

Unpacking Power Hierarchies in Students as Partners Practices

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Research Report Submitted to BCcampus

September 2019

Situating Ourselves

By way of an introduction, we would like to situate ourselves so that the reader has a sense of our team.

Roselynn Verwoord: I'm a PhD Candidate in the Department of Educational Studies at The University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC, Canada. My formal training is in teacher education and my doctoral research is focused on pre-service teachers' existential understandings of what it means to be a teacher and to teach. As an educator, I am committed to education as a tool for social change and I strive to create spaces where research is about 're-searching' both individually and collectively. Firmly believing in the importance of relationships and engaging in community, I actively seek out opportunities to work in partnership with students and community members. I aim to create opportunities for research partners and participants to engage as equal voices in research and inquiry processes. My research inquiries are motivated by a desire to see a more equal and just world – a world where all voices are valued and at the table.

Conan Veitch: I graduated with an MSc Computer Science from the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) in 2019, and am currently the systems administrator and an instructor for the Computer Science department at UNBC. My research interests lie in distributed embedded computing algorithms and computational education. I've worked as a tutor, teaching assistant and instructor in Math and Computer Science courses, and have helped develop a Web-and-Coach model that has been implemented in three student-driven courses. These opportunities have allowed me to work with students individually, as a group, and remotely - contributing to my view that a hands-on, student-led approach to education is invaluable.

Yahlnaaw: Jah! Xaaydaga 'las! Yahlnaaw han.nuu dii kiiᑕa ga. Hlᑕaagilda Xaayda Gwaii sda.uu hll iijiing. 'Lax Kxeen' sda.uu hll na.uu dii gan. Way.yad.uu 'Nizdeh Nekeyoh Hohudel'eh Baiyoh', Prince George guu.uu hll naa.uu dii ga. T'aawgiwat han.nuu Naanᑕa kiiᑕa ga. Jaaskwan han.nuu dii awᑕa kiiᑕa ga. Bruce han.nuu dii ᑕungᑕa kiiᑕa ga. Giidahlᑕuuhll.aay han.nuu dii dawᑕanas kiiᑕa ga.

“Hey! Wonderful People! My name is Yahlnaaw. I am from Skidegate, Haida Gwaii. I was born and raised in Prince Rupert on Ts'msyen territory. I am attending post-secondary education at the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George on Lheidli T'enneh territory. My Grandmother's name is T'aawgiwat. My Mother's name is Jaaskwan. My father's name is Bruce. My sister's name is Giidahlᑕuuhlaay.” I am a member of the Raven Clan and we have many crests as we are from a Chief's family.

Heather Smith: By training, I'm a critical feminist with a PhD in Political Studies and I'm located in an interdisciplinary department of Global and International Studies at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC). I'm also the former Director of the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology at UNBC, a 3M National Teaching Fellow and a BCCampus Scholarly Teaching Fellow for 2018-2019. My area of 'expertise' is gender and Canadian foreign policy and I've engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning. I'm interested in the students as partners approach because I believe it provides for a profound learning experience for all partners.

Teaming Up and Research Question

Members of the team had worked together in various capacities prior to coming together under the aegis of the BCcampus Scholarly Teaching Fellows Program. Heather and Roselynn began working together in 2015 with Angela Kehler, an undergraduate student from UNBC. Their work was guided by concerns about the underestimation of power in students as partners practices and was ultimately published in the *International Journal for Students as Partners* in 2017 (Kehler, Verwoord and Smith 2017). Conan and Heather worked on a students as partners project at the University of Northern British Columbia when Heather was Director of the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology and Conan was a student research assistant. Similarly, Heather and Yahlnaaw worked together at the UNBC Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology. Yahlnaaw led in the creation of a speaker series titled: Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Decolonization of our Teaching and Learning.

In addition to connections that preceded our work together for BCcampus, each of us brought our own past experiences and expertise in terms of students as partners work in theory and practice (See BCcampus 2019a). Roselynn has been an active researcher in the students-as-partner field (see Acai et al. 2017; Felten et al, 2019; Werder et al. 2016). Conan has been active as both a student and instructor in student-driven courses. Yahlnaaw has worked with Edōsdi / Dr. Judith Thompson at the University of Victoria, and they have presented their work, "Decolonizing our Colonized Minds", at provincial, national, and international levels. Heather tried to put students as partners into practice during her time as Director of the UNBC Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology and has worked with 'students' in a variety of capacities ranging from programming to research (see Smith et al 2012).

