

# **“Teach me how to dance with you”**

## **A phenomenological exploration to improve my own (football) coaching**

By Marink Hendricus Marinus Reedijk

A thesis submitted to Cardiff Metropolitan University in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Taught Doctorate in Sport Coaching

April 2021

Director of Studies: Professor Robyn L. Jones

Supervisor: Dr Gethin Thomas

### **Copyright**

Attention is drawn to the fact that copyright of this thesis with its author. This copy of the thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is understood to recognise that its copyright rests with the author and that no quotation from the thesis and no information derived from it may be published without written consent of the author.

This thesis may be made available for consultation within the university library and may be photocopied or lent to other libraries for the purpose of consultation.

Signature of Author.....

M. Reedijk

## **Abstract**

During my academic journey, I have always felt a nagging space between the subject of my studies and my coaching practice, causing all kinds of angst and challenges. Hence, due to this personal struggle, I wanted this work to be beneficial for both scholars and practitioners; indeed, for all who work in the sports coaching community. That is why I undertook a phenomenological examination of coaching, with the purpose of bringing theory alive in practice. Throughout the work, I narrate my 'research journey' to create understanding(s) of the opportunities and difficulties related to applying phenomenology in practice. Guided by Heidegger's (2001) perspective, the aim was to explore my own coaching phenomenologically; to consider what 'coaching' really is about. The work is undertaken through a first person phenomenological approach (Van Manen, 1990), where my phenomenological awakening in relation to my coaching practice is traced and deconstructed. The 'findings', in turn, are presented within vignettes crafted through the process of creative (non-)fiction. Each vignette focuses on the stated project objectives, encapsulated in the research questions of; 'How can I discern what I see?' 'What are the presuppositions that underpin my practice?' and 'What are the connections between what I see and what I do?' The method employed within the work borrows heavily from critical companionship, where primacy is given to reflexivity (Finlay, 2002a; 2002b) in all its forms.

## **Acknowledgements**

At first, I'd like to thank the individuals who gave me the opportunities in football and academia before doing and during this study. I believe these experiences allowed me to enter the doctorate in the first place, made me able to adapt towards the demanded level more easily and made me able to bring practice and theory together.

The journey to create, continue and finish this thesis was a hell of a process. Therefore, secondly. I'd like to thank family and friends who supported, listened to and motivated me. Without the care, positivity and opportunism around I could not have done this in the way I did now.

A special thanks to my supervisors Robyn Jones and Gethin Thomas for their patience, helping hand and understanding to guide a somewhat stubborn identity like myself who questioned... nearly everything. I have got deep respect for the fact that you were open in your ideas to mutually create 'my little silly outlying idea' towards something called a doctoral thesis. In the guidance during this process your 'coaching' let my strengths over-shine the weaknesses I possess. It is something I highly valued - heel erg bedankt!

## Contents

<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>p. 1</b>
	Introductory vignette	p. 2
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>A review of literature</b>	<b>p. 5</b>
	2.1 Introduction	p. 6
	2.2 Coaching	
	2.2.1 Introductory debate	p. 7
	2.2.2 The psychological (behavioural) perspective	p. 8
	2.2.3 The sociological turn	p. 10
	2.2.4 Post-structuralist, post-modernist, and socio-pedagogic perspectives	p. 11
	2.2.5 The on-going gap between theory and practice	p. 14
	2.2.6 The coaching craft	p. 16
	2.3 Phenomenology	
	2.3.1 An introduction	p. 17
	2.3.2 Phenomenology: some principal thinkers	p. 19
	2.4 The phenomenon of coaching	p. 22
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>p. 25</b>
	3.1 Introduction	p. 26
	3.2 Ontology and epistemology	p. 26
	3.2.1 My research journey	p. 27
	3.3 Methodology	
	3.3.1 Understanding data: phenomenology as a method	p. 29
	3.3.2 Gathering data: first person phenomenology and reflexivity	p. 31
	3.3.3 Presenting the data: creative (non-)fictional vignettes	p. 33
	3.3.4 Avoiding too much ‘me’: critical conversation and companionship	p. 36

3.3.5 Setting the scene (and a nod to procedure)	p. 37
3.4 Judging the study	
3.4.1 Trustworthiness	p. 39
3.4.2 Ethics	p. 40
<b>Chapter 4 Results</b>	<b>p. 42</b>
Vignette 1: how can I discern what I see?	p. 43
Vignette 2: what are the presuppositions that underpin my practice?	p. 51
Vignette 3: the connections between what I see and what I do?	p. 59
<b>Chapter 5 Conclusion</b>	<b>p. 67</b>
5.1 Introduction	p. 68
5.2 Recapping the aims and objectives and principal conclusions of the study	p. 69
5.3 Future considerations	p. 71
5.4 Personal benefit	p. 72
5.5 'Outroductory' vignette	p. 74

## References

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

*'Honestly, I really, really do not want to do this research'. For me, doing this thesis is like a long waltz with an unattractive partner. This partner (research) has been dancing in the same way for a long time (Jones et al., 2012); she forgets the real-life domain (Abrahams and Collins, 2011) and does not bring her practical knowledge to the floor (Nash and Sproule, 2009; Jones and Wallace, 2005). Ultimately, dancing the waltz is a practical phenomenon which needs to be understood by both partners to be executed well. At the moment, I feel that doing it her way will be disastrous due to the fact that my approach is very different. We just do not see things in the same way! For me, it is all about practical understanding; it is about the practice of the dance, first and last; for her, on the other hand, it seems to be about the theory.*

*Should I ask her to dance? And if so, what will dancing with her look like?? I cannot answer either question; although in pondering I drift into phenomenology. This philosophy and method provides insight into what is distinct or unique in a phenomenon. It does so by examining our intuitive perceptions (Van Manen, 2017), something which perhaps can be useful if I dared to dance? Why? Because it can offer a rich portrayal of what I actually feel and do when dancing. In this way, it may lead to new unexplored territory; to a variety of the waltz I have not yet tried. Driven by obligation and curiosity, I take her hand and walk towards the dance floor.*

*My thoughts swing from 'what a great opportunity' to 'I should turn around and walk back to my place, now, right now (!)' in the space of a second. Despite the doubt, I keep on walking, the desperation to unfold and understand the dance in this different way overriding the concern. Our waltz will be phenomenological, thus deepening my understanding of dancing, my partner and myself. Consequently, I can explore and transform my own practice; a thought which excites me!*

*As we arrive on the floor and turn towards each other, I put my arm around her waist, pulling her hip close. For a few seconds, I stare into her eyes, the little blush on her cheeks redden, before her eyes roll away from mine. She will not reveal her secrets so easily. I have to find a way to dance harmonically so we can learn from each others' perspectives. During the dance then, I pay great*

*attention to every step and move, I need to make sense of these in a practical way, to create a mutual knowledge-for-understanding (Jones and Wallace, 2005) about a phenomenon called dancing (coaching).’*

As a point of departure, and as the author of this research, I believe it is appropriate to provide a glimpse of myself by outlining my background and interests (Armour and Jones, 1998). As a student on the Doctorate in Sports Coaching (DSC) at Cardiff Metropolitan University, I needed to complete a research project in order to graduate. Despite being a practitioner, a football trainer/coach, I took on the challenge of “taking research by the hand” with my eagerness to develop my coaching as the driving force. Needless to say, this project was not something I particularly relished; I come from practice. I am originally from the Netherlands, while my career working in other countries and in different languages, from elite academy to professional first team football coaching, has challenged and changed my assumptions. Here, I have been regularly confronted with something ‘new’ whilst also ‘utterly normal’; that is, the way interactions occur in football, what people actually say, perspectives on the game, and comparisons, are both the same and, at the same time, different. I became increasingly intrigued by this paradox, particularly in relation to the apparent fallacy of my ‘self’. My background (Dutch, white, educated at university, raised in a village etc.) and personality (determined, stubborn, always striving for perfection, constantly looking for challenges etc.) made what I experienced in and from coaching football completely different from others. Although I somehow implicitly knew this, it was only triggered when confronted with a (totally) new context. I felt, however, that I always knew more than I could say; that there was more I knew about what I already did in a taken-for-granted way. I suppose I just did not have the time, or perhaps the means, to really consider and access this hidden knowledge, I was, in many ways, an adventurer looking for new territory to explore. On reflection, perhaps a frustrated one, as that territory did not appear easily to me, as I assumed it would. However, a discussion on the DSC in one of the modules undertaken involving ‘making the familiar strange’, took me to a new place; and to ideas about the current project.

Therefore, this study aims to explore my own coaching through a phenomenological perspective. Its value lies in both exploring my own practice and addressing a gap in the literature. Phenomenology of course has been used in sport before (e.g., Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2016; Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2007;



Brown and Payne, 2009; Ravn and Christensen, 2014; McNarry and Allen-Collinson, 2019), but very limitedly in coaching. My goal here is to further develop this perspective of a phenomenology of coaching practice; to use the philosophy as a method, thus highlighting its utility to practice. My specific objectives relate to addressing such questions as; How can I discern what I see? What are the presuppositions that underpin my practice? and What are the connections between what I see and what I do? The remainder of the thesis is dedicated to addressing these issues.

A purpose here then was to raise personal consciousness, leading to a potential transformation of my own practice. There was no certainty here however, just an exploratory journey. Although this raising of consciousness suggests a revisiting or unearthing of things, events and feelings already known, the hope here was also to discover things not yet known. In the words of Boudieu and Wacquant (1992), to possibly bring into play “unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable” (p. 40). In this respect then, the work also held some potential exciting transformation. As you can already gather, this work is grounded in the interpretive paradigm which, naturally, demands a degree of reader engagement. The thesis thus can be read in numerous ways, assuming a position that multiple realities exist (Benoliel, 1996; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Indeed, by advocating relativism rather than realism, in which knowledge is relative rather than real, the work invites readers to make their own sense of what I present, albeit within certain parameters (a point discussed at some length on in the methodology section).

In terms of structure, following this introduction, Chapter 2 comprises a review of pertinent literature. The point here, however, is not merely to go over what has already been written but to build an unfolding case as to the significance of the work undertaken. In this respect, it also serves as the rationale for the work. Chapter 3 comprises the method section where the way of writing, the collection and the presentation of the data will be discussed and further explained. Then in Chapter 4, the results will be presented in three different (non-)fictional vignettes. With after each vignette, a theoretical reflection to recap practical execution on the basis of theoretical ideas. Thereafter, Chapter 5 will be about presentation of the conclusion followed by an ‘outroductory vignette’ where a long dance will be properly ended.

## **Chapter 2: A review of literature**

## 2.1. Introduction

*What am I doing?* I was staring at the mirror but did not recognise myself. My introduction was finished but progress was sluggish. I could not see the relevance of the DSC research phase to my ultimate goal of becoming a professional head coach. During my first year, linking theory to practice and having discussions with peers had been a great addition to my ultimate goal. From my perspective, prominence should be given at all times to relationality and understanding, something I could not see happening during the research phase.

Despite this uncertainty, I was not giving up on the final research project, I just had to find a way forward. I drew inspiration from the songwriter Eddie Vedder: *“I know the rules but the rules do not know me, guaranteed”*. To progress, I had to make something practically applicable, and use *‘the rules’* to get my thoughts right on paper. First, I would focus on a phenomenological examination of my own coaching. This would help understand the essence of my practice, and ultimately how to improve it. Second, this (i.e., research) exercise had to be a bridge between me (the practical orientated dancer) and the unattractive (theoretical) dancing partner. The key intention was to move coaching science closer to practitioners through academic work, which could be practically understood and (at least partly) applied. Soon after, I started.

In earnest, however, similar to Cushion and Partington (2016), I began to feel disciplined and normalised by the rules and regulations of academia. I expressed frustrations that ‘academia was missing the point’ by being so apparently rigid. For me, it was quite clear: it should be about practice first and last, with theory only supporting; to be pressed into the service of practical improvement. I was advised to develop two separate pieces, one based on academic conventions and regulations, and the other related to practical orientated work. It was not what I wanted; and I could not hide my natural skepticism and critical attitude towards much of what was labelled ‘current coaching science’. It got to the point where I even entertained thoughts of ‘quitting’, and return to my ‘grass work’. And so it came to that morning when I stared at myself in the mirror and asked myself, “what am I doing?”

My response? I decided to begin with what I knew, to write ‘my way’. Following this, I would consider my natural critique and that of others who have similarly taken issue with mainstream thinking (e.g., Jones and Wallace, 2005) to further develop my own ideas, thus further giving it a unique flavour. I was aware that this point of departure held the potential to cause conflict, therefore, I needed to be clear in my

thoughts and reasoning during this research journey. Thereafter, I had to clarify myself ontologically, epistemologically and methodologically very carefully to make sure that, academically, the work would be appreciated. I washed my face; now I needed to find the best possible way to kick-start the work.

A few moments later, I climbed the stairs to my 'office', articles and notes in left hand, coffee in the right. While walking upstairs the importance of clarity loomed large in my initial thoughts. *To accomplish my aim and objectives, I need to be strategic*, I told myself. Once I climbed the second stairs, I came up with a plan. It would guide the readers through my, and subsequently their own, experiences around the practical interpretation and the 'doing' of coaching. With this in mind, I needed to explore the literature in terms of what it actually said about the phenomenon under study (i.e., coaching).

I entered my 'office', took a sip of coffee, and looked at my huge magnet board on the wall. On the board, the research ideas floating in my mind were captured and written down in domains: 'coaching', 'phenomenology' and 'the phenomenon of coaching'. This would provide the structure for the review of literature, where I would use them to first separate, and then analyse and evaluate relevant writings. They would direct and focus how I was going to explore my coaching practice. First, through a focus on coaching; I wanted to review the different perspectives on the phenomenon, to create theoretical and practical understanding. Thereafter, I would focus on phenomenology, by explaining and exploring this philosophy and method. Later I would deepen this understanding of phenomenology by looking specifically at some phenomenological scholars; before concluding with an approach to coaching phenomenologically.

## **2.2. Coaching**

### **2.2.1 Introductory debate**

It did not take me long to realise that understanding coaching from the literature was not going to be an easy task, as there was, or is, no definitive agreement about what coaching is (see the debate between Grecic and Collins, 2013; North, 2013, and Jones et al., 2016). I needed to provide some clarity by identifying, understanding and critically analysing the different theoretical perspectives that had been used in coaching research. I soon discovered that the major debates within coaching science revolved around conceptualizing and defining (sport) coaching and its effectiveness. Since the turn of the century, this debate has been

discussed through a variety of different lenses so I began with the most prominent; psychology, followed by sociology, philosophy and pedagogy.

### **2.2.2 The psychological (behavioural) perspective**

Emerging in the late twentieth century, the early foundations of coaching science drew upon a range of scientific-orientated fields (e.g., sport physiology and sport biomechanics), but was viewed predominantly through a (behavioral) sport psychological lens (Chelladurai, 1990). Early studies were mainly guided by the positivistic paradigm leading often to quantitative research and a related statistical analysis. The adoption of this approach can be attributed to the dominance of behavioural psychology as coaching's traditional disciplinary guide (Cushion et al, 2006). Viewed through this lens, coaching was (and to an extent still is) considered as a rational practice; that is, predictable, measurable and controllable (Jowett, 2017).

Consequently, models were developed, and relied upon, to capture the process of coaching; models *for* and models *of* the coaching process. Models *for*, reflected idealistic representations of coaching (e.g., Lyle 1999; 2002). They were developed through the identification of a set of assumptions about coaching (Bush, 2008), often providing statistical based outcomes of coaching behaviours. Although these outcomes appear as logically deduced and interrelated, they have been criticised as presenting a segmented and decontextualised view of coaching (Cushion et al., 2006); highlighting only snapshots of something far more complex. Other academics, meanwhile, advocated the usefulness of models *of* coaching, claiming that they explain and demonstrate the coaching process. This led to a focus on topics within the general activity of coaching, such as the coach-athlete relationship (e.g., Jowett, 2017; Jowett et al., 2010), the 'effectiveness' of coaching (Côté and Gilbert, 2009) and the 'development of successful coaches' (Gilbert et al., 2006). Such research focused on describing and conceptualising coaching, for example by defining and differentiating what an effective and/or ineffective coach actually is (Côté and Gilbert, 2009). Both such approaches (models *of* and *for*) imply a 'standardisation' of coaching, presenting specific definitions or conceptualisation as a 'gold standard' for action.

Although this early work provided some insights into coaching, such theoretical frameworks and models (e.g., Côté, Salmela, Trudel, Baria and Russell, 1995; Chelladurai and Saleh, 1980; Fairs, 1987) have been criticised as rationalistic, because they fail to capture the dynamic and contextual complexities in which

coaches and athletes operate (see Jones and Wallace, 2005 for a fuller early critique here). Despite good stated intentions then, such work has been critiqued for lacking any appreciation for coaching's dynamic and contested pedagogical nature to ultimately stimulate athlete learning (Jones, 2006). In other words, applying such an approach offers no real answers to unravelling coaching's essence, since it can only ever capture isolated and decontextualised fragments of the phenomenon under study.

Although other psychologically grounded academics acknowledge the inherent complexities of coaching, they still approach its study through a somewhat positivistic lens. Like Abrahams and Collins (2011), they consequently continue to offer a model of coaching or one aspect of it (e.g., the coach's decision making process) as a solution to improve coaches' practice (Abrahams and Collins, 2011). Such scholars (e.g. Lyle, 2007; Collins and Collins, 2016; Grecic and Collins, 2013) agree that coaching is complex, but that a definitive process and relatively narrow structure is still needed to support and implement practical application. Collins and Collins (2016), for example, identified the importance and complexity of context, while presenting a given, tight perspective of coaching through advocating a (practical) 'useful' framework, called 'Technicolor coaching' (p. 1238). *Is it possible to capture complexity by such explicit guidance?* I wondered.

As I read the psychological literature, it became clear to me that this perspective looked for the creation of absolute models and standards to direct coaches in their practice. Indeed, Abrahams and Collins (2011) argue that practical guidelines 'need to be given through explicit guidance such as questions and instruction' (p.373). *Although I initially thought that these researchers wanted to bring theory into practice, I was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the assumption that modelling the coaching process was useful to capture its complexity. From my practical experiences, everything within the context was directly and/or indirectly inter-linked. Consequently, I did not think that a model, aiming to give specific guidance or instruction, could really capture the essence of coaching or really help in the doing of it.* Although easy to understand, I needed a perspective that went beyond viewing the coaching process as a sequential and mechanistic activity. Indeed, I knew from experience that by not engaging in the complex social character of coaching, such models are unable to interpret and understand the dynamic nature of coaches' work and how they manage it (Bowes and Jones, 2006 Jones et al., 2006). *Practice is just more fluid than can be captured by any psychological model or variable. There's no way that the fluidity I know through experience and*

*practice can be captured by such an approach. That's why I need to explore deeper. Maybe sociology can help.*

### **2.2.3 The sociological turn**

The move towards a sociological approach to coaching claimed that coaching should be considered, amongst other things, a “social process” (Jones, 2000, p. 35); a process that is interpersonal, dynamic and multifaceted, founded primarily on social interaction. It was presented as an alternative to the psychological cognitive perspective which “seeks solutions without taking into account the endemic nature of the coaching context and its inherent dilemmas” (Jones and Wallace, 2006, p. 63). In a further critique of earlier conceptualisations, Jones et al. (2016) developed the argument for embracing the complexity of coaching (which many authors from different perspectives appear to agree exists) emphasising that “if we consider something to be messy (as most coaching scholars, rhetorically at least, seem to agree on), then ‘would something less messy make a mess of describing it? It is a case that simplicity would not help us understand complex things.’” (p. 202). Jones et al. (2016) subsequently developed the notion that coaching is complex and ambiguous; going beyond mere rhetoric to actively create a (better) understanding of the ambiguity referred to (Jones and Wallace, 2006). In describing the social as the invisible ingredient in coaching knowledge (see Potrac and Jones, 1999), this marked the beginning of a critical deconstruction of sports coaching (see Jones [2019] for a more detailed chronology here).

It was subsequently argued that positioning sports coaching as a social activity held (and continues to hold) the potential for shedding new light on many enduring coaching issues, subsequently generating new questions about this ‘messy’ profession (Jones et al., 2002). Similarly, Fleming and Jones (2008) claimed that by adopting certain sociological perspectives, coaches could actively engage in, and understand more deeply, the social worlds of the athletes they coach, in addition to the socio-cultural constraints and influencing factors that impinge upon their own (coaching) contexts (Cushion et al., 2006). It was thus postulated that engagement in and with the social turn allow “us to see things from new angles and perspectives, to be able to understand more fully the relationship between sports and social life, and make informed decisions about sports and sport participation in our lives, families, communities and societies” (Coakley, 2006 p.32).

Coaches were thus able to become more than ‘knowers’ of theory (Scott, 2000); but better able to make sense of the everyday ‘taken for granted’ actions in their own, and others, practice.

Despite the seemingly positive consequences for coaching science, the sociological approach has not been exempt from critique; thus has not been considered as a panacea for all of coaching’s ills. Abrahams and Collins (2011), for example, proposed that although such socially orientated literature has offered new avenues through which to explore the complexity of coaching practice, the descriptions and processes offered are so complex that the inherent complexity remains unaddressed. Cushion and Jones (2006), however, countered that it is only by adopting different, deeper social theories, that the possibility exists to have a more meaningful theory-practice link, and thus ultimately better developing the field (Cushion, 2010a).

