**Centralizing Culture in Cultural Sport Psychology Research: The Potential of Narrative Inquiry and Discursive Psychology**

**Abstract**

**Objectives:** To understand cultural issues within cultural sport psychology (CSP) research, methodological variation has been advocated. Those interested in carrying out CSP research with a ‘critical sensibility’ are presented with the challenge of deciding what methodology may capture a socially constructed and nuanced analysis of culture, self-identity and experience. In this paper we focus on two qualitative methodologies grounded in social constructionism and their potential for advancing understandings of culture within CSP research: narrative inquiry and discursive psychology.

**Results:** Focusing on what is at the “core” of critical CSP research– cultural praxis – we briefly outline narrative inquiry and discursive psychology, articulate three key convergences between them and discuss how these link with, and build upon, cultural praxis tenets. To further demonstrate the potential of these methodologies for centralizing and expanding understandings of culture in CSP, we next offer distinct methodological contributions of each: autoethnography, conversation analysis, and critical discourse analysis.

**Conclusion:** We close by suggesting that to move beyond theoretical discussions of cultural praxis in CSP, sport psychology researchers might use narrative inquiry and discursive psychology. Doing so allows for more informed and principled methodological choices in CSP research that align with social constructionism, and provides a critical and nuanced analysis of culture, moving forward.

Key Words: cultural praxis, autoethnography, conversation analysis, critical discourse analysis, cultural sport psychology

**Centralizing Culture in Cultural Sport Psychology Research: The Potential of Narrative Inquiry and Discursive Psychology**

The lack of inclusion of culture and/or cultural identities within sport psychology has been challenged for many years (e.g., Butryn, 2002; Duda & Allison, 1990; Fisher, Butryn & Roper, 2003). A central reason for the advocacy of culture is because culture shapes how we think, feel, and behave; we cannot step outside culture, thus to ignore it would be to miss a key matter that shapes people’s self-identities and lives (Smith, 2010). The consequences of denying or ignoring culture in physical activity and sport contexts can result in decreased physical activity participation (McGannon & Schinke, 2013), alienation and distress (Smith, 2013a, 2013b), cultural identity exclusion leading to reduced physical performance (Blodgett, Schinke, Smith, Peltier & Pheasant, 2011), and simplistic views of exercise as medicine (Caddick & Smith, 2014). Recently, there has been a further push for a more culturally inclusive and socially just sport psychology, with scholars continuing to advocate for culture’s rightful place within sport psychology under the genre of cultural sport psychology(CSP) (Schinke & Hanrahan, 2009; Schinke, Michel, Danielson, Gauthier & Pickard, 2005). Scholars within CSP seek to facilitate contextualized understandings of marginalized topics and cultural identities (Ryba, Schinke & Tennenbaum, 2010; Ryba, Stambulova, Si & Schinke, 2013; Schinke & Hanrahan, 2009; Schinke & McGannon in press; Stambulova & Ryba, 2013). CSP is creating dialogue among physical activity participants and social scientists to open up new and additional understandings concerning solutions to sociocultural challenges limiting physical activity participation and sport performance.

In the quest for understanding cultural issues, an openness to methodological variation

grounded in various epistemologies (e.g., social constructionism, post-positivism) has been advocated within CSP research (Ryba & Schinke, 2009). In the present paper we focus on two qualitative methodologies that hold potential for advancing understandings of culture within CSP research: narrative inquiry (see Smith & Sparkes, 2009a) and discursive psychology (see McGannon & Mauws, 2000). These methodologies have this potential in light of their alignment with key tenets of what is at the “heart” of CSP: cultural praxis (Ryba & Wright, 2010; Schinke, McGannon, Parham & Lane, 2012). In drawing attention to these two methodologies, we acknowledge that they are not the only ones that hold potential for advancing and centralizing culture within CSP. Examples of other methodologies that also align with cultural praxis will be outlined shortly. For now it can be noted that within CSP, cultural praxis is grounded in cultural studies and the epistemology of social constructionism (see Ryba & Wright, 2005), with the central tenet being to blend theory, lived culture, and social action to understand cultural identities as fluid and socially constructed within social interaction and discourse (Ryba & Wright, 2010). Cultural identities from this perspective also include those of the researcher and/or practitioner, particularly in terms of how one’s own values, social position and self-identities impact participants within the context of power issues (McGannon & Johnson, 2009; Ryba & Wright, 2005, 2010; Schinke et al., 2012). CSP research grounded in the foregoing cultural praxis tenets is anchored by an agenda of social change and social justice which aims to transform sociocultural issues within the everyday lives of marginalized participants via reflexive processes of the researcher to encourage deeper consideration for the implications of the research process, the knowledge produced and how these connect with lived experiences and identities of participants (Blodgett, Schinke, McGannon & Fisher, in press). Thus, CSP research grounded in cultural praxis seeks to be emancipative, with the goal to open up multiple forms of knowledge and understanding and to **create space and opportunities for individuals as cultural beings in sport and physical activity contexts to improve well-being and/or performance** (McGannon & Schinke, in press). Those interested in carrying out research in a manner aligning with cultural praxis tenets are presented with a challenge: which methodologies might be used to “capture” a socially constructed, intricate and nuanced analysis of culture, self-identity and personal experience – of researcher and participants(s)? Lest it be unclear, this central question emphasizes the importance of considering the alignment of methodological choices with underlying epistemological assumptions – in this case, those of social constructionism. With this point in mind, the question of which methodologies align with cultural praxis tenets becomes a complex one. Yet, it is one with which the CSP literature has minimally engaged, as discussions concerning cultural praxis have remained primarily at the theoretical level. There are a few exceptions within the CSP genre to this latter statement. In 2009 a special issue of the *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* featured empirical articles under the umbrella of decolonizing methodologies to broadly address issues of power and sociocultural difference in research (Ryba & Schinke, 2009). While a cultural praxis agenda was discussed in the opening article, the various forms of empirical research included within the special issue did not explicitly link particular methodologies to the tenets of cultural praxis and social constructionism. Nevertheless, the various methodologies employed (e.g., auto-narrative to examine whiteness in sport psychology (Butryn, 2009), participatory action research to examine relations between a research team and Aboriginal sport participants (Schinke, Peltier et al., 2009)) stand as examples of critical forms of CSP research implicitly grounded in cultural praxis. Blodgett and colleagues have explicitly grounded their research as cultural praxis, particularly in relation to researcher reflexivity, inclusion of marginalized identities and social justice. Their research used a co-participatory methodological approach to conceptualize youth sport programming on an Aboriginal Reserve in Canada through local cultural practices (Blodgett, Schinke, Fisher et al., 2010), and developed Indigenous research recommendations, applied practice and self-governance from experiences of Aboriginal community members (Blodgett, Schinke, Peltier et al., 2010; Blodgett et al., 2011). Finally, Schinke et al. (2012) engaged with cultural praxis through a confessional tale from a sport psychology consulting experience. This self-reflexive tale grounded in cultural praxis served as a culturally sensitive method to highlight interactions of power and socio-cultural difference encountered in a multi-cultural sport context