Building on our personal connections and diverse expertise, we came together as a team to tackle the following research question: How do we adopt the students as partners concept in a way that is sensitive to embedded power hierarchies?

Our shared question led to the development of a conceptual framework for exploring the role that power has in student-faculty/staff partnerships. The framework uses the acronym P.O.W.E.R. and will be expanded upon in detail in this report. Thus, in response to our research question, we argue that the inclusion of the P.O.W.E.R. framework for reflective practice, by those engaged in students as partners work, will help all partners be more sensitive to embedded power hierarchies.

Below we introduce readers to the concept of students as partners, highlight some of the students as partners work that has tackled the intricacies of power and then turn to the origins of the P.O.W.E.R. framework. As will be seen, the P.O.W.E.R. framework provides reflective prompts associated with Positionality, Openness, Willingness, Ethnocentrism and Reflexivity. Following the identification of the elements of the P.O.W.E.R framework we share team reflections on each of the elements. Given that we found that we were evaluating the framework at the same time as using it as a reflective tool, we share our reflections on the framework itself. The penultimate section of the report shares our broader reflections on partnership. In our concluding section we return to our unique voices to share our final thoughts on this project.

Introduction to Students as Partners

The literature on students as partners is vast (see for example: Acai et al. 2017; Ahmad et al. 2017; Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten 2011; Felten et al. 2019; Healey, Flint, & Harrington 2014; Marquis et al 2016; Seale 2010; Seale 2015). Central to our understanding of students as partners is that “partnership is a way of doing things, rather than an outcome itself” (Healey et al 2016, 2) – it is an ethos (NUS 2013). Moreover, partnership is values based. For Healey et al. (2014, 14-15) the values which inform the students as partners process are: authenticity, inclusivity, reciprocity, empowerment, trust, challenge, community, and responsibility. In the 2016 update of Healey et al. trust, courage, plurality, responsibility, authenticity, honesty, inclusivity, reciprocity and empowerment are identified as the values inform students as partners (Healey et al 2016, 2).

Partnership is not ‘add student and stir’ and it is not simply about bringing a student into faculty research or governance and claiming that you are engaging in students as partners. Partnership is different from student involvement, student participation, or even collaboration. The literature on partnership highlights the “need for students to play not only central roles, but increasingly equitable roles” (Werder, Pope-Raurk and Verwoord 2016, 1) and provides for co-creation. Partnership is not easy and it requires that all participants (students, faculty and administrators) commit to the partnership in ways that will disrupt traditional hierarchies and which emphasize the student voice (Kehler,

Verwoord, Smith 2017; Bovill 2014). It is essential to note that “partnership may not be possible, or indeed appropriate, in all learning and teaching contexts” (Healey et al 2016, 8).

Understanding that the model is not appropriate in all instances, the students as partners framework is nonetheless appealing to us for a variety of reasons. As argued by many students as partners advocates, the model has the potential to disrupt hierarchical and non-democratic practices in higher education (Center for Engaged Learning University 2019; Peters and Mathias 2018; Cook-Sather & Alter 2011; Mihans et al. 2008). As well, the model foregrounds the student voice, challenges views of ‘student as client’ (Center for Engaged Learning 2019) and requires all of us to work collaboratively to challenge spaces and processes that can undermine authentic engagement by all partners. Students as partners scholars also highlight the positive impacts for students, staff and faculty. Roisin Curran draws from the wide body of students as partners literature and highlights the following student outcomes: “development of the learner leading to better citizens, ...enhances motivation and learning,...improves teaching and classroom experience...improves learning in terms of employability skills” (Curran 2017, 2-3). Healey et al. (2014) also highlight a variety of impacts for both students and faculty/staff partners including increased agency for students, increased engagement of marginalized students, as well as “enhanced confidence, motivation, and enthusiasm; enhanced engagement in the process not just the outcomes of learning; enhanced responsibility for, and ownership of, their own learning; deepened understanding of, and contributions to, the academic community” (Healey et al. 2014, 20). “Engagement outcomes for staff (faculty) included: transformed thinking about and practice of teaching; changed understandings of learning and teaching through experiencing different viewpoints; reconceptualization of learning and teaching as collaborative processes” (Healey et al 2014, 20).