Looking up from my screen, I started thinking; *although it is sometimes and somewhat useful to use certain scientific ideas in practice, from personal experience, the application of more sociological work is more real and beneficial (to me) than taking the psychological route. Despite some doubts and reservations (naturally), particularly about the complexity of the analysis which I did not always understand, I felt that the sociological approach provided an opportunity to explore and better understand my own coaching (practice in context). Consequently, I was intrigued and wanted to find out more about the different approaches found within this sociological turn.*

#### **2.2.4 Post-structuralist, post-modernist, and socio-pedagogic perspectives**

The first approach or position I found in this exploratory quest, was the post-structuralist one. This emphasises a distinctly social and relational perspective, using the theories and writings of different philosophers and sociologists to better explain the phenomenon of coaching. Such work involves a general attempt to “decode” a (coaching) culture. In taking issue with earlier structuralist thought, Denison and colleagues (e.g., Mills and Denison, 2018) used the work of the sociologist Foucault to help unearth, and be critical of, operations of power to better help understandings of why coaches coach as they do. Here, they found that coaches’ development will always be somewhat superficial or limited, until they become aware of power in all its guises; that power is omni-present within social and, therefore, coaching life. In linking knowledge to power, they asserted that this is why it is critical for coaches to understand how certain



meanings, and not others, are established as being a part of coaching ‘truth’ (Mills and Denison, 2018). Similarly, Townsend and Cushion (2017), borrowing from the work of Bourdieu, explored the culture within (cricket) coach education. Their findings suggested that “coach education needs to be critically explored and reflected upon, to contribute to a more sophisticated understanding of coaching in order to progress the field” (p. 543). Hence, in leaning upon established post-structural thinkers (such as Foucault and Bourdieu), the coaching scholars mentioned have attempted to deepen our understanding of the (contextual) complexities of coaching. Bringing the ‘undiscussed into discussion (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 168), this so called ‘post structuralist’ approach offered, and continues to offer, coaching science different perspectives, and to explore as yet undisclosed elements of coaching practice (Potrac and Jones, 2011). Bringing these ‘different’ theoretical insights to coaching has assisted in creating a broader (theoretical) understanding of the phenomenon whilst offering handholds, or analytical hooks, to approach practice differently.

A theorist that deserves special mention here is Erving Goffman, whose work was especially influential (in terms of its use by others) in assisting or creating the social turn in coaching. Although more than often considered an interactionist who gave much more emphasis to agency, Goffman has in some quarters also been considered as being closer to post structuralism than assumed at first glance. This is because he also emphasised the character of wider social and cultural life, in addition to the importance of related thought, meaning and action. Consequently, some (e.g., Gonos, 1977) have argued that Goffman’s attention to ‘frame’ (e.g., Goffman’s ‘Frame analysis’ [1974]) and such structural elements places his position closer to post structuralism than many usually consider. In addition, he also gave credence to a notion of a ‘paramount’ as opposed to ‘multiple’ realities (Raab, 2014), thus agreeing with the idea of social inter-subjectivity as a societal structure in determining individual behaviour. In this respect, Goffman certainly acknowledged the limitations of situatedness (i.e., localised autonomy) and self determination in guiding action (Raab, 2014); a point which further emphasises his (quasi) commonality with the post structuralist tendency. Indeed, some have even gone so far as to portray Goffman as a “functionalist or structuralist in the Durkheim tradition” (Raab, 2014, p.27). Although this would be a step too far for most in defining or ‘labelling’ Goffman, however considered, the emphasis of his work in relation to ‘impression management’, ‘face work’ and interaction (among other concepts) has proved very fruitful ground for many coaching scholars (e.g., see the work of Jones and Potrac in particular) in terms of better understanding the

‘doing’ of coaching. Like others, be they more aligned to interactionist or structuralist perspectives, the debate has always surrounded the degree of credence given to structure and/or agency in deciphering social (read coaching) life.

A second perspective to be discussed under this heading is the post-modern turn within coaching science. An aspect of this perspective, tends to grasp the context and practice of coaches from an inside-out approach, as opposed to the outside-in one predominantly employed by post-structuralists (Sparkes and Smith, 2002). This has been done through, for example, means of auto-ethnographical stories (Jones, 2006), photography (Jones et al., 2013) and ethnographic film (Edwards and Jones, 2016). It is a research genre which searches to better uncover and understand the ‘lived experience’ of coaching, thus openly inviting readers to make personal sense of the narrative or data presented. Such a perspective then, holds the potential to foster an understanding of personally experienced situational complexity or the sequencing of events (Aull Davies, 2008), because it frames and deconstructs multi-layered meanings (Phoenix, 2010). Besides, by using technology like photography or film, the approach also offers opportunities to reflect with those under study about ‘what they say they do’ and ‘what they actually do’ (Kluge et al., 2010). Although naturally supported by advocates who ground their work in it (e.g., Goldstein, 2007; Stanczak, 2007; Rakic and Chambers, 2009), post-modernism has also its fair share of criticisms. Principal among these are that such ‘narratives’ leave too much space and leeway for personal interpretation, thus casting doubt upon their wider applicability and inter-subjectivity. Despite such a perceived shortcoming, the personal evocative stories emanating from coaching scholars who have utilised such research means, have certainly served to enrich the field (e.g., Jones 2006, 2009; Allen-Collinson, 2009). Through such means, the real issues experienced by coaches have been starkly brought to the fore, thus making a better, or more explicit, link between theory and practice. Thus it has been claimed that using such research methods continues to “hold considerable promise for elucidating, clarifying and even redefining established concepts from an alternative perspective” (Jones et al., 2013 p.14). In other words, their use brings the opportunity to view coaching more as perhaps coaching actually is; as it is experienced, as opposed to being theoretically led.

A final perspective worthy of mention here is that of viewing or conceptualizing coaching as a socio-pedagogical endeavour. This comprised of developing a greater awareness of the often intuitional pedagogical means and methods used within coaching (Jones et al., 2013). It also positioned athlete learning

at the heart of the coaching act and process itself. Instrumental here was Jones's edited text 'The sports coach as educator' (Jones, 2006). Here, it was argued that "at the heart of coaching lies the teaching and learning interface, and the myriad ways through which coaches influence athletes to develop and improve" (p.3). Since then, learning theory has been increasingly adopted to help theorise and guide sports coaches' actions. For example, Jones et al. (2016) offered the pedagogical structure of Leont'ev's (1978) activity theory as such a useful perspective, while Potrac et al. (2016) and Jones et al (2018) similarly used some Vygotsky's work to both explain and inform coaching practice. Here, related notions such a cultural-historical perspective, a zone of proximal development and mediation among others were offered as means to better engage with coaching. Another further example of such work was that of Jones and Thomas (2015) in their presentation of the 'scaffolding' metaphor to conceptualise coaches' practice. Here, scaffolding was offered as a broad guideline to link individual actions with macro frames of reference. This pedagogical turn then, provides a further understanding of coaching, whilst also offering lines of 'good practice'; that is, a reconstruction of the activity (Jones, 2019).

*In other words, so far anyway, there appears to be two main schools of thought about coaching. Those from a more psychological, cognitive base who argue for increasingly explicit guidelines for coaches (including a tendency to educate through models), and those taking a more social view in the search for understanding and informing practice (similar to the debate between Grecic and Collins, 2013, North, 2013, and Jones et al., 2016). Despite disagreements, they also have some commonalities I thought out loud. Both, namely, strive to improve (coaching) practice through theory. It appears then, that many do think theory has an active role to play here.*

#### **2.2.5 The on-going gap between theory and practice**

Strangely enough, I half expected there would be disagreement; similar discussions always loom in the practice of coaching. Indeed, in the practical world, we cannot even agree over the meaning of words like 'trainer' and 'coach'! (Manikutty, 2005; Kroll, 2009). Thinking about practice, however, it seemed that elements able to be measured, collected and quantified always carried more importance and primacy than anything to do with 'interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge' (Coté and Gilbert, 2009). In this respect, it seemed to be true what those writers from a sociological standpoint were railing against! Not that I was

against the use of data, measurements or a scientific approach. On the contrary, I loved poring over relevant stats. However, on reflection, what was plainly missing here was an emphasis on the ‘coaching elements’, such as the relational-, social- and pedagogical complexities, in addition to an understanding of self. It just seemed taken-for-granted; as if it was ‘just there’ (Jones, 2019). My orientation was changing, not only towards coaching, but to who I was as a coach and what I was trying to do while coaching. Consequently, I now wanted to explore if there was a possibility to also give this area a certain in-depth level of (practical) attention.

With my broader theoretical understanding combined with the practical experiences I subsequently began to think that both practice and theory were missing something. Practice was too much focused on explicit elements of coaching, whereas the literature was more broader orientated, more abstract, thus forever seemingly keeping a certain distance from the practical possibilities. Of course, I still remembered those writings which engaged with the relational, pedagogical and social complexities of coaching itself (i.e. Jones and Thomas, 2015; Cassidy et al., 2008; Jones, 2007; Stelter, 2007; Bowes and Jones, 2006; Lyle, 2002; Jones et al., 2002). However, they still appeared as foundations for rather than the real steps of a bridge between practice and theory. Discussions circled generally in the theoretical spectrum, none of which I heard before in practice. Great knowledge therefore was hardly found back in practice. What I also found was relatively little understanding about the self as a coach. Apparently, it was not just practice or the more (prescriptive) literature that had missed something. This was despite Jones and Wallace (2005, 2006), over 15 years ago, claiming that too many ‘knowledge-for-action’ projects had been undertaken, resulting in oversimplification, and a rush to prescription without fully understanding the phenomenon at large. Alternatively, they argued for more ‘knowledge-for-understanding’ projects (Jones and Wallace, 2005) to better understand sports coaching before giving recommendations for good practice. In other words they claimed there was a need to discover coaching’s deeper layers; about what lay beneath the surface (Gardiner, 1998). Although considerable work has been done in the meantime, particularly in relation to the sociological turn described above (see for example, Malloy and Rossow-Kimball, 2007; Millar et al., 2011; Santos et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2016), a study of the coaching self, inclusive of a deconstructive, critical self awareness remains elusive. *Hang on*, I looked up from the screen while this realisation hit my mind, *when I start to walk the unpaved path of studying the self in practice, I can do this through two approaches. There is*

*the opportunity to follow the sociological approach advocated by Jones et al. (2016; 2019), or the more explicitly psychological approach advocated by Abrahams and Collins (2011); Grecic and Collins, (2013); North, 2013. If I am searching for deeper understanding and guiding principles, rather than being prescriptive, I obviously need to follow the sociological bumpy road. It is harder to follow for sure, but I know coaching is tough, to think of it otherwise does me and everyone else who coaches, a disservice.*

### **2.2.6 The coaching craft**

Having taken such a standpoint, I started to travel further down my chosen path' a road which led me to Day (2011) and the 'craft' of coach educators and practitioners. Taking a view from history, Day gives priority to 'intuition' 'community', 'experience' and 'craft knowledge' in coaches' practice before 'scientific control'. The argument made is that although scientific knowledge can be a good advisor, ultimately it is the 'elusive' aspect of craft which needs to be dominant within coaching. *Ha, I am on familiar ground* I realised as I read on; *this is because it (i.e., the craft) deepens the coaching elements... Exactly what I need!* However, despite Day's interesting insights, I still felt the meaning of 'craft knowledge' and its associated concepts of 'experience' 'community' and 'intuition' were somewhat frustratingly elusive, and, therefore, was my ability to really create the desired for knowledge-for-understanding (Jones and Wallace, 2005). *I thought about 'experience'. If someone has thirty years of experience but always does exactly the same thing, how much do they learn from the experience? Although presenting the concept of craft is useful, how to practically understand the craft better is not articulated nor brought to practice very clearly.*

*Still, I know there is something here for me as from a practical perspective I believe investigating one's own coaching craft can be very beneficial* I mumbled. My belief here originated from remembering the Stoic philosophic perspective of Epictetus; who believed that human beings tend to value everything that lies externally to us. However, externality is something we have no direct, or very little, control over (Long, 1904). Therefore, he believed that we should focus more internally; on our own thoughts and actions because those we can control directly (Long, 1904). Understanding these directly controllable aspects or features better, makes one capable of eventually (slightly) changing them. Such a stance, advocates claim, can expand the horizon of personal understanding and, ultimately, create better knowledge-for-understanding (Jones and

Wallace, 2005). In this respect, it holds the potential to unearth or bring to light taken for granted every day events never before considered in a critical light (Gardiner, 1998).

*This brings me back to coaching science*; and to Jenkins (2017), who articulated that coaches generally lack an introspective access to the causes of actions and behaviour, and, therefore, an inability to question the whole basis of reflective practice. He further questioned if practitioners do not have access to the reasons why they make the decisions of judgements that they do, how can they learn from their reflections? (Jenkins, 2017). *Similar to aforementioned critical voices (some directly others more indirectly e.g., Jones and Wallace, 2005; Potrac and Jones, 1999; Cushion, 2010) I mused, the ‘craft’ elements that appear so attractive to me are just mentioned (Day, 2011; 2013) as ‘being there’; there is still no in-depth explanation as Epictetus argued for (Long, 1904) on ones (own) coaching craft. What if I try to go beyond this taken-for-grantedness of one’s coaching craft? The most interesting way to do so is by discovering my own craft and, thereafter, explain the process I undertook. By showing mine, I can offer other coaches a perspective they can use to search for (part of) their own craft.* I had to look into the phenomenon of my own coaching. Next stop, therefore, was ‘phenomenology’.

## **2.3 Phenomenology**

### **2.3.1 An introduction**

Phenomenology derives from the Greek word ‘phainomenon’ which literally means ‘appearance’ (Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2007). It is a philosophy, method and/or approach (Langdridge, 2007) that provides insight into what is distinct or unique in any particular phenomenon (essence), and does so by examining our “intuitive perceptions” of that phenomenon which are, of course, situated within our given context (Van Manen, 2017). In every moment, we always find ourselves caught up and immersed in the world and its inescapable presence, often living our day-to-day lives in an unquestioned and taken for granted manner (Seamon, 2018). Phenomenologists aim ‘to shine a different light’ on these taken for granted issues by questioning the meaning we give towards a phenomena. It involves reawakening an understanding of original acts whereby humans come to awareness in the world (Moran, 2000); a “return to the innocence of first seeing” (Spiegelberg, 1984, p.680).

I stopped writing. *This is too abstract, I need a practical example to create understanding of what phenomenology is and how it can help coaches.* The phenomenological question to be asked was ‘what are the essential features of football?’ After some thought, I could not really give an answer. It was not about the dimensions of the pitch, the number of players, or the use of a ball. It just was very difficult to approach football phenomenologically because there was no clear point where one can say: ‘this is football’. Despite the lack of a clear answer, there was a consequence just of thinking about the question itself. The complexity of looking for an answer made me realise I mentioned the things I thought to be football. It made me aware of the things I saw and interpreted which I took for granted in my day-to-day life. For example, why did I start to think about the dimensions, the number of players and the ball in response to this question, but not about the passion people have for the game or maybe the fun players get from it? In other words, my consciousness was raised about something existent within my unconsciousness.

Engaging in such (re)thinking, as suggested earlier, is or can be the reason to use phenomenology in order to create knowledge-for-understanding (Jones and Wallace, 2005) in relation to the phenomenon of coaching and, specifically, my own coaching. Despite calls from Kerry and Armour (2000) over two decades ago for greater phenomenological research in sport, scant literature treading this specific path has been undertaken, with the exception of work by Allen-Collinson and colleagues (Allen-Collinson and Hockey, 2011; Brown and Payne, 2009; Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2016; McNarry and Allen-Collinson, 2019; Ravn and Christensen, 2014). Here, research was carried out on ‘doing endurance’ in distance running (Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2016), to explore the body of golfers (Ravn and Christensen, 2014) and towards alternatively conceptualisation movement in physical education (Brown and Payne, 2009). It was clear that there needed to be a greater engagement with the phenomenology of coaching; and, in particular, of the self as a coach. Tentative steps have, however, been made by Cronin and Armour (2015; 2017) who focused phenomenologically on community and youth performance coaches. Despite the seeming promise here, their work still lacked a means or an approach to create a deeper understanding of (the ‘core’ elements of) coaching. *I could subsequently see a ‘gap in the literature’, and played with the idea of focusing the research on an application of phenomenology in my own coaching practice, investigating coaching from ‘the inside’; my personal ‘inside’. This, I believed, would give an opportunity to discover and develop a ‘new understanding’ of the phenomenon itself, with the nature or the essence of coaching being searched for* (Van

*Manen, 2017). Consequently, understanding the essence(s) of a phenomenon like coaching could indirectly change my thinking and practice as a coach. This new knowledge then, would not only be academically original but also beneficial to my own coaching practice. First, however, I needed to get a deeper insight into phenomenology as a philosophy, analysing whether such an idea was possible and if a related method existed to bring the idea to life.*

### **2.3.2 Phenomenology: some principal thinkers**

To engage with phenomenology means that we unpack our ‘taken-for-grantedness’ (Moran, 2000). Rather than, as Rawls (2011) states, seeing things we expect to see, an appreciation is developed that we do not see things as they are but as we are (Nin and McEvilly, 1961). Phenomenology thus, enables us to focus on what we normally look through, thus giving an account of what we are and how we experience our practice (Martinkova and Parry, 2011). In this respect, it hints towards an understanding of the recognition that we are captured by ‘ourselves’, because human beings are always (unconsciously) engaged in interpretative meaning-making activities (Smith et al., 2009).

*This happened to me when I moved from my home country Holland to England. In my new environment I still ‘saw’ everything through my ‘Dutch glasses’. During sessions and matches, I was looking for evidence of the ‘Dutch way’ and there was little understanding of cultural or contextual differences. It took a while, but slowly I removed my ‘Dutch glasses’ and somewhat replaced them with English ones in order to create a better understanding of what I saw and interpreted. Doing so, however, did not make me see things phenomenologically but made me realise the ‘fallacy of the (self contained) self’. Later, I realised that if I wanted to see phenomenologically, I needed to be wide-awake and aware about something I simply take for granted through adherence to what is usually termed ‘common sense’ (Schutz and Luckmann (1973). I had to take my glasses, every pair, off; this, phenomenologically speaking, would or could show me a different ‘way of how to play football’ and ‘how to coach’ it.*

Within this area of phenomenology, there is a debate about the idea or concept of ‘removing the glasses’ between the original founder of phenomenology Edmund Husserl and his student Martin Heidegger. Husserl was a German philosopher (1936) who established phenomenology to challenge the dominant objective, empirical and positivist Cartesian philosophy (Barnacle, 2001). He was convinced that the world



was only ‘one among many’ such worlds. Thus, he called for a review of our world and ourselves as conscious beings (Lavery, 2003). In order to do so, Husserl developed the science of phenomena to clarify how objects are experienced and present themselves to human consciousness (Spinelli, 2005). He subsequently developed the concept of ‘life-world’ (Husserl, 1936; Smith et al., 2009) which, as explained by Wilson (2014), is the world as it is immediately experienced (Van Manen, 1997). Schutz and Luckmann (1973) described life-world as that province of reality which the normal adult simply takes-for-granted in the attitude of common sense (*something I could relate to!*) Moreover, according to the phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty (1962), the life-world is determined by our bodily movements and perceptions. Having said that, we are not necessarily aware of this experience, thus the life-world fundamentally encompasses a pre-reflective mode of being in the world. Nevertheless, it is claimed that by turning our attention to a particular experience, we are capable of achieving a reflective awareness of that experience (Van Manen, 1997). Consequently, due to the fact that we create meanings of and about things, we interpret the world as those things (Husserl, 1936).

According to Husserl, we can bracket out this pre-given meaning of the life world by using the phenomenological method (Hockey and Allen Collinson, 2016). In doing so, he claimed it would be possible to push aside the world of assumptions and interpretations that contaminate our basic perception of a certain phenomenon (Sokolowski, 2000). This allows us to investigate the correlation of ‘the what’ (an experience) and ‘the how’ (it is experienced), leaving an identification of things themselves (Husserl, 1936). In other words, Husserl believed that one could ‘bracket the self out’ while observing or interpreting something without counting the ‘self’ in. Based on the earlier ‘glasses example’, he consequently advocated the possibility to look and see without any glasses at all, just with the eyes only.

