

Meta-ethnography and Seven Phases in Graduate Inquiry Supervision

Ai-Girl Tan^{1*}

¹National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Abstract

Meta-ethnography and seven phases were invented to synthesize qualitative studies (Noblit & Hare, 1988). The study and methodology of meta-ethnography has been well received by health care scientists and researchers. Recently, researchers in the field of education (Noblit, 2019) have been engaged in research synthesis. Our paper shares how meta-ethnography and seven phases can benefit graduate students when teaching phases of meta-ethnography are innovated with a spiral approach to enhancing graduate capacities in inquiry and academic writing (Tan, 2021). Advancing from Tan (2021), further innovations are suggested to enhance teaching or supervising graduate research or inquiry studies. The current paper reports on an initial meta-ethnography on the topic of interest – graduate inquiry or research supervision. Using the seven phases, three studies of research supervision were synthesized to generate a conceptual framework of research supervision comprising among others processes such as modeling, conversation/dialogue, collegiality, and criticizing. Teaching and supervising experiences of four graduate students were referred to elaborate processes of supervising meta-ethnographic studies in education. They comprised one undergraduate student who was supervised by the author for 12 months in an educational research course, and three graduate students of the Master degree program who attended a human development course and an integrative project course. While meta-ethnography is a study or a methodology for synthesis performed or led by experienced researchers, with an innovative teaching spiral approach and supervising processes, the phases guide graduate inquiry supervision, which in turn help build capacity of research inquiry and academic writing of graduate students.

Keywords: meta-ethnography, seven phases, graduate supervision, inquiry, and innovation

1. Introduction

Qualitative synthesis is about reading, summarizing, identifying relationships, interpreting, and translating empirical studies. In graduate and undergraduate research supervision, qualitative synthesis has emerged as an important endeavor. The author presents her experiences in supervising graduate research using a qualitative synthesis methodology – meta-ethnography (Noblit & Hare, 1988) in the context of building capacity of graduate students in research inquiry and academic writing. Specifically, she shares in this article how seven phases of meta-ethnography are innovated from a research methodology and a complete study to a research supervision and teaching framework for inquiry. This paper is

divided into three parts. The first part reviews meta-ethnography and its seven phases as a qualitative synthesis methodology and a study. The second part outlines how meta-ethnography seven phases are innovated to teach and supervise graduate research and inquiry-based courses. In the third part of the paper the author presents innovations in teaching and supervising graduate research syntheses in education.

In all literature review, researchers synthesize studies and findings qualitatively. They interpret and explain the studies with reference to the contexts and conceptual orientations of the studies. To find out the validity of the studies in contexts other than those mentioned in the studies, they refer to their professional knowledge and experiences. Research synthesis is more than reviewing literature. The essence of research synthesis is more than just summarizing and reviewing the literature. It aims to deepen understanding of a phenomenon of a topic of interest using an inquiry approach and to generate a theoretical or a conceptual framework to explain the phenomenon. The outcome of research synthesis is contemporary and temporary and can be refined and revised when new data (e.g., empirical studies) emerge and inform us new and different findings. Research synthesis includes a set of research and inquiry skills. With reference to meta-ethnography and seven phases (Noblit, 2019), research synthesis begins with getting started with a topic of interest (phase 1), followed by refining the topic of interest with searching for relevant literature available in the e-databases and/or library archive databases, and appraising quality of the research papers or articles found that are related to the topic of interest (phase 2). The process of determining the topic of interest, searching for literature, and reading the studies (phase 3) is iterative and functions as a feedback and feedforward loop to sharpen the topic of interest. Several iterations of phases 1, 2, and 3 occur to determine if the topic of interest is in congruence with available existing literature after reading and re-reading of the articles by identifying the interpretations and interpreting them. The author suggests the first stage of meta-ethnography in inquiry and in iterations include the first three phases of meta-ethnography. Thereafter, reading and re-reading continue to determine how the studies relate to each other (phase 4). In each study, metaphorical conceptions instead of literal meanings are highlighted. Within each study, comparison of similar and different metaphorical conceptions over several times to confirm the themes within each study. A storyline for each study is generated, before moving on to the next study. The process of metaphorical analysis (comparison) within one study is followed by writing a storyline (phase 5). Three ways of comparison are introduced to identify similarities (reciprocal translation), differences (refutational translations) and lines of argument (overlaps). With the metaphorical conceptions and storylines for all primary articles, the next phase is synthesizing the translations by establishing associations of storylines (phase 6). Noblit and Hare (1988) refer to grounded theory for some insight into how to translate the studies at the level of storylines or analogy. Finally, there are different ways to express the synthesis such as in the form an academic term paper, a theater show, or an art artefact. Meta-ethnography is a complete study. The data of meta-ethnography are interpretations of the primary studies. There are three types of interpretations. The first interpretations are voices of the participants in the primary studies. The second level interpretations refer to the views of the authors of the primary studies, at the metaphorical level and in abstraction. The third level interpretations are generated by the researcher of meta-ethnography. Meta-ethnography is also a methodology situated in the hermeneutic