It is essential to remember that partnership is context specific. Partnership programs that exist at one institution may not be appropriate in another setting. Partnerships can vary in scale, aims, processes, resources, and outputs. There is no one size fits all. There is no specific checklist that allows individuals to claim they are engaged in students as partners practices. The model is not about deliverables, it’s about process and values that inform our practices. And while students as partners is context specific, there are a host of examples that can inform practices.

In terms of teaching and learning, Healey et al. (2014; 2016) identify four overlapping areas for potential partnership: learning, teaching and assessment; subject-based research and inquiry; scholarship of teaching and learning; curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy. Beyond the practical examples offered in Healey et al. (2016) the

diversity of options for engaging in students as partners can be seen in the programming of the University of Queensland (2019) where there are partnership opportunities where students could be involved as co-authors of university policy, or co-designers of campus student related events, or co-designers of classes or programs. Another example can be found at the McMaster University's MacPherson Institute which also has a students as partners program. Created in 2013, "the program was designed for students who are interested in pedagogical research and innovation" (Paul R. MacPherson Institute for Leadership, Innovation and Excellence in Teaching 2019). Reflections on the application of the students as partners model, through one of the MacPherson Institute projects, called Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) are provided in a 2017 article by Arshad Ahmad et al. For those interested in additional cases of students as partners in practice, readers are recommended to review the *International Journal for Students as Partners, Teaching and Learning Inquiry, Teaching and Learning Together in Higher Education*, and *the Canadian Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Readers are also recommended to review Lucy Mercer-Mapstone and Jenny Marie's (2019) "Practical Guide: Scaling Up Student-Staff Partnership in Higher Education".

Power and Students as Partners

For all the value we see in the students as partners model, our work is premised on the view, consistent with Kehler, Verwoord and Smith (2017), that there is too often an underestimation of power in the literature on the model and an underestimation of power in students as partners in practice.

There is existing scholarship that raises important questions related to power (see Allin 2014; Bovill, Cook-Sather, Felten, Millard, & Moore-Cherry 2016; Cook-Sather and Alter 2011; Felten et al. 2013; Kehler et al. 2017; Mihans et al. 2008). Within the students as partners literature there is an acknowledgement of the power inherent in the creation of students as partners practices because it is generally faculty or staff who are inviting students into partnership (Bovill et al. 2016; Seale et al. 2015; Ahmad et al), and there is an impact of "power differentials in terms of authority, institutional status and expertise" (Weller et al. 2013, 11). The power related to the socially constructed roles of student or faculty or staff (Bovill et al. 2016; Kehler et al. 2017) and the ways in which those roles are dynamic, fluid, often overlapping, and context specific (Kehler et al. 2017; Weller et al. 2013) is also a central theme in the literature.

The power of non-action (or what is often called resistance), misrepresentation (Weller et al. 2013) and the power of silences (Kehler et al. 2017; Seale et al. 2015; Smith, 2017) is a theme that arises in some of the literature and often in relation to students. We believe that resistance or withholding by students is an act of power and agency and consistent with Seale et al. (2015, 548), we need to pay attention to silence, be mindful of how we

interpret silence, and respect students “for their astuteness in appreciating the reality of the relationship they have with lecturers - a relationship in which they, as students, are perhaps minor rather than major stakeholders”. It is vital to the unpacking of power in students as partners processes, that we do not underestimate the ability of those labelled ‘student’ to appreciate and navigate power (Cates, Madigan and Reitenauer, 2018; Dwyer, 2018; Kehler et al. 2017; Silvers 2016; van Dam 2016).

As Kelly Matthews (2017, 3) has observed “power, whether discussed or left unspoken, is always a factor in SAP interactions”. Consistent with our call for a focus on power in everyday practice (Kehler et al. 2017), Matthews (2017, 2) reminds us of the importance of being attentive to both conscious and unconscious habits and behaviors.

