

Book Review

Parallaxic Praxis: Multimodal Interdisciplinary Pedagogical Research Design

By Pauline Sameshima, Patricia Maarhuis, and Sean Wiebe

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Reviewed by

Emily Turner, Lakehead University

Sy Regalado, Lakehead University

Julie Filipetti, Lakehead University

A pedagogy of parallax is an inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning that foregrounds collaboration, introspection, and creative expression as essential to meaning-making. Developed in Pauline Sameshima's doctoral dissertation (2006) and published in 2007 by Cambria Press, this paradigm has blossomed as a transformational research praxis since its initial iteration as a methodology in an addiction and recovery project (Sameshima & Vandermause, 2008) that highlighted its ability to develop more empathetic understandings of complex sociocultural topics. *Parallaxic Praxis: Multimodal Interdisciplinary Pedagogical Research Design* (Sameshima et al., 2019) formalizes this research design and offers an informative guide for researchers and educators alike.

Parallaxic praxis contributes to the fields of arts-based educational research, arts-informed inquiry, and a/r/tography while positioning itself as an arts *integrated* research approach that uses artistic mediums as ways to inform the research process rather than embedding an artistic discipline directly into the research framework. Framed as a trans-methodological research design, the model's theoretical underpinnings and conceptual logic are outlined in the first chapter and thoughtfully explored in subsequent

chapters. The versatility of this model is highlighted in the book in various projects concerned with pertinent topics such as teacher identity (Stock et al., 2016), literacy (Maclaren & Becker, 2018), interpersonal violence (Maarhuis, 2016), and Indigenous mental health care (Saunders, 2015). The various sites of application discussed in the book reflect the model's strong theoretical foundation, inspiring readers to dwell in the possibilities of co-creation and multi-modal knowledge production.

The second chapter articulates the three phases of the model: Data, Analyses, and Renderings; and describes how the arts are positioned within the model--as catalysts for dialogue among researchers, participants, and audiences. The arts can play a role in each phase of this design, challenging normative assumptions about what counts as knowledge, who produces it, and how it is shared in academic spaces. Data can be collected in multimodal ways, such as through numerical surveys or participant-made art, as exemplified in the referenced Clothesline Project, discussed in chapter seven, where participants decorate t-shirts to raise awareness of domestic violence (Maarhuis & Sameshima, 2015). This data, or art creation in the Analyses Phase invites sustained, reflexive inquiry, that honours the affective and relational depth of the source material in its full complexity. These artefacts loop back into earlier phases of inquiry, affirming the model's cyclical, layered approach to meaning-making.

Framed as the artefact-making stage, it is at this time that researchers work from their disciplinary backgrounds and social locations to interpret and extend the data. Interpretations become explicit through the objects they create. This phase welcomes both traditional and metaphoric ways of understanding data and leads researchers to articulate insights that might not be possible through other research methods, which often prioritize fixed answers rather than embracing an open-ended approach that seeks new questions. Such artefacts, which may be photographs, clay bowls, paintings, poetry, or other artful creations, invite engagement from broader publics beyond the academy. In the case of the [Women and Meth](#) study (Sameshima & Vandermause, 2008), the use of this research model illuminated how marginalized lived experiences are often overlooked in conventional research paradigms and encouraged participants to articulate their realities with nuance and complexity through poetic and visual forms.

The creations that come from the Analyses Phase ultimately facilitate a dialogue between team members, participants, and audiences during which personal experiences are shared, honoured, and used to mobilize knowledge, an occasion recognized as the

Rendering Phase. A strength of the rendering phase is its inherent flexibility, as it may look like an exhibition of the art created during the previous phases or it can be a formal process of synthesis and evaluation in which a structured dialogue takes place through what the authors label the Catechization Process, which is thoroughly explained in the third chapter of the book. The Catechization Process extends the list of criteria used to evaluate the significance and value of arts-based work, a significant advancement in arts-based research. The eight Catechizations outlined in the book provide directions for informal yet direct dialogue, which ultimately work to foster relationships and mutual respect between scholars and participants.