Heidegger, however, a student and later an assistant of Husserl (Sloan and Bowe, 2014; Horrigan-Kelly et. al, 2016), disagreed on this notion of ‘bracketing the “self” out’ and, consequently, developed different approach. Alternatively, Heidegger’s phenomenology contained a fundamental assumption that we are already, and always will be, engaged in our world, interpreting, coping with practicalities and caring about matters (Dreyfus, 1991). When a subject (one) is observing an object it is, therefore, impossible to understand that object without having any pre-understanding of it: in essence, it is a belief that there is no view from nowhere (Nagel, 1989). Subsequently, both subject and object are considered inseparable in

observing and interpreting the world around us (Heidegger, 2001). The key difference between the two (i.e., Husserl and Heidegger) is that Heidegger believed understanding could be achieved through worldly activity, while Husserl advocated that one could separate ‘the self’ from the world (Horrigan-Kelly et. al, 2016). *My thoughts returned to the glasses. Based on my earlier example, Heidegger was conscious of the fact that one wears glasses all the time, and that without them the world cannot be seen and interpreted. Therefore, he does not take the glasses off, but rather is aware of the fact they are always worn by ‘the self’. Having such an awareness, one then can understand what the self misses to see by knowing what it sees. This was what I had discovered when I answered my question of ‘what makes football, football’; I could now think about what I had not previously considered football to be. This unconsciousness within a self is what Heidegger argued to be always there and cannot be bracketed out.*

Building on the ideas of Husserl and Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962) argued that a human being creates a perception of the world not only through observation but also through the lived body. He built upon the theories of Heidegger and especially Husserl by stating that experiences are not primary visual in terms of ‘I have a body’, but are also the experiences of ‘I am my body’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). He developed this analysis by using the example of one’s own hand; that is, if one puts one’s left hand on the table and touches it with the right hand, the right will feel flesh, bones and skin. At the same time, however, the left hand feels a different contact from the right. This makes the left hand the subject (receiver of stimuli) and the object (flesh, skin and muscles) at the same time. Merleau-Ponty (1962) thus positioned the body as subject-object, as there is no possibility of fully detaching ourselves from our body. Here, he stated that: ‘The body is the vehicle of being in the world’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.82); something that connects us to the world but also offers us the way to understand that world. Consequently, for Merleau-Ponty, such a state of affairs influences individual thinking. This is because before we think, we observe, with the specific observation in question always being bounded by an observer, a body. Alongside the conscious knowledge of thinking (‘I think’) comes knowledge based on and in the body of the surrounding environment, called ‘I can’. In combination, they become ‘the silenced knowledge’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). This is because through our engagement in daily activities, we tend not to be conscious of our bodies thus taking them for granted (Sartre, 1969). *My mind wandered back to the dance floor. Dancing is another example of this as, when I (or someone else) dance to the rhythm of the music, my body dances automatically; the movements feel smooth*

*and comfortable. However, at the moment I start to think about what steps or movements I have got to make while dancing, I start to struggle with their execution. I cannot dance so smoothly (to what extent that already is the case) anymore due to the fact that I am conscious of things now. In other words the body already has a feel for this without even ‘thinking’ about it, it speaks to the belief that there is more ‘knowledge’ within a body than just ‘cognitively’ known.*

*For coaches, it can be beneficial to be aware of the fact that they are both subject and object at the same time* I summarised this section to myself. Such an awareness offers a different dimension to coaching and coaches in terms of the latter’s experiential learning. Normally coaches are educated in courses inter-alia to reflect on their practice, themselves and their players or respective contexts. This can better be understood as ‘thinking about’; that is, as a subject I reflect on an object (Finlay, 2002b). Having the phenomenological knowledge from Husserl (1936), Heidegger (2001) and Merleau-Ponty (1962), however, that one is both subject and object simultaneously, creates an opportunity for coaching. This is because it suggests that our coaching is very unconscious. Consequently, paying more attention to unconscious (crucial) elements in our own coaching makes us able to become increasingly aware of things we simply take for granted. Still, the question remains, what potentially are the (core) coaching elements which appear similar for every coach no matter the context? And what really does such a phenomenological perspective contribute towards coaching (science)? I continued to question myself in search of answers. Having to further explore coaching as a phenomenon, I continued my journey,

## **2.4 The phenomenon of coaching**

*If I want to have an understanding of the phenomenon of coaching, I should be asking myself ‘what is coaching, specifically?’ As already indicated, the literature does not provide a definitive answer; indeed, the question is not broadly engaged with from a practical/theoretical phenomenological perspective. However, the answer must lie in looking at and examining what coaches do when they coach, which can give a core understanding of the phenomenon at hand... I paused for a second, realising that this should be the first part of discovering the phenomenon. Different kinds of literature should be merged together to pave a new path. While deconstructing coaching from a phenomenological perspective, three main elements emerged through theoretical and practical thought.*

First, there is, according to Luhmann (1995) *observation*, which can be considered through the use of the senses: “seeing” (Matsuyama and Tsuchiya, 2017 p.7), “feeling” (Lyon, 1997, p.96), and “hearing” (Rodaway, 1994, p.95). Before we actually coach, we first observe phenomena, generally seeing the things ‘we look for’. By observing one thing, therefore, we tend forget to observe other thing(s). According to Luhmann, this means that each observation has a blind spot (1995). For example, if a coach looks for a defensive run of a winger into a certain area on the football pitch, a distinction in his observation will take place specifically in relation to that run. In this respect, something has been brought to consciousness, it has been observed; this was something Luhmann called the “marked space” (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994; Brekhus, 1998). Inevitably, this leaves the possibility of an ‘unmarked space’, which comprises the rest of the context or the environment that the run was seen against (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994; Brekhus, 1998). What could remain hidden in this unmarked space are the conditions necessary to create or allow the run to be made in the first place. By looking for this run (or particular event), the observation of a coach is blinkered by the “marked space”. Subsequently, he or she might lose sight of other possibilities because that ‘run of the winger’ is foregrounded leaving other features of the context unseen in the background (Luhmann, 1993). These become the non visible aspects of any context (Keiding, 2011).

The second deduced fundamental element of coaching is that of *interpretation*; that is, the inclusion of ‘the self’ (‘the coach’) in any observation made (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994, p.135). It is the creation of meaning on what has been seen in the observation (Luhmann, 1985). Taking this principle to coaching, it seems that during our observations we create meaning of what we see. What helps decide the creation of this meaning can be found within ‘the self’; for example from features such as what we ‘see’ in the “marked space” (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994; Brekhus, 1998), from within and through the body (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), from obligation such as social reciprocity (White et al., 2007) and through cultural-historical elements (Vygotsky, 1978). Taking such theoretical ‘hand holds’ back to coaching, informs us of decisions made on personal frames of reference (Luhmann, 2002b). The obligation exists therefore, to critically revisit such frames if we are to develop what Jones (2019) recently called coaching ‘quality of mind’. The call here included, not only a look back at what we think we know, but also an inferential look forward to ‘who we can be’ (Jones, 2019).

The last pillar to be discussed here is that of *communication*. This is verbal and non-verbal communication, which simultaneously distinguishes between external reference, or information, and internal reference, or performance, and combines both in understanding (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994). This involves a merging or converging of the *observed* and *interpreted*. Although acknowledged as a vital aspect of coaching, communication is usually treated as unproblematic, as opposed to being merely a tip of the iceberg; just the part that can be seen (Schein, 1989). What is below the surface (i.e., the observed and interpreted) is what informs the communication; is what creates the communication (Jones, 2006). Again, little work has deconstructed the communication of coaching as such. Although the sociological turn has begun to engage with the hidden depths of coaching practice with even more recent work (e.g., Corsby and Jones, 2020; Cronin and Armour, 2015; 2017) going further to decode the ‘hidden rules’ of practice, it was obvious that more work needed to be done. I was on my way.

*There is an opportunity here to give coaches some handholds in order to understand this fallacy of the taken-for-granted. Being consciously aware of these three ‘coaching aspects’ hold the potential to really help coaches think more clearly about why they do what they do, and who they are as coaches.. Here coaches can ask themselves why did I see that or pay heed to that distinction and not another in my practice? Asking this question makes one aware of personal background, assumptions, positioning, feelings, and behaviour while also attending to the impact of the wider organisational, discursive, ideological and political context; in other words it can make one become increasingly reflexive (Jenkins, 2017, p.15).*

## **Chapter 3: Methods**

### 3.1 Introduction

The methods are an essential part of any research work. Here, I have to create an understanding of how to explore my own coaching phenomenologically. While looking back at the (underlying) aim(s) and objectives, I sighed: *This is going to be a challenge. Within coaching science literature, phenomenology has not been used to great lengths before; there is just no example to follow. How can I make this work in such a way that practitioners want to read it as well?* There was a struggle to connect the dots.

*I want and need to break with current (coaching) science discipline; with a way of thinking and analysing coaching. Every time an idea comes up, the structural limitations reduce it. Like Foucault (2012), perhaps I should pulverise some disciplinary feelings and shine a different light on this apparently docile body. Only then will I be able to find new insights on coaching and my 'self' (Cresswell and Eklund, 2007). Only then can my underlying aim come alive.* I stood up to write my ideas on the magnet board.

“(N-o-n) f-i-c-t-i-o-n-a-l”. The white board was now full of colours indicating topics and short explanations, brought together by arrows and lines. It formed a draft of the ‘methods structure’, its core comprising three main parts which were, in turn, divided into sub-parts: (1) ontology and epistemology, which would outline my standpoint as a researcher within this thesis (Converse, 2012); (2) ‘my research journey’, where I would discuss the reasons for writing the whole work in a narrative format in terms of a developing consciousness (Bochner, 2012; Bruner, 1990; Rorty, 1982), and; (3) the methodology and precise methods to be used to collect and analyse the data. Here, in this latter section, I would explain phenomenology, and first-person phenomenology in particular, as a method (Finlay, 2012; Van Manen, 1990), in addition to the use of vignettes (Hunter, 2012; Finch, 1987 ) and (non)fictional stories (Rabbiosi and Vanolo, 2017; Richardson, 2000). The structure seemed logical; *it was time to go for it.*

### 3.2 Ontology and epistemology

“Gosh, what words!” I remembered thinking when I saw them initially. I did not understand why they were so important within academic work. Now, after grasping such work better, I appreciate their value to any research undertaken; to explain the standpoint taken in terms of the nature of reality and knowledge, in addition to position and subsequent role of the researcher within the research.

As this study is using phenomenology, as understood by Heidegger (2001), it adopts the position of an interpretative phenomenology (Converse, 2012). Heidegger's phenomenological approach (2001) focusses on the essence of the phenomenon as perceived by the researcher (Converse, 2012; Larkin et. al, 2006). Therefore, this work needs to be understood from a relativist ontological perspective. This paradigm considers knowledge as "relative to particular circumstances - historical, temporal, cultural, subjective - existing in multiple forms as representations of reality (interpretations) by individuals" (Benoliel, 1996, p. 407). In other words, investigations are guided by a researcher's beliefs and feelings about the world and, hence, is how this work should be read and understood (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

From an epistemological perspective, which is to do with the nature of knowledge, the work can be considered as (emic) subjective (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Subjectivism is the belief that knowledge is always filtered through lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity (Levers, 2013). Hence, the gathered or created knowledge from this work comes from a personal viewpoint. Such a filter cannot be (totally) removed, only understood (Converse, 2012), as the observations are influenced by the observer and the observer influenced by the observed (Levers, 2013). Based on this epistemological perspective, I hope to demonstrate, through the work, "how I know what I know" (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). The point here is to give clarity where this particular 'knowledge' comes from.

### **3.2.1. My research journey**

Following engagement with the study's ontological and epistemological positions, I increasingly became a critical friend to my 'self'. Consequently, I started challenging myself to address such questions as: *if I am stubborn enough to do it 'my way', there needs to be a clear explanation throughout defending the decision to employ a certain genre of writing (Blodgett et. al, 2011). Why is it so important that I write the research as a story, and how does using a story contribute to addressing the aims and objectives?* To find answers I started to read different kinds of literature, arguing internally; between my past and my present.

I remembered and kept returning to the underlying aim for this work; to build a bridge between the practitioner and theorist. It was informed by Laurel Richardson who wrote: "for years I had yawned my way through numerous supposedly exemplary qualitative studies" (Richardson and Pierre, 2005 p. 959). I could relate! This was where my initial idea of writing in a different way came from. Not that the content was not



relevant or interesting, it was just...boring, missing (or ignoring) links with practice. Hence, like Richardson and Pierre (2005 p. 959), I began to informally ask fellow students and coaches how they experienced academic papers. Largely, they agreed with me; much academic writing was indeed boring, with interesting and relevant knowledge not being brought back to practice; not being made to 'live'. Jeffries and Maeder (2005) articulate the necessity of this missing link accurately, albeit in the field of education: "A critical theme of institutions of higher education in the preparation and continuing education of teachers is that research informs and is informed by practice" (p. 17). Similarly, although a phenomenon as practical as coaching no doubt needs to be fed by research, that research also needs to relate to, and be fed by, practice.

Building on such and similar critiques, a need exists to bridge the different domains so they can inform each other. Richardson (1990) offers an interesting option to address the conundrum. She suggests that the best way to understand human experience is for humans to understand their own lives, through narratives. Similarly Bruner (1990) believed that such narratives create 'acts of meaning' which can be easily understood by readers. Bochner (2012), meanwhile, further makes the case by querying that if we experience our lives as stories, then why not represent them as stories? Should there not be a closer connection between our research texts and the lives they represent? What is needed, according to Bochner (2012), is an approach to social science which emphasises the utility of narratives and vocabularies rather than objectivity of laws and theories. Finally in this context, Gabriel (1998) noted that, ultimately, the truth of any story lies not in its accuracy but its meaning. Using a narrative to describe both the creation and 'result' of this work then, represents an attempt to create a better understanding of its process. The hope is that doing so attracts, awakens and arouses readers, inviting them into conversations with the incidents, feelings, contingencies, contradictions, memories and desires that my research depicts (Bochner, 2012). Through such stories' abstract phenomenological content can be more practically explained.

I realise the chosen path is a difficult and somehow unusual one to take; this is because people often crave objectivity, as to be subjective has a certain kind of vulnerableness (LeGuin, 1989). Writing in a narrative form can, therefore, be a reason (for some) not to take the work seriously. They will argue that stories are always 'out of control', too dependent on interpretation. Therefore, the work can miss its aim (Frank, 2010), or struggle for legitimacy, with narratives being viewed as (partly) fictional (Sparkes and

Smith, 2014). Like Bochner (2012), however, I wonder why we tend to privilege data over stories. In both there is a truth, in both there is a fallacy (Rose, 1993).

I stopped for a second...It had been a while since the words came so easily. *I was surprised and somewhat elated by the quick progress.* Since I was now far into it, I could sense the importance of methodical deconstruction and explanation. It gave me a sense of why I do what I do (or did what I did). I started typing again, yielding to the desire to continue.

### **3.3 Methodology**

#### **3.3.1 Understanding data: phenomenology as a method**

Time passed slowly since the last meeting with my supervisors. I just could not get the expression right. I found myself thinking out loud: *The theoretical framework gives an idea about what the underlying philosophy of the work is, but does not really go into phenomenology as a method (Langdridge, 2007).* Having said that, *being aware of phenomenology makes me differently aware of practice. But how could I bring this (phenomenological) conscious understanding to my practice? What 'method' as Langdridge (2007) questions, do I bring to the table?* Posing these questions made me realise I needed to research and discover the different opportunities to methodologically introduce phenomenology into my coaching. Previously, I had just considered it as a philosophy.

I began to read the literature on the method of phenomenology. Kordes (2013) believed, on the basis of neuroscientist Varela's (1996) work, that the start of a phenomenological method lies in lived experiences: everything that goes on in the scope of an individual's awareness. Articulating these lived experiences, however, has always been done retrospectively, with the data being based on memories (Kordes, 2013). These memories are themselves experiences, which make the articulation a second experience on the lived first experience (Varela and Shear, 1999). *Let me explain this with a practical example...because this is tough going!* For instance, one has coached a training session (the first experience) and later he or she starts to consider and articulate the related thoughts on paper (a reflective experience). Here, memory is used in order to reconstruct or recall events. By doing so, one unconsciously starts a second experience as a memory will inevitably not contain the whole of the first experience in itself (Kordes, 2013). Rather, it will place things, events and features at the forefront which are considered 'interesting' enough to record (Luhmann

and Fuchs, 1994). Additionally, at the moment of articulation, one is not involved in the situation itself anymore that one is trying to record. Therefore, he or she sees the first experience from (at least some) distance (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994). This means that the articulation of the (first) experience is different from the actual first experience itself.

The example given could also be used to explain the differences in the phenomenological thinking of Husserl (1936) and Heidegger (2001). Husserl's (1936) phenomenology included the idea of 'bracketing the self out'. Here, instead of writing down what happened, one starts focussing on 'what is it like to be', thus trying to bracket out, through focused reflection, all habitual assumptions from the self (Husserl, 1936). It advocated the process of free imaginative variation to discover and describe the essence of a phenomenon (Giorgi, 2006). In terms of the example above, the effort lies in divorcing or excluding any presumptions from the sense making engaged in about any (coaching) session. Husserl's (1936) perspective, therefore, is based around the origins of phenomenon (Giorgi, 2006). Heidegger's (2001) method, on the other hand, can be seen as akin to 'being' in the world. It is a search for the meaning(s) embedded in everyday occurrences (Reiners, 2012). Again, this perspective can be used in terms of first and second order experiences (Papp et al., 2003). For instance, following an experience, a Heideggerian researcher would ask him or herself how the phenomenon is understood through interpretation (Reiners, 2012). In the training session scenario, such a scholar would adopt a particular interpretation of the phenomena experienced during the session. This does two things; firstly, it makes one aware of elements at the forefront of consciousness during the experience (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994), thus creating opportunities to look for other elements (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994). Secondly, it gives an opportunity to ask oneself where this interpretation of the phenomenon comes from; a form of reflexivity (Finlay, 2002). Through engaging with both, the resulting awarenesses can unpack the phenomenon and/or the 'self' further, this getting closer to the essence of what is being searched for. *Therefore, phenomenology offers potentially rich information about phenomena and the 'self'. It might be an interesting method, since it offers an insightful and appropriate means to address the aim(s) of this work. That is, it potentially allows me able investigate and explore elements of my coaching which I currently take for granted. It is what I want to do.*

Although I believed that this could be the right method to articulate and research my thoughts and actions (and the connections between them) as they developed, as ever, this was not as easy as I first thought

(as with seemingly everything else related to this project!). *Another challenge in front of me. ‘How’ to collect the data of and from experiences?* This was particularly in light of Searle’s (1992) argument that observation essentially changes the observed (Searle, 1992), making the essence, of anything then, very elusive.

Although a phenomenon changes our experiential landscape, this does not mean that the landscape becomes a completely different existential one. It just that the change offers a new perspective to look differently at something familiar (Kordes, 2013). In other words, we become aware of things we normally take-for-granted. *If I go with Kordes (2013), and choose phenomenology as my method, there is now another decision to make. Do I use Husserl’s (1936) or Heidegger’s (2001) interpretation to explore my own coaching? If I choose Husserl (1936), I’ll have to (or try to) bracket myself out of what I see. With Heidegger (2001), on the other hand, I’ll be able to understand my interpretation of the phenomenon experienced, thus trying to focus on what I usually miss and take for granted;* this was the inner dialogue I engaged in. *The method should be practically applicable whilst (philosophically) phenomenologically exploring my own practice. It needs to do both for me.* Ultimately, I decided to follow Heidegger (2001). *Why? Because this perspective makes me able to explore own coaching, specifically as related to the crucial aspects of observation, interpretation and articulation. Through Heidegger, I can consider how I execute each coaching aspect during my practice, which should lead me to see different things, give me different insights about my coaching. Besides this method also offers me a way to look within my ‘self’ and why I do/see/interpret the things that I do at the moment. Conversely, if I took Husserl’s (1936) perspective I would not be able to access the depths my ‘self’, and its influence on how I practice as a coach, which is one of the core elements of the aim of this project.*

### **3.3.2 Gathering data: first person phenomenology and reflexivity**

With regard to the method, I wondered how to be a researcher and a subject simultaneously. Did such a method exist? I read through different phenomenological perspectives...and found Van Manen (1990, p.54);

“To conduct a personal description of a lived experience, I try to describe my experience as much as possible in experiential terms focussing on a particular situation or event. I try, as Merleau-Ponty says, to give a direct description of my experience as it is, without offering causal explanations or interpretive generalisations”.

I was reading about first person phenomenology. It seemed interesting and relevant because of its focus on the ‘self’ as researcher and subject at the same time. Following up this lead, I discovered that first-person phenomenology is not a set of methodological steps that dictates how a personal research account should be carried out and presented (Finlay, 2012). Rather, the data collection process can be compared to a potter throwing clay onto a spinning wheel; the shapeless clay slowly and ultimately being modelled into a pot. Similarly, within a first-person approach, data initially come from raw written material which are later re-read, re-written and re-made sense of. Hence, the initial words ‘thrown’ onto paper are crafted and further edited as the process evolves. First person phenomenological writing then, does not usually involve an off-the-cuff description akin to the more straightforward accounts offered by participants in research (Evans, 2011). Instead, the description needs to be transformed in some way, through the identification of themes or explicating existential points of interest. Alternatively, the transformation might involve embellishing the description in a literary-metaphorical sense. (Finlay, 2012; Evans, 2011).

The principal challenge for phenomenologists using first-hand experience, however, is to engage personal reflection and revelation not just as ends in themselves, but as springboards for more general insight into the phenomenon of concern. Importantly, this requires an open phenomenological attitude (Finlay, 2008); something that focuses on the phenomenon under study with fresh, curious eyes. Rather than showing “straightforward, unreflected absorption in the objects of experience, [such a] phenomenological approach involves reflection upon experience” (Finlay, 2012, p.3). *This was it! This first-person approach gives me a certain freedom to discover my own coaching self. It also gives an opportunity to display my raw material in a literary-metaphorical sense, so that (the use of) theory is more applicable and understood in a practical way. But can I really explore my own coaching through this method? (Doubts persist). What if each vignette contains raw data from a constructed reflective story, which I shape and re-shape through several times; taking bits out while adding others related to each topic? So, the vignettes will develop through critical consideration of ‘events’ being recalled and fashioned in the interests of the project’s aims (Sparkes and Smith, 2012). Using this particular process I can craft the prime story many times through re-reading, re-writing, and re-making (Finlay, 2012) based on additional relevant experiences. It will certainly make me*

*more reflexive because it also indicates a form of reflection upon experience. Still, I need to find out more about reflexivity to make such a statement, and to make this approach work.*

Reflexivity can be defined as thoughtful, conscious self-awareness (Finlay, 2002). It involves a shift in our understanding of data collection from something objective, that is accomplished through detached scrutiny of ‘what I know and how I know it’, to recognising how we actively construct our knowledge (Finlay, 2002). (Trying to clarify for myself) *This means that everything we experience and interpret during a coaching session or match can be construed as data. So, instead of focusing on what has been observed/interpreted/articulated while or after collecting data, the reflexive coach would concentrate more on how he or she constructed the observation, interpretation, and/or articulation in the first place. It is an inward look into the ‘self’, into my ‘self’, rather than at any external phenomenon. Therefore, reflexivity is clearly differentiated from reflection. Here, the reflective coach is “thinking about something”; for example, on my own performance (as a coach) after a session or match (Finlay, 2002; Finlay, 2002b). Here, I think about what I did and what to do differently next time. Reflexivity, on the other hand, brings reflections and practice forward, to be used to create understandings of why we (as coaches) make the decisions of judgements, and the choices of subsequent actions, that we (they) do (Jenkins, 2017). It provides the story behind the story, and creates greater personal insight into the ‘self’ (Finlay and Gough, 2003).* A practical use of reflexivity then, through a first-person phenomenological perspective, became my chosen method of investigation. The next step was to decide upon 'how' to present the collected/constructed data.