Throughout the literature there are a range of habits and behaviours that are identified as sites of power about which we must be mindful. Ahmad et al. (2017, 5) note how discussions of authorship and attribution “became a source of tension given different expectations and disciplinary conventions”. Questions of authorship are significant considering the findings of Mercer-Mapstone et al (2017, 14) who show through an extensive review of the students of partners literature that “the majority of articles had a staff first author (88%) with one-third listing a student co-author”. Mercer-Mapstone et al. go on to argue: “While our literature review captured a plethora of SaP practices premised on the ideals of reciprocity and shared responsibility, the artefacts (publications) of those interactions tended to be staff-centric” (Mercer-Mapstone et al. 2017, 14).

The question of student remuneration is also a site of power. Mercer-Mapstone et al’s (2017) literature review shows that of the majority of the partnerships took place outside of the students’ regular curriculum and of those studies that did indicate whether or not a student was paid, that “35% (n=23) of partnership initiatives paid students (this includes payment via scholarship or stipend), whilst 26% (n=17) did not” (Mercer-Mapstone et al. 2017, 10). While Ahmad et al (2017, 6) note that that the students at McMaster were paid, they argue that ‘less tangible’ incentives such as professional contacts played a role in ongoing volunteer work by students after the paid portion of their research. While the less tangible rewards are important for some students, there are tensions around financial compensation that cannot be underestimated and if students are not paid there are degrees to which the use of their intellectual labour can be exploitative.

Kehler, Verwood and Smith (2017) remind us that partnership practices are deeply personal. Issues of authorship and remuneration, among others, are important but it is vital to remember that partnerships are about relationships and that as we navigate these relationships we must be mindful of the subtle ways in which power operates. Power is found in everything from the way students are selected and the way partnerships are

initiated, to the use of acronyms without explanation thus excluding those 'not in the know'. Power is found in the ways and modes of determining meeting times, to who chairs meetings and how the meetings are run, to colonial images in meeting rooms, to behaviours that limit the agency of a partner. The sites of power are vast. It is vital to remember that when we talk about power embedded our practices that it is about impact, not intent. How students feel about the power is something that must always be considered.

One way to ensure our attentiveness to our partnership practices and to remain mindful of our conscious and unconscious habits and behaviors is through ongoing and regular reflective practice, both as individuals and teams. Relationship building, conversation and dialogue are all practices central to the SAP literature (see Allin 2014; Bovill et al. 2016; Cates et al. 2018; Kehler et al. 2017; Matthews 2017; Weller et al. 2013). The P.O.W.E.R. framework, expanded upon below, is designed to support reflective practice in students as partners processes.

Origins of the P.O.W.E.R Framework

The P.O.W.E.R. framework builds on the work of Kehler, Verwoord and Smith (2017) in that it assumes we must be attentive to power in our students as partners work. More broadly, the P.O.W.E.R. framework reflects a theoretical commitment to critical educational approaches (Freire 2002; Giroux 1997; Shor 1992;), feminist international relations (Enloe 1996 and 2004; Sylvester 2009; Zalewski 1996) and decolonizing approaches (Battiste 2000; Denzin, Lincoln and Tuhiwai Smith 2008; Tuck and Yang 2012; Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Wilson 2008). Consistent with Verwoord and Smith (2019 np) these approaches “inform our understanding of power hierarchies as gendered, racialized, heteronormative, class-based and ableist.” Given the complex and intersectional nature of power we must be willing to unpack power and reflect on the way in which it functions in our partnerships.

It is this emphasis on unpacking power that led to the creation of the P.O.W.E.R. framework. Roselynn and Heather were invited to contribute a piece to a forthcoming volume on power in students as partners practices and the focus of that piece became the creation of a practical and applied tool that would foster the kind of reflection we have advocated previously. As can be seen in Verwoord and Smith (2019), the framework is designed to foster dialogue among partners.

In the next section we provide readers with the P.O.W.E.R. framework. The framework can be used in any partnership processes. We encourage readers to use the framework to frame conversations between team members, although the framework can be used for

individual reflection as well. Following the presentation of the framework, we share our collective reflections on each of the elements of the framework.

