to contact her.

Reflections and lessons learned

Based on Ms. Everland's orientation toward inclusion, one might assume that she would be a good candidate for developing the sort of working relationship necessary for collaborative research. Two factors, however, worked against this outcome. First was her discomfort with dissension. Negotiating mutually agreeable outcomes requires that each of the collaborators is secure in her own identity and can tolerate disagreement without feeling that inclusion has been jeopardized. This quality was not evident in Ms. Everland. Second was her lack of investment in the instrumental goal of completing the research. Although establishing a relationship with the researcher may have been a goal of Ms. Everland, accomplishing the task of conducting the research and obtaining findings never became a priority for her. It may never have been a priority, and if that was the case, probably she would have been reluctant to express disagreement with what the university-researcher had suggested. The difficulties she had deciding whether she wanted greater parity in role and responsibility with the university-researcher also reflects her developmental maturity.

Discussion

Earlier in this paper we described the characteristics of good collaborative research. The research experiences reported in this paper are illustrative of some of these characteristics. It will be remembered that some of the conditions for good collaborative research were sufficient time to build the relationship, a willingness to share disagreements, negotiate agreeable outcomes, and work toward parity in the relationship. There are decisions to be made relative to the researchers' expectations, roles, and responsibilities, as well as allowances for the presence of multiple perspectives and voices in the data gathering, analysis, and interpretation of the results. Finally, there is a mandate for flexibility and adaptability to accommodate the organic nature of collaborative research. Each of these conditions may require that the researchers have reached a level of developmental "maturity" that enables them to meet these conditions. If one or the other does not have the maturity to accept varying perspectives and share and negotiate differences, then a truly collaborative relationship is less than likely.

In the first of the cases presented, we must ask difficult questions about the potential for a good collaborative relationship, even if the research design had been mutually agreed upon. Ms. Smith seemed to be very oriented toward independence, an orientation that works in opposition to the requirement for negotiation. Additionally, she did not discuss emotions, a characteristic incompatible with the demand for sharing disagreements. She seemed to have difficulty coordinating demands for fairness between the males and females in her classroom, and she seemed to not recognize the differing interpersonal needs in her classroom. We must wonder, then, about the potential for different voices to emerge throughout the research process.

It would seem that a good research collaborator must be developmentally mature enough to be open to contradiction, to be capable of intimacy, and to see the self in relation to the rest of society. These are characteristics of Kegan's (1982) final stage of development, Stage 5. The limitation of Stage 4 is that there is, again, an over involvement in independence. One's identity is tied to the rules or principles of the identifying body, be it gender, family, race, or work. For the Stage 4 individual contradiction is a threat to one's identity and self-sufficiency is paramount. Demands for flexibility and adaptability will not come easily to the Stage 4 individual. This was evident with the teacher in our first study, and at least to some extent, the more controlling behavior of the university-researcher contributed to the obstacles to a collaborative alliance between the researchers. The teacher in the second study, though agreeing to collaborate fully, may have done so out of a need to be liked and to be seen as agreeable. However, for a successful collaboration there must be a willingness to engage your fellow researcher and be able to express and resolve differences, a combination of both struggle and accommodation.

Are we left, then, to assume that only the most developmentally advanced individuals who function at Stage Five will make good collaborators? Certainly, there is a need for research in this area. One caveat is in order, however, before we conclude that collaboration will be less than effective with individuals who have not attained the highest levels of development. Distinctions between equality and parity are not always clearly recognized, and it is sometimes assumed that relationships characterized by equality are preferable to those characterized by inequality. It is not always true;

however, that equality is preferable to inequality in relationships, especially if what one means is equality in terms of responsibility. Ms. Everland did not really want equality in the collaborative research relationship into which she entered. She may have wanted to participate because she wanted to belong, but she never took an active role in gathering or interpreting the data, and did not assume a position of shared "ownership" of the project, which was encouraged and would have been welcomed by the university-based researcher.

Kreisberg (1992) encountered a similar situation in his research on teacher empowerment. He reported that his teacher participants did not really want to be equal owners, a role that required more interest and time than they had. Instead, they wanted to contribute in a way that felt comfortable for them. As university researchers we must be aware that our collaborators in the schools do not all want equal ownership (and responsibility) in our research projects. They want parity, meaning they want equal authority in determining what role they play, so that neither the university-based collaborator nor the school-based collaborator is maneuvered into a role that is uncomfortable for either of them.

It is evident from the literature and the personal experiences we have described, that collaborative research conducted by university and school based individuals is fraught with potential pitfalls and challenges. We are more likely to be successful in such collaborations if we are aware of and can anticipate the possible difficulties, with an eye toward prevention. Being aware of the role, status, and contextual differences, as well as the developmental maturity of the person with whom we are collaborating, can help us anticipate problems, know what we can expect of the other, and thereby ease the tension we bring to the collaborative venture. Being somewhat selective of the person(s) with whom we choose to collaborate, rather than choosing to work with anyone who is willing to let us into their classroom may also prevent the kind of failures in collaborative research that others have experienced.

In considering possible directions for future research, one fruitful option is an explication of the relationship between developmental level and degree of parity between research collaborators. This might involve the Subject-Object Interview to assess the developmental level of the collaborative researchers, and behavioral observations of collaborative behaviors and self-reports of experiences of parity in the relationship between the researchers. Such an investigation might help shed more light on the extent to which developmental level of the researchers affects the success of the collaborative relationship. There is also a need for more research on Kegan's (1982) theory of constructive developmentalism and a language to explain this theory, which Kegan himself acknowledges is difficult for his readers (Kegan, 1994, p. 2). This exploration of developmental considerations in university-school collaborative research represents just one of a myriad of potential applications of Kegan's (1982) theory to successful relationship enterprises, both professional and personal.

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Author Note

Barbara L. Carlozzi, Ph.D. is an educational psychologist and assistant professor in the School of Applied Health and Educational Psychology, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. Her current research interests include qualitative research in general, independence and inclusion across the lifespan, and identity development via life history interviews. Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to Barbara Carlozzi, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University, School of Applied Health and Educational Psychology, 434 Willard Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078-4045 E-mail: carlozz@okstate.edu

Alfred F. Carlozzi, Ed. D. is a counseling psychologist, professor and head of the School of Applied Health and Educational Psychology, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. His current research interests include empathy as related to emotional intelligence, open-mindedness, and universal-diverse orientation, and ethical issues in counseling/psychotherapy.

Steve Harrist, Ph.D. is an assistant professor in the School of Applied Health and Educational Psychology, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. His research interests include ameliorating the negative effects of power relations through life history

dialogue, psychological and health benefits of expressive writing, and philosophical and theoretical psychology.

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Author's Citation

Carlozzi, B., Carlozzi, A., & Harrist, S. (2004). Developmental considerations in university-school collaborative research. *The Qualitative Report, 9*(3), 375-391. Retrieved [Insert date], from http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR9-3/carlozzi.pdf