### **3.3.3 Presenting the data: creative (non-)fictional vignettes**

While reading around ‘how’ to present the data, I came across a debate about researched ‘truth’. In traditional (bio-scientific) research, one searches for ‘the truth’ by using ‘objective’ data collection methods (Humphreys, 2005). However, based on my practical perspective, I doubted if there was or is a ‘(coaching) truth’. It made me explore different variations and options of data presentation or representation. Once I read about creative (non-)fictional writing, I was intrigued. This form differs from traditional research since it indicates the existence of multiple realities, truth being relative (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Humphreys, 2005). I read more.

Gerard (1996) argued that creative (non-)fiction provides “stories that carry both literal truthfulness and a larger truth, told in a clear voice, with grace, and out of a passionate curiosity about the world” (p. 208). It tells a story using facts, but does not just report those facts. It delivers facts in ways that move the reader toward a deeper understanding of a topic (Cheney, 2001; Sparkes 2002). In its presentation of ‘truth’ then, creative (non-)fiction does not have to be fair, just faithful to the vision (Bloom, 2003). Because of its ‘difference presentation’, it is considered that this way of writing is able to reach multiple audiences instead of only academics (Sparks and Smith, 2012). This is because it is able to relate to the everyday world of experience; be that practical or theoretical. It is able to do so because good creative nonfictions are stories that use everyday language, are emotionally engaging, contextualise experiences, have credible characters, promote meaning-making, stimulate imagination, resonate with people, show theory and humanise the mind, behaviour and action (Ellis and Bochner, 1996; Humphreys, 2005). *Wow, this really suits my project I thought. It will be interesting to see if I can really use this way of presenting for the benefit of my work.*

Continuing reading, I found another positive, almost necessary, outcome of using creative (non-)fiction as a means to represent my data; that is, the resultant theoretical benefits. According to Ellis (2004), creative (non-)fiction can show theory within the story instead of it being ‘outside’ the story. It allows a researcher to show an array of research findings along with multiple theoretical points in one paper, because a story can uniquely contain complex, multi-layered information. Another advantage of using a creative (non-)fiction story (or stories) is the possibility to avoid the interpretative rigidity of normal theory. It can thus display interpretive openness, therefore encouraging additional theoretical insights beyond what the researcher considered or purposively aimed to show initially (Frank, 2010); in this respect, it has emergent properties. In so doing, rather than remaining firmly anchored to one way of seeing the world, readers may be spurred to revisit the world from a different direction and transported into understanding human life in other ways (Ellis, 2004). Thus, instead of theoretically finalising human lives, that is, offering the last or final theoretical word on them, a creative (non-)fictional tale can generate a rich smorgasbord of understandings and possible ways of being.

For others, however, the use of creative (non-)fiction is not as positively perceived. Here, the word ‘fiction’ is often (or always for some) questioned within ‘research’ in terms of a struggle for legitimacy (Sparkes and Smith, 2014). Also, as Frank (2010) makes clear, stories are always ‘out of control’. That is,

when one offers a story in the form of a (non-)fictional tale, there is no guarantee that the purpose behind the story, the analytical insights, the theoretical points, the attempts to translate knowledge, or the desire to generate impact, will be realised (Humphreys, 2005).

*Despite these questions and doubts about the use of (non-)fictional writing, the possible advantages the method will benefit this thesis, because it facilitates the discovery of both the (underlying) aim and objectives, outweigh the negatives I thought, while determinedly bringing the theory and my work together. Presenting the data in a traditional format, does not offer enough opportunities to improve academic and practical understanding at the same time. Creative (non-)fictional writing, on the other hand, offers a way to present data better aligned with my purpose. Maybe I should use the term informed fiction like Gilbourne (2007) and Gilbourne and Llewellyn (2008) to better explain what I am doing. However, this sits very close to the more established creative (non-) fictional writing genre the other scholars (Gerard, 1998; Ellis, 2004; Frank, 2010; Sparks and Smith, 2012, 2014) thus, I do not think there is a real necessity to further debate. Perhaps what I should focus on alternatively, is to explore the possibility if such writing (i.e., creative non fiction tales) can be written in and through vignettes? If so I could write a vignette based on each objective. Firstly, however, I need to explore vignettes a bit more and explain what they actually are.*

According to Hunter (2012), the term vignette comes from the French word *vigne*, meaning ‘small vine’. There is, however, a lack of consensus on the definition and format of the vignette as a means to present or create meaning, since they have been used diversely and differently across numerous fields. (Jeffries and Maeder, 2005). Within social science, vignettes are generally described as short stories, scenarios, depictions of situations, accounts using imagery, and recollection of actions. They use first-person storying to recall a professional experience (Hunter, 2012). “Vignettes [however] can, inter alia, be used to become ‘reflexive’, [thus] making the research process and the related decision making visible at multiple levels; i.e., the personal, methodological, theoretical, epistemological, ethical, and political”. (Lutrell, 2010 p. 4). Next to these benefits vignettes also can provide a crystallisation of understanding for both the reader and the author (Richardson, 1997). *Is there, therefore... (asking myself) also a possibility to combine (non-) fictional writing within vignettes?* Following a further search, I found a paper from Rabbiosi and Vanolo (2017) on (non-)fictional vignettes. I read that, because of their hybrid status, (non-)fictional vignettes are advocated as always being in-between ‘real’ and ‘imagined’ worlds. Indeed, there is no clear boundary



separating the fictional from the non-fictional; hence, and in this respect, all fictional works draw on the ‘real’ world’ (Banks and Banks 1998). Consequently, Rabbiosi and Vanolo (2017) argue for (more) use of (non-) fictional vignettes as they hold the potential to enhance the interest of the reader or the audience, provide a deeper sense of participation, suggest open-ended alternative endings and conclusions, and widen the accessibility of research advancement outside the borders of the academia, thus providing interesting and relevant insights on social phenomena.

*Using (non)fictional creative stories to create vignettes as a means to undertake the phenomenological search within my coaching, gives opportunities to express multiple elements of what I do, I excitedly summarised my thoughts. Firstly, the genre gives an understanding of the possible use of phenomenology in coaching science and practice (Cheney, 2001). Secondly, they hold the potential to better articulate this deeper understanding towards the reader (Caulley, 2008; Sparkes 2002b). And, thirdly, they give freedom to readers to interpret the work within (and for) their own practice (Sparkes and Smith, 2012). All in all, given the (underlying) aim and objectives of this work, (non-)fictional vignettes appear to be the best way to present the data; I’ll use them to create meaning from my experience(s).*

### **3.3.4 Avoiding too much ‘me’: critical conversation and companionship**

As the methodology developed a thicker body, I became concerned about the degree of ‘me’ inherent within it. *Is there too much me? Could this really be academic research with the amount of ‘self’ processed and possessed in the work?* I posed these questions to my supervisors and, following discussions, we came up with something of a solution; that of critical companionship (Titchen, 2003). Here then, during the collection, interpretation, construction and presentation of the data I would work on the basis of critical companionship with my supervisors. These particular conversations went further than some kind of facilitation through mentoring, where a more experienced practitioner accompanies a less experienced one on a particular learning journey (Jones and Ronglan, 2018). Rather, it was more of a collaborative gathering, evaluation and critique of self and peer practice for the purpose of knowledge clarification and further generation. The method of data generation employed within this project then, involved concerted and co-operative critical reflection, and the development of new knowledge through deconstruction and debate (Titchen, 2003). It was a means to discover the uniqueness of a person (in this case me) and the contextual

actions undertaken; to sense my needs and sense making within what I did or wanted to do (Dierckx de Casterlé, 2015). *For this work, I clarified through inner dialogue, the interactive processes between the supervisors and myself will be around concepts, perspectives and experiences in both practice and theory. By doing so, we'll try to improve the application of phenomenology in practice whilst critically creating stories through which to present the data. Based on Zeichner and Liston's (1996) ideas of re-theorizing and reformulating, we also positioned our discussions in light of, or in relation to, the notion of coaching as a phenomenon. Consequently, through phenomenologically exploring my own personal practice we deepened understanding of the activity. Thus, at first, my assumptions about coaching, as well as my practice itself, will be 'stripped back' to the core and critically discussed. Subsequently, I will bring these considerations (consciously) back to my practice, and ultimately reflect upon this implementation. In essence, we will critically collaborate, negotiate and cooperate in order to present my experiences of coaching in a (non-) fictional, creative way (Finlay, 2008).*

### **3.3.5 Setting the scene (and a nod to procedure)**

*Indirectly the scene has already been set I realised....by taking you (the reader) on my research journey, explaining, first the purpose, and then the methodological process.* This journeying creates acts of meaning (Bruner, 1990), makes readers understand (the intended message) easier (Richardson, 1990), whilst enabling them to better engage with the work (Bochner, 2012). It can also lead to a different, more practical, way of understanding the employed explanatory theory (Bochner, 2012), which hopefully helps develop others' personal considerations and practice.

*While collecting or generating the data for this work, I need to state my involvement to give background;* I remembered. During the period of research, I was employed as a first team assistant coach of a professional football team, after having worked in youth football full-time for a number of years. Hence, in many ways, this was a step up for me. Although I collected the experiential data for this research from numerous roles and dynamic environments, the 'experiences' (Kordes, 2013) predominantly came from involvement in first team contexts. Such moments I considered and described to myself in a form of reflective story of each experience, thus creating a form of 'second experience' (Kordes, 2013). Here, initial recollections became the 'clay that I threw on the spinning wheel' (Evans, 2011). Each vignette, therefore,

contains raw data from a constructed reflective story. These, in turn, were shaped and re-shaped through several successive iterations; taking bits out while adding others related to earlier and later experiences as considered appropriate. As opposed to some claim of ‘being there’, the vignettes were developed through critical consideration of ‘events like these’ being recalled and fashioned in the interests of the project’s aims (Sparkes and Smith, 2012). The vignettes were crafted many times through re-reading, re-writing, and re-making (Finlay, 2012) using additional relevant experiences. Naturally, it took a few drafts per vignette to merge the experiences well together to get the essence of the objective of concern right on paper. In such a way the vignette became a springboard for more general insights rather than just a personal reflection (Finlay, 2008). Each vignette was thus crafted towards accounts expressing both practical and theoretical elements. The nature of the first-person phenomenology, however, did not allow for a set structure while collecting the data (Van Manen, 1990), which also suited the dynamics of the environment I found myself in very well. Depending on context, situation and time, the different objectives were investigated equally as and when appropriate situations arose. Naturally, there was a degree of chronology here as well, somewhat tracing my engagement with phenomenological ideas during the period under study. During the process of data collection, fashioning and presentation (which was done from my home in the Netherlands), I also held fortnightly Skype meetings with my supervisors. Here, I tried to explain, describe and better understand my experiences of applying phenomenology practically as well as how to present these in the vignettes accordingly. During these meetings, we worked in terms of a critical companionship (Titchen, 2003). We debated how I would apply phenomenology in practice, and how the recorded events and thoughts addressed the objectives of the study. Through such critical conversations (Jones and Ronglan, 2018) I gleaned different insights regarding the (following) practical application of phenomenology’ both in terms of what I had done, and what I could do. At the same time, discussions tried to draw out and highlight the most important features my related experiences, subsequently taking these to be fashioned into the produced vignettes through my use of (non-) fictional creative writing (Hunter, 2012; Sparks and Smith, 2012).

The writing process which produced all three vignettes took approximately three to four months. Their ultimate content was based on many combinations of different ‘present’ and past experiences which resonated to make each vignette unique, whilst being linked in a loose developmental chronology. Each story

hopefully demonstrates the practical application of phenomenology in relation to each the study's objectives, the rich (new) insights for coaching, what it did to me as coach.

### **3.4 Judging the study**

#### **3.4.1 Trustworthiness**

*In order to persuade my audience that the findings of this inquiry are worthy of attention I have to consider its trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 1989), I thought. This is normal to engage with and consider within qualitative research, which cannot be considered in relation to the positivistic notions of reliability and validity. Alternatively, according to Patton (2002), trustworthiness in qualitative research can be judged according to four principal criteria; namely, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. It was along these lines then, I knew I had to make the case to make others trust the thoroughness of my 'findings' and conclusions.*

Credibility is concerned with ensuring that the data reported is a 'true' or rather an accurate representation of research participants' thoughts and experiences (Patton, 2002). Within this work, this has been done through critically reflecting on personal experiences in cooperation with the supervisory team as previously mentioned, during and after data collection construction and presentation. Doing it this way, reduced potential individual biases and the influence of personal presumptions, while broadening the base of interpretation. The consensual inter subjective agreement subsequently arrived at, improved and developed the credibility of the work produced.

Transferability meanwhile gives an indication as to whether the findings of the study can be transferred to other settings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This work is evocative and reflective in nature, which invites readers to reflect on their own lives, inviting a so called naturalistic generalisation (Erlandson et al., 1993). Therefore, this work has not so much of an unproblematic transferability, although the claim made is that it can be considered relatable; that is, others can relate to, and see themselves in, it due to sufficient contextual information and content (Firestone, 1993). In this respect, the work has a wider reach than just the immediate context; this is because, it aims to supply insight to readers by having them reflect upon the details and descriptions presented in relation to their own lives and contexts (Shenton, 2004). I do, however, realise that this narrative is from my standpoint; a subjective experience from which I cannot escape (Myers,

2000). Firestone (1993) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) build on this by arguing that the researcher only knows the 'sending context', thus, cannot unproblematically make transferability inferences. Nevertheless, by utilising an evocative narrative throughout the whole work to recant my 'story', and presenting the data through non-fictional vignettes, the purpose was to bring my coaching, and the doubt, dilemmas and enlightenment I experienced within it, to the attention of others in a way they could 'see' and 'feel' (Shenton, 2004). In doing so, I hope to create contextual understanding for readers, thus making them more able to transfer or better relate (parts of) the knowledge to their own context and practice (Shenton, 2004).

Dependability is seen as the consistency of findings. In this work, issues related to consistency can naturally be questioned due to the dynamics of the context. A consistency in terms of rigour of approach, however, was evident throughout the research process undertaken. Here, a constant comparative criticality in relation to the discussions between myself, my supervisors and the data ensured that the data collection, construction and analysis was a consistent and robust one. This necessarily rigorous process then, gave the work a degree of required dependability.

Confirmability is to do with demonstrating the roots of the findings. Such confirmability then require that claims and 'findings' indeed be found in the data and not in a figment of the researcher's imagination (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). This is not to abdicate the researcher from active interpretation (how could it, with the work being grounded in the interpretive paradigm?), but again to ensure that the data are given primacy while the inference made from them are not 'slip shod', superficial or over tenuous in nature. The work thus, must be believable (Shenton, 2004) to others; again something ensured through the methodological rigour engaged with (see the earlier sections in this chapter).

### **3.4.2 Ethics**

*Explaining the ethics needs to be done to create some clarity about possible fallacies or problems while doing the data collection* (Frank, 2002; Southern et al., 2005), I highlighted and summarised parts of the article I was reading. Within sport coaching research ethics aim to reflect the responsibility of the researcher when attempting to provide an authentic research study (McFee, 2014). Although these ethical issues were addressed within this study through recourse to the Cardiff Metropolitan University ethical procedures, they need elaboration in the context of this thesis.

My position within the research was crucial, as I was both researcher and subject, which raised several ethical issues. This study dealt with these often perceived or potential ethical issues from a relational standpoint through continually revisiting and questioning the research project and the procedures employed within it as required (Ellis, 2007). My vignettes were a fashioned construction from distinct experiences and sources, over many years, exploring coaching in a broad context and as a broad construct rather than focusing specifically on a particular club or coach-athlete relationship. As such, informed consent from individuals was not needed (Barone, 2000). However, there is the potential that institutions (e.g. clubs, governing bodies) and/or individuals from clubs where I have coached could associate themselves with the ‘fictional’ clubs or the characters’ actions or words featured in my stories. Careful consideration was given, therefore, to the selection of names, places/localities, and tournaments/ matches (Jones et al., 2006). Likewise, I created anonymous timeframes to protect these institutions and individuals from potential exposure by association, such as with tournaments and other events, which were held on specific dates. Additionally, the relational standpoint ensured that I protected myself when constructing a narrative potentially based on the “perceived warts and bruises” of my own self (Ellis, 2007, p. 17). Similarly, I wanted to protect the authenticity of the work as I believe we have an ethical responsibility to our ‘findings’ (Jones et al., 2006). The ‘bruises’, therefore, although carefully considered in terms of their appropriateness, could not be hidden. Finally, in this respect, I also engaged in critical discussions with my supervisors and friends that ensured that I reflexively and ethically constructed the sought after meaning from my own coaching experiences (Smith, 2017). In such a way, issues of anonymity and confidentiality were addressed, whilst I simultaneously took care to protect the integrity of myself and the work itself.

## **Chapter 4: Results**

## **Vignette 1: How can I discern what I see?**

### **The M4:**

Singing along with the music I indicated to leave the motorway. The car in front suddenly changed lanes! I braked and quickly swerved to avoid a collision. Swearing out loud, I shouted: “someone has massive eye problems!”.

Waiting for my coffee, thirty minutes later, calmer, I thought back on ‘the incident’. I could not understand the other driver. Why did he not see what I saw? Why did he not see me? What did he see? The questions brought me back to a PhD discussion, one which circled around observations while coaching: where do such observations come from? What’s their focus and their fallacies? I liked this theoretical approach. I felt a better understanding of personal observation would improve my coaching which ultimately would help the players I coached. Despite my enthusiasm, I was not clear how I could bring this theory into practice. The incident reminded me of the importance of seeing ‘more’. If it was not for me, we would have crashed. Even though we did not, could I maybe have seen more? Similarly, I wondered what the other driver had seen (or not seen)?

I suddenly thought ‘I can take this into my football coaching practice; I do not want to be the other driver’. I promised myself to re-read the phenomenological approach of Heidegger (2001) to become more aware of ‘what is seen’. I planned to revisit any observations as they happened in my next coaching session to focus on what I saw within them. Thereafter, I would compare ‘the seen’ with any subsequently decided upon elements I missed, or that I was not even looking for. These ‘unseen’ or ‘un-looked for’ features would then be placed at the forefront during my next observation. I smiled as my coffee arrived.

### **The session**

The following day I was sitting, preparing myself for the first session (following an enforced break). I rehearsed again the delivery, tightened my laces and walked out. *Perfect conditions* I thought, carrying cones, around my neck a whistle and stopwatch. Whilst laying the cones, the Spanish head coach came over: “Todo bien, Marink?”. *Si, todo esta bien, no puedo esperar para comenzar*, I replied with a wink and continued in English: *So...to recap our earlier talk, we look for an active transition from attack to defence. Within two seconds, we want to win the ball back. Players close to the ball need to press from all sides. If*



*players in the second line are too far away to press the ball, they need to cut out the passing lanes. The third line of players then needs to cover, or lock on and get compact straight away, right?* The head coach gave me a smile. *We gonna work this through quality not quantity*, I continued. “Looks good to me” he replied, “but... I have a question: What are you going to look for exactly within those moments of transition from attack to defence?”

The question made me think, I scratched the back of my head; I just could not answer. It made me realise that this might be an excellent moment to revisit the question of my observations, but I did not know how. *My focus point will be on the players around the ball. They have to make sure that the opponent cannot play a quick ‘controlled’ ball; I was merely thinking out loud. I will look for the players’ execution of basic conditions, leaving the second- and third line work for other sessions. However, the question just asked triggered me to look at more than just what happened around the ball. Maybe I could also pay attention to what is further from the ball, instead of getting caught up in the ‘trap’ around the immediate and obvious point of action.*

“What are you thinking Marink?” the head coach smiled again. I shared my thoughts on being conscious of my observation(s), and my train of thought(s) following the incident. *Fundamental would be my positioning during the session, I have to be able to observe all players, their individual behaviour and actions during the transition from attack to defence. My focus should not be only around the ball, the second- and third line should also be consciously observed. By doing this, I should observe elements indirectly aligned with the purpose of the training, or those involved in terms of managing the session adequately.* Once I was done explaining, I asked the head coach *what do you think?* He gave me a pat on the back and just said: “you’ll be alright, experience it”.

### **The execution**

*Position and observation*, I repeated in my head when the players came over. Once positioned, I explained the exercise and its purpose. During the warm-up, I had already handed out the bibs so we could immediately start. Before we started, however, I showed the players the ‘picture’ we were looking for once we had lost the ball. Here, I was specific on the conditions and positioning around the ball, and what was expected of the

second- and third lines (of players). I asked if there were any questions; they all seemed to understand, and so we started.