**Purpose, Contributions and Goals**

Beyond the above examples, few writings in CSP have engaged with cultural praxis in conjunction with what specific methodologies might be utilized to carry out CSP research. Such articulation is necessary in order to provide researchers with additional resources to make informed, reflexive and strategic methodological choices that align with certain epistemologies (e.g., social constructionism) when carrying out critical forms of CSP research. The purpose of outlining narrative inquiry and discursive psychology as they align with cultural praxis is to expand dialogues advocating for critical forms of CSP research that conceptualize and analyse culture and cultural identities as socially constructed and nuanced (i.e., align with the underlying assumptions of social constructionism and cultural praxis tenets) (McGannon & Schinke, in press). Additionally, while the use of narrative inquiry (e.g., Smith, 2013a) and discursive psychology (e.g., McGannon & Schinke, 2013) is growing in sport psychology, no published work within the discipline has put them into dialogue to explore what they afford the CSP research genre. Our further intent with the present submission is to expand narrative inquiry and discursive psychology literature, with the hope of prompting further empirical investigations using these methodologies within sport psychology to explore cultural topics and cultural issues in novel and different ways. Our ultimate goal is to add to the wider dialogue within sport psychology that encourages researchers to ask new questions and think differently, and in so doing, create new knowledge that leads to creative solutions to socio-cultural challenges in sport and physical activity contexts (Smith & Sparkes, 2009a). In this regard, because narrative inquiry and discursive psychology take a novel and creative approach to conceptualizing and studying self-identity, experiences and behaviour, new and different research questions and points of change are opened up within the socio-cultural realm of sport psychology.

To accomplish the above goals, we first provide an overview of narrative inquiry and discursive psychology, delineate some key convergences between them and how these link with, and build upon, a cultural praxis agenda. Next, to further demonstrate the potential of these methodologies for centralizing culture in CSP research, we offer some distinct methodological contributions of each. While little to no research has used narrative inquiry or discursive psychology within CSP, when possible, we draw on research examples within the wider sport and exercise psychology field that has used them, to explore what critical CSP research might be. We conclude with some aspirations for critical forms of CSP research grounded in cultural praxis moving forward. In the spirit of cultural praxis being “an attempt to broaden the epistemological spectrum of theory and practice in the field” (Ryba & Wright, 2010, p.3), these ideas are offered as considerations amongst a range of methodological possibilities that might centralize culture in CSP.

**Narrative Inquiry and Discursive Psychology: Convergences, Links and Expansions**

Although there are various approaches to narrative within the social sciences (Brockmeier, 2012; Frank, 2010), narrative inquiry can be described as a psycho-social approach distinguished from other qualitative approaches (e.g., ethnography or phenomenology) by its focus on stories (Smith & Sparkes, 2009a, b). While more will be said about the specifics of this methodology in the next section, it can be noted that the basic tenet of narrative inquiry is that people are regarded as storytelling creatures. Elicitation and analysis of stories are traditionally the focus in narrative inquiry because they are viewed as the primary medium through which meanings – about thoughts, emotions, motivations, self-identities – are communicated and fashioned in order to make sense of life experiences and act within the social and cultural world. Narrative inquiry further places personal agency and structure in balance: people are active storytellers in that they shape– act on – society and culture, but who also are shaped – acted on - by narratives that emerge from and circulate within society and culture. As a result of this “narrative fusion”, narrative inquiry dissolves any individual/society dichotomy via simultaneously recognizing that stories are learned from outside us whilst, at the same time, people depend on and will act to defend what they experience as their interior lives and their personal authenticity (Smith & Sparkes, 2009a). Grounded in such theoretical premises and the idea that stories can reach broad audiences and act on them, recently researchers in sport have moved narrative inquiry into a practical realm by examining narrative as a knowledge translation tool to facilitate impact (Smith, Tomasone, Latimer-Cheung, & Martin Ginis, in-press). The use of narrative as a medium in knowledge translation aligns with cultural praxis’ transformative and social change agenda and concern for grounding change in the experiences, lives and identities of participants.