The P.O.W.E.R. Framework

Positionality - Is the ability to consider one's position and social location and to view these aspects as relational, where context and aspects of our identities (i.e. gender, race, class, etc.) are fluid and changing (Alcoff 1988). Positionality involves individuals taking up a position within a context (i.e. a partnership) and constructing meaning from this position (Alcoff 1988). In partnership, positionality involves individuals asking themselves questions including: What subject position am I taking up? How much power do I have in this partnership, based on the position and social location that I occupy? How much power do others have in this partnership, based on their positions and social locations?

Openness - Is the desire to explore what might be possible. In partnership, openness involves asking questions about the purpose, goals, vision, and desires that partners have for the partnership. It also involves embracing the process of partnership in its myriad of forms - messy, challenging, and exhilarating, to name a few, yet also ripe with possibilities for individual and collective growth. In partnership, openness can be demonstrated by individuals asking themselves questions such as: What are my goals and intentions for participating in this partnership? What are my partners' goals and intentions? To what extent am I open to the process of partnership? To what extent are my partners open to the process of partnership? How will I know if I and others are being open throughout the partnership?

Willingness – Involves the concept of temporality, which can be understood as past, present, and future, as well as space, place and one's being. It involves individuals determining how much time they have to participate in the partnership, how much time they have to engage in relationship building and to what extent participating is a priority. Decisions about participation and prioritization are often connected to: 1) individuals' prior partnership experiences or existing relationships with current or proposed partners, and 2) satisfaction with current or proposed partnership practices. In partnership, determining one's willingness to invest time in the process involves individuals asking themselves questions such as: Am I/will I be an important stakeholder in this partnership? Does the partnership process/proposed partnership process attend to aspects that are important to me? Am I/will I make the time to build the relationships so essential to this process?

Ethnocentric - Having the attitude that one's own group is superior. In partnership, ethnocentrism can take the form of partners making assumptions about each other, based on labels such as a Faculty member, student, staff member, etc. Whether intentional or

not, making assumptions about various groups (Faculty, student, staff) can limit what is possible in partnerships. In partnership, developing an awareness of ethnocentrism involves individuals asking questions including: Does this partnership imply that anyone who disagrees with what is proposed is wrong? Does the partnership acknowledge that there are other logical ways of looking at the same issue? Am I making assumptions about certain groups of people, based on a homogenized label such as Faculty, student, or staff member?

Reflexivity - Is the ability to recognize how individuals are shaped by and can shape their environment and how the self and other exist in relation. Reflexivity supports individuals to “open new ways of addressing...long-standing questions of how and what we can legitimately take ourselves to know and what the limitations of our knowledge are” (Davies et al. 2004, 364). In the context of partnership, reflexivity involves individuals asking questions including: How are my interests and actions being shaped, supported, or limited by the interests and actions of others? How are my actions or inactions shaping the experience of others in the partnership?

Team Reflections on the Elements of the P.O.W.E.R Framework

As a team, we engaged in conversations related to the elements of the P.O.W.E.R. framework. In this section, we share some of our insights on each element. We are writing this in a collective voice and this approach has the obvious issue of homogenizing our voices, which is problematic given the individual nature of our reflections. However, this approach also provides for some privacy for participants, in terms of the reflections they have shared. We are aware of this uneasy tension as we move forward but nonetheless aim to share how the P.O.W.E.R. framework guided and illuminated our conversations.

Positionality - We reflected on the prompts related to positionality and asked ourselves “how has positionality played a role in your partnership experiences?” Across the board, we agreed that positionality was often not discussed and that it was rare to engage in conversations about place, privilege and identity. There was also a sense that too often there was a dominant emphasis on roles - such as faculty, administrator or student - and that focus limited introspection on positionality. This said, we do act in and through our roles -- we can take on practices that are rooted in power and so attentiveness to roles is important but not enough.

It is also clear to us that the dominance of language that emphasizes roles such as ‘staff’, or ‘student’ or ‘faculty’ can be misleading. These role designations miss the fact that we may occupy multiple roles at the same time. We may be staff/student and student/faculty and so the question of positionality, in terms of institutional labels, becomes less obvious

and more complex. Moreover, these labels are academic institutional labels and they are only a small part of who we are. We are so many more things than an institutional label, and we do not fit into tidy categories.