For the first minute, I caught myself checking if the created circumstances were good enough to get the outcomes we were looking for. Indeed, the transition moment appeared three/four times which was enough to train and emphasise the principle or the point being worked on. It felt good to focus on the execution of the principle itself; it was good to 'see' what I thought I wanted. Purposefully, I then moved to position myself to better see the whole team and not just the action around the ball. This is what I focussed on and now saw in the last one and a half minutes of the first practice block:

*Chris (a pseudonym) is not reacting when he is around the ball to press it. He gets himself caught up in a 'moment of grief' by responding emotionally. At first, he raises his hands in frustration and does "alibi pressing"; that is, acting like he is pressing but really is not. Later, he criticises team-mates shouting that they cannot play the game while standing still, before repeatedly walking away from situations when the ball is lost. Also, when the ball is lost behind him, he stands still with his hands in his hips; instead of executing the task expected in the transition from attack to defence. His teammates are getting frustrated. They are beginning to ignore him completely during the play.*

My stopwatch beeped, the first two and a half minutes were over; the players had a minute's rest. I revisited my observation to understand what I saw. My positioning was good, I was able to see all the players. However, what I really saw was one player not performing properly. I observed the others but my prime observation was so focussed on one individual, that the other players were only background. This was not aligning with the aim of the session. In the next block, I would purposefully try to see what I wanted a little more; what we had planned; the transition from attack to defence. I called everybody in again, to start the next block.

*Both teams are losing the ball even more. The frustration from the first block is still there; it affects the execution and decision making of certain individuals. As a consequence, transitions are happening all over the place. After losing the ball, the players in the immediate area are trying to press to win it back straight*

*away, but the second and third lines of players are hardly engaged. They are only looking at what's in front of them, not orientating to their surroundings, not adapting their positions, and not communicating with each other. That's why the two second rule (to win the ball back) is not working, and the team in possession can easily play through, around or over the pressing team. Chris is, again, one of the primary dissenters when losing the ball. With the ball he performs well, but without it is lost due to poor execution and decision making. He struggles to execute the football he needs to do; or we need him to do.*

I blew the whistle. *That was two and a half minutes gentleman, please stay on the pitch.* I felt the need to give them more details of expectations. Thirty five seconds of rest were left when my explanation finished. The players went to their drink bottles. I stepped aside and thought again. I now resolved to focus on given parts of the team, refusing to be drawn to the actions of one. For the next two and a half minutes, I'd again try to take a wider perspective of pressing around the ball within 'the seen' (i.e., what I wanted to see). To look at the social action beyond the immediate interaction. *Let's go boys!*

*Now, when one of the teams lose the ball, suddenly most of the players in the second- and third lines are actually trying to orientate and adapt their position towards the context. Because of this, the organisation gets better. Still...those in possession are able to avoid the press too many times. When facing a better team we'll be in trouble. Searching for possible improvements, I see that nearly all the players around the ball are trying to press. However, despite the effort and the correct intention, there is too much space between them and the ball; there is hardly contact with the opponents. The players need to react and work harder; to sprint back to affect the situation. Not doing so leaves the opponent on the ball too much time and space to evade the oncoming pressure. Despite some moments where he is still struggling, Chris is executing his defensive work better now. The reaction to the team is more positive and football related; much better than than merely expressing frustration. Both Chris and the team are better, but still not at the level it is supposed to be.*

*Stop, stand still, two and a half minutes done.* Picking out a particular example, I explain how the players around the ball could better compliment the players in the second- and third lines. I also highlight Chris's improvement. It became clear that I could now see more while still observing the same. I began to

notice individuals and the team simultaneously, and was able to specifically see the first-, second- and third lines of players working as parts of the same overall unit. I felt comfortable enough to understand my focus point without overly concentrating on it. I was now curious if I could find something which I had not yet seen, without losing the value of the session and the intentionality within it.

*For the first three quarters of the first minute (of the next block), one of the teams pop the ball around very well, while the other hardly touch the ball at all. Once the 'popping' team loses the ball, they execute the transition properly. The players around the ball (including Chris) are closer to the ball now with a lower body position which they use to affect the opponent having the ball. The players in the second- and third lines are also closer thus cutting off potential passing lanes, ultimately resulting in winning the ball back quite quickly. However, after ten seconds they lose the ball. Again, with the right intentional actions, they press once more but this time are not able to recover the ball. Initially, I really cannot see why they do not win the ball back, as they seem to be doing all the right things; and it was not as if the team in possession were performing wonderfully well! After they finally recover the ball, I start to focus on their positioning as a team to try to ascertain the difference compared to the earlier pressing example. Due to the slightly bigger distances from not being close enough to the opponent when the ball is lost, one or two players are just half a second too late in terms of executing a press to positively affect the outcome. It makes all players of the pressing team hesitate; it makes all the difference to the point of the practice. The hesitation is minimal but enough to be too late, like a domino effect.*

I blew the whistle three times indicating that this practice was done. *Ok, that's it from me! Off you go... to the manager.* When I walked towards my drink bottle, I realised that due to a cognisant focus on my observations (i.e., what I was looking for and what I subsequently 'saw'), and on my mindful positioning to see the whole team, I was consciously seeing and noticing more things. Seeing the in-possession problem to improve the transition from attack to defence was rewarding; I felt good. It felt like something new, something learned. I was excited by the possibilities for my coaching. Due to this 'new' way of seeing, I could now not only notice more while observing the same, it also made me able to see specific team needs in different phases of the game.

## Theoretical reflections

What we see is often very familiar. It is not this, however, that makes it difficult to know what we see. The problem lies more in the unthinking acceptance of what we see (Luhmann, 1995). As Merleau-Ponty (1945) writes ‘nothing is more difficult than to know precisely what we see’ (p. 71). In deconstructing the act of observation, the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann proclaimed that every observation involves making a distinction, which is indicative or reflective of an indication; that is, we see things in relation to other things; we see things we know and things we expect to see. Indeed, it is this process that enables us to ‘see’ things within our observations (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994). Subsequently, our unconscious selection of what we ‘see’ and how we ‘label’ such things makes some things visible to us and others non-visible (Keiding, 2011; Luhmann, 2002).

Phenomenology, as defined by Spiegelberg (1984), involves a revolt against beliefs and theories handed down by tradition. In this respect, it can challenge taken-for-granted assumptions about what we ‘see’. In tying such theory to my illustrated practice (above), utilising Heidegger’s (2001) phenomenological approach enabled me to see things differently. Initially, I discovered what I might have observed, but did not really see. The early conversation with the coach had raised the possibility of a blind spot (*‘what are you going to look for exactly?’*) (Luhmann, 2002b). It brought to mind my (on reflection) blinkered habit of focussing so much on what I expected to see; something which has been termed as ‘the marked space’ (Brekhus, 1998; Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994). Being aware of such a space, made me subsequently and proactively look for my unmarked space; for what I did not usually see, or had not yet seen (Brekhus, 1998; Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994). This has similarities with a practical execution of Mason’s Discipline of Noticing (2002). Mason’s thesis here was to be more pedagogically perceptive and considerate to the needs of the moment; “to become more sensitive to aspects of our practice that we may wish to change; to enable us to develop the sensitivity to recognise opportunities to act freshly as they arise, and to prepare us to have alternative options” as appropriate (Breen et al., 2014 p.292.).

Playing with phenomenological concepts such as ‘suspension and silence’ (Halldórsdóttir, 2000) enabled a reflection in the midst of action; a cognitive engagement without interrupting what I was already doing, whilst simultaneously reshaping it (Yanow and Tsoukas, 2009). This, so called, reflection-in-action is where Schön (1987) placed significant attention, in terms of being illustrative of a ‘higher mental function’.

It was also recently highlighted by Jones (2019) in making a case for developing a ‘quality of mind’ in coaches as an aspiration for coach education. Such a quality not only reflects a critical examination of what has been, but also imaginative inferential thinking about what can be. In some ways, it also mirrors Dreyfus (2004) model of developing competence, where the expert is capable of going beyond existing interpretations to an alternative vision of what is possible (Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 2005). It was what Schön (1987) described as seemingly spontaneous responses in pursuit of collaborative goals, of actively checking on ways, there and then, to alter conversations and actions in different directions. In a later work, Schön (1995) explained this more practically as: “the actor reflects ‘in action’ in the sense that his (sic.) thinking occurs in an action –present, a stretch of time within which it is still possible to make a difference to the outcomes of action” (p. 30). Being more than a reflection on experiences as a learning activity, such action also engages with in-the-moment issues in terms of an innovative response that draw on a form of professional artistry (Stockhausen, 2006). Such concepts brought to my attention what was at the forefront of my observation, and made me check things I observed but did not really see. This ultimately led to a ‘new’ awareness of my developing ‘artistry’ (Stockhausen, 2006).

Additionally, due to an engagement with Merleau-Ponty (1962), I became consciously aware of the importance of my (bodily) position in terms of what and how I saw; that the body and its positioning can be subject as well as object. In this respect, Merleau-Ponty (1962), speaks about “having a body” rather than “being a body” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). The point made here is that the body is considered a vehicle to receive stimuli, as it is through the body we become aware of things in our surroundings (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Observing, hence, is not only a visual act but a sensual physical one (Matsuyama, 2017; Lyon, 1997; Rodaway, 1994; Merleau-Ponty, 1962). It can also stretch into a positioning act, in terms of choosing a location from where to see something. Although my care-full positioning enabled me to see more in the above vignette, I was nevertheless still aware that I’d always have a ‘blind spot’ (Luhmann, 1995); that information is always gathered and interpreted selectively. Such a concept again brings to mind the idea of marked and un-marked spaces (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994); with the body being a principal ‘player’ in terms of dictating what is seen and observed.

The phenomenological approach employed triggered a wave of personal reflexive engagement (Finlay, 2002; Jenkins, 2017). Remembered phrases such as capturing (or trying to capture) the innocence of

first 'seeing' (Spiegelberg, 1984), and that "we see things not as they are but as we are" (Nin and McEvilly, 1961), literally came alive for me. The exercise made me aware of discoveries, and to wonder where these 'preferences' which guided what I saw and noticed came from, and why they were of such importance to me; why did I have to fight to see other things? It made me question 'why I did see that, and not something else?' In tandem with questioning my bodily sense of awareness, I slowly came to understand myself differently. Through sincere reflexive considerations then, I became more aware of the (unconscious) influence my 'self' was having (and continues to have) on what I saw.

Applying Heidegger (2001) to my practice brought new insights regarding the influence of my self as a seeing being. It provided me with alternative insights developing reflexive and adaptable capabilities to both adjust to and shape the context in front of me (Breen et al., 2013). More specifically, I became acutely aware that I saw things I 'expected' to see (Bateson, 1991; Rawls, 2011); that there is no view from no where. (Nagel, 1989). The approach, in turn, led to more sensitive, better informed practice than just seeing or experiencing 'the expected'. At the same time, I came to realise that there is no way that observes everything (Luhmann, 1993; Luhmann, 1995). The work involved in this movement (maybe transformation is too powerful a word) was demanding, precise, confrontational and sincere; to firstly recognise the 'influence of self' in terms of its roots and power, before creatively imagining different alternatives (Jones, 2019). Now, my context was different.

## **Vignette 2: What are the presuppositions that underpin my practice?**

### **An equine show**

It was my first day off. A friend of mine, a horse rider, called. She invited me to see a ‘showjumping’ competition. She knew I was not into equine events, but tempted me by saying “other friends will be there too”. I still did not see the attraction; “it is the horse doing all the work”. But... since I had time, I went along anyway.

My lack of knowledge about horses in general and this sport, in particular, made me ask all sorts of questions; I was suddenly intrigued. Why was the rider thrown off there? Why did the horse sometimes refuse to jump? How can horses jump so high? I could not believe what I was seeing, and wanted to understand more; I was ‘hooked’. I was intrigued by how these riders controlled such powerful animals, and began to realise my earlier presupposition of “the horse doing all the work”, was wrong. It seemed to be about the relationship between human being and the animal; now I was really curious.

### **Driving and realising**

While driving home, I could not resist thinking about how to apply this experience to my own practice. Thoughts wandered to the relationship between rider and horse; just like coach and athlete, but without the verbal communication. Suddenly another thought hit me, it was the change in my assumptions; something that happened whilst actually watching the cooperation between rider and horse. I started wondering if I also had such presumptions within my coaching practice? If so, was I really consciously aware of them?

Thinking about the presuppositions influencing my practice, I remembered my (so-called) ‘personal vision’ and ‘mission’, which I’d always considered to be of massive influence. ‘Everything I do and think as a coach can ultimately be brought back to these core elements’ I’d always believed, and actively told others. Take, for example, the interpretation of a ‘good pass’ in football. Based on presumptions, I’d always considered the intention of the decision made in relation to any pass, as well as the (technical) execution before judging it ‘good’ or ‘bad’. Other coaches, meanwhile, had only looked for the outcome, or the result of the pass itself, not taking much else into account. These differences in interpretation of the same phenomenon come from different assumptions about what can be considered ‘good’. I was, therefore, aware of how one considers something being influential in terms of what they see and how they judge.



My interest in personal presumptions and ‘taken-for-granted-ness’ had been piqued, could they be different within oneself as well as between others? When confronted with a different context, could existing interpretations be challenged? Since stepping up to a professional first team environment, I had entered a different world within the same field. Everything to do with the first team was the so-called ‘business-end’ of sport and coaching; a loss or a win at the weekend had several consequences for the following (seven) days. Similarly, previous results, both positive and negative, heaped pressure upon the next result, and so on. It was after this realisation that I started to question myself if I knew and really understood the assumptions I possessed about first team football, and how they were further influencing what I did or said. Were they aligned with my prized personal ‘mission’ and ‘vision’? It was strange to realise my uncritical utilisation of a taken-for-granted attitude on something I considered fundamental to my work. What consequences does this ‘blind spot’ have for my practice I wondered? Phenomenology again came to the fore; hopefully allowing a discovery of personal presumptions and how they aligned with how I thought about coaching.

### **The session**

In response to the musing undertaken (above), I began to purposefully look for opportunities to practically examine my assumptions and ‘taken-for-grantedness’ phenomenologically. It seemed challenging; I decided to do it (or start it anyway), whilst not leading a particular session or practice. It was not long before an appropriate opportunity arrived. The session was based on denying the opposition time and space in their half of the field (something termed a ‘high press’). Our next opponent would play out from the back no matter what, so this was a practice aimed at stopping them from doing precisely that. From earlier analysis, it had been deduced that the upcoming opposition’s right back (right-sided flank defender), struggled with the ball at his feet, whilst often positioning himself incorrectly. Therefore, we decided to close down their left side, forcing the ball to their right (and thus towards the ‘weak’ defender). Our very quick left winger was, therefore, crucial in the first phase of pressing (i.e., putting pressure on the ball). My task was to give him the information for proper execution of the plan; the head coach could then focus on the others.

I knew it would be challenging as Pete (a pseudonym for the left winger in question) did not always understand tactical information as well as he should. Even following apparent understanding, the translation into practice was a big struggle for him. This made me re-think the recently visited equine event. What I

thought about, where Pete was in question, were my presuppositions in relation to Pete and what was asked of him, similar to the ones I had before going to watch the horses. On reflection, it appeared that I'd somewhat already made up my mind about him. Indeed, I seemed to already expect or knew what would happen. I forced a 'stop' to my thinking. I had to move to a different space, a different frame of reference; could I possibly interpret his football behaviour in another way?

The head coach was finished going through the exercise with the players. I went to Pete and started to explain our expectations of him as a part of this strategy in more detail. He listened, then nodded. The session started, I focussed on Pete only. All my presumptions were immediately confirmed. He was not smart in his execution and decision making, his speed of pressing and (body) positioning were all wrong! "*He'll never understand this, never*", I thought as I ran my hand through my hair in frustration. Just then, breaking from the temptation to reaffirm what I'd expected at the start of the practice, I recalled my ambition to explore my presumptions phenomenologically. I considered again my current interpretation and questioned myself; "*does this help to support Pete?*" I took a step back to revisit my interpretation(s) (again).

While considering, I stepped (even) away further from the session to physically/mentally (and perhaps symbolically) extract myself from the context. I felt annoyed, a form of anger. Not so much around the performances of the players (which perhaps I had a right to be), but because of myself. I realised my current interpretation of Pete was 'easy'; it was already agreed, it was what we all thought as coaches. It was just assumed that he could not and would not ever be able to execute the demands asked. In other words, we needed to replace him with someone who would be able to do what we wanted. He had to go... These thoughts shocked me; so much so, that I came to consider that I, and not Pete, might be the problem here. Why? Because, firstly, I strongly believe that any player can see or feel such personal negative coaching interpretations in some sort of way. This, in turn, would no doubt affect the relationship between me and any player in an undesirable or adverse way. Secondly, such an attitude and actions go against who I want to be as a coach; I should be able to support Pete, help him, instead of judging and condemning him as someone that will 'never understand'. I should, alternatively, search for a way to let him (slightly) understand what was asked of him. He has all (or nearly all!) the attributes we need to make the team better, *I just need to help him investigate this area of struggle in a more constructive and hopefully fruitful way. This (practice) is what I believe in, this is what I stand for; this is what my job is about. It is me who needs to change here!*

The first part of the session was done. In order to refocus, I rubbed my face, I was determined to interpret Pete's actions in such a way that we established progress. First of all, I needed to re-consider my interpretations (and eventual resultant feedback) as informative rather than judgmental. Since realising I will always subjectively interpret something, because I believe that I cannot detach myself from myself, I should focus on constantly revisiting my thoughts and conclusions. By consciously considering the unconscious distinction in the creation of meaning, I become aware of my unconscious considerations and so-called 'beliefs'. This awareness, then, gave me a 'handhold' or analytical hook to choose more consciously what the phenomenon presented really meant to me, and not just to rely only on first, more-than-often, uncritical impressions.

It was clear that Pete needed to improve, and my role was to support, facilitate and ensure that the best way I could. In order to do so, I needed to understand his qualities and potential; of what he could do instead of what he could not. Therefore I revisited my interpretation(s) and actively started to question myself: "what are his strengths? How are these strengths coming alive in this task? Which points for improvement are necessary? How am I going to make them clear to Pete? What if we break it down?" This slight change of thought made me look for progression and considered corrections instead of labelling Pete a 'sinking ship' too late to rescue. Adopting this somewhat more positive perspective, I felt better. It was more aligned with who I wanted to be as a coach. I was more comfortable; slowly but surely an excitement replaced my frustration.

While walking off the pitch following the session, I thought back on what had just happened. Revisiting my interpretation taught (or rather reminded) me that both presuppositions and interpretations were self-created; I could consciously consider and thus change both. I had more agency here than I had previously considered. Due to this realisation of choice, the last part of the session felt like a paradox. On one hand, revisiting gave me tools to consciously interpret Pete's behaviour differently; making me feel more effective whilst certainly being a more pleasant and pleasing experience. On the other hand, however, not having recognised this taken-for-grantedness earlier made me frustrated. I had always believed that under any circumstance I stayed close to my 'self'. I even believed that this assumed consistency and authenticity was one of my strengths. Using phenomenology, however, made me aware that I was not quite built on such firm foundations, at least not all the time.

A few hours later, after everybody had left, I found myself in the gym. While driving myself through a tough set of interval sprints, I could not stop thinking about the ‘negative’ interpretations I initially held about Pete. *“Where the hell did they come from? When in academy (youth) football never, not once (or not once I could recall), did I interpret like this, I always looked for possibilities and opportunities to improve players. Had being around first team football changed all that? Does it have to be that different at the higher levels?”* I was so disgusted with myself that I wanted to get to the bottom of this. I continued: *“Somehow, despite an unawareness of my interpretation when in academy football, I think I was still able to understand my interpretations as informative. Did the so-called ‘development’ ethos of youth football influence my sense making of how to coach so much? And if it did: what does this say about me that I seemed to have changed so much with a step-up to senior sport? Before this session I thought that I was self aware, believing that context hardly influenced the way I interpreted. This experience had demonstrated that this was not the case”*. While sprinting, I revisited internally what had influenced me to think of the first team environment in this way. After some minutes, I stopped running, and caught my breath. *“Of course, my misinterpretation had come from a real lack of understanding of the first team environment. I was not able to see the context yet. I was just following the lead of others”*. I also realised that I had to allow some, or more, room for my own learning, for my own mistakes. This ‘leeway’ similarly needed to apply to the players; *“I cannot expect them (the players) to be able to do everything perfectly; to just judge them and leave the judgement as certainty. There is a need to find a balance between results and development based coaching; or even, is there really a difference better the two?”*

I now recognised the need to become increasingly aware of my interpretations; a recognition that would allow me to revisit them, and to become more focused on a critical self within the environment. I can now better evaluate, and hence manage, the influence of context, and to a certain degree history, on my actions and behaviours. For the next couple of sessions, I decided that my focus would, therefore, be on revisiting my interpretations to raise self understanding within this new environment. Doing so, would better equip me to ‘support any individual’ within the context...I took a deep breath and sprinted every fibre of personal frustration out of my tiring body.

## **Theoretical reflection**

As mentioned in the first vignette, what we see when we observe is a distinction as well as an indication of that distinction (Luhmann, 1995). The theme explored in this second vignette is the root of this distinction, thus figuring out the interpretation of what has been observed, or perhaps even before it has been observed (Luhmann, 1995). It examines the process of translating what has been seen to the meaning given to it (Garfinkel, 1967); that is, deconstructing the labelling we apply to things observed to make sense of what has been seen. It also calls into question the issue of if we use labels to attach to the things we see, ahead of the seeing (Luhmann, 1995). This creation of meaning is not fixed. Rather, it is fluid, since it is a social process due to its constructed nature (Luhmann, 1995; Luhmann, 2002c). The question it inevitably leads to is: are we (coaches) ‘aware’ of the socially constructed nature of our observations? Or, do we sometimes fail to see what is in front of us, simply because of what we already ‘know’ (Lieberman, 2013)? This was my struggle.

