



# Crafting poems for data analysis?

*Methods Fair: Creativity in Social Science Research*  
*28<sup>th</sup> October 2019, University of Manchester*

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# Outline

- 1. [My research](#) (case study)
- 2. Process of crafting for data analysis
- 3. Two cases / two poems
- 4. What worked / did not work
- 5. Considerations

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# 1. My research (case study)





# Digital capabilities in Engineering & Management



**Questions**

What are the characteristics of a good X student?

What do you think are distinct teaching methods in X?

Can you describe a digitally capable professional in X?

**Poems**, metaphors, concept maps, can  
**enhance** the process of **sense-making**

(Bazeley 2013).



# 2. Process of crafting poems





- One poem/ transcript → One poem / case
- Picking out key/recurring participant words and phrases  
(~Spindler 2008, Lahman et al 2010) or constructed by researcher (DeHart 2019)
- Searching for metaphors, rhythm and rhymes



# How I used the poem – thesis excerpt

<p><i>'We open boxes. Pull things apart/Bikes, trimmers, spark plugs, cars.'</i></p>	<p>Opening boxes and taking things apart express engineers' inquisitiveness and "curiosity about the world" (ENG6emp-Paul). ENG7emp-Craig captures the essence of a true engineer: "I really want to make things, I really want to build things, I really want to investigate this world that isn't, that's made by man". This professional drive is expressed by ENG2-Mike who talks about "living and breathing" a project (as opposed to a '9-5 job'), because you (the engineer) are excited about it and want to make it work.</p>
<p><i>'We simulate and model with graphs/Solve problems with applied maths.'</i></p>	<p>Engineers are problem solvers who apply the principles of science and mathematics. In ENG6emp-Paul's words, "an engineering project is the ways and means by which some other end is achieved". In problem-solving, modelling and simulation have emerged as a signature engineering trait which I discuss in sub-section 6.2.1.1.</p>

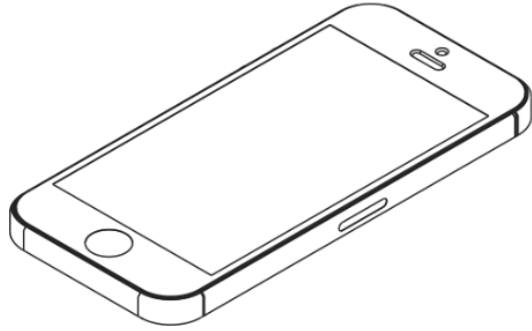
# 3. Two cases / two poems

- **Your response?**
- **Whose voice/s?**
- **Form: poetic devices?**
- **Meaning: signature characteristics of engineering and management?**

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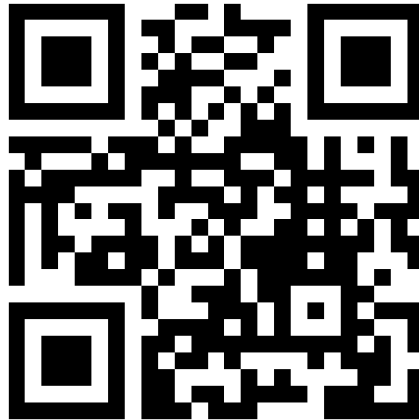


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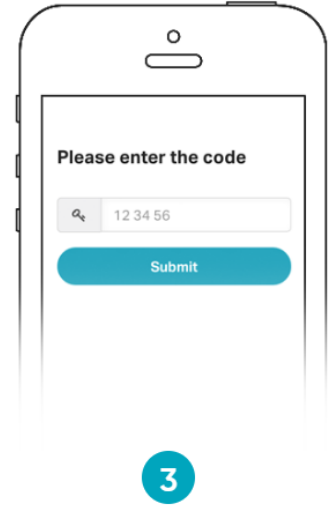
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**'1=I thought...'**

**'2=I felt...'**



# Management

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I can slowly rise  
Or to be a manager  
if management is for me  
I can decide early

ladder.  
on the

and rise

and rise

I can slowly rise

Collect-  
Analyse-  
Interpret-  
Communicate.

As long as  
I am  
adaptable,  
resilient,  
dynamic, with  
new ideas  
and know that the  
world revolves  
around the £,  
I can!

My currency is information & data.

Collect-  
Analyse-  
Interpret-  
Communicate.