While numerous developments within psychology have contributed to discursive psychology(Potter & Wiggins, 2008), its origins can be traced to Potter and Wetherell’s (1987) form of discourse analysis and Edwards and Potter’s (1992) work. These influential writings sparked a reworking of the “subject matter” of psychology (i.e., cognitions and mental states) by re-conceptualizing and studying psychological phenomena as “worked” up and given meaning in micro-talk and discourse, rather than as entities housed within the mind. While there are different orientations to analysing discourse, talk and texts, all discursive psychological investigations converge on the assumption that discourse and language are constructed and constituted. This means discourse is viewed as the primary medium of social action– we “do things” with words (e.g., blame, justify, make sense of who we are, decide how we might behave) because words have associated meanings and concrete actions and consequences depending on the discourses circulated at institutional and cultural levels (McGannon & Mauws, 2000; Potter & Wiggins, 2008). Discursive psychological approaches also theorize self-identity as the product of individual, social and cultural discourses, which interact to create particular meanings and associated actions related to identities (McGannon & Spence, 2010). Identities cannot be understood independent of language and need to be explored in ways that allow for the context of the language practices that create them to be captured (Potter & Wiggins, 2008).

**Convergences, Connections and Expansions**

There are three main points of convergence between narrative inquiry and discursive psychology that we see as promising to connect with, and expand, a cultural praxis agenda within CSP. The first of these points is that despite having different research foci and points of analysis – stories in narrative inquiry and micro-talk, conversation and texts in discursive psychology--- in-line with cultural praxis, both converge on a conception of self-identity as socially and culturally constructed, with language playing a key role in identity construction and experience. The view of self-identity and language practices as a form of social action that constitutes and shapes, rather than reflects and provides access to, meanings within narrative and discursive psychology, is grounded in social constructionism (McGannon & Spence, 2010; Smith, 2010). Social constructionists believe “that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context” (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Because the specific role and function of language is less developed within CSP writings, narrative inquiry’s and discursive psychology’s explicit focus on language and its role in self-identity (re)production with behavioural implications, expands such understanding.

The reliance on a socially constructed view of meaning, self-identity and practice which centralizes language, brings us to our second point of convergence connecting with, and extending, cultural praxis: socially constructed identities are multiple and fluid as people move within and between social and cultural contexts (Ryba & Wright, 2005, 2010). Narrative inquiry and discursive psychology add a further dimension of understanding to this cultural praxis conception of self-identity, as both conceptualize self-identity as fluid to provide a way “capture” this fluidity within the context of language in the generation of self-related meanings and action (McGannon & Spence, 2010; Smith & Sparkes, 2009a). Despite the potential for identity fluidity, it should be pointed out that narrative inquiry and discursive psychology have also shown, via their novel and nuanced approach to cultural analysis, that some individuals construct self-identities within their personal stories (Smith, 2013a) or via recurring forms of taken for granted language use (McGannon & Spence, 2010), in a limited manner. Such identity construction occurs due to people having a limited set of narrative resources (in the case of narrative inquiry) or discursive resources (in the case of discursive psychology), which are made available (or not) at institutional and cultural levels (McGannon & Spence, 2010; Smith & Sparkes, 2009a). These points of convergence further align with the concern in cultural praxis for marginalized, silenced or disenfranchised cultural identities within the context of social justice issues (Blodgett et al., 2011). If people have limited narrative or discursive resources at their disposal with which to make sense of who they are, they can become disadvantaged in terms of health, well-being and opportunities to better their lives (McGannon & Schinke, 2013; Smith, 2013a, b). By focusing on personal stories and micro-talk as ‘entry points’ of analysis within the context of larger cultural narratives and discourses, stories and language practices can further serve as concrete entry points of personal-level intervention and change (McGannon & Schinke, 2013; Smith, Papathomas, Martin Ginis & Latimer-Cheung, 2013).

The final point of convergence between narrative inquiry and discursive psychology as they align with cultural praxis is reflexivity in the research process. Although it is beyond the scope of our discussion to provide a detailed overview of the origins of reflexivity and its iterations, it can be noted that reflexivity is understood and used in multiple ways (Day, 2012; Finlay, 2003). In general, reflexivity means questioning the notion that data are collected and evaluated with detachment/objectivity, thus reflexive researchers acknowledge how their own self-identities, values and beliefs are co-constructed within and through the research process (Day, 2012; Finlay, 2003). CSP work grounded in cultural praxis has shown, for example, how self-reflexivity of the researcher’s (McGannon & Johnson, 2009) or consultant’s (Schinke et al., 2012) values and beliefs highlights dilemmas about how to express one’s social position and identity without marginalizing another’s cultural identity. While examples of reflexivity within CSP writings are scarce, when considered within CSP, reflexivity discussions have solely focused on the self-identity of the researcher. Narrative inquiry and discursive psychology extend understanding of these forms of self-reflexive analysis and critique via their detailed and nuanced focus on personal narratives, which can include auto-ethnographic stories of the researcher (in narrative inquiry), or a focus on taken for granted talk including conversations between participants and interviewers (in discursive psychology) (Condor, 2006; McGannon & Mauws, 2000).

Beyond forms of reflexivity focusing on researcher introspection/subjectivity explored in CSP, the case has been made within the social sciences for additional forms of reflexivity in order to fully engage with multidimensional power dynamics embedded within qualitative research (Day, 2012). In this regard, narrative inquiry and discursive psychology are useful tools to “tease out” what has become naturalized or often goes unacknowledged (e.g., particular stories, the use of certain words and categories) within the context of cultural identities and power issues in the research process. This dimension raises reflexive awareness in terms of how researchers are located within complex power relations within the research context itself via connection to social and cultural structures and taken for granted practices (e.g., particular theoretical traditions, research methods, politics within the academy that privilege some forms of research and identities over others) (Day, 2012; Finlay, 2003).