Again, following Heidegger (2001), I tried to discover how I interpret phenomena. Through such a process personal interpretations (Cushion and Partington, 2016) can broaden, while the awareness of the ‘self’ as a practitioner can be raised. What (core) elements caused the creation of meaning to the ‘seen’ was important to understand. Research had taught me that cultural historical- (Vygotsky, 1978), bodily- (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) and observational elements (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994; Brekhus, 1998) are grounded in past experiences and, consequently, create subconscious presuppositions; they leave cognitive and emotional sediments that, often unknowingly, we carry forward. This connects with the writings of Merleau-Ponty (1962) who argued that the body as a whole adds (unconsciously) to the meaning process. Similarly, he believed that while we are almost always aware that we ‘have’ a body we often forget that we also ‘are’ a body. This makes one subject and object at the same time. In other words, our primary uncritical interpretations of phenomena are based on both a cognitive and bodily process (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Vygotsky, 1978). Since we cannot escape from our cultural/historical being (Vygotsky, 1978) nor our body (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), we cannot interpret something from ‘nowhere’. This makes the bracketing of self out before perceiving anything, as advocated by Husserl (1936/1970), very problematic, if not impossible. It also points to the core difference between the student Heidegger (2001) and the teacher Husserl (1936/1970). In this respect, Heidegger (2001), believed that the past will always presents itself in how we interpret, therefore, factoring it in is more beneficial (and realistic) than trying to factor it out. Thus, it is only through

an awareness and a revisiting of one's own 'frame of reference', that one is able to change that frame of reference (Heidegger, 2001).

From such a perspective, the observational fallacy alluded by Luhmann and Fuchs (1994) can be understood. They state, as mentioned earlier, that during the process of observation we see thing(s), but by seeing something we forget to see other thing(s). Hence, each observation must have a blind spot (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994). While observing then, because we cannot see everything, we naturally focus on something(s); this is, a 'marked space' (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994). This naturally leaves an 'unmarked space' (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994); the non-visible(s) that we tend not to see in an observation. This process also exists in relation to our interpretations. The 'marked space' (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994) of an interpretation is often based on conscious and unconscious elements inter alia from the earlier mentioned cultural/historical (Vygotsky, 1978) background and body (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Looking into or even for the 'unmarked space' (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994) is, therefore, difficult; it demands considerable effort and insight. This is because it challenges existing frames of reference thus making one more aware of normally taken for granted elements and features.

Ultimately, applying a phenomenological lens from a Heideggerian (2001) perspective can not only tweak thoughts, but can lead to a fundamental questioning of what is known, felt and acted upon provoke critical reflection (Mezirow, 1995) whilst challenging existing frames of reference. In many ways, it marks a deeper critique than a superficial reflection in and on practice, as witnessed in many coach education programmes, to a more evaluative reflexivity (Jenkins, 2017; Finlay, 2002). It can create a realisation that phenomena can be seen from different angles, with what emerges marks a distinct resemblance to the 'unmarked' space (Luhmann and Fuchs, 1994). Becoming reflexive also makes one wander internally; searching for where uncritical primary interpretations come from (Taylor and White, 2001).

Reflexiveness developed in (social) science in the 60's and 70's, although came to flower a little later through the work of ethnographers (Salzman, 2002). The basis of reflexivity, as defined by Strauss (1956), is the turning-back of the experience of the individual upon him or herself. It requires an awareness of one's contribution to the construction of meaning(s), and an acknowledgment of the impossibility of remaining 'outside of' one's subject matter while being in context. Reflexivity then, urges us to explore the ways in

which one's involvement with situation influences, acts upon, and informs the situation (Nightingale and Cromby, 1999; Lewis, 2003).

In differentiating between the two, in order to better develop working definitions, Ryan (2005) claimed, that being reflexive can, and should, nourish reflections. The introspection engaged in heightens the awareness of 'self'; making conscious the unconscious internal elements of thought, thus raising recognition of existing frame of reference.

The phenomenological approach of Heidegger (2001) offers *a* way to (critically) consider the way we create meaning towards and from any phenomena. Having knowledge of this process helps us become better aware of the self and opens a myriad possibilities both looking inwards, and how we then relate to the wider world (Strauss, 1956). This so called 'reflexive look' then makes it possible to extend or engage in broader and different interpretations of any engaged with context (Breen et al., 2013).

### **Vignette 3: The connections between what I see and what I do?**

#### **A bird**

I opened my laptop to watch something relaxing and decided on a nature documentary. My attention was caught by a feature on meerkats\*. These animals have a strategy while searching for food, each individual has a different role. Some search for the food, while others protect the ‘searchers’ by warning them of potential dangers. ‘A searcher’ finds a juicy meal, a scorpion; then, suddenly, without particular reason a warning is posted sending the meerkats scurrying to safety. A Drongo bird appears on the scene (a bird of no threat to the meerkats) and picks up the scorpion. The Drongo had imitated the alarming noise of the meerkats allowing him to steal the meal without resistance.

Intrigued by the Drongo because of an ostensible overlap with my phenomenological project, I paused the documentary. Seeing this bird adapt his ‘sound’ to the circumstances made me think he must have had a certain awareness. He must understand the sound made, its being, qualities and fallacies. The bird also had to see and interpret the meerkats’ social structure, and likely collective response. This knowledge additionally had to be connected in order for actions to change adequately to context. It was a great example to explain my practical execution of phenomenology. Currently while coaching, although I was becoming increasingly aware of my observations and interpretations, I questioned my recognition of subsequent ‘adequate actions’. This was about thought moving to productive action.

I toyed with how to bring this idea to life in my practice. Although stepping back while observing and interpreting had probably changed my behaviour(s), I wanted to explore and discover how this had happened and was happening more closely. *Another thing I just took for granted...Never before had I checked and challenged myself if or how these elements of observation and interpretation affected my actions.* It would be interesting to consciously consider my observations and interpretations, and then to reflect on if and how they affected exactly what I did.

\* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEYCjJqr21A>



## **A new signing**

A few days later, the club signed a new player. He was well known, although in the ‘autumn’ of his career. I thought back to the meerkats. Since I did not know the player, I realised this could be an opportunity to implement an idea I had after seeing the Drongo bird in action.

My first impression was that he was a reliable, quiet and thoughtful character. He asked sharp questions and was curious to know more about my background ‘since I was so young’. Him commenting on my age made all earlier impressions immediately irrelevant; I baulked, I interpreted his words as a challenge; how could I know anything being seven years younger than him? I suddenly became anxious and conscious about what others were possibly thinking of me as a coach. It felt I had to prove myself; to ‘earn my stripes’ before being totally accepted (again!). I needed to explore this perception, and the internal struggle it brought on a bit more.

After the earlier utilisation of the phenomenological approach in practice, I became more conscious of myself; what I see and interpret. It was now that I realised it also brought different opportunities to consciously consider and adapt actions. Signing this new player gave me an opportunity to challenge myself within this area. My first impression of the new player would no doubt direct my next observation and interpretation (and so on). Probably I would be looking for the ‘being young’ element and would see or interpret something confirming this impression. Consequently, it would affect my future actions; it was a trap I was now becoming aware of. The earlier experiences of applying phenomenology in my coaching, however, gave me confidence to refocus; to see things in a different way, and to act accordingly.

## **The session**

Today’s session would focus on the upcoming match. My role was to introduce our principles of play to the new player. I asked him before the session to come into the office so I could outline expectations. I shared the information, purposefully, in a one directional way, for two reasons. Firstly, as usual, I wanted to avoid an overload of information. And secondly, I wanted to consciously communicate differently through observing and interpreting his reactions. I aimed to see how he transformed the information I gave him to practice, and how he coped with my way of coaching, testing both my earlier presuppositions of him, and my interpretation of ‘who he was’.

The players warmed up on the crisp ground while I further discussed the session with the head coach. He wanted to start the new player in the next match, in two days time. It was, therefore, crucial that the player understood what was expected. Immediately the head coach mentioned he was positively surprised by the direct approach I took, he did not see that coming. He smiled while listening to my reasoning and responded: “well that is interesting, but please...do not get caught up by thinking, think but just not too much...people can sense that actions are not ‘real’. There is this thin line between thinking and feeling. Combining the two is very difficult but necessary. My unasked advice? ‘Before you act, think, when you act feel, and after acting, think again’. I looked at the head coach totally confused; *what on earth did he just say?*. There was no time to ask; the players came over from warm-up.

While the head coach was explaining the session’s objectives, I tried to make clear to myself what I would do. Initially, I just wanted to observe the new player in action, how he had interpreted the information given. I would then consciously consider my next move. Although he had to be ready for the starting eleven within two days, at the same time I needed to earn his trust and build a relationship for the rest of the season. A delicate paradoxical situation where communication, and subsequent understanding were key to guarantee success in the short- as well as the longer term.

The session started. My focus was on the player. However, nothing I explained was evident in his actions, my heart sank...yet...as I looked again...the outcomes he produced were exactly those desired. *How is this possible? I perhaps have to look differently at the same observation and my interpretation of it (or them).* Through phenomenological engagement, I began to question the seen and, hence, to see more. I stepped back and questioned what I was seeing. I subsequently realised that my focus was too much on my earlier explanation as opposed to the outcomes (to dominate a certain space). I stepped back further back... took a deep breath, and re-entered the ‘arena’. Now, I looked differently at his actions and realised he was using a different road to the same destination; to secure the space we wanted to dominate on the field of play. This was interesting, it was challenging for me: how should I respond? Should he do it ‘my way’ because that was what we ‘agreed’, or should I use his current actions to maybe improve on the original instruction(s)? This was really something to consider, I was in unfamiliar territory. Normally I would not consider this at all because I just could not ‘see’. After some thinking, I decided, due to this somewhat different view to also act differently. Instead of becoming overly loud trying to coach him towards ‘the way’

I had initially explained, like I normally would have done, I allowed the practice to flow; after all, the outcomes were what I wanted and what we needed. I therefore focussed on what he showed me and the others. I became critical; there were technical aspects which he could certainly improve, I needed to challenge him to create more time in the space we wanted to dominate.

His current execution was, on the whole, pretty average, although with greater focus and a few adjustments this could easily be improved. The longer I focused on this, the more I saw where he could improve. After three minutes, I stepped back, revisiting my own observations and interpretations. I became aware that I was focussed almost exclusively on perceived negativities of his game. I was seemingly obsessed by ‘what he did wrong’. *That, again, is one of my fallacies* I told myself; *while always aiming for better, I get caught up in ‘negatives’, slightly taking me away from the aim of the session. The other consequence is that I unconsciously and indirectly display this negativity in my communication. In other words, the way I see and interpret now is not helping the player nor myself.* For the next few minutes, I decided to try to interpret these more positively and see what he did well.

Minutes later, with the session still running, I thought back to the Drongo bird. I focussed on my level of conscious awareness; forcing it higher. I instantly started to see and interpret differently, which, in turn, fed and demanded a different set of actions. Like the Drongo, I could now think of adapting myself ‘better’ to context since I was more aware of my ‘self’ within that context. This adaptation had consequences, on the way I acted; in this case, on my communication. The somewhat cryptical earlier words of the head coach: “before you act think, when you act, feel; and after acting, think again” now made sense. I was aware of opportunities to think differently about what I was seeing and interpreting; to consciously consider what and how I would communicate. However, possibly overthinking this was around the corner... the warning from the head coach not to make my communication ‘artificial’ sprung to mind. In other words, (re)considering the way of communicating was great but I needed to be careful to bring craft and science together in such a way that it was still ‘me’. While still looking at the session, I pondered how to do this with sincerity and insight.

I had an idea, albeit a rough one: when the next break occurred I would ask the player about his experiences. I would trust my broader knowledge to then decide how to develop the interaction along the path I wanted to tread in terms of the points I wanted to make. I also wanted to make him aware of the more

direct coaching style possibly coming his way! On the other hand (with this altered way of coaching there always seemed to be an ‘other’ hand!), I did not want him to perceive my ego nor my knowledge were obstacles here. Consequently, a message couched in humour seemed a good option. Doing it so, I thought to combine the short-term expectations with the long-term needs of building a relationship.

*What do you think?* I asked him during the break of the session. He answered that he was fairly satisfied with his level of performance. *Ok, good to hear* I replied and continued *what are your thoughts about the execution of the few principles we spoke about before the session?* He thought he had tried his best and could not expect more of himself. *Interesting* I thought *we have different perspectives. Important now is to bring the considered short- and long term elements together; and do it well.* My developed, more insightful consciousness gave me greater confidence as I considered what to say next. *Well,* I told him with a smile, *you definitely get the outcome we want which I am very happy with... but... I think I can nearly do what you are doing even with my two wooden legs!! (I tapped my ‘wooden’ legs for effect).* *With your qualities, experiences and possibilities, I think you can do better, for sure.* He laughed and said “are you abilities so limited?” firmly passing me the ball. I controlled it dead; and said *do not look so surprised, you underestimate your own qualities mate!* We both laughed, which gave me the opening to further explain the two further points I wanted him to focus on. After the explanation I said again smiling: *I hope your next pass is better than what you just gave me, even my grandma is able to control that one.* He laughed loudly saying I had to pay very good attention to his execution on the next part. *Ok, I am curious amigo. Looking forward to some ‘grandma’ moments;* I winked as I turned to walk back to the touchline.

The session restarted. My focus would be on the finer points of my message(s). I resolved to be more demanding and alive while the session was going on. He executed one of the focus points perfectly; I jumped up and shouted with a touch of irony; *Excellent! But I know it is luck!* A moment later I had to admit that it was not *Oo no it is not luck, bloody hell! Great!.* Soon, however, a moment occurred where although his intention and execution were good, the ball was lost. Instead of being negative, I called out: *very much liked the intention and execution! Next time again!* I started to enjoy the session more, even when his execution was not good I found a way to remain honest but at the same time nice, challenging and/or funny. I found myself, for example, saying to him *Come on man direction and pace of your touch is poor, just because of you have a closed body position, you stand too high on your feet and you attack the ball with your foot.*

*Remember where we spoke about you can do far better or shall I call a retirement home, maybe you can be grandma's neighbour?* He smiled and for the last few minutes of the session did nearly everything correct in his execution.

I revisited the session following its completion and started to wonder: why was I not able to see more within the first observation? Why was I observing and interpreting in the way I did? What were the consequences of my articulations, and how can I take this knowledge into subsequent sessions? Using phenomenology, I questioned myself and my coaching in two fundamental ways. Firstly, it was not about the 'trainer' elements of football like the session itself or the football game, but more on the things I did in my coaching. Secondly, I started to wander internally searching for explanations why I did what I did in practice. This more reflective and reflexive attitude made me more aware of my coaching 'craft', something I somehow took for granted normally.

### **Theoretical reflections**

The earlier application of Heidegger's (2001) phenomenological approach to observation and interpretation created a better understanding of my 'self' in context. What I still took for granted, however, was the way I presumed my thoughts affected my actions. I, therefore, decided to focus on the way I communicated while coaching. This part of coaching is what others see what we do; the part often mentioned as the 'craft' of the profession (Day, 2011). What is often missing in the literature is an understanding of this 'craft', with the alternative course being a rush into prescription; into knowledge-for-action (Jones and Wallace, 2005). Through applying Heidegger's (2001) thoughts and writings then, I became increasingly conscious about communication and its connection with my observations and interpretations; in essence, I became more aware of my 'craft' (Day, 2011).

This broadened and deepened a critical awareness (Heidegger, 2001) of my normally taken-for-granted attitude. It led to a general suspension of judgement and to an internal examination of alternatives (Schofield, 2003). Doing so, brought to mind the work of Schofield (2003), who emphasised the value of the 'vague' as opposed to an obsession with the 'precise'. Here, issue was taken with the significance attached to "acts of exact measurement, calculation and calibration (as) the basis for forms of knowledge that can be rendered practical in the service of everyday life" (Schofield, 2003 p. 324). Alternatively, greater credence

was given to a process that enables a re-ordering of the ordered to ultimately be precise again (Schofield, 2003). Deconstructing my taken-for-granted attitude by means of an internal 'suspended' examination, where there was no rush to certainty, forced a reconsideration of my communication with others. Rather paradoxically perhaps, it also led me into the sphere of security again; that I was now ready to take care-full action.

In further exploring the concept of generative 'vagueness', Merleau-Ponty (1962) argued that one has 'silenced knowledge' to be understood as conscious knowledge, termed '*I think*'. In addition, he considered we also have knowledge based on the body within the surrounding environment, called '*I can*'. This is because, as we engage in our daily activities, we tend not to be conscious of our bodies thus taking them for granted (Sartre, 1969). Since how we observe and interpret is something we do within our daily activities, it is likely that we take (considerable elements of) it for granted. These normally unconscious features have direct consequences for how we act and communicate with others. Heidegger (2001), however, claimed that this process can be considered more consciously; that is, through developing an ability to consider multiple options from observations or/and interpretations before articulation. In this case, I consciously chose to consider what I said from what I actually 'saw', and made sense of what I saw. Here, I indirectly revisited Heidegger (2001), being also somewhat informed by Halldórsdóttir (2000), and the 'Vancouver school of doing phenomenology'. Not that I systematically brought such instrumentality into practice, but that I came to realise how much such concepts had influenced me in the process. Hence, somewhat mirroring the steps of the Vancouver School, I reconsidered what I first thought of the new player (referred to in the above vignette); giving me a broader insight. I subsequently found that my way of communication with him changed. Similarly, during the session, I felt the benefits of a more insightful 'self' knowledge constructed through applying Heidegger's (2001) approach. Doing so helped me to overcome the paradox of creating a longer-term relationship whilst simultaneously searching for short term results; something that has bedevilled coaching practitioners since time immemorial, and something that most functional coaching scholars (e.g., Jowett, 2017) refuse to venture. Due to more considered appreciation of my 'self' in context then, in addition to relevant reading, (e.g., Edwards and Jones, 2018) I adopted an altered course of action.

Being increasingly aware of my existing frame of reference considerably broadened my horizons and options. Since having knowledge of the known through Heidegger (2001), I could focus on the unknown (Brekhus, 1998; Spencer-Brown, 1979). Here, I would try to get out of the prison of 'self' by taking my 'self' into account, leading me into the 'unmarked space' (Spencer-Brown, 1979) as related to elements of 'self'. I subsequently discovered various elements I took for granted while coaching normally, this portraying them in a different light. An example of this can be found in the above vignette when I primarily saw the 'new player' achieve the agreed desired outcome, but not in line with the agreed process. Something that forced a personal reconsideration. Lest I should rush to an achievement claim here, at the same time I realised that this will always remain an ongoing process, because the unknown will always exist (Luhmann, 2000).

Another path I took to understand my 'self' better was by trying to make the familiar strange (Merleau Ponty, 1962), again in order to see the known differently. Here, I deliberately thought carefully about what I was seeing, putting the essential feature of the phenomenon before the factual experience; emphasising the what was happening (i.e, the phenomenon itself), as opposed to the how it was happening. Previous assumptions about a (i.e., my) 'gold standard' right way, which had served me so well in the climb up the coaching ladder, were brought into question. Seeing the strange in the familiar (Brown et al., 2010) then, opened my eyes to different, alternative (perhaps better) ways to achieve agreed goals. I could now simply 'see more'.

During the above described process I was inspired by Merleau-Ponty (1962) on 'how' to actually 'do phenomenology'. I remembered the metaphor of thinking while dancing. If one starts to think about how to dance while dancing the movements will likely become clumsy; one just can't go with the 'rhythm of the moment'. The above vignette hinted towards this in the comment of the head coach: "“before you act think, when you act feel and after acting think again”. I, therefore, had to take my articulation as it came, unencumbered by previous instructions and assumptions. Following it, I then would be reflexive (Finlay, 2002; 2002b) on why I executed the way I did and be reflective (Finlay, 2008) about how this was done. In other words, to use science (Day, 2011) to discover and understand the 'craft' (Day, 2011) and at the same time...to use craft to get a broader perspective of the 'science'.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**



## 5.1 Introduction

The roots of this thesis lay in my inherent skepticism of theoretical knowledge, in terms of how such knowledge can possibly impact (coaching) practice. Consequently, despite holding a Masters degree in sports science, I found myself more-than-often questioning the applicability of academic knowledge to the coaching life experienced; to my life. In searching for a better connection, this thesis describes and discusses how adherence to a Heideggerian (2001) perspective allowed a first-person phenomenological investigation into my personal coaching practice (Van Manen, 1990); to consider what sports coaching really is about, and how to better understand what I did within it (Jones, 2019). In this respect, the work is positioned to build on that of Jones and colleagues e.g., 2016; Jones and Ronglan (2018) in taking the broader context of coaches into account. Furthermore, the work also expands on that of Cronin and Armour (2015; 2017), possessing the purpose to create a deeper understanding of something; in this particular case, of the ‘self’ within the complexity of (the coaching) context.

In terms of structure, this concluding chapter contains the following. Firstly (i.e., this introductory section), I draw attention to the research and the feelings that provided the rationale for this study. Secondly, I present a summary of the conclusions drawn from the data constructed while addressing (or maybe re-addressing) the aims and objectives of the work. The third part considers the merits of adopting the use of narratives as a way to present my experiences from within the study, while fourthly some directions or recommendations for future research are offered. Finally, I conclude by offering some ultimate personal reflections.

The review of literature chapter highlighted the limited amount of current research applying phenomenology to sport (e.g., Ravn and Christensen, 2014; McNarry and Allen-Collinson, 2019); work which focused mainly on ‘being’ the sportsman or woman. Subsequently, I wondered, *can I use phenomenology in coaching? And if so, how?* This was certainly an opportunity to add to the ‘coaching science’ literature by using and applying a phenomenological perspective; an opportunity manifest in three principal ways. Firstly, through consideration of a different perspective of coaching as a certain, given phenomenon. Secondly, by applying phenomenology in practice and offering a different perspective to create knowledge-for-understanding (Jones and Wallace, 2005). And, thirdly, through being reflexive (Finlay, 2002)

and reflective in action (Schön, 1987), thus allowing a critical exploration and understanding of my own coaching practice.

