1 **Context**

2   This data sample includes nanofiction stories from four parents of Black sons with Autism

3 Spectrum Disorder (ASD), who have received their diagnosis within the last five years. I

4 personally invited four parents representing three prior students of mine to participate in this data

5 collection. Via an informal Zoom meet-up, I defined nanofiction ("as close as you can get to 55

6 words") and explained that I would show them examples unrelated to the prompts they would be

7 given, to get an idea and feel for nanofiction. Potential authors were informed that they would

8 have 20 minutes per prompt and would be given three different prompts that centered around *the*

9 *diagnosis, their son's strengths* and *their hopes and prayers for their African American/Black* son

10 with a disability. The parents/authors were assured that their original pieces would not be used for

11 publication, although, in transparency, I shared with the future narrators that is a future goal.

12   Once the parents gave a verbal commitment, we took a 5-minute break and then began the

13 writing session. I divided each of the four authors into a breakout room, set a visual timer for 20

14 minutes and screen shared the definition of nanofiction with the four elements their short story

15 should include (character, setting, conflict, and resolution) and the first prompt, *Take me back to*

16 *the day/time period that you received the _____'s* diagnosis. *What were your thoughts, feelings or*

17 *emotions after you heard the words 'Autism Spectrum Disorder'?* This process was followed for

18 prompt two, *"Describe _____'s strengths and what makes _____ special."*, and prompt

19 three, *"What are your hopes and dreams for _____."* The authors shared their stories

20 orally and typed their stories up and emailed them to me.

21   For the purposes of this structural analysis, I will be using the portion of data from prompt

22 one: *the diagnosis.*

23

24 **Data Analysis**

25 **Narrative 1**

26   My initial reactions were guilt, fear, blame, and anger. You see carrying Preston was a

27 medical miracle, being diagnosed with uterine fibroids that had to be treated with several meds

28 while pregnant and the pain that ensued for months were at times unbearable. I thought it was

29 something I did. Then I was afraid of what would this mean for my son moving forward in school.

30 What would normal be for him/us? I was so afraid of not knowing so I knew I had to research,

31 educate, and advocate. (KW_*Receiving Preston's Diagnosis*_SA, Pos. 1-9)

32

33 **Coding for Narrative 1:** Labov's Approach to Structural Analysis

OR	1	**Receiving Preston's Diagnosis**
AB	2	My initial reactions were guilt, fear, blame, and anger.
	3	You see carrying Preston was a medical miracle, being diagnosed with uterine fibroids that had
CA	4	to be treated with several meds while pregnant and the pain that ensued for months were at
	5	times unbearable.
EV	6	I thought it was something I did.
	7	Then I was afraid of what would this mean for my son moving forward in school.
CA EV	8	What would normal be for him /us?
RE EV CODA	9	I was so afraid of not knowing so I knew I had to research, educate, and advocate.

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38 **Narrative 2:**

Stage1: Identifying the narrative (the entire excerpt.)

Opposition: Eventful/medically monitored pregnancy v. uneventful/healthy pregnancy

Opposition: My fault v. my lot.

Opposition: Ability/progress vs. Preston's progress.

Opposition: Society and school's definition of normal and typical vs. Preston's ability.

Opposition: Education v. ignorance of the disability.

Stage2: The Storyline: This is a narrative about KW initial reactions upon receiving the ASD diagnosis. The author