Reflexivity can also be utilized during a study’s data collection and analysis phases through the researcher’s deeper engagement with the epistemological assumptions and ethical implications of the methodology chosen (Burck, 2005; Finlay, 2003). While reflexive CSP work has been less developed in this regard (an exception is the co-participatory work of Blodgett and colleagues or Schinke, Peltier et al., 2009), narrative inquiry and discursive psychology have “built-in” reflexive tools throughout the entire research process. For example, from the outset narrative analysts consider the researcher and the participant as jointly constructing the stories being told, and thus the researcher needs to be reflexive about how they are shaped both by what is said and how things are communicated in research settings. Likewise, discourse analysts acknowledge an up-front awareness of the researcher’s influence on data collection and interpretation with some forms of discourse analysis exploring how interviewer talk orients to participant’s talk and vice versa, to account for the researcher as a co-constructer of the research process (Condor, 2006). Further, both methodologies adopt various self-reflexive forms of writing and record keeping throughout data collection and analysis phases (e.g., reflexive journal to focus on researcher responses, thoughts and feelings toward participants, thoughts about emergent categories and the implications).

Finally, narrative inquiry and discursive psychology offer CSP researchers an opportunity to expand the reflexivity concept as each offers additional possibilities for communicating and writing-up research. Narrative inquiry may use a creative non-fiction story co-constructed from analysed data to centralize the emotional worlds and complicated identities of participants’ lived experience (Smith, 2013a). Discursive psychology can analyse naturalistic conversations between a participant and a researcher to show how something is talked about and used as a categorical resource in talk (e.g., depression) which has concrete effects for both parties (Faulkner & Finlay, 2002). This form of reflexivity brings ethical and power issues concerning representation to the forefront, which means that we avoid “speaking for participants” or other-ing them in relation to researcher imposed categories and researcher viewpoints (Day, 2012).

**Centralizing Culture in Cultural Sport Psychology: Two Promising Methodologies**

With the ground work laid in terms of narrative inquiry’s and discursive psychology’s convergences and connections with cultural praxis, we now turn to how each may uniquely contribute toward CSP research. First, whilst there are many ways to do narrative inquiry (Smith & Sparkes, 2009b), the discussion will focus on one strand--autoethnography-- in order to expand what has been said about this kind of narrative inquiry in sport psychology by discussing autoethnography in its varied forms and how these link to cultural praxis. Secondly, the discussion on discursive psychology will focus on two strands of discourse analysis (i.e., conversation analysis and critical discourse analysis) that have emerged in discursive psychological investigations in sport psychology. Each form of discourse analysis will be outlined and how each may centralize culture in CSP research and the specific links to cultural praxis outlined earlier.

**Narrative Inquiry: Autoethnography**

As noted earlier, narrative inquiry is a psycho-social oriented approach that conceptualizes human beings as meaning makers who, in order to interpret, direct, and intelligibly communicate life, configure and constitute their experience and sense of who they are using narratives that are pre-given and available in their social and cultural world (Smith et al., in-press).) Because narratives are the resources with which we constitute and fashion our self-identities, the stories we tell about ourselves and others are ‘crucial actors’ (Frank, 2010) which have the power to activate and frame subjectivity and bring meaning to our lives (Smith & Sparkes, 2009a). This notion of ‘narratives as actors’ also shapes experiences through ordering certain events in certain ways, teaching people what to pay attention to and showing them how to respond emotionally and behaviourally (Frank, 2010). Given that narratives function in the foregoing manner, as noted earlier in our section on convergences, the harnessing and use of narratives also has applied or practical potential, making it the primary medium for action (Smith, 2013a; Smith et al., in press). In this sense, narratives act as a medium for doing things on, with, and for people (Frank, 2010)—whether to motivate, to explain oneself, to enrol others in a cause, to connect or disconnect a group, to make people sad, happy, fearful, or angry, or to simply entertain. People as acting beings who themselves tell stories in certain ways can do multiple and crucial things to impact their own lives and the lives of others (Smith, 2010, 2013a).

The above view of how narrative functions aligns with the key cultural praxis tenet outlined earlier, which is that meanings and self-identity are socially and culturally constructed. In turn, self-identities and associated experiences and behavioural practices are multiple and fluid depending on the social and cultural context and the language practices (i.e., personal and cultural narratives) at one’s disposal. The focus on narrative as a medium for self-identity construction and entry point for personal and social action/change further aligns with the social justice and social action agenda articulated in CSP and cultural praxis writings (see Blodget et al., in press; Schinke, Peltier et al., 2009). In this regard, narratives functioning as both self-identity resources and crucial actors allows for the identities and associated experiences of participants to come forward, and with these self-stories articulated and heard, the possibility for self-awareness and self-emancipation and social and cultural change is opened up (Smith et al., in press).