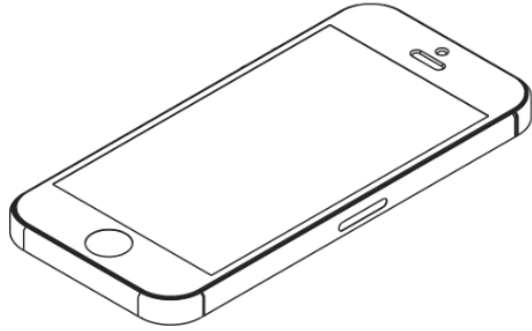




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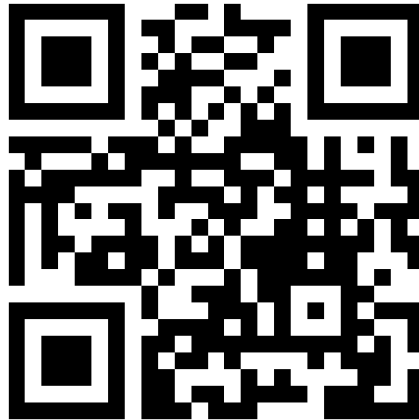


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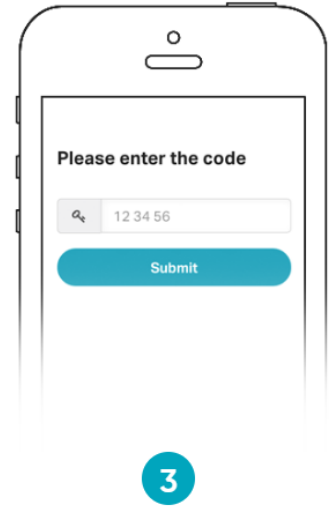
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3



Enter the code 84 75 67 and vote!

**'1=I thought...'**

**'2=I felt...'**

# 4. How did the poems work? Benefits? Challenges?

# Both poems: what worked

- Stimulated new ideas and insights (Cahnmann 2003).
- Gives voice to participants (Edwards & Weller 2015; Byrne 2017).
- More powerful, condensed form of presenting data (Byrne 2017).
- Engages both feeling and intellect (Spindler 2008).

# Engineering poem: what worked 1

'Poems, surrounded by space and weighted by silence, break through the noise to present an essence.'

(Leavy 2009, p.63 quoted in Byrne 2017)

Captures essence of engineering as a discipline: 'we', rhymes: echo recurring words (SP-3)

Decentres the texts of researcher and the participants. (Rath 2001);

# Management poem: what worked

- Brings out salient aspect ('I' versus 'we') via graphic form **1**
- Led to novel insight about signature pedagogy of management



# Management poem: what did not work

Fewer voices  
More linear?

More interpretative?  
Impartial? (Gallagher 2011)

Bias in relation  
to engineering?

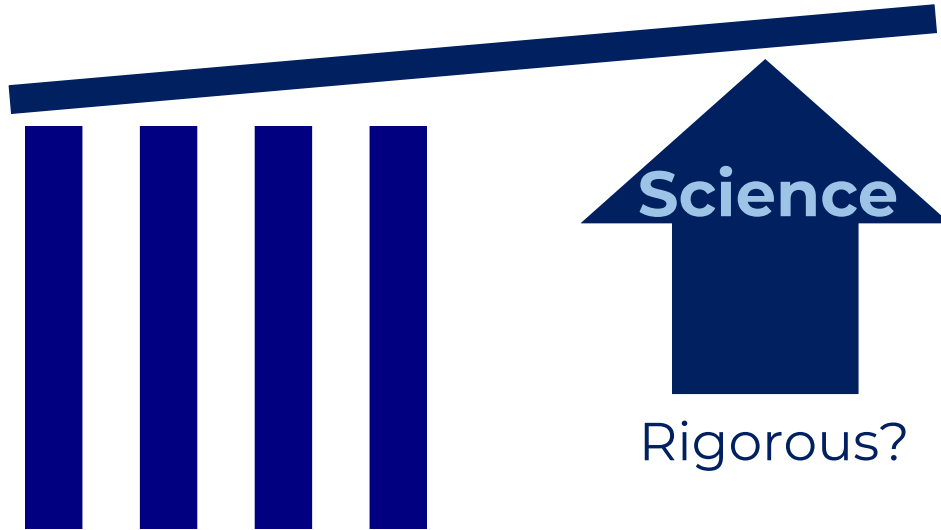


BUT difficulties reflect exactly my finding  
(i.e. management ~ not a unified discipline)