philosophy, which highlights the importance of conversation and dialogue as tools to create values, morality, and insights.

In education, meta-ethnography and seven phases has been adopted to synthesize qualitative studies. More than just synthesis of existing qualitative studies, meta-ethnography and its seven phases can be used as a framework of teaching in an inquiry course for graduate students, or a framework of supervising research among undergraduate students. Elsewhere, the author presents a spiral approach to teaching seven phases of meta-ethnography in inquiry (Tan, 2021) to graduate students. The spiral approach emphasizes on mastery of basic research skills and setting goals of mastery toward professional research capacity. As a framework of research supervision, meta-ethnography and seven phases turn to hermeneutic philosophy and its main features of conversation, dialogue, and communication. This paper focuses on innovating meta-ethnography and seven phases for research supervision.

2. An Initial Meta-ethnography on Inquiry Supervision

Research supervision is a journey of transformative development of a student researcher under the close guidance of an experienced researcher. The student researcher is the supervisee. The experienced research is the supervisor. Teaching to impart research skills and knowledge of the field of inquiry is an essential component of research supervision. Both the student researcher and his(her) supervisor engage in a considerably long-term relationship as they journey together from the start to the end of the whole research inquiry phases and stages.

In Tan (2021), the seven phases of meta-ethnography in a teaching framework for inquiry is categorized into three stages. Stage 1 comprises of iterations of phases 1, 2, and 3 aiming to determine primary studies for a topic of interest for inquiry. Stage 2 is composed of iterations of phases 4 and 5 focusing on determining relations of primary studies through translations. Stage 3 consists of phases 6 and 7 which is related to synthesizing the translations and expressing the synthesis. In each stage, iterating among phases is a characteristic of a spiral approach to mastering research skills from basic to intermediate or advanced for capacity building. As research supervision is more than just teaching, a meta-ethnography study on research supervision was conducted to generate relevant innovations on the seven phases. For a start, before embarking on the current meta-ethnographic study on research supervision, the author referred to the teaching framework (Tan, 2021). She refined the seven phases through conducting regular hermeneutic dialogues and conversations. She followed the university research student supervision guide that emphasized among others regular meetings between the supervisors and the (under)graduate student researchers.

The author conducted a meta-ethnographic study with a research question in mind: What are processes of research supervision? To provide some insights into this question, the author embarked on a search on relevant literature and studies. Her topic of interest was related research supervision – the what it is and how to do it. Using the key terms “research supervision” a series of search were conducted from google website and the integrated e-databases of her university. Her initial searches focused on peer-reviewed journals, full-text empirical qualitative studies, recent articles (within the recent ten years), and graduate student participation. She read the titles and abstracts of the articles that appeared in the first hundreds of returned pages. She then downloaded the articles that met her initial criteria.