As noted, there are many ways of doing narrative inquiry, with a number of these documented in sport psychology (Smith & Sparkes, 2009b). These include structural narrative analysis and creative analytical practices like ethnodrama and creative non-fiction (see McGannon & Cameron, 2013; Smith, 2013a; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). One way relevant for CSP, particularly in terms of the cultural praxis tenet of reflexivity, but not yet explicitly unpacked in sport psychology or CSP in terms of the multiple forms it can take, is autoethnography or self-narrative. Broadly, this genre of creative analytical practice is defined as follows:

Autoethnography is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. Back and forth autoethnographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations ... Autoethnographers vary in their emphasis on the research process (graphy), on culture (ethnos), and on self (auto) (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, pp. 739-740)

Sport studies researcher Allen-Collinson (2012) supports the above view and states that in general, “autoethnography is a research approach which draws on the researcher’s own personal lived experience, specifically in relation to the culture (and subcultures) of which s/he is a member” (p. 193). For her, given that the researcher in her/his social interaction with others is the subject of the research, then the putative distinctions between the personal and the social, and between self-identities and other, are blurred. This notion of a socially and culturally constructed self-identity as multiple, fluid and blurred in terms of self-other and cultural boundaries, is in-line with the socially constructed cultural praxis conception of self-identity (Ryba & Wright, 2010). Additionally, with an emphasis on self-identity as fluid and socially and culturally constructed when interpreted through the body and theoretical lenses of the sport psychologist or CSP researcher, a well-crafted autoethnography has a strong fit with a cultural praxis agenda, particularly in terms of researcher reflexivity. Autoethnography, depending on how crafted, serves as a tool and entry point for researchers and/or sport psychology practitioners to engage in a more concrete way with multiple forms of reflexivity articulated in CSP writings such as acknowledging one’s values and beliefs and the illumination of dilemmas about how to express one’s social position and identity without marginalizing another’s cultural identity (see McGannon & Johnson, 2009; Schinke et al., 2012). Additionally, depending on the type of autoethnography utilized, this form of self-narrative research is a useful tool to expand and deepen more critical forms reflexivity less considered within CSP. For example, this might include showing what goes unacknowledged within the context of cultural identities of researchers and/or practitioners and power issues in the research process by crafting personal stories of politics within the academy that privilege some forms of research and identities over others or stories about the researcher’s engagement with the epistemological assumptions and ethical implications of data collection methods (Day, 2012; Finlay, 2003). Autoethnography can then be a very useful resource for extending multiple reflexive tenets of cultural praxis into “action” and the empirical realm, particularly when based upon Chang’s (2008) four assumptions of autoethnography. .

(1) Culture is a group-orientated concept by which the self is always connected with others; (2) the reading and writing of self-narrative provides a window through which the self and others can be examined and understood; (3) telling one’s story does not automatically result in the cultural understanding of self and others, which only grows out of in-depth cultural analysis and interpretation, and (4) autoethnography is an excellent instructional tool to help not only social scientists but also practitioners gain profound understanding of self and other and function more effectively with others from diverse cultures. (Chang, 2008, p. 13)

Autoethnography is not however a singular practice for enhancing self-reflexive knowledge in CSP and understanding identities as socially and culturally constructed through the narratives resources that are accessible to people. Rather, this type of narrative inquiry needs to also be considered in the plural. Amongst the several varieties of autoethnography to utilize, a sport psychology practitioner or CSP researcher might choose from the following. *Emotional autoethnography*, or what is sometimes termed evocative autoethnography, refers to a literary approach that seeks to show, rather than tell, theory through emotionally driven stories (Ellis & Bochner, 2006). The goal is evocation specifically in terms of creating an emotional resonance with the reader and a heartfelt understanding of culture as told through a self-reflexive story by a researcher or practitioner. Emotional stories of personal experiences that connect with the sub-cultures the researcher is immersed in are crafted and, because in this variety of autoethnography a story aims to show theory, little or no attempt is offered by the researcher to provide a theoretical autopsy of the story (Ellis & Bochner, 2006). By refraining from telling readers what the story is meant to theoretically show and convey about experience, identities and culture are not only shown through deeply emotional forms of writing, but they are felt by the reader. An example of an emotional autoethnography can be found in Ellis (2014), who tells her own story of chronic pain and arthritis, the emotional impact on her self-identity and life, and then artfully links the story elements to the psychological and socio-cultural realms through her use of certain words, phrases and story telling devices (e.g., dramatic turns, humour). In accomplishing this emotional autoethnography it should be emphasized that Ellis (2014) still reflexively acknowledged the various underlying epistemological and theoretical tenets concerning autoethnography and the links of the story with the personal and cultural realm. Thus within this autoethnographic genre, reflexive acknowledgement in terms of epistemological understanding is still done “behind the scenes” even if it is not written or published in the final version of the story or manuscript. Lest it be unclear, the researcher or practitioner does not simply write a story or present case studies, but rather, such stories or case studies are written artfully and with epistemological awareness up front. Armed with a deeper epistemological engagement prior to, and during the writing of one’s self-story, an emotional autoethnography is a potential tool to deepen and expand epistemological and methodological forms of reflexivity that have been called for within the broader social sciences (e.g., Day, 2012), but less considered within CSP and cultural praxis writings.

Another autoethnographic option for sport psychology practitioners and researchers to consider is *analytic autoethnography (*Anderson, 2006). This variety of autoethnography also crafts evocative stories but is distinguished from emotional or evocative autoethnography in that the researcher is a full member in the research setting, making one’s self visible and exposes within the published text, and seeks to overtly tell, rather than implicitly, show theory. Within this genre of autoethnography the researcher then does not let the story do the work of theoretical analysis nor does the researcher assume the reader will connect theory to the story on his or her own, but instead explains what the story aims to theoretically offer and accomplish. Examples of analytic autoethnography in sport psychology can be found in Krane (2009) who crafted sport stories from her childhood and analyzed them for their psychological and social impact, and Douglas (2014) who contrasted media narratives of her sport career with self-stories (e.g., diary extracts, stories, poems) to convey self-reflexive understanding of her self-identity and life in professional sport. In exercise psychology McGannon (2012) used analytic autoethnography to craft a self-reflexive story of her exercise identity and running experiences, followed by a Foucauldian interpretation which allowed her to problematize certain aspects of taken for granted fitness practices within the story, and explore the implications for exercise participation. As with emotional autoethnography, analytic autoethnography offer CSP researchers an additional tool with which to engage in the cultural praxis tenet of reflexivity. Moreover, this specific form of reflexive writing again offers CSP researchers an additional way to more deeply and explicitly engage with reflexivity on multiple levels (e.g., personal, epistemological, theoretical, methodological), beyond the acknowledgment of researchers’ identities as in previous CSP writings (e.g., McGannon & Johnson, 2009; Schinke et al., 2012).

