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Assess Research Quality

Having to explain my collage to my classmates really started the questioning process of what did I ultimately hope to find from this project and how did I envision getting there. Critical questions about my possible methods were key in helping me examine what I was planning to do.

—Jennifer A. M. O’Looney (2006),
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CHAPTER DESCRIPTION

This chapter offers a discussion about the need to collect multiple and different sources of data to improve the quality of research. Critical friends create a prism effect and serve to present alternative points of view and interpretations of your data. Issues of transparency, validation and trustworthiness, reliability, and generalizability are addressed in this chapter. A detailed outline and rubric is provided for your self-assessment and your critical friend assessment of how well you addressed the Five Foci or the self-study methodological components in your research.

◆ The chapter offers guidelines for assessing your study with a discussion of the role that a validation group can play in that process.

I sit at my computer, plug in my headphones, and sign on to Skype. I’m excited to see that Hafdís, Mary, and Jennifer are also signed on. Hafdís connects us on a four-way conference call, and the fun begins. I hear the phone ring and see the phone receiver icon flashing on my computer screen. I press the icon and say hello. Across three continents, we gather to talk about our research and celebrate our efforts as four women working to make a difference in teacher education.

We send files ahead of time through e-mail and also through Skype during our bimonthly meetings. During the development of an electronic survey, we send tracked edits to each other to assess