Three articles were read repeatedly to identify metaphorical conceptions of research supervision processes. For each article she generated a storyline. Reading the storylines of the primary articles, she determined how the studies were related to each other. She then conducted translational analysis using her own decades of experience in research supervision and the philosophy of hermeneutics she adopted for research supervision as an analogy for translations. She synthesized the translations (see Table 1).

Table 1

Outcomes of an Initial Meta-ethnography

	Reciprocal	Refutational	Themes	Storyline	
Douglas (2003)	Senior and junior supervisor: 7 categories with different properties	Senior supervisor: Different properties seen – checking, defense and criticism Junior supervisor – no checking, no direct confrontation of defense and no criticism	Research supervision includes: Time management, expectation, motivation, intellectualizing, criticizing, collegiality, presiding	Research supervision is multidimensional and requires experiences in motivating, controlling, collegiality, etc.	
Hamilton & Carson (2015)	First general and second generation supervisors: dialogues/conversations			Research supervision is creative through conversation/dialogues	
Caldwell, Osborne, Mewburn & Nottingham (2016)	Role modeling, participatory supervision, the GRT toolkit (social media, online surveys and polls) at the start of research.			Research supervision varies according to the stage of the research project.	

She used her own supervision experiences as analogy and translated the storylines of the three articles. The outcome of the synthesis of the translation is expressed below in writing and in visual representation.

“In a supervision relationship, the supervisor is the knowledgeable other at the start, model the skills and scaffold skill acquisition. At the start of the project, creative (guerilla) research techniques can be used. For creative practices and arts, dialogue and conversation research supervision is dominant. The supervisor is the facilitator who invites conversation and who engages in dialoguing with the student researcher. In conversation, the supervisor teaches,

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actively listens, constructively feedback, and facilitates unfolding of insights from both the supervisor and the supervisee. Toward the end of the journey, the supervisor is the partner or co-author of the journey. S/he departs from the role of supervisor in the research learning journey to the role of supervisor in the sharing and reporting journey.” (see Figure 1 below)

Figure 1. Research supervision journey

Start ----->End				
Guerilla Motivating	Modeling Participatory Management Criticizing	Creative, dialogue, conversation	Controlling Collegiality Intellectualizing	Presiding

Using a spiral approach to teaching seven phases of meta-ethnography (Tan, 2021), learning each phase moves from basics to intermediate/advanced in iterations. The focus of teaching and learning is to impart inquiry skills and skills of translation and synthesis through systematic spiral up and down teaching. As part of research supervision, teaching using a spiral approach is included into our more comprehensive framework research supervision of meta-ethnography. Depending on the experience in research of the graduate students, the research supervision journey varies. In some situation, motivating supervision is prevailing, in another situation criticizing and controlling are essential. Toward the end of supervision presiding and collegiality are essential.

Using the synthesis of research supervision on graduates, the author refines her research supervision incorporating elements of motiving, modeling, conversational, intellectualizing, and presiding. Throughout the journey of learning how to do meta-ethnography for a research study, the author organized regular meetings to ensure the journey of meta-ethnography is manageable for the graduate students. The following Table 2 presents how a meta-ethnography of research supervision incorporates an initiate synthesis of research supervision. The meta-ethnography research supervision journey framework is used to supervise undergraduate students who enroll into an educational research course, as part of the requirements for a degree program at a research university. The research supervision for the course lasts for a year over two semesters. The author released a research project outline on culturally appropriate and value-relevant creativity for early childhood education. This research project was published in an educational research portal for undergraduate students enrolled into the Bachelor Degree program. The outline stated the nature of the project. Undergraduate students can write directly to the author to find out more about the project. A meeting can be convened to discuss the scope of the project. The author can send an offer to the student. The student after the meeting can accept the offer or decline it. The journey of the study of meta-ethnography starts when the undergraduate student accepts the offer.