The work also aimed to build a bridge between academia and practice; a bridge allowing two way ‘traffic’. Hence, I purposefully wrote the work as a whole in a narrative format; taking the reader with me on ‘my research journey’. This included presenting data in a (non-)fictional creative way (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Through such means, I tried to (practically) explain how I implemented the theory into my everyday world and practice, complete with difficulties, benefits and insights. By doing so, I aimed to create a deeper understanding of the application of phenomenology in coaching practice (Cheney, 2001). Phenomenology, however, is not a specific tool or model to pick up, to immediately bring back to use as when it is considered needed. It is a way of thinking which really needs to be lived (Van Manen, 2007), and subsequently requires hard work to really apply. Therefore, it is the meaning (Gabriel, 1996) that this work presents that counts; the meaning it holds for me, and also hopefully for others. Ultimately, through (really) applying this way of thought in practice, it will (or perhaps should) always be part of someone. In other words, through the meaning of this work, the way of thinking phenomenologically is presented. In turn, through its presentation, I hope to somewhat inspire others to actually bring this “way of thinking/living” towards and into (their) coaching practice.

By writing in a narrative account, inclusive of creative (non-)fictional representation, I aimed to show how both contexts (practice and theory) could feed each other resulting in new and different insights (Jeffries and Maeder, 2005) stimulating a reciprocal exchange of knowledge (Jones et al., 2012). Hence, I wanted the work to be more than just a call for the unity of theory and practice, I wanted to provide an example, a purposeful example, of how this can be done.

## **5.2 Recapping the aims, objectives and principal conclusions of the study**

This thesis explored a personal phenomenology of coaching, to better ascertain the essence of the job (Heidegger, 2001). The quest then, acknowledging that we always seem to know more than we can say, through making the familiar strange, was to put personal knowing “into a form of knowledge” (Jones, 2019, p.4). Doing so, enables and encourages us to “return to the innocence of first seeing” (Spiegelberg, 1984, p.680), thus breaking free from the cramped confines of the familiar (Jones, 2006).

My specific objectives in terms of this work related to addressing such issues/questions as;

- How do I discern what I see when I coach?
- What are the presuppositions that underpin my practice?
- How can I 'overcome' them? (Husserl, 1936; Heidegger, 2001)
- What are the connections between what I see and what I do?
- How can I make this private issue a public concern?

In this section, it is tempting to get into the details of the experiences I had while applying phenomenology. However, I think that will not do justice to the overall, more abstract, outcome(s) the application suggests. Although I accept and realise that the work is about 'my' experience, it is not about me at all, it is about the use of phenomenology in one's practice and the (potential) benefits this has for others. Through an explanation of my phenomenological exploration in practice, I aimed to write this private issue down as 'an example' for others to benefit from; that is, to make my experiences a public concern. In other words, the work is about common, shared experiences rather than just being mine; in this respect, they have wider significance. Consequently, I drew inspiration from i.a. C. Wright Mills (1959) who argued sixty years ago for this individual to public concern. Here, he advocated for a greater appreciation and understanding of the relationship between a person and their specific historical and social contexts. Despite perhaps being judged as fairly dated theory, his arguments still apply today. Similar to Berger and Luckmann (1963), the emphasis here is on seeing things differently; on seeing the general in the particular.

Within this thesis I, therefore, focused on an exploration of my own coaching through a first-person phenomenological approach. On the basis of literature, in addition to critical reflection on that literature (and personal practice), specific aspects of coaching were selected to research, namely; observation, interpretation and articulation. In this processual work, on reflection, these were fundamental elements I just took-for-granted; perhaps elements that we all (as coaches) normally take-for-granted. We aren't always aware of our preoccupations and fallacies of 'self', or recognise that we can actually explore these through a phenomenological deconstruction of what we see, what our presuppositions actually are, and how we then combine the both in the way we communicate and ultimately behave. Conversely, ultimately applying this approach in practice can shift paradigms in our critical reflections (Mezirow, 1990; Mezirow, 1998), and

make it possible for transformative learning to take place (Mezirow, 2003). While the aim of this study is to explore practice, a possible consequence of the exploration can be practical transformation. This did happen to me (see the different vignettes).

This work provides a way to individually explore these coaching aspects practically as well as academically to ultimately raise one's understanding of personal 'craft'. Since these coaching aspects are of an individual nature, they are unique to all coaches and therefore (part of) the 'craft' of their coaching. Rather than accepting 'craft' as simply a mystic form of 'being there' however, as is the tendency in coaching science (Day, 2011, Froelich and Puig, 2007; Nash and Collins, 2006), this work challenges us to better explore the nuance and fine-grain of practice; in essence, of what makes up this 'craft' of coaching. Although this thesis takes a step in that direction, no doubt this should and can be explored further. Such an imaginative deconstructive analysis no doubt holds the potential to make one become increasingly conscious about the nature of their particular craft, what it looks like, how it is performed, and where it comes from. It is not easy, but demands hard work. Having said that, the time is well spent, because ultimately it will benefit those we all do it for; the people we coach.

### **5.3 Future considerations**

In light of the findings and the process undertaken in the making of this thesis, a further general exploration of phenomenology can be an interesting addition to the study of sports coaching. This is because it potentially offers the current literature a different angle from which to view the activity (Jones and Wallace, 2005), whilst possessing the ability to illuminate elements of the phenomenon we call coaching that we currently take-for-granted (Seamon, 2018). No doubt then, more of this and similar work needs to be done; the picture is by no means complete.

Indeed, there is more to discover about the elements specifically examined within this work; those of observation, interpretation and articulation as related to coaching practice. Approaching these on the basis of the works of Luhmann (1993; 1993b 1995; 2000; 2002) and Merleau-Ponty (1945/1962), holds the potential to demonstrate that within our lives (and so coaching), we are 'blinkered by habit'. Understanding these 'fallacies of self' and thus approaching them differently (through the work of Heidegger [2001]), offers alternative perspectives, deepening the knowledge on coaching. Future research then can develop greater

depth into such elements of coaching, and in doing so, can ‘peel away’ some of the layers that overlie the activity, thus giving us a clear picture of its essence.

In addition, another consideration for future research is to better consider the way to present sports coaching data in an ‘academic’ world. In this respect, a lead has already been provided by scholars such as Richardson (1990), Richardson and Pierre (2005) and Bochner (2012). Writing through dynamic evocative narratives creates (different) knowledge(s) about the complexity of the context in which a coach has to operate. Such a means of representation, therefore, has the potential to make personal experiences public concern, as people can relate to these in and to their own contexts. At the same time, writing in a narrative format can open the world of academic considerations to the more practically minded. The text is interesting and increasingly ‘not boring’, making it more relatable (Richardson and Pierre, 2005) allowing valuable knowledge to be spread and brought alive into actual coaching practice.

An underlying purpose of this work was to document and present *a* way to bring phenomenology into coaching practice. Having said that, I am keenly aware of the existence of (many) other possibilities in relation to how this can be done. I’d like to emphasise that despite all the presented ‘positivity’ of the experience this work is not some kind of ‘key’ to coaching success. Rather, it merely illustrates *a* way, shows *an* outcome and gives *a* possibility for engaging in this kind of critical thinking within coaching and what rewards it could bring (particularly as a resource to [self-] discovery). Here then, I ask readers to personally engage and hopefully make sense of the work itself and how it can hopefully enrich their personal working contexts. Hopefully, therefore, the content of this work will be used only as a resource, not as instructive but as a springboard for more general insight into the phenomenon of concern (Finlay, 2008; 2012).

#### **5.4 Personal benefit**

The personal benefit of this work can be considered two-fold; the application of the content to my coaching, and in the more general processual ‘making’ of the study. Starting with the first; the application of the content. Once I practically applied this phenomenological approach, coaching became something different to me. My conscious awareness of (parts of) the aspects of coaching focused on gave me a broader view on and of my ‘self’ as a coach. Consequently, things I normally saw, interpreted and communicated during practice,

began to appear in a different light (Moran, 2000). I became aware of things, of different things, within my coaching that I had previously taken-for-granted. It made me able to be reflective-in-action (Schön, 1987; Yanow and Tsoukas, 2009), made me more reflexive (Finlay, 2002), and changed both my outlook and particular parts of my practice; It gave me both long and short term gains.

There is an interesting sentiment that we do not or cannot just use philosophy or phenomenology as a tool to be picked up and returned as and when we please. Rather, such thinking and theories act on and through us; they change us. So did engagement with phenomenology change me. The experiences of applying phenomenology in practice were very beneficial to broaden my understanding of coaching and my 'self'. It became more than an abstract 'read' to a practical useful application. Hence, from my perspective, I believe it can help 'the researcher' to improve/change his or her practice, can support academia to find new ground to explore coaching differently, whilst (perhaps most importantly), it can build a bridge between academia and the world of coaching practice so they can feed each other. I hope this work gave insight into these different worlds and perspectives in order to improve practice, academia and coaches' 'selves'.

Now let's focus on the other part of the personal benefit; the process of making this project work. During the creation of this work, many (personal) challenges crossed my path; ultimately resulting in the realisation that I needed to make some decisions. The first decision faced contained the doubt to finish this doctorate, since I (initially) did not see the practical benefit of it. However, my surroundings and supervisors convinced me to continue, so I did. After some time, another difficult personal decision had to be taken in order to guarantee that I finished the degree. The combination of working full-time as a coach whilst studying full-time no doubt took its toll. Therefore, when my practical adventure ended (I lost my job), I decided not to go back (to the 'world of work') until I was done with the thesis. I missed the everyday-ness of the job, of working with players; yet the decision gave me much needed internal peace. Other smaller (internal) battles were also fought during the process of creating and completing this work. These were often based on my different conflicting viewpoints about academia and practice; I did not and to a degree still do not consider myself a 'research tiger' but rather am much more a 'practitioner'.

Writing this section means that all the decisions I took and the battles I fought were not done so in vain, I survived the process, and I survived myself! Looking back on this journey, I consider myself to have massively developed as a person and a coach. Those difficult moments and decisions I took also demanded

certain actions from me. I had to negotiate about how to make this work, had to articulate my thoughts very precisely, had to put in endless hours to overcome some personal (perceived) fallacies; such as like not writing in my mother tongue, or sitting down a lot to think and write instead of being active in practice. Slightly but slowly I found a way through the fog and the undergrowth of doubt. This process of coping, being patient and reconsidering what was negotiable and what was not, developed me as a professional and as human being.

Before I started this thesis, I was not patient enough and had difficulties to understand, relate and cope with the inevitable bureaucratic and political processes involved in thesis construction. Now, I feel to have learned these things and, hence, better equipped for future challenges (Not that I am thinking about doing another PhD!) The insights and demanded actions this process gave are comparable to those earlier earlier personal struggles. I also consider myself to be able to articulate myself better in all kinds of circumstances. Within this process there was a need to be academically as well as practically sound in my explanation. Therefore, I learned how to do this better in different circumstances. I am changed, but not so changed that I know where my future lies; still in the (football) practice!

## **5.5 'Outroductory' vignette**

*The lights came on, but I knew we were not finished. While others left the floor, we stayed, determined to end the dance in style. I had mixed feelings. I was happy it was over, but knew that such an intense dance with this partner would not happen again. It was a bitter-sweet relief that hurt. In the beginning, I had felt imprisoned, wanting to leave the floor. The judges, however, saw my struggles, accepted my clumsiness and gave me freedom to shape this dance, releasing me from a felt captivity. I started to appreciate my partner with each step. She was teaching me about dancing and myself, something that would not have happened if I had not plucked up the courage to ask her for a dance in the first place; a decision that felt so long ago. These last minutes, therefore, would be filled with intense enjoyment; we had found a way to dance harmoniously.*

*Time flew, two steps followed by a whisk and it was over. She held my hands and we faced each other for the last time. Denying protocol, I kept hold of her hands drawing them closer to my hips. We were close to each other now. Normally, she was composed but now appeared surprised and uncomfortable. I*

*improvised extending our harmony just a little longer with a few more steps. Her head came closer, I whispered in her ear: “to dance is to be out of yourself. Exploring the unexplored; thinking the un-thought”. She smiled.*

*Once finished, I turned towards her, realising she was much more attractive than I first thought; I could flirt with her but she would never be my soulmate. I wondered how my perspective had changed in such a short period of time, was it the new light, a better awareness of the self or a combination of both? I kissed her softly on the hand, said thank you and goodbye, turned and walked away without looking back hoping that the experience of the dance had been similar for her. While walking outside into the crisp cold evening air, I knew this dance would always be part of me and thought: “I am really, really glad I took her hand”.*



## References

- Abraham, A., and Collins, D. (2011). Taking the next step: Ways forward for coaching science. *Quest*, 63(4), 366-384.
- Adie, J. W., and Jowett, S. (2010). Meta-perceptions of the coach–athlete relationship, achievement goals, and intrinsic motivation among sport participants. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 40(11), 2750-2773.
- Allen-Collinson, J. (2009). Sporting embodiment: sports studies and the (continuing) promise of phenomenology. *Qualitative research in sport and exercise*, 1(3), 279-296.
- Allen-Collinson, J., and Hockey, J. (2011). Feeling the way: Notes toward a haptic phenomenology of distance running and scuba diving. *International review for the sociology of sport*, 46(3), 330-345.
- Banks, A., and Banks, S. P. (Eds.). (1998). *Fiction and social research: By ice or fire*. AltaMira Press
- Barnacle, R. (Ed.) (2001). *Phenomenology*. Melbourne: RMIT Press.
- Barone, T. (2000). *Aesthetics, politics, educational inquiries: Essays and examples*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Bateson, G. (1991). *A Sacred Unity* ed. Rodney E. Donaldson New York: Cornelia and Michael Bessie/Harper Collins.
- Benoliel, J. Q. (1996). Grounded theory and nursing knowledge. *Qualitative Health Research*, 6, 406-428.
- Berger, P., and Luckmann, T. (1963). Sociology of religion and sociology of knowledge. *Sociology and Social Research*, 47(4), 417-427

- Blodgett, A. T., Schinke, R. J., Smith, B., Peltier, D., and Pheasant, C. (2011). In indigenous words: Exploring vignettes as a narrative strategy for presenting the research voices of Aboriginal community members. *Qualitative inquiry*, 17(6), 522-533.
- Bloom, G. A., Crumpton, R., and Anderson, J. E. (1999). A systematic observation study of the teaching behaviors of an expert basketball coach. *The sport psychologist*, 13(2), 157-170.
- Bloom, L. Z. (2003). Living to tell the tale: The complicated ethics of creative nonfiction. *College English*, 65(3), 276-289.
- Bochner, A. P. (2012). On first-person narrative scholarship: Autoethnography as acts of meaning. *Narrative inquiry*, 22(1), 155-164.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Vol. 16). Cambridge university press.
- Bourdieu, P., and Wacquant, L.J.D. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bowes, I., and Jones, R. L. (2006). Working at the edge of chaos: Understanding coaching as a complex, interpersonal system. *The sport psychologist*, 20(2), 235-245.
- Breen, S., McCluskey, A., Meehan, M., O'Donovan, J., and O'Shea, A. (2014). A year of engaging with the discipline of noticing: five mathematics lecturers' reflections. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 19(3), 289-300.
- Brekhus, W. (1998). A sociology of the unmarked: Redirecting our focus. *Sociological Theory*, 16(1), 34-51.
- Brown, S., Souto-Manning, M., and Tropp Laman, T. (2010). Seeing the strange in the familiar: Unpacking racialized practices in early childhood settings. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 13(4), 513-532.

Brown, T. D., and Payne, P. G. (2009). Conceptualizing the phenomenology of movement in physical education: Implications for pedagogical inquiry and development. *Quest*, 61(4), 418-441.

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bush, T. (2008). *Leadership and management development in education*. Sage.

Cassidy, T. G., Jones, R. L., and Potrac, P. (2008). *Understanding sports coaching: The social, cultural and pedagogical foundations of coaching practice*. Routledge.

Caulley, D. N. (2008). Making qualitative research reports less boring: The techniques of writing creative nonfiction. *Qualitative inquiry*, 14(3), 424-449.

Chelladurai, P., and Saleh, S. D. (1980). Dimensions of leader behavior in sports: Development of a leadership scale. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 2(1), 34-45.

Cheney, T. A. R. (2001). *Writing creative nonfiction: Fiction techniques for crafting great non-fiction*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Coakley, J. (2007). *Sports in Society: Issues and Controversies*: 9th ed., McGraw-Hill, New York,

Collins, L., and Collins, D. (2016). Professional judgement and decision-making in adventure sports coaching: The role of interaction. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 34(13), 1231-1239.

Converse, M. (2012). Philosophy of phenomenology: How understanding aids research. *Nurse researcher*, 20(1).

Corsby, C. L., and Jones, R. L. (2020). Complicity, performance, and the 'doing' of sports coaching: An ethnomethodological study of work. *The Sociological Review*, 68(3), 590-605.

Côté, J., and Gilbert, W. (2009). An integrative definition of coaching effectiveness and expertise. *International journal of sports science and coaching*, 4(3), 307-323.

Coté, J., Saimela, J., Trudel, P., Baria, A., and Russell, S. (1995). The coaching model: A grounded assessment of expert gymnastic coaches' knowledge. *Journal of sport and exercise psychology*, 17(1), 1-17

Cresswell, S. L., and Eklund, R. C. (2007). Athlete burnout: A longitudinal qualitative study. *The sport psychologist*, 21(1), 1-20.

Cronin, C., and Armour, K. M. (2015). Lived experience and community sport coaching: A phenomenological investigation. *Sport, Education and Society*, 20(8), 959-975.

Cronin, C., and Armour, K. M. (2017). 'Being' in the coaching world: new insights on youth performance coaching from an interpretative phenomenological approach. *Sport, Education and Society*, 22(8), 919-931.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: Sage.

Cushion, C. (2010). Understanding the change process, Valuing what it is that coaches do: A Commentary. *International Journal of Sports Coaching*, 5, (2), 181-182

Cushion, C., Armour, K., and Jones, R. L. (2006). Locating the coaching process in practice: models 'for' and 'of' coaching. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 11(1), 83- 99.

Cushion, C., and Jones, R.L. (2006). Power, discourse and symbolic violence in professional youth soccer: The case of Albion F.C *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 23(2), 142-161

Cushion, C. J., and Jones, R. L. (2014). A Bourdieusian analysis of cultural reproduction: Socialisation and the 'hidden curriculum' in professional football. *Sport, education and society*, 19(3), 276-298.

Cushion, C., and Partington, M. (2016). A critical analysis of the conceptualisation of 'coaching philosophy'. *Sport, Education and Society*, 21(6), 851-867.

Davies, C.A. (2008). *Reflexive Ethnography, A Guide To Researching Selves and Others*: London: Routledge

Day, D. (2011). Craft coaching and the 'Discerning Eye' of the coach. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 6(1), 179-195.

Day, D. (2013). Historical perspectives on coaching. *Routledge handbook of sports coaching*, 5-15.

Denzin, N. K., and Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research (3rd ed., pp. 1-32)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dierckx de Casterlé, B. (2015). Realising skilled companionship in nursing: a utopian idea or difficult challenge?. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 24(21-22), 3327-3335.

Dreyfus, H. L. (1991). *Being-in-the-world: A commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*. Division I (Vol. 1). Mit Press.

Dreyfus, H. L., and Dreyfus, S. E. (2005). Peripheral vision: Expertise in real world contexts. *Organization studies*, 26(5), 779-792.

Dreyfus, S. E. (2004). The five-stage model of adult skill acquisition. *Bulletin of science, technology and society*, 24(3), 177-181.

Edwards, C. and Jones, R. L. (2016). The legitimacy of ethnographic film: Literary thoughts and practical realities. In G. Molnar and L. Purdy, *Ethnographies in Sport and Exercise Research* (pp.155-164). London: Routledge.

Edwards, C. N., and Jones, R. L. (2018). Humour in Sports coaching: 'It is a funny old game'. *Sociological Research Online*, 23(4), 744-762.

Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.

Ellis, C. (2007). Telling secrets, revealing lives: Relational ethics in research with intimate others. *Qualitative inquiry*, 13(1), 3-29.

Ellis, C., and Bochner, A. P. (Eds.). (1996). *Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writing*. (Vol. 1). Rowman Altamira.

Erlandson D.A., et al., (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: a guide to methods* London: Sage.

Evans, K. (2011). Writer's Block: A reflective literature review. *European Journal of Qualitative Research for Psychotherapists*, 5, Article 2.

Fairs, J. R. (1987). The coaching process: The essence of coaching. *Sports Coach*, 11(1), 17-19.

Fendler, L. (2003). Teacher reflection in a hall of mirrors: Historical influences and political reverberations. *Educational researcher*, 32(3), 16-25.

Finch, J. (1987). The vignette technique in survey research. *Sociology*, 21(1), 105-114.

Finlay, L. (2002). "Outing" the researcher: The provenance, process, and practice of reflexivity. *Qualitative health research*, 12(4), 531-545.

Finlay, L. (2002b). Negotiating the swamp: the opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in research practice. *Qualitative research*, 2(2), 209-230.

Finlay, L. (2008). Reflecting on 'reflective practice'. *Practice-based professional learning centre (PBLC)* paper 52.

Finlay, L. (2012). 'Writing the pain': Engaging first-person phenomenological accounts. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 12 (Special Edition, July: Evidence-Based Approaches and Practises in Phenomenology), 9 pp.

Finlay, L., and Gough, B. (2003). Introducing reflexivity. *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social sciences*, 1-2.

Firestone, W. A. (1993). Alternative arguments for generalizing from data as applied to qualitative research. *Educational researcher* 22.4: 16-23.

Fleming, S. and Jones, R.L. (2008). *Sociology for Coaches*. In: Jones, R.L., Hughes, M. and Kingston, K (Eds.): *An introduction to Sports Coaching From Science and Theory To Practice*: London: Routledge

Foucault, M. (2012). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Vintage.