For all of us, it is essential to acknowledge our own individual positionalities as we did above in the introduction to this report. Partners need to have a sense where each other comes from because experiences shape and inform our partnership processes. This said, we also recognize that there are elements of our own identities that we are unwilling to share in our partnerships and that needs to be respected. We do have to reflect on positionality and we encourage conversations with partners, but acknowledge our reflections can also be deeply personal and thus need to be handled with care.

Openness - In response to the question “how has openness manifested in your partnership experiences” we observed that openness requires us to be willing to challenge the norms of post-secondary institutions that limit our abilities to engage in partnership. Openness must be reciprocal and is reflected in a shared commitment to learning about and from each other. Without openness it’s not partnership -- it may be some other relationship within institutional bounds - but it’s not partnership.

Openness also required that we be willing to challenge social and political norms that infuse our institutions and we need to be attentive to the colonial norms that shape our institutions, practices, and assumptions about what constitutes knowledge. We need to challenge colonial norms about scholarly distance and objectivity. Openness is also directly related to positionality. We are not separate from our identities in the project. We bring ourselves - our identities - our motivations - our histories - to all our practices.

Just as we recognize the tensions in positionality between a public and private articulation of who we are, in our discussions of openness we acknowledged that openness must involve recognition by partners that in openness we are vulnerable and we can be harmed. While mindful of the vulnerability that comes with openness, we also believe that openness can result in opportunities for profound learning if we are willing to take the risk.

Willingness - By way of a prompt, we asked “how has willingness to invest time in the process been a consideration in your partnerships?” Central to our conversation on willingness was the theme of individual agency. For each of us, it was clear that we all reflected on how we might contribute to a partnership. Who our collaborators were and the relationships we had with them prior to the proposed partnership also influenced our willingness to participate in partnerships.

Our conversations related to willingness, like the other elements of the P.O.W.E.R. framework, also reflected our own experiences and how they framed assumptions about time. A commitment of time by an administrator may mean something different than a commitment of time to an undergraduate student, but there needs to be intentionality about making time to engage, a recognition of workload distribution, and an understanding that building partnerships takes time. How the expenditure of time is recognized or valued will also vary for partners, and that needs to be acknowledged.

Willingness to invest time is also linked to ownership. The degree to which we feel part of a project directly influences our willingness to commit time to the processes of partnership. Ultimately, for all involved, we want to know that we are important to the work and that we contribute to the work -- in partnership. This doesn't mean that all partners do the same amount of 'work' but rather that all partners feel that they are part of the process and valued members of the partnership.

Ethnocentrism - Our conversations related to ethnocentrism began with the question of "do you have any thoughts on ethnocentrism"?

The dominance of euro-centric and colonial models of education where Western knowledges and practices dominate our institutions, was a central theme in our discussions of ethnocentrism. It was asked "what might it look like to decolonize partnership given that it is a practice and ethos currently situated within a Eurocentric system of education"?

Sharing our reflections on ethnocentrism in a third person homogenized team voice is also impossible given that three of us are settlers and Yahlnaaw is an Indigenous woman. Even the way in which this report is written eliminates the voices of each of us and thus engages in research practices counter to Indigenous storytelling practices. Moreover, experiences with dominant norms and practices as settlers is fundamentally different than those of an Indigenous woman. Settlers have privilege that too often goes unexamined and if examined, they will be shocked at how deeply embedded they are in Western, masculinist, and Eurocentric norms.

Reflecting on ethnocentrism must be coupled with positionality, openness, and a willingness to invest time to build relationships and to learn from each other. Through conversation, we can learn about the multiple sites of power in which Western and colonial practices are embedded and through the leadership of our Indigenous partners, settlers can support the decolonization of our spaces.

Reflexivity - For this final element of the P.O.W.E.R. framework we prompted each other by asking “how has reflexivity been an important practice in your partnerships?”

Reflexivity, we agreed, is central to partnership. It was noted that reflexivity isn't part of the process - it is the process and that the P.O.W.E.R. framework was rooted in reflexivity. The importance of reflexivity in partnership is that it helps us individually, and collectively, explore relationality.