Table 2

Meta-ethnography for Inquiry or Research Supervision

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 6	Phase 7
Getting started	Searching for literature	Reading	Determining how studies are related	Translation	Synthesizing translations	Expressing synthesis
A spiral approach to multiple revisiting previous phases for mastery while advancing to the next phases (Tan, 2021)						
Start ----->End						
Motivating Creative	Modeling Participatory	Dialogue, Conversation	Controlling Intellectualizing (e.g., probing, checking, Douglas, 2013)	Management	Collegiality Criticizing	Presiding

3.Examples of Supervising Inquiry Synthesis

3.1 Motivating and Creative Getting Started

The initial stage of research supervision, the author uses motivating and creative strategies to engage the graduate students. She invites the graduate students to share their experiences and align their personal and professional interest to the topic of inquiry. Graduate students in the field of early childhood education for instance are motivated by the topics – play, creativity, and sustainability, whereas those in the field of special education for instance are motivated by topics such as inclusion, caregiving, and transition from school to work. Knowing the topics of interest within the professional fields and practices opens dialogues to search for the topic of interest. Sriwani (2018a), a primary school teacher for near two decades enrolled into a Master in Education program specialized in special education. In a course of human development, the author who was her instructor structured the inquiry component of the course assignment with the seven phases of meta-ethnography. Sriwani (2018a) embarked on a study of language learning of children with autism. She was interested to explain experiences of a child with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their language development from views of Bronfenbrenner and Vygotsky. In another course of integrative project, Sriwani (2018b), also a mother of four boys, conducted another study on parenting children with special needs. Sriwani’s interest in understanding children and their unit of care was genuine and emerged from her personal and professional roles. Since 2004, education in the mainstream schools in Singapore opened their gates to include children with special needs who are able to manage classroom learning with peers without special needs. Understanding the phenomena of language development and caregiving as a primary school educator and a mother was essential for her to relate to the new community of children and parents of special needs in schools, and for her to participate in relating herself with these new community and to contribute to dialoging with colleagues in her school in terms of how to provide support or work with other special educators. Her genuine intention was supported creatively in the initial journey of meta-ethnography by establishing continuity in her

experiences between her workplace and her part-time studies at the Master level. Experience is personal and social, and is continuous, interactive, and complementary (Dewey, 1938). Managing new learning creatively in the context of professional expertise empowers graduate students who are practicing educators to acquire new skills and knowledge as a contributor, a learner, and a researcher. Sriwani (2018a; 2018b) acquired skills to synthesize academic knowledge from the published peer-reviewed journal articles by aligning goals and tasks of seven phases to her experiences with community of students with special needs and by relating her roles as a mother of four boys and a primary school educator for near two decades. The seven phases of meta-ethnography are creatively designed into a framework for teaching and supervising (see Tan, 2021, and this paper) and into a template for students to start their academic writing journey alongside with reading, acquisition of research inquiry skills, and understanding of new phenomenon, among others. The framework and template crystalize the graduate students' paths toward a meaningful journey of meta-ethnography for research synthesis.

3.2 Modeling, Participatory Mastery, and Dialoguing

Good supervision relationships is the key for co-construction of space and time for graduate students to acquire new skills and knowledge of inquiry that can benefit the research inquiry journey. Modeling, participatory learning, and dialoguing or conversation allow graduate students to learn and master research inquiry skills. Liyana (2021), a primary school teacher, an artist, and a mother was an undergraduate who enrolled into the educational research inquiry. To guide her to search for relevant articles, modeling how to generate key terms and search peer-reviewed articles, and how to read for identifying key concepts, and how to write story line and so on were beneficial for her learning. Modeling what and how to do helps remove fear to step into an unknown area of skill acquisition. Graduate education during the COVID-19 pandemic adopt the mode of digital face to face learning via zoom. Close supervision such as weekly zoom face-to-face consultation allow graduate students to observe how the supervisor search articles using different e-databases at the university and how certain functions of e-databases can filter non peer-reviewed journal articles. After demonstration and modeling sessions, graduate students conduct search on their own, record systematic their search history, compile the search processes and outcomes, and invite confirmation from the supervisor. To enhance their participation, and mastery of skills, graduate students receive verbal and written feedback from their supervisors regularly and engage in dialogues or conversations with their supervisors in all phases of meta-ethnography. For instance, in learning how to read repeatedly the studies and to identify key concepts or to write storylines, conversations or dialogues are held before graduate students pen down the processes of reading and summarizing.