Stage1: Identifying the narrative (the entire excerpt.)
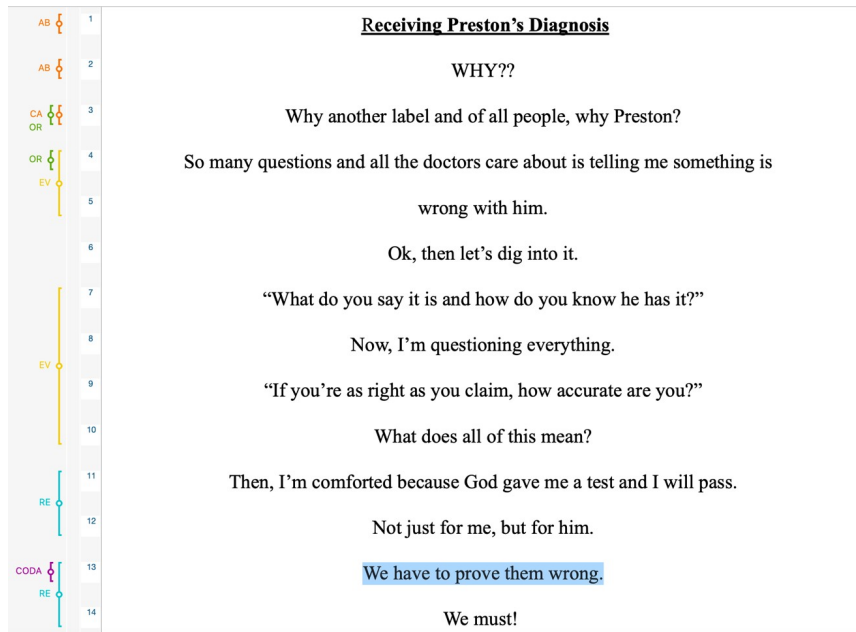
The Storyline: This is a narrative about CW's initial reactions upon receiving the ASD diagnosis. CW questions

3

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

39   WHY?? Why another label and of all people, why Preston? So many questions and all the doctors care about

40   is telling me something is wrong with him. Ok, then let's dig into it. "What do you say it is and how do you know he

41   has it?" Now, I'm questioning everything. "If you're as right as you claim, how accurate are you?" What does all of

42   this mean? Then, I'm comforted because God gave me a test and I will pass. Not just for me, but for him, We have to

43   prove them wrong, We must. (CW_Receiving Preston's Diagnosis_SA, Pos. 1-14)

44

45   **Coding for Narrative 2:** Labov's Approach to Structural Analysis

46

		Receiving Preston's Diagnosis
AB	1	
AB	2	WHY??
CA OR	3	Why another label and of all people, why Preston?
OR EV	4	So many questions and all the doctors care about is telling me something is
	5	wrong with him.
	6	Ok, then let's dig into it.
	7	"What do you say it is and how do you know he has it?"
EV	8	Now, I'm questioning everything.
	9	"If you're as right as you claim, how accurate are you?"
	10	What does all of this mean?
RE	11	Then, I'm comforted because God gave me a test and I will pass.
	12	Not just for me, but for him.
CODA RE	13	We have to prove them wrong.
	14	We must!

47   **Narrative 3:**

48   My son Kayden was diagnosed with Autism by his school team when he was 10. I didn't

49   want to believe it, because doesn't everyone have quirks nowadays? But then everything began to

50   make sense: the meltdowns, the lack of focus, the socialization issues. I finally had answers and I

51   wanted to help my son. (NJ_*The Diagnosis*_SA, Pos. 1-5)

52   **Coding for Narrative 3:** Labov's Approach to Structural Analysis

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Margin annotations:

Conflict: Why Preston v. Someone else
Kia Rel
[14/14]

Conflict: something is wrong v. he's reaching developmental
[14/14]

Questioning v. acceptance
Kia Rel
[14/14]

Conflict: accurate diagnosis v. chance it's something else
[14/14]

Conflict: unrest v. comfort
Kia Rel
[14/14]

Conflict: Pass God's test v. Fail Preston
Kia Rel
[14/14]

Conflict: Prove them wrong v. Accept the diagnosis
Kia Rel
[14/14]

Conflict: Craig & Katrina v. the experts
Kia Rel
[14/14]

Stage1: Identifying the narrative (the entire narrative)
[14/14]

Stage2: The Storyline: This is a narrative about NJ's initial reactions upon
[14/14]

Conflict: late diagnosis v. early diagnosis
Kia Rel
[14/14]

Conflict: denial v. acceptance
Kia Rel
[14/14]

Conflict: typical v. atypical behaviors
Kia Rel
[14/14]

"bad behavior" receiving punishment v. characteristics of a
[14/14]

OR, OR, OR, AB	1	My son Kayden was diagnosed with Autism by his school team when he was 10.
	2	I didn't want to believe it, because doesn't everyone have quirks nowadays?
EV, CA	3	But then everything began to make sense: the meltdowns, the lack of focus, the socialization
	4	issues.
EV, RE, CODA	5	I finally had answers and I wanted to help my son.

