

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOGUE	1
CHAPTER ONE	
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	
<i>Summary</i>	3
1. TALUM: a general introduction	4
2. A certain type of TALUM research	6
3. The TALUM studies the book draws on	9
CHAPTER TWO	
METHOD, PROCESS AND PRESENTATION	
<i>Summary</i>	15
1. Data samples and M	16
2. The dialogic format	
The Narrative Approach	18
From interview transcripts to Dialogue: an application of the Narrative Approach	24
3. Style, format and thematic breakdown of Chapters 3 – 8	29
NOTE TO READER: A RECOMMENDATION ON HOW TO READ CHAPTERS 3-8	39
CHAPTER THREE	
THE ENCOUNTER WITH FORMAL MATHEMATICAL REASONING: CONCEPTUALISING ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND ENACTING ITS TECHNIQUES	
<i>Summary</i>	41
<i>Episodes</i>	
1. The tension between familiar (numerical, concrete) and unfamiliar (rigorous, abstract): resorting to the familiarity of number	42
2. The tension between general and particular:	48
Constructing examples	49
Applying the general to the particular	51
3. Using definitions towards the construction of mathematical arguments:	
Weaving the use of definitions into the construction of a mathematical argument	57
Making the fine choice between algebraic manipulation and employment of a definition	60
4. Logic as building block of mathematical arguments: reconciling with inconclusiveness	64

5. Proof by Contradiction	
Spotting contradiction	70
Syndrome of the Obvious	79
6. Proof by Mathematical Induction: from $n$ to $n+1$	83
7. Proof by Counterexample: the variable effect of different types of counterexample	89
<i>Special Episodes</i>	
1. School Mathematics, UK	93
2. Inequalities	102
3. Mathematical reasoning in the context of Group Theory	103
4. Algebra / Geometry	106
CHAPTER FOUR	
MEDIATING MATHEMATICAL MEANING	
THROUGH VERBALISATION, SYMBOLISATION AND VISUALISATION	
<i>Summary</i>	111
<i>Episodes</i>	
0. To appear and to be:	
Conquering the ‘genre’ speech of university mathematics	112
1. Strings of Symbols and Gibberish – Symbolisation and Efficiency	120
Desperate juggling of axioms and random mathematics	121
To-ing and fro-ing between mathematics and language	125
2. Premature Compression:	
Why is $\det(aI_n) = a^n$ true?	134
Why is $xox = xox^{-1} \Rightarrow x = x^{-1}$ true?	136
3. Visualisation and the role of diagrams	139
4. Undervalued or Absent Verbalisation	
and the Integration of Words, Symbols and Diagrams	151
<i>Special Episodes</i>	
1. The Group Table	152
<i>Out-takes</i>	
1. Typed Up	159
CHAPTER FIVE	
THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE CONCEPT OF FUNCTION	
<i>Summary</i>	161
<i>Episodes</i>	
1. Concept Images and Concept Definition	
Domineering presences (function-as-formula),	
conspicuous absences (domain / range)	162
The Students’ Turbulent Relationship with the Concept Definition	166
2. Relationship with Graphs: Attraction, Repulsion, Unease and Uncertainty	168

3. The Troubling Duality at the Heart of a Concept: Function as Process, Function as Object	172
<i>Special Episodes</i>	
1. The Tremendous Function-Lookalike That is Tanx	176
2. Polynomials and the Deceptive Familiarity of Essentially Unknown Objects	177
<i>Out-takes</i>	
1. History Relived	179
2. Evocative Terms for 1-1 and Onto	180
3. $\mathbb{R}^{\mathbb{R}}$ : A Grotesque and Vulgar Symbol?	180
 CHAPTER SIX	
THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE CONCEPT OF LIMIT	
<i>Summary</i>	181
<i>Episodes</i>	
1. Beginning to Understand the Necessity For A Formal Definition of Convergence	182
2. Beyond the ‘Formalistic Nonsense’: Understanding the Definition of Convergence Through Its Verbalisation and Visualisation – Symbolisation As A Safer Route?	185
3. The Mechanics of Identifying and Proving A Limit In Search of $N$	193
Identifying the Limit of a Sequence	194
<i>Special Episodes</i>	
1. Ignoring the ‘Head’ of a Sequence	195
<i>Out-takes</i>	
1. $\geq$ or $> N$ ?	199
2. Series	200
3. Continuity and Differentiability	200
 CHAPTER SEVEN	
UNDERGRADUATE MATHEMATICS PEDAGOGY	
<i>Summary</i>	205
<i>Episodes</i>	
1. Interaction / Participation	
Enhancing students’ mathematical expression through interactive interrogation of their thinking	206
Building students’ understanding through ‘Socratic dialogue’	206
Facilitating students’ realisation of their responsibility towards their own learning	207
Benefiting from the rich environment of a one-to-one tutorial	208
Students’ resistance to participatory teaching	212
Conditioning interaction effectively	212
2. Introducing, contextualising the importance of new ideas	215
3. Concept Image Construction	217
4. Abstraction/Rigor Vs Concretisation, Intuition and Exemplification	

Abstraction	220
Formalism	
a. Fostering the significance of mathematical literacy	224
b. The fuzzy didactical contract of university mathematics	229
Numerical experiments	234
Pictures	
a. The pedagogical potential, and the strongly personal nature, of pictures	237
b. Building students' understanding of convergence through the use of visual representations	238
c. Strengthening students' understanding of injective and surjective functions using Venn diagrams	239
d. Strengthening students' understanding of functional properties through construction and examination of function graphs	240
e. Negotiating meanings and appropriateness of pictures as a means of strengthening students' concept images in Group Theory	241
The 'toolbox' perspective	247
The skill and art in trial-and-error: making appropriate / clever choices when deciding the steps of a proof	248
<i>Special Episodes</i>	
1. Teaching without examples	250
2. Do not Teach Indefinite Integration	251
3. Teaching of functions, process – object, polynomials	253
4. Rules of attraction	254
5. Content coverage	255
<i>Out-takes</i>	
1. Does learning happen anyway?	255
CHAPTER EIGHT	
FRAGILE, YET CRUCIAL:	
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MATHEMATICIANS AND RESEARCHERS IN MATHEMATICS EDUCATION	
<i>Summary</i>	257
<i>Episodes</i>	
1. Benefits	
Benefits from using mathematics education research	258
Benefits from engaging with mathematics education research	260
2. Reflection and critique of the practices of RME	
– there's something about the way you...	
Do Research (an evaluation of Qualitative Inquiry and conditions under which it could work for mathematicians)	
a. ...currently	264
b. ... and other ways you could be doing it!	273

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

xiii

Theorise (or: on the R C Moore diagram)	276
Write up	280
Disseminate	281
<i>Special Episodes</i>	
1. The Reviews	285
EPILOGUE	293
POST-SCRIPT Amongst Mathematicians: <i>Making of, Coming to be</i>	297
<i>Beginnings...</i>	297
<i>Initial proposal</i>	299
<i>Flash forward...</i>	302
<i>Back to initial planning</i>	304
<i>A modified proposal</i>	304
<i>First trials and reviews</i>	308
BIBLIOGRAPHY	311
THEMATIC INDEX: <i>Mathematical Topics</i>	333
THEMATIC INDEX: <i>Learning and Teaching</i>	335
AUTHOR INDEX	337