# 5. Considerations

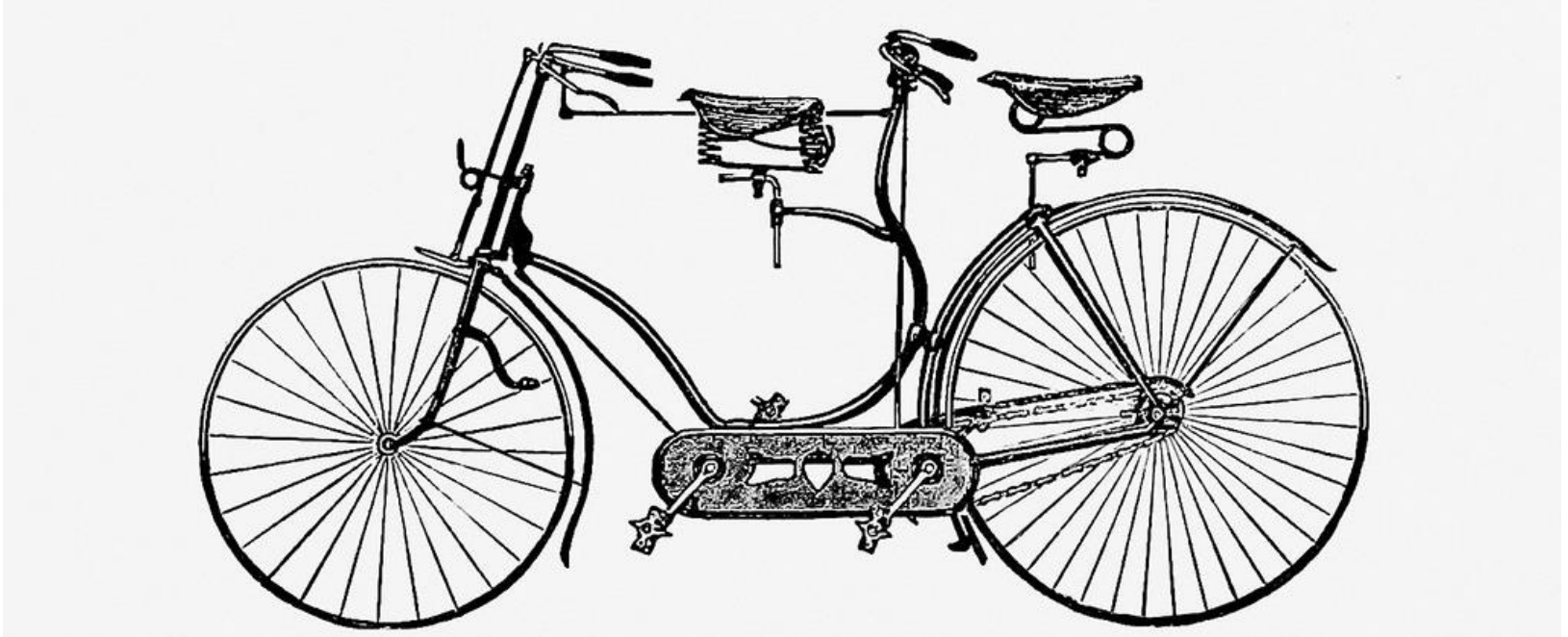


Playful,  
serendipitous



# Poetic representation does not replace the due analytic process

(DeHart 2019)



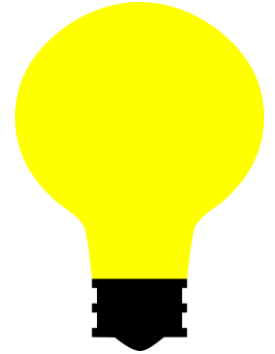
Analytic play 'expands ways of knowing'

(DeHart 2019, quoting Ellingson 2013, p.414).

# Poetic representation: Art versus and Science?

“attention to resonance, form, substance and  
the interplay between form and meaning,  
provide an alternative way  
to assess rigour and relevance”

(Spindler 2008)



~[multimodality]: meaning-making comes from  
freedom and constraint

(Kress&Leeuwen 2006, Jewitt 2009; Mavers 2009)



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Questions?  
Thank **you**

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