Frank, A. W. (2002). Why study people's stories? The dialogical ethics of narrative analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(1), 109-117.

Frank, A.W. (2010). *Letting stories breathe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Froelich, K. S., and Puig, E. A. (2007). The Magic of Coaching: Art Meets Science. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 3(1), 18-31.

Gabriel, Y. (1998). Same old story or changing stories? *Folkloric, modern and postmodern mutations. Discourse and organization*, 84-103.

Gardiner, C. (1998) Mentoring: towards a professional friendship, *Mentoring and Tutoring*, 6, pp. 77-84.

Garfinkel, H. (1967). *What is ethnomethodology?*. Studies in ethnomethodology.

Gerard, P. (1996). *Creative Nonfiction: Researching and Crafting Stories of Real Life*. Cincinnati: Story P, 1996.

Gilbert, W., Côté, J., and Mallett, C. (2006). Developmental paths and activities of successful sport coaches. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 1(1), 69-76.

Gilbourne, D. (2007). Self-narrative: Illustrations of different genre and explorations of the underlying rationale for writing. *Symposium "Narrative and its potential contribution to sport and health psychology," FEPSAC (European Federation of Sport Psychology)*, Halkidiki, Greece



- Gilbourne, D., and Llewellyn, D. J. (2008). Storytelling through auto-ethnography and drama: An introduction and development of informed fiction. *Narrative Research in Sport and Exercise: Exploring the theme of story analysts and story tellers*. Cardiff, UK: Evening and Day Workshop
- Giorgi, B. (2006). Can an empirical psychology be drawn from Husserl's phenomenology?. In *Phenomenology and Psychological Science* (pp. 69-88). Springer, New York, NY.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis: an essay on the organisation of experience*. New York: harper and Row
- Goldstein, T. (2008). Multiple commitments and ethical dilemmas in performed ethnography. *Educational Insights*, 12(2).
- Gonos, G. (1977). Situation versus frame: The interactionist and the structuralist analyses of everyday life. *American Sociological Review*, 42, 854-867.
- Grecic, D., and Collins, D. (2013). The epistemological chain: Practical applications in sports. *Quest*, 65(2), 151-168.
- Guba, E. G., and Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. London: Sage.
- Halldórsdóttir, S. (2000). The Vancouver school of doing phenomenology. *Qualitative research methods in the service of health*, 47-81.
- Heidegger, M. (2001). *Phenomenological interpretations of Aristotle: initiation into phenomenological research*. Indiana University Press.
- Hockey, J., and Allen-Collinson, J. (2007). Grasping the phenomenology of sporting bodies. *International review for the sociology of sport*, 42(2), 115-131.

Hockey, J., and Allen-Collinson, J. (2016). Digging in: The sociological phenomenology of ‘doing endurance’ in distance-running. *Endurance running: a Socio-cultural examination*. London: routledge, 227-42.

Horrigan-Kelly, M., Millar, M., and Dowling, M. (2016). Understanding the key tenets of Heidegger’s philosophy for interpretive phenomenological research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 15(1).

Humphreys, M. (2005). Getting personal: Reflexivity and autoethnographic vignettes. *Qualitative inquiry*, 11(6), 840-860.

Hunter, P. (2012). Using vignettes as self-reflexivity in narrative research of problematised history pedagogy. *Policy Futures in Education*, 10(1), 90-102.

Husserl, E. (1936/1970). *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology: An introduction to phenomenological philosophy*. Northwestern University Press.

Jeffries, C., and Maeder, D. W. (2005). Using vignettes to build and assess teacher understanding of instructional strategies. *Professional Educator*, 27, 17-28.

Jenkins, S. P. (2017). Beyond ‘crude pragmatism’ in sports coaching: Insights from CS Peirce, William James and John Dewey. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 12(1), 8-19.

Jones, R.L. (2000) Toward a sociology of coaching: In R.L. Jones, K.M. Armour (Eds.) *Sociology of Sport: Theory and Practice*, 33–43: London: Addison Wesley Longman.

Jones, R. L. (2006). *The sports coach as educator*. Taylor and Francis Limited.

Jones, R.L. (2006a). Dilemmas, maintaining “face” and paranoia: an average coaching life. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12 (5), 1012-1021.

Jones, R.L. (2007). Coaching redefined: An everyday pedagogical endeavour. *Sport, Education and Society*, 12(2), 159-173.

Jones, R.L. (2009). Coaching as caring (the smiling gallery): accessing hidden knowledge. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 14, (4), 377-390

Jones, R. L. (2019). *Studies in Sports Coaching*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Jones, R. L., Armour, K. M., and Potrac, P. (2002). Understanding the coaching process: A framework for social analysis. *Quest*, 54(1), 34-48.

Jones, R.L., Bailey, J., and Thompson, A. (2013). Ambiguity, noticing, and orchestration: Further thoughts on managing the complex coaching context. In, Jones, R.L., Potrac, P., Cushion, C. and Rongran, L.T. (Eds.). *The Sociology of Sports Coaching*: London: Routledge

Jones, R. L., Edwards, C., and Viotto Filho, I. T. (2016). Activity theory, complexity and sports coaching: An epistemology for a discipline. *Sport, education and society*, 21(2), 200-216.

Jones, R., Morgan, K., and Harris, K. (2012). Developing coaching pedagogy: Seeking a better integration of theory and practice. *Sport, Education and Society*, 17(3), 313-329.

Jones, R. L., Potrac, P., Haleem, H., and Cushion, C. (2006). Exposure by association: Anonymity and integrity in autoethnographical research. *LSA Publication*, 90, 45.

Jones, R. L., and Ronglan, L. T. (2018). What do coaches orchestrate? Unravelling the 'quiddity' of practice. *Sport, education and society*, 23(9), 905-915.

Jones, R. L., Santos, A. S. and Mesquita, I. and Gilbourne, D. (2012). Visual methods in sports research, *In K. M. Armour and D. Macdonald (Eds.), Research methods in physical activity and youth sport: 263-275*, London: Routledge.

Jones, R. L., and Thomas, G. L. (2015). Coaching as 'scaffolded' practice: Further insights into sport pedagogy. *Sports Coaching Review*, 4(2), 65-79.

Jones, R. L., Thomas, G. L., Nunes, R. L., and Viotto Filho, I. A. (2018). The importance of history, language, change and challenge: What Vygotsky can teach sports coaches. *Motriz: Revista de Educação Física*, 24(2).

Jones, R. L., and Wallace, M. (2005). Another bad day at the training ground: Coping with ambiguity in the coaching context. *Sport, education and society*, 10(1), 119-134.

Jones, R. L., and Wallace, M. (2006). The coach as 'orchestrator': More realistically managing the complex coaching context in: Jones, R., eds., *The Sports Coach as Educator: Re-Conceptualising Sports Coaching*, Routledge, Abingdon, 2006, 51-64.

Jowett, S. (2017). Coaching effectiveness: The coach-athlete relationship at its heart. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 16, 154-158.

Keiding, T. B. (2011). Observing participating observation-a re-description based on systems theory.

*Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung*, 106-123

Kerry, D. S., and Armour, K. M. (2000). Sport sciences and the promise of phenomenology: Philosophy, method, and insight. *Quest*, 52(1), 1-17.

Kluge, M.A., Grant, B.C., Friend, L., and Glick, L. (2010). Seeing is believing: telling the 'inside' story of a beginning masters athlete through film. *Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, 2(2), 282-292.

Kordeš, U. (2013). Problems and opportunities of first-person research. *Interdisciplinary Description of Complex Systems*: 11(4), 363-375.

Kroll, J. (2009). The supervisor as practice-led coach and trainer: Getting creative writing doctoral candidates across the finish line: *Journal of Writing and Writing Courses* (6).

Langdrige, D. (2007). *Phenomenological psychology: Theory, research and method*. Pearson Education.

Larkin, M., Watts, S., and Clifton, E. (2006). Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 102-120

Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 2(3), 21-35.

LeGuin, U. (1989). *Dancing at the edge of the world: Thoughts on words, women, places*. New York: Grove Press.

Leont'ev, A. N. (1978). *Activity, consciousness, and personality*. Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall

Levers, M. J. D. (2013). *Philosophical paradigms, grounded theory, and perspectives on emergence*. Sage Open, 3(4).

Lewis, Y. (2003). The self as a moral concept. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 42(2), 225- 236.

Lieberman, K. (2013). *More studies in ethnomethodology*. New York: SUNY

Lincoln, Y. S, and Guba, E. A. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Long, G. (1904). *Discourses of Epictetus*. D. Appleton and Company, New York.

Luhmann, N. (1985). Society, meaning, religion: Based on self-reference. *Sociological Analysis*, 46(1), 5-20.

Luhmann, N. (1993). Observing re-entries. *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, 16(2), 485-498.

Luhmann, N. (1993b). *Communication and social order: risk: a sociological theory*. Transaction Publishers

Luhmann, N. (1995). The Paradox of Observing Systems. *Cultural Critique*, (31), 37-55.

Luhmann, N. (2000). *Art as a social system*. Stanford University Press.

Luhmann, N. (2002). The cognitive program of constructivism and the reality that remains unknown, *In William Rasch (Ed.), Theories of distinction. Redescribing the descriptions of modernity* (pp.128-152). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Luhmann, N. (2002b). I see something you don't see. *In William Rasch (Ed.), Theories of distinction. Redescribing the descriptions of modernity* (pp.187-193). S Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Luhmann, N. (2002c). Deconstruction as second-order observation. *In William Rasch (Ed.), Theories of distinction. Redescribing the descriptions of modernity* (pp.94-112). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Luhmann, N., and Fuchs, S. (1994). "What is the Case?" and "What Lies Behind It?": The Two Sociologies and the Theory of Society. *Sociological Theory*, 12, 126-126.

Luttrell, W. (2010). *Introduction, in W. Luttrell (Ed.) Qualitative Educational Research: readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice*. New York: Routledge.

Lyle, J. (1999). The coaching process: An overview. *The coaching process: Principles and practice for sport*, 3-24

Lyle, J. (2002). *Sports coaching concepts: A framework for coaches' behaviour*. Psychology Press

Lyle, J. (2007). A review of the research evidence for the impact of coach education. *International Journal of Coaching Science*, 1(1), 17-34

Lyon, M. L. (1997). The Material Body, Social Processes and Emotion: Techniques of the Body Revisited. *Body and society*, 3(1), 83-101.

Malloy, D. C., and Rossow-Kimball, B. (2007). The philosopher-as-therapist: The noble coach and self-awareness. *Quest*, 59(3), 311-322.

Manikutty, S. (2005). Manager as a trainer, a coach, and a mentor. *Vikalpa*, 30(2), 57-64

Martens, R. (2004). *Successful coaching* (3rd ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics

- Martínková, I., and Parry, J. (2011). An introduction to the phenomenological study of sport. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 5(3), 185-201.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Researching your own practice: The discipline of noticing*. Psychology Press.
- Matsuyama, N., and Tsuchiya, J. (2017). Sympathy of Movement: Expanding Coaching Abilities through Phenomenological Discussion. *International Journal of Sport and Health Science*, 15, 6-13.
- McFee, G. (2014). Ethical considerations. In *Research Methods in Sports Coaching* (pp. 98-108). Routledge.
- McNarry, G., Allen-Collinson, J., and Evans, A. B. (2019). Reflexivity and bracketing in sociological phenomenological research: researching the competitive swimming lifeworld. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(1), 138-151.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1945/1962). *Phenomenology of perception*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Mezirow, J. (1993). A transformation theory of adult learning. In *Adult Education Research Annual Conference Proceedings* (Vol. 31, pp. 141-146).
- Mezirow, J. (1995) Transformative Theory of Adult Learning. In M. Welton (ed.), *In Defense of the Lifeworld*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Mezirow, J. (1998). On critical reflection. *Adult education quarterly*, 48(3), 185-198
- Mezirow, J. (2003). Transformative learning as discourse. *Journal of transformative education*, 1(1), 58-63.



- Millar, S. K., Oldham, A. R., and Donovan, M. (2011). Coaches' self-awareness of timing, nature and intent of verbal instructions to athletes. *International journal of sports science and coaching*, 6(4), 503-513.
- Mills, J. P., and Denison, J. (2018). How power moves: A Foucauldian analysis of (in) effective coaching. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 53(3), 296-312.
- Moran, D. (2000). *Introduction to phenomenology*. London: Routledge.
- Myers, M. (2000). Qualitative research and the generalizability question: Standing firm with Proteus. *The qualitative report*, 4(3), 9.
- Nagel, T. (1989). *The view from nowhere*. Oxford University Press.
- Nash, C., and Collins, D. (2006). Tacit knowledge in expert coaching: Science or art?. *Quest*, 58(4), 465-477.
- Nash, C. S., and Sproule, J. (2009). Career development of expert coaches. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 4(1), 121-138.
- Nin, A., and McEvilly, W. (1961). *Seduction of the Minotaur*. Chicago, IL: Swallow Press.
- Nightingale, D., and Cromby, J. (1999). *Social constructionist psychology: A critical analysis of theory and practice*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- North, J. (2013). A critical realist approach to theorising coaching practice. *Quest*, 65 (3). 278 - 299.
- Papp I, Markkanen M, von Bonsdorff M (2003) Clinical environment as a learning environment: student nurses' perceptions concerning clinical learning experiences. *Nurse Educ Today* 23: 262-268.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry: A personal, experiential perspective. *Qualitative social work*, 1(3), 261-283.

Phoenix, C. (2010). Seeing the world of physical culture: the potential of visual methods for qualitative research in sport and exercise: *Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, 2(2), 93–108.

Poczwardowski, A., Barott, J. E., and Henschen, K. P. (2002). The athlete and coaching their relationship and its meaning: Results of an interpretative study. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 33, 116-140

Potrac, P., and Jones, R. L. (1999). The invisible ingredient in coaching knowledge: A case for recognising and researching the social component. *Sociology of Sport Online*, 2(1).

Potrac, P. and Jones, R.L. (2011). Power in Coaching, In R.L. Jones, P. Potrac, Cushion, C and Ronglan, L.T. (Eds.), *The Sociology of Sports Coaching*, London: Routledge

Potrac, P., Jones, R.L., and Armour, K.M. (2002). ‘It is all about getting respect’: The coaching behaviours of an expert English soccer coach: *Sport, Education and Society*, 7(2), 183- 202.

Potrac, P., Nelson, L., Greenough, K., and Groom, R. (2016). Lev Vygotsky: Learning Through Social Interaction in Coaching. In *Learning in sports coaching: Theory and application*. (pp. 101-112). Routledge.

Raab, J. (2014). *Erving Goffman*. Herbert von Halem Verlag.

Rabbiosi, C., and Vanolo, A. (2017). Are we allowed to use fictional vignettes in cultural geographies?. *Cultural Geographies*, 24(2), 265-278.

Rakic, T., and Chambers, D. (2009). *Researcher with a movie camera: visual ethnography in the field*. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 12(3), 255-270.

Ravn, S., and Christensen, M. K. (2014). Listening to the body? How phenomenological insights can be used to explore a golfer's experience of the physicality of her body. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 6(4), 462-477.

Rawls, A. W. (2011). Garfinkel, ethnomethodology and the defining questions of pragmatism. *Qualitative Sociology*, 34(1), 277-282.

Reiners, G. M. (2012). Understanding the differences between Husserl's (descriptive) and Heidegger's (interpretive) phenomenological research. *Journal of Nursing and Care*, 1(5), 1-3.

Richardson, L. (1990). Narrative and sociology. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 19, 116–135.

Richardson, L. (1997) *Fields of Play: constructing an academic life*. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Richardson, L. (2000). New writing practices in qualitative research. *Sociology of sport journal*, 17(1), 5-20.

Richardson, L., and Pierre, A. S. (2005). *Writing: A method of inquiry*. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 959-978.

Rodaway, P. (1994) *Sensuous Geographies: body, sense and place*. Routledge, London.

Rorty, R. (1982). *Consequences of pragmatism*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Rose, D. (1993). Ethnography as a form of life: The written word and the work of the world. *Anthropology and literature*, 192-224.

Ryan, T. (2005). Reflexivity and the reader: An illumination. *The Ontario Action Researcher*, 5, 12.

Salzman, P. C. (2002). On reflexivity. *American Anthropologist*, 104(3), 805-811.

Santos, S., Jones, R. L., and Mesquita, I. (2013). Do coaches orchestrate? The working practices of elite Portuguese coaches. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 84(2), 263-272.

Sartre, J. P. (1969). Being and Nothingness: An essay on phenomenological ontology. *Trans., HE Barnes, London: Methuen and Co. Ltd.*

Schein E. H. (1989), *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Schofield, B. (2003). Re-instating the vague. *The Sociological Review*, 51(3), 321-338.

Schön, D.A. (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schön, D. A. (1995). Knowing-in-action: The new scholarship requires a new epistemology. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 27(6), 27-34.

Schutz, A., and Luckmann, T. (1973). *The structures of the life-world* (Vol. 1). Northwestern University Press.

Scott, D. (2000). Realisms and Educational Research: New Perspectives and Possibilities, *Social Research and Educational Studies Series*, Psychology Press.

Seamon, D. (2018). Merleau-Ponty, lived body, and place: Toward a phenomenology of human situatedness. *In Situatedness and Place* (pp. 41-66). Springer, Cham.

Searle, J. R. (1992). *The rediscovery of the mind*. MIT press.

Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for information*, 22(2), 63-75.

Sloan, A., and Bowe, B. (2014). Phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology: The philosophy, the methodologies, and using hermeneutic phenomenology to investigate lecturers' experiences of curriculum design. *Quality and Quantity*, 48(3), 1291-1303..

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., and Larkin, M. (2009). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Theory, method and research*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage

Smith, N., (2017) "The power of partners: a qualitative study on the effects of long-term partnerships during Writing Workshop". *Theses and Dissertations*. 2461.

Smith, R. E., and Smoll, F. L. (1989). Self-esteem and children's reactions to youth sport coaching behaviors: A field study of self-enhancement processes. *Developmental psychology*, 26(6), 987.

Sokolowski, R. (2000). *Introduction to phenomenology*. Cambridge University Press.

Southern, S., Smith, R. L., and Oliver, M. (2005). Marriage and family counseling: Ethics in context. *The Family Journal*, 13(4), 459-466.

Sparkes, A. (2002). *Telling tales in sport and physical activity: A qualitative journey*. Human Kinetics Publishers.

Sparkes, A. C. (2002b). Autoethnography: Self-indulgence or something more. *Ethnographically speaking: Autoethnography, literature, and aesthetics*, 9, 209-232.

Sparkes, A. C. and Smith, B. (2002). Sport, spinal cord injuries, embodied masculinities, and narrative identity dilemmas: *Men and Masculinities*, 4 (3), 258-285.

Sparkes, A.C., and Smith, B. (2012). Embodied research methodologies and seeking senses in sport in sport and physical culture: A fleshing out of problems and possibilities. In K. Young and M. Atkinson (Eds.), *Qualitative research on sport and physical culture* (pp. 169–192). Emerald Press.

Sparkes, A.C., and Smith, B. (2014). *Qualitative research methods in sport, exercise and health*. From process to product. London: Routledge.

Spencer-Brown, G. (1979), *Laws of form*, E. P. Dutton, New York, NY.

Spiegelberg, E. (1984). *The phenomenological movement: A historical introduction* (Vol. 5). Springer Science and Business Media.

Spinelli, E. (2005). *The interpreted world: An introduction to phenomenological psychology*. Sage.

Stanczak, G. C. (Ed.). (2007). *Visual research methods: Image, society, and representation*. Sage Publications.

Stelter, R. (2007). Coaching: A process of personal and social meaning making. *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 2(2), 191-201.

Stockhausen, L. (2006). Métier artistry: revealing reflection-in-action in everyday practice. *Nurse Education Today*, 26(1), 54-62.

Strauss, A. (1956). *The Social Psychology of George Herbert Mead*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Taylor, C., and White, S. (2001). Knowledge, truth and reflexivity: The problem of judgement in social work. *Journal of social work*, 1(1), 37-59.

Titchen, A. (2003). Critical companionship: part 1. *Nursing Standard (through 2013)*, 18(9), 33.

Townsend, R. C., and Cushion, C. (2017). Elite cricket coach education: A Bourdieusian analysis. *Sport, Education and Society*, 22(4), 528-546.

Van Manen, M. (1990) *Researching lived experience: human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. State University of New York Press.

Van Manen, M. (1997). *Researching the lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Ontario, Canada: Althouse Press.

Van Manen, M. (2007). Phenomenology of Practice. *Phenomenology and Practice*, University of Alberta. 1-11.

Van Manen, M. (2017). Phenomenology in its original sense. *Qualitative Health Research*, 27(6), 810-825.

Varela, F. J. (1996). Neurophenomenology: A methodological remedy for the hard problem. *Journal of consciousness studies*, 3(4), 330-349.

Varela, F. J., and Shear, J. (1999). First-person methodologies: What, why, how. *Journal of Consciousness studies*, 6(2-3), 1-14.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, and E. Souberman, Eds.).

White, H., Fuhse, J., Thiemann, M., and Buchholz, L. (2007). Networks and meaning: Styles and switchings. *Soziale Systeme*, 13(1), 2.

Wilson, A. (2014). Being a practitioner: an application of Heidegger's phenomenology. *Nurse Researcher*, 21(6).

Wright Mills, C. 1959. *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Yanow, D., and Tsoukas, H. (2009). What is reflection-in-action? A phenomenological account. *Journal of management studies*, 46(8), 1339-1364.

Zeichner, K. M. and Liston, D. P. (1996). *Reflective teaching: An introduction*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.