In the context of our conversations, reflexivity was linked to the other elements of the P.O.W.E.R. framework. For example, there were connections made to positionality and it was noted that through an explicit emphasis on reflexivity, we can ask ourselves questions about who we are in relation to others and what insights we were gleaning from our partners. Reflexivity was also related to the limitations of knowledge and the construction of hierarchies of knowledge that functioned to invalidate Indigenous knowledge. Through reflexive practice, in combination with openness, settlers can challenge their colonial practices. Finally, it was argued that reflexivity needed to be coupled with feedback and then action on the feedback.

Reflections on the P.O.W.E.R. Framework

After we gathered our collective reflections on the framework, it became clear that as we worked through the framework, we were also evaluating the framework. As a result, many questions arose -- questions that are worth sharing.

The questions that arose include are we using the right terms to describe the way power plays through partnership and then capturing impressions accurately? How do we ensure elements of the P.O.W.E.R. framework have some sort of shared understanding despite how subjective the elements can be? Will there be a space to introduce and situate ourselves? If we worked with other partners and wanted to use the framework, how do we facilitate the reflective process for this framework? Would we use conversation as a space for reflection or quiet reflection? How to we facilitate sharing? What kind of time do people need to process this? It's not always easy to articulate our points and to have them make sense to our audiences and how do we make them authentic? How do we boil down complex conversations? How do we prompt people to think about power in ways that are safe, authentic, valuable to their partnership processes?

These questions speak to the vulnerability at the heart of discussions of power and partnership. We had all worked together prior to this project and so relationships had been built or at least the foundations of relationships had been built. Perhaps because of those foundations we were able to have our conversations more fully than those new to

partnerships but the point remains that if the reflections on power are to be authentic we must all become vulnerable and all recognize each other's vulnerability. Consistent with Weller et al (2013, 3), there is a deep and profound affective dimension to the work of partnership and co-inquiry.

We also acknowledged that there were four different ways to engage the framework and that we all came to our partnership with our own experiences. The P.O.W.E.R framework is designed to help us share our respective experiences. Our intention is not to prescribe how readers use it or what their outcome might be but it can help us all to look at the nuanced elements of power. We need to move beyond the generalizations of 'there are power issues' and actually say what kind, how and where of the power.

Reflections on Partnership

Beyond the reflections on power in partnership and the P.O.W.E.R framework, there are some broad reflections on partnership and the students as partners model that arose in our work together.

One of the questions that arose was whether we can ever really be in partnership? As Allin (2014, 96) recognizes, true collaboration is hard in higher education and efforts at partnership can be uncomfortable for all involved (Felten et al 2013, 65). Higher educational structures are fundamentally hierarchical and even when there are efforts to 'partner' the faculty member or administrator still hold those 'authoritative' positions regardless of their efforts of partner with students. Students are acutely aware of the hierarchy and to assume anything less is extremely naive.

It was also noted that arguments in the literature about the transformative potential of the S.A.P. model needs to be unpacked in terms of transformative for whom? Additionally, embedded assumptions of partnership as normatively good need to be examined. Good for whom? While we don't deny that working in partnership can be transformative and can be a positive experience in a variety of ways, these assumptions do need unpacking. For example, there seems to be a tone in the literature that assumes students will be transformed and that their non-engagement is simply resistance that can be overcome. This tone has an imperial and colonial resonance. The students are often implicitly constructed as the 'other' in academic research led by faculty thus undermining pretensions of partnership and reinforcing hierarchies of power (See Allin, 100). The issues with 'othering' students are exacerbated by the fact that the student voices are excluded or minimized in many students as partners articles thus raising questions about for whom is this research?

Another element that arose in our conversations was the perception of tokenism by students in students as partners initiatives. If faculty and administrators are going to try to adopt the students as partners models they need to engage authentically and in a way that doesn't make students feel that their participation is a shallow gesture in inclusion for political or public relations purposes. There must be a commitment to students as partners that isn't transitory and aims for some sort of sustainability (Martens et al 2019). Moreover, faculty and administrators adopting this model need to check behaviours and assumptions of privilege and expertise and be willing to learn. They need to be willing to be transformed and to listen and learn.