Recently Allen-Collinson (2011, 2012) added a further variety to autoethnography, termed *autophenomenography*. Located within phenomenology which also emphasizes self-identity and experience as embodied and inseparable from the socio-cultural realm, autophenomenography is an autobiographical genre in which the phenomenological researcher is positioned and acknowledged as both researcher and participant in her or his study of a particular phenomenon, rather than of a particular social group that shares a common culture. As a tool to extend reflexivity notions within CSP and cultural praxis, this form of autoethnography also holds great promise in light of its emphasis on t the researcher subjecting her or his own lived experience to a sustained and rigorous phenomenological analysis against the backdrop of the research process, the socio-cultural world and the ethical implications. As with the analytic and emotional autoethnography genres, within autophenomenography, researchers and/or practitioners must again be reflexively aware of the epistemological (e.g., social constructionism) and theoretical assumptions (e.g., phenomenology) underlying this form of writing. Such self-reflexive awareness will assist researchers in attaining a deeper understanding and engagement with the exploration of her or his identity as multiple and fluid (e.g., researcher and participant) and the evocative communication of these as an embodied, emotional, experiential process and product of the socio-cultural realm.

Most emotional, analytical or autophenomenography autoethnographic work is done by one researcher. However, there is also the option of doing a *collaborative-autoethnography* whereby a *duo or relational autoethnography* is utilized.As these names suggests, this version of autoethnography is about two (or more) people engaging in the autoethnographic process and producing collaboratively a story for certain purposes, one of which might be to again highlight the impact of researchers’ multiple identities as socially constructed and how these impact certain aspects of the research process, particularly in terms of marginalized identities of research participants. Such a goal would align with the social justice and social change component of cultural praxis articulated within CSP writings. A rare example of a collaborative-autoethnography in sport research can be found in the work of McMahon and Penny (2011) on the culture of body pedagogies within swimming in Australia. In line with key tenets of CSP, the collaborative-autoethnography centred on several considerations that were central to their research methodology and aspirations to empower participants in the research process. These considerations included achieving and maintaining highly collaborative relations throughout the research process and enabling the reader to take on and read from the differing positions and identities of the people involved. The stories offered also highlighted the importance of reflexivity during analysis and the process co-writing a journal article. They too showed the realization of the emancipatory potential of the research as part of promoting social justice in a sport that can be enjoyable but also dangerous when it comes to power relations and the enculturation of athletic bodies, identities and minds.

Although an untapped resource in sport psychology, researchers might also produce what is known as a *meta-autoethnography* (Ellis, 2009). This involves those who have produced autoethnographies revisiting them, considering the responses of others and the author to this former representation in the time that has elapsed since its production, and then generating an autoethnographic account about the original autoethnography to stimulate further reflection on key personal and cultural issues. While no research in sport and exercise psychology has yet produced a meta-autoethnography, the co-participatory work of Schinke and colleagues (e.g., Blodgett, Schinke, Peltier et al., 2010; Schinke, Peltier, et al., 2009) with aboriginal communities stands as excellent examples of researchers reflexively acknowledging how their own taken for granted assumptions may have unintentionally marginalized participants and/or impacted the communities whose needs they sought to best serve (Schinke, McGannon, Watson & Busanich, 2013). Moreover, this work has been produced in collaboration with the community members as co-participants, co-researchers in the research process (i.e., from conception to analysis and interepreation) and in some cases, co-writers of the final published manuscript (e.g., Schinke, Peltier, et al., 2009). Having drawn attention to the foregoing work it is important to point out that such work, while reflexive and extremely innovative within CSP, was not written up and (re)presented in the autoethnographic/storied style and thus the emotionality and evocative power that usually accompanies autoethnographic work was absent. With that said, within the CSP genre, the use of meta-autoethnography as a creative and informative way to convey researcher reflexivity and further centralize culture is wide-open, as is the application and use of evocative multiple researchers’ and/or co-particiapnts’ stories to understand, explore and communicate various socio-cultural issues within sport psychology.

Given the emphasis on culture, reflexivity and self-identity and experience as socially constructed within cultural praxis, autoethnography as one methodology and way of doing narrative inquiry clearly has much to offer those interested in centralizing, and extending, culture in CSP. Further, researchers now have a variety of autoethnographic genres to choose from to explore and communicate reflexivity in various forms, depending on their goals for understanding and highlighting cultural identities within the context of the research process, social justice and social change. As noted throughout this section, those who wish to do autoethnographic work for various purposes need to be specific about what kind of autoethnography chosen and why it is being utilized. In this regard we again draw attention to a notion of reflexivity articulated earlier, which is that critical CSP researchers engage on a deep level with the underlying epistemology, theoretical and research methodology assumptions for studying and ultimately) (re)presenting cultural identities. Reflexive epistemological engagement will allow one to be aware of why certain methodological choices concerning autoethnographic genres are made, and which one(s) can serve as useful tools to illuminate cultural identities in particular ways, with particular effects and/or impacts resulting. In making this point of epistemological, theoretical and methodological reflexivity we do not wish to suggest that that one type of autoethnography is better, superior or more useful than another. Rather, for critical CSP research grounded in cultural praxis to move forward and flourish ,through autoethnographic work, researchers need to be aware of the variety of types available, make informed decisions about which type to utilize, and articulate why they choose a certain one. Ultimately, for CSP researchers interested in aligning with, and extending, the cultural praxis tenets of a socially constructed self-identity and reflexivity, autoethnography is a promising methodological tool for capturing and revealing the complex interrelations between self-identities, experience, behaviour, physical activity, culture and society (McGannon, 2012).