The book offers a new language for engaging with complex, creative, and critical research practices. In reframing terms and concepts such as mimesis and ekphrasis, it fosters a deeper, more expansive understanding of scholarship as layered and actively unfolding. While the language may be intimidating to emerging arts integrated or post-qualitative researchers, it does not alienate – it invites. It leads readers to understand how words and definitions are made and can be remade – symbolizing the central goal of this research model: to explain that no perspective is beyond reimagining or re-evaluation.

By centring co-creation, as researchers and participants collaboratively engage in making artefacts, the model dismantles traditional roles in research spaces and affirms historically marginalized epistemologies. Like its pedagogical foundation, which is further discussed in the fourth chapter, parallaxic research promotes aesthetic inquiry, a process that prompts a departure from linear explanation to recognize how *situatedness* alters interpretation. In this way, this model gestures towards a decolonial approach to research by unsettling dominant paradigms and inviting relational forms of inquiry that honour lived experience.

The parallaxic praxis model's relevance in today's academic landscape was recently recognized with the 2025 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Award in Research at Lakehead University, which Sameshima and team won for their leadership of the HOPE Collaboratory's Community Arts Integrated Research Program (Lakehead University Faculty of Education, 2025). HOPE, which stands for HIV Obstruction by Programmed Epigenetics, used parallaxic praxis to draw attention to the hopes and fears of individuals living with HIV. The EDI award confirms the model's significant contribution to equity-informed scholarship. Its versatility is further demonstrated by its use

in more recent studies that highlight socially complex issues such as in English language education (Chi et al., 2025a, b)

A treasure of scholarly insight, this book offers emerging and experienced researchers alike the encouragement to transgress the boundaries of conventional qualitative and quantitative methodologies and remain flexible in acts of research. As graduate students with diverse research interests and educational backgrounds, we find ourselves connected after engaging with the pedagogy of parallax. This research design and its various applications encourage researchers to recognize the ethical importance of remaining creative, responsive, and attuned to the possibilities that emerge when we decentre our interpretations and make space for different points of view.

In the process of composing this review, the reviewers entered the Rendering Phase themselves. We extend a warm invitation for readers to engage with the subsequent poem, 'Ebbs and Flow,' penned by Sy Regalado (2025), and the accompanying visual-text poster (Figure 1), crafted by Julie Filipetti (2024), as extensions of these layered meanings.

Ebbs and Flow

In *It's All Greek to Me*, it glints
a shimmer, a shore,
a song that speaks
in syllables not yet your own.
come in,
savour, not skim—
sink.
stay.

Some truths slip
through the net of numbers.
Sometimes, what swells in the chest
slips past the grid and graph;
so we cast art like anchors,
murmur meaning into clay,

sing loss into shirts
and silence into sound.
Sobs, sighs, hopes, and lullabies,
washed, weathered, washed again
meaning in motion,
made with, not on.

Calypso calms her currents – not.
With capricious charm
her ebbs and flow,
seduces us so
no shoreline's seen
the same way twice.
What brushes you once
does not pass through—
it stays, it shifts,
it softens sight.

And when you rise,
salt still on your skin,
what was once Greek
now rests in your hands
like shells by the shore,
no longer foreign –
hymns held, forevermore.

This tidal touch –
tender turning –
we come to know
as parallax.



Figure 1. Rendering inspired by *parallaxic praxis*

Created through a series of prompts from text in the book offered to the software DeepAI. J. Filipetti, 2024.

Using the lens of arts integrated research and the framework of parallaxic praxis opened a once-hidden world of possibilities and dispelled many of my self-perceived limitations in research. The liminal point of view, to me, is the foundation of lifelong learning. If we are always on the edge of something or somewhere, then there are no limits. The rhizomatic nature of this rendering demonstrates how the use of imagination and artful representation in learning and research is multilayered, embraces diversity, and allows space for what is unsettled and in a dynamic place of agitation. (Sameshima et al., 2019)

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