3.3 Controlling and Intellectualizing

Seven phases of meta-ethnography require research skills that across the basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. Graduate students conduct meta-ethnography studies to deepen their understanding of the phenomenon at the same time to strengthen their research and inquiry skills. The outcomes of graduate research with meta-ethnography are for learning how to intellectualize with academic writing and reading activities, and for controlling quality of inquiry at the graduate education level. Beginning with recording and reflecting

own learning systematically, graduate students learn to read peer-reviewed journal articles and write a term paper with academic languages. The manual of academic writing such as APA 7th edition (American Psychological Association), and related video links are recommended for graduate students to acquire the skills through self-directed learning. Draft writing with proper referencing is sent to the instructor for comments and feedback. Graduate students master systematic documentation and making own interpretations (explanations) based on evidence from studies through close controlling and regular intellectualizing exchange. They are alerted of unethical academic practices. For instance, citing references without reading the original articles is considered unethical. Graduate students are alerted to read deeply for key concepts, metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and to cite accurately articles they read. For a meta-ethnography study project, the quality of research synthesis does not rely on the number of primary studies but on how graduate students genuinely and thoroughly interpret, translate, and synthesize the studies. Storylines and interpretations are data of meta-ethnography. Graduate students need to acquire skills to visualize how different primary studies are related and how translations at the metaphorical language levels are synthesized. Reading samples peer-reviewed meta-ethnography journal articles and samples peer-reviewed journal articles that synthesize concepts of the topic of interest can be helpful. Graduate students need to understand that synthesis of the whole (the middle range theory) is more than the sum of the parts (all individual primary articles). In synthesis experiences of the meta-ethnographer who is also the professional and practitioner of the field of inquiry can be analogy of translation (comparison). Translations occur at three levels: Reciprocal (similarities among the primary studies), refutational (variations or differences among the primary studies) and lines of argument (overlaps among similarities and variations among primary studies).

3.4 Management

Meta-ethnography study requires management at a project level. Each phase of meta-ethnography is part of the project. In total there are seven parts. The project manager is the student teacher. Advisor of the project is the instructor or the research supervisor. The project manager reports regular the progress of the project including challenges s/he faces. The advisor provides guidance, tips, possible ways to handle challenges, and arranges various skill acquisition opportunities for the project manager. The supervisor creates structure of teaching and schedule for teaching, task management, monitoring, controlling, intellectualizing and so on. She also co-construct space of learning with reference to the framework of community of learners and practices. Course participants are practitioners and professionals. They serve as active members in the community of learning of meta-ethnography. They share their learning processes and outcomes at regular face to face or zoom meetings. During teaching and supervising meta-ethnography, three questions can be posed to graduate students to reflect on their own learning of each phase of meta-ethnography in inquiry: What challenges does a graduate student face during the seven phases of meta-ethnography? How does the graduate student overcome the challenges s/he faces? If s/he would have to revisit the seven phases of meta-synthesis, how would s/he do?

Yang a special educator employed at the stage of writing as a special teacher in a government school in China completed her assignment for a course at a Master program. She has posed the above three questions to reflect upon her recently completed meta-ethnography

assignment on inclusion in mainstream schools from the teachers' perspectives. She outlined three challenges she faced in her first attempt to conduct a meta-ethnographic study using the seven phases in a course. She spent ten weeks during the course to learn and conduct her synthesis research inquiry study. In reflecting on phase 1, getting started, Yang (2021), outlined three challenges that she initially faced.