**Discursive Psychology: Conversation Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis**

Discursive psychology was introduced into sport and exercise psychology by McGannon and Mauws (2000, 2002) to expand understandings of exercise participation beyond mainstream theoretical approaches (e.g., social cognitive). Discursive psychology has since been extended toward developing qualitative research methodologies (e.g., Faulkner & Finlay, 2002 for conversation analysis applied to exercise and depression; Locke, 2004 for a discursive psychological analysis applied to how athletes account for success and failure), understandings elite sport identity (e.g., Cosh, LeCouteur, Crabb & Kettler, 2013) and women’s exercise participation issues (e.g., McGannon & Schinke, 2013; McGannon & Spence, 2010).

The above investigations have been grounded in two very different approaches to discourse analysis. The first of these is a fine grained analytic approach to action oriented talk using conversation analysis, which explores the technical aspects of talk to examine micro-instances of ordinary forms of talk and the implications for action (see Faulkner & Finlay, 2002). Discursive psychological work adhering to this form of analysis is grounded in Garfinkel’s (1967) ethnomethodology, which assumes a large portion of people’s daily lives is spent engaged in descriptive accountings of states of affairs to one another. Social life is displayed in people’s everyday understandings of what is happening in a given context, and people come to these understandings via conversational accounts. Language and descriptive accounts therefore provide people with the tools to make sense and meaning of events that have taken place in their lives. Thus, ethnomethodology focuses on members’ methods of reality construction via talk, with the central tenet being that what is going on in social interaction – including self-identity construction- cannot be distinguished from how it is accomplished (Garfinkel, 1967, McGannon & Mauws, 2002).

Locke’s (2008) work is an example of the above ideas “in action” within sport psychology, in which ‘the zone’ as a discursive resource was examined within two televised accounts of performance by elite athletes. Through a fine grained analysis of athlete’s talk and conversations, ‘the zone’ was given certain meanings within situated accounts and discursive resources used by athletes to claim various forms of agency and explanations for their performance. This study reveals the usefulness of broader cultural portrayals (i.e., television) of athletes and the taken for granted ways of speaking within them, as a tool to open up additional understandings of psychological phenomena in CSP. Using a different data source from that of media data, Faulkner and Finlay (2002) provide another example through their analysis of the ways in which participants do things with words in conversations. An analysis of naturalistic conversations between a researcher and a director of a program revealed that ‘disagreement’ was (re)negotiated in social interaction as both parties oriented to one’s own and each other’s identity and various words each drew upon. In addition to showing that people do things with their words, the study highlighted questions of researcher reflexivity in terms of how the interviewer impacts research and interpretations throughout the process. Such engagement not only aligns with cultural praxis’ concern for researcher reflexivity. It also expands the notion of researcher reflexivity in the research process beyond current CSP writings, making the researchers’ talk the ‘subject’ of interrogation and analysis. While neither of these studies were positioned as cultural work per se, it is important to remember that within discursive psychology, ways of speaking –in media text or conversations– are products of taken for granted cultural discourses that frame self-identity (Potter & Wiggins, 2008). This conception of self-identity as socially and culturally constructed aligns with a cultural praxis conception of self-identity articulated earlier in our introduction and convergences sections. Moreover, by focusing on the nuanced function and role of language in the conveyance and understanding of who we are and how we behave, CSP researchers are afforded with an additional entry point of personal-level intervention and change (i.e., conversations and micro-talk in cultural discourses, McGannon & Schinke, 2013). This notion is aligns with the personal emancipation and social change components of cultural praxis, which emphasize the construction and role of one’s identity in the consideration of social justice issues.

Applied further to CSP research, fine grained conversation analytic work grounded in ethnomethodology thus centralizes culture via its focus on talk-in-interaction and conversational accounts as means of studying/capturing cultural identities and the nuanced effects and implications for people’s lives. CSP work focusing on conversational accounts in this manner would include those between researcher and participant, consultant and athlete, athletes and teammates, coaches and athletes and consultants and coaches. Such a focus for study and analysis opens up additional understandings of cultural identities as products of social and cultural interaction, via attending to the taken for granted and nuanced ways in which people are situated in conversations with themselves, and others, as they work up their self-identities using particular words, categories and phrases, in virtually any cultural context. Since words and phrases have multiple meanings and effects -- even within the same context and within and between and cultures--this nuanced form of analysis further highlights who and what may be marginalized and who and what may be privileged, in sport psychology contexts. Data sources less common in sport psychology such as forms of media (e.g., television, newspapers, blogs), video interactions between people, and transcribed verbatim interviews that include reflexive consideration of interviewer talk, will also contribute toward understanding cultural identities and psychological phenomena as socio-cultural constructions within sport contexts.