Building sustainable partnerships, built on personal commitments to the values of partnership, requires persistence. We can create spaces for the student voice but that doesn't mean others will buy into that voice or listen to the students in any way that is more than superficial. The literature is clear that we are engaged in cultural change but dominant cultures can push back through marginalization, inattention, or an absence of mind that requires constant vigilance on the part of partnership advocates. Persistence, however, at Felten et al (2013, 65) argue, "offers the possibility of challenging and disrupting established norms, promoting integration and inclusion rather than marginalization and exclusion of student voice".

Finally, as Kelly Matthews (2017, 5), notes "SaP should be governed by ethical guidelines — conducted in an ethical process and for ethical outcomes". In some cases, the students as partners work will require ethics approval by our respective universities and thus is it essential to be clear on when this may be required. If there are any instances where a faculty member is partnering with students, who they are currently teaching and grading, then there are issues of ethics and real questions about whether this could be a partnership given the power associated with a grade. Even for us there were tensions related to the fact that Conan and Yahlnaaw were employed at the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology at different times and had done partnership work as student employees of the CTLT. It is true they were remunerated for their work which deals with one of the issues noted above but it adds a different problematic layer of power. The bulk of this work was done when those employee-employer relationships were past, but it does raise, again, questions of power. Regardless of whether we're talking about an ethics review or ethical behavior, ethics must be given consideration when engaging partnerships.

Ultimately, the students as partners process can be complex and messy. It requires that we all come together with a willingness to listen and learn and the learning can be transformative. The P.O.W.E.R. framework is one tool that can support your reflexive

practice and help you to unpack the sites and sources of power in your partnership and thus help you build authentic partnership processes and practices.

Concluding Reflections

Heather: By way of conclusion, we wanted to return to our own voices and we wanted to acknowledge the value of our collaborative work. Working with Roselynn, Conan and Yahlnaaw reminded me, regularly, of the depth of power in the processes. I was reminded about the way that unconscious bias plays through so much of what we do. If we to have authentic relationships we must all be open to change and reflection. The labels of 'senior scholar' or 'faculty member' do not excuse us from the need to learn. As I wrote elsewhere, "Conan reminded me that there is always power in our partnerships and students are always aware of its existence. Yahlnaaw brought an Indigenous perspective to our work and shared it in ways that required me to reflect on my own colonial assumptions. Roselynn brought a unique perspective of being a doctoral student, instructor, professional developer, and leader in the scholarship of students as partners. She regularly provoked me to consider the function of roles and labelling as a practice of power. None of these insights would have been possible if not for my partners. We have so much to learn from those who we label students – the question is, are faculty willing to take the risk?" (BCcampus 2019b).

Roselynn: - I am thankful to have had the opportunity to engage in many conversations with Conan, Yahlnaaw, and Heather where we explored and shared our ideas pertaining to power and partnership. While insightful, these conversations provided me with an opportunity to develop new relationships with Conan and Yahlnaaw and to build on an existing relationship with Heather. While I'm thankful for the work that we accomplished together, I will treasure the relationships that we developed. On a personal level, the opportunity to spend a significant amount of time reflecting on my experiences with power in partnerships has proven useful to my own theorizing around power and partnership. I am hopeful that the P.O.W.E.R framework will be a useful tool for those interested in exploring the nuances of power and partnership.

Conan: This has been a tremendous opportunity to work with researchers from outside of the STEM fields. In this regard, each discussion with Roselynn, Yahlnaaw and Heather provided me with their unique insights into the underlying structure of student-faculty relationships. My own research in computational education has been augmented by the very nature of our multidisciplinary team, as I feel as if I'm asking a wider scope of questions after my experiences in this project. I'm grateful to my team for welcoming me with open arms; we've grown together as collaborators and friends through discussion, experiences, births and deaths. I could not ask for a better group.

Yahlnaaw: I believe that a foundational component of Students as Partners - and partners in general - is the building and maintenance of relationships. In order for us to efficiently work and communicate with one another, we must know each other and understand why we bring what we do to the table of our research. Our many different life experiences shape how we view, interpret, and interact with our world - and I am so grateful for how Heather, Roselynn, and Conan have shaped how I understand and participate within Students as Partners practices.

Haawa. Kil 'laa dluu gam gina kuuya gang han.nuu dii Chinga dii gii suu gang giini. - "Thank you. My Grandfather used to tell me there is nothing more precious than thank you".

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