First, in the first few weeks of learning how to conduct meta-ethnography, she felt overwhelming by her own area of interest, which was broad. She was unsure if the area of interest was worthwhile exploring with the meta-ethnography and seven phases.

Second, at the same time, she was doubtful on the purpose of conducting a meta-ethnography on her selected topic of interest as she lacked deep understanding of the methodology of meta-ethnography.

Third, additionally she was unclear how to formulate the research question for a meta-ethnographic study.

With reference to the first challenge, at this stage the graduate student still unclear how to go about it, and hence the challenge persisted. She resolved two challenges during research supervision. She realized the purpose of conducting a meta-ethnographic study upon completion of her initial attempt. She mastered formulation of research question under the supervision of the instructor. In the follow-up conversation before she embarked on the second attempt of conducting a meta-ethnographic study, she was exposed to the differences of meta-analysis and meta-synthesis, and the history of development of meta-ethnography. While meta-analysis is a methodology to synthesize quantitative primary studies, meta-synthesis is a methodology to synthesize qualitative primary studies through interpretations and translations of qualitative empirical studies to generate a conceptual/theoretical framework. The above is an example how the instructor managed teaching of meta-ethnography through continuous dialogues, questioning, and reflective writing.

3.5 Collegiality, Criticizing, and Presiding

Throughout the meta-ethnography journey, *collegiality* was maintained through regular dialogues, email exchanges, personal and group whatsapps, and face-to-face personal consultations. Graduate educators engage actively in reading and writing. They get interested in a topic, read peer-reviewed journal articles related to the topic, identify key concepts and characteristics, create storylines, translate the storylines using analogy, and express the synthesis in the form of middle-range theory. In each phase, they report verbally the process of analysis and/or synthesis, and present draft writing or report to the instructor for feedback and inputs. The goals of the meta-ethnography inquiry study are for graduate students to gain a deep understanding the phenomenon of interest by synthesizing available empirical studies in the e-databases for academic and peer-reviewed journals, developing graduate students' academic writing competencies, and empowering graduate students to construct middle-range theory or a synthesized framework to guide their practice or writing of a research project. Collegiality, criticizing, and presiding support quality research supervision towards these goals.

To acquire skills of meta-ethnography and seven phases, *criticizing* is essential to advance the quality of research skills of graduate students. The following is a retrospective critique on two stages of learning of meta-ethnography and seven phases in courses in higher degree programme. Using the spiral approach to meta-ethnography and seven stages (Tan, 2021), each phase of meta-ethnography starts with basic level of research skill acquisition to immediate/advance level. In the course of human development (Sriwani, 2018a) and the course of integrative project (Sriwani, 2018b) the degree of difficulty of each phase of meta-ethnography increased. In the first course Sriwani (2018a) acquired knowledge of human development and identified an area of interest language development of children with autism. Around the same period, Sriwani (2018b) conducted another meta-ethnography study before she graduated from the Master degree program. In her second attempt she identified a related area of interest, namely parenting children with special needs and synthesized three articles she selected from the e-databases of the university. She used the CASP (critical appraisal skill program) to appraise the articles and proceeded to reading and repeated reading. Using two tables she detailed key concepts, metaphors, and idiomatic expressions, as well as key characteristics of the studies. Thereafter she employed the grounded theory constant comparative method, conducted multiple translations (reciprocal, refutational, and line of argument) before synthesizing the translations.

For the first course, Sriwani (2018a) was required to write an academic term paper as part of the requirements to fulfill the course assessment. The instructor used the seven phases to structure her academic writing. In her area of interest, she posed research questions, and embarked on literature search. She represented her search history using a simple diagram adopted from PRISMA. However, she did not conduct repeated searches with the same e-databases using different sets of key terms or synonyms of key terms. Neither did she perform the search using different e-databases. Furthermore, she only recorded her search with one e-database and set up simple inclusion criteria: Peer-reviewed journal, full-text and references available. She did not describe strategies of search, and further inclusion and exclusion criteria related to the site and the participants of her study. Accordingly, she attained the basic level of search in phase 2. She appraised the quality of the article using the ten questions of CASP (critical appraisal of studies program).