In addition to discursive psychological investigations adhering to a fine grained analytic approach to action oriented talk, some discursive psychology investigations are concerned with broader discourses, power and subjectivity and grounded in post-structuralism and the work of Foucault (Willing, 2000). Within sport and exercise psychology, enthnomethodological and post-structuralist analyses have been placed into dialogue, rather than opposition, to benefit interests of discursive psychology researchers (McGannon & Mauws, 2002; McGannon & Spence, 2010). This critical approach to discourse analysis draws attention to both discursive practices (e.g., how discourse is used to perform specific functions and the resulting effects) and broader discursive resources (e.g., how texts and/or talk are informed by wider cultural practices and norms). Such work aligns with Garfinkel’s (1967) ethnomethodological principle of attending to taken for granted talk and understandings about psychological concepts (e.g., self-identity, attributes, emotions) and a Foucauldian post-structuralist approach, whereby discursive psychology is also “concerned with the discourses, the subject positions those discourses confer, and the subsequent use of discursive resources” (McGannon & Mauws, 2000, p. 159). Discourses –be they personal, social or cultural—offer competing and (potentially) contradictory ways of giving meaning to the world and how we view ourselves. Known as subject positions for individuals to take up, these positions further offer conditions of possibility for constituting subjectivity (identities, understandings of the world) and vary in terms of the power and agency they afford people (Davies, & Harré, 1990; McGannon & Spence, 2010).

An example of the critical discursive approach in sport psychology comes from Cosh et al. (2013) who studied Australian newspaper representations of athlete’s comebacks in sport and their retirements, with attention paid to the role of language in the ways in which retirements were depicted in media accounts, and the implications for athletes’ lives. Results revealed that athletes were positioned as “naturally” playing sport for as long as they are physically able regardless of desires and motivations, with accounts worked up as driven by emotion rather than reason. These discursive constructions of athletic identities had implications for decisions to compete in sport, ultimately downplaying alternate reasons for (returning to) competing as inappropriate and, thus compromising athlete well-being. Another study in exercise psychology by McGannon and Schinke (2013) used critical discourse analysis to explore a woman’s taken for granted conversations and those of her significant others (i.e., husband, male exercise partner), in relation to motherhood identity and exercise participation. Two primary discourses were identified which were drawn upon by the woman and her significant others in their conversations: apatriarchal discourse of the family and a liberal feminist discourse. Participants drew upon these discourses to position the woman’s identity as that of a good mother and/or super mother, and there were particular behavioural practices linked to discourses and the subject positions/identities (e.g., good mothers place children’s needs over their own, super mothers do it all with ease). A situation came into being which made physical activity participation difficult, created psychological distress and disempowered the woman, making her barriers to activity difficult to overcome.

Applied to CSP research, a critical approach to discourse analysis centralizes culture by linking self-identity talk and the implications to cultural discourses as well as attending to the role of power. In light of CSP’s concern for marginalized cultural identities within the context of power and social justice issues, CSP research would greatly benefit from this discursive approach’s focus on taken for granted self-identity talk (e.g., of participants, self-reflexive talk of the researcher or consultant) and the effects (e.g., psychological, behavioural, ideological). CSP investigations utilizing this discursive approach could also focus on the role of others (e.g., coaches, consultants, training staff, teammates, significant others) to learn more about the (re)production of ways of speaking that form cultural identities and their impact on one another (McGannon & Spence, 2010; McGannon & Schinke, 2013). A critical discourse analysis of media texts, are also useful windows into understanding cultural identities (e.g., gay and lesbian athletes, elite athlete mothers or fathers, immigrant athletes) and the psychological and behavioural implications within CSP research (McGannon, Cunningham & Schinke, 2013; McGannon & Spence, 2012). The role of sport organizations–including practices, norms and regulations --would also be a useful focal point in CSP research, since discourses that frame identities are connected to institutions (McGannon et al., 2013; McGannon & Spence, 2010). Finally, critical discourse analysis as articulated within discursive psychology, provides the opportunity to explore self-identities as products of taken for granted ways of speaking within cultural discourses, a topic that has been minimally explored, if at all, in CSP. This latter point is underscored by the fact that cultural praxis writings within CSP have repeatedly drawn attention to discourse as shaping and impacting our self-identities with social, cultural and/or political implications (e.g., Blodgett et al., in press; Ryba & Wright, 2005, 2010). Yet few studies within CSP have systematically studied the specific role of discourse in relation to self-identity construction and socio-cultural issues in sport.

**Conclusion**

As CSP grows and gains prominence, an important and necessary part of the dialogue concerns the methodological choices researchers might make to further understand sociocultural issues. We have emphasized that researchers interested in exploring culture in a critical and nuanced manner might consider making informed methodological choices that align with cultural praxis tenets articulated in CSP writings. Herein, the case was made for two possibilities to add to the methodological repertoire of critical CSP research: narrative inquiry via different forms of autoethnography and discursive psychology via content analysis or critical discourse analysis. Our intent was to illuminate, rather than prescribe and finalise, what these forms of research might look like within CSP. We hope these suggestions may assist researchers in making reﬂexive and strategic choices about why and when they might engage with narrative inquiry or discursive psychology, should they wish to do so. Neither methodology is to be viewed as “the” choice to carry out CSP research. As we noted in our introduction, there are other research methodologies that align with cultural praxis tenets (e.g., participatory methodologies). As we have made clear, both narrative inquiry and discursive psychology hold promise for understanding experiences and lives as sociocultural constructions. Put simply, narratives and discourses matter in the socio-cultural construction of our cultural identities, and as yet are relatively untapped methodological resources for understanding and centralizing culture within CSP research.

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