Throughout the course, in all phases of meta-ethnography, she remained with the basic level of skill acquisition. She read in total three qualitative research articles, identified key concepts, metaphors and/or idiomatic expressions and summarized key characteristics of all the articles. She then learned how to appraise the three articles, interpreted the studies with reference to her experience and the theories of human development, particularly Vygotsky's views of inclusive education and Bronfenbruner's ecological theory. Sriwani was a mainstream teacher, and a graduate student in the special education specialization. In the first course, she adopted open coding strategies to identify possible codes and themes. She also learned how to write third level interpretations for one study, and conduct reciprocal and refutational translations within one study. Finally, she expressed the synthesis of the studies in the context of human development using academic language and APA (American Psychological Association) style. From her study, she was able to explain using academic language emotional, cognitive, and social risks and benefits of interventions on language development of children with autism. Research supervision proceeded to *presiding* guiding

graduate students learn to express the synthesis of empirical studies in academic writing and with academic language. They reported their research processes and outcomes. The course highlighted academic integrity and ethics of reporting. Capacity building of academic writing was presided from basic level of academic writing (drafting out) to intermediate (referencing to model articles) and advanced (writing with the lens of presenting to a conference or submitting to a journal) level of academic writing. Several rounds of self-editing and instructor-led editing were conducted during one-to-one zoom consultation, and email exchange. By the end of the course (13 weeks in total), the quality of academic writing reached the level between intermediate and advanced in Sriwani (2018a) (see Table 3).

Table 3

Seven Phases of a Graduate Student

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 6	Phase 7
Getting started: Language development of children with autism	Searching for literature: University e-databases Identified three empirical qualitative articles. Conducted CASP for these articles.	Reading and repeated reading three qualitative empirical studies: Identifying key concepts, metaphors, and idiomatic expressions	Determining how the three studies are related: Identifying key characteristics	Translations: Reciprocal, refutational (<i>learning how to use grounded theory to translate</i>)	Synthesizing translations in a simple visual representation: multiple influencing factors and intervention for language development	Expressing synthesis: APA term paper (<i>self-editing and instructor-led editing for several rounds</i>)
A spiral approach (Tan, 2021): Basics for phases 1-6, intermediate-advanced for phase 7 (Sriwani, 2018a) Research supervision: Motivating, collegiality, criticizing, and presiding						

4.0 Conclusion

Meta-ethnography as a study is integrated into graduate research supervision to develop capacity of reading, writing, analysis, and synthesis. The seven phases invented by Noblit and Hare (1988) was refined by Tan (2021) using a spiral approach to facilitating mastery of phases. Previous phases were revisited several times while advancing to the next phases. With each phase different levels of difficulty were included to allow incremental learning, yet to be recognized by the author's university. The seven phases were categorized into three stages of teaching, namely the stage of getting ready for analysis (phases 1, 2 and 3 in iterations), getting ready for synthesis (phases 4 and 5 in iterations), and synthesizing outcomes (phases 6 and 7 in iterations). The goals of supervising graduate inquiry and research studies are multiple: Understanding the phenomenon of interest, reporting using academic language, and synthesizing studies to generate a middle-range theory. For graduate students who are practitioners in their field of specialization, the seven phase meta-ethnography provide a framework of inquiry for facilitating capacity building in multiple

aspects ranging from analysis, synthesizing, and expressing. With these aspects, multiple processes are involved such as searching and appraising for relevant studies that can answer the research questions (analysis), reading for synthesis, and writing for generating a conceptual framework. Meta-ethnography which originally invented for synthesizing qualitative studies by a group of researchers can benefited graduate students who are practitioners in their fields of specialization when the phases are taught and supervised and strategies to relate basic inquiry research skill levels of undergraduate and Master students.

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