53

54 **Narrative 4:**

55 I wasn't shocked when I received the diagnosis of Autism from Kennedy Krieger. I was a little

56 relieved because while I felt like there was an issue with Angelo's development, there were others

57 around me who felt like I was being hypersensitive. To be honest, his diagnosis was something I

58 already knew. At the time, I was in school majoring in early education so I already knew a little bit

59 about Autism and the information I would read described what I was seeing or experiencing with

60 my child. Even with that sense of relief, I was overwhelmed too because I had so much to learn.

61 (CS_*The Diagnosis*_SA, Pos. 1-8)

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70 **Coding for Narrative 4:** Labov's Approach to Structural Analysis

OR AB	1	I wasn't shocked when I received the diagnosis of Autism from Kennedy Krieger.
OR CA	2	I was a little relieved because while I felt like there was an issue with Angelo's development,
CA	3	there were others around me who felt like I was being hypersensitive.
RE	4	To be honest, his diagnosis was something I already knew.
OR OR	5	At the time, I was in school majoring in early education so I already knew a little bit about
	6	Autism and the information I would read described what I was seeing or experiencing with my
EV	7	child.
CODA	8	Even with that sense of relief, I was overwhelmed too because I had so much to learn.

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72

73   **Patterns, Distributions and Arrangement of Codes**

74   When analyzing the narratives, as the authors reflected on the *the diagnosis*, prominent in

75   their stories was the location, the person from whom they received the diagnosis, and the

76   complicating actions. Because the author's shared their stories orally and then wrote them down, I

77   thought this analysis type to be fitting to the oral component of the narrative. Both event-centered

78   and text-centered, this approach presented, well, temporally or causally ordered events.

79   While all of the narratives had a point of resolution, for many, the resolve was not acceptance of

80   the diagnosis, but an acceptance of now knowing the *why* (behaviors) behind the *what* (ASD

81   diagnosis).

82   The coding did not fall in a neat linear or sequential fashion and progress from abstract to

83   orientation to complicating action to evaluation then resolution, and finally coda. The lived

84   experiences were peaks and valleys of emotion and resolution, so coding was eventful and

85   introspective. Even for the narratives that were not titled, the nanofiction did begin with an

86   orientation, as if the author wanted to invite the reader into their space and their experience of

87   where they received *the diagnosis*. Each narrative ended with CODA but sometimes the CODA

88   fell in the middle of the narrative and inclined or declared to the reader, 'Now what do I do?' or

89   'This is what we/I must do!' The CODAs were powerful statements of resolve and commitment to

90   accept, fight and love their sons.

91   **Reflection**

92   For this analysis, I selected Labov's Approach to structural analysis. The six main parts of

93   Labov's model **abstract; orientation; complicating action; evaluation; resolution; and coda**

94   were present in the narratives. The coding system is defined as abstract **(AB)** summarizing the

95   point of the narrative; complicating action **(CA)** describing the sequence of actions, turning points,

96   crisis or carrying the action forward; evaluation **(EV)** the narrator's commentary on complicating

97   action; Orientation **(OR)** is the time, place, situation, participants and provides information about

98   the setting and characters; Resolution **(RE)** is the resolve of the narrative and coda **(CODA)** ends

99   the story and returns the listener to the present.

100   I vacillated between Labov and Knight and Sweeny's approach to structural analysis, so

101 you will see notes in the margins indicating the identification of the narrative, storyline and

102 oppositions. Syllogisms and enthymemes were identified, but not included in this reflection. The

103 vacillation between approaches did help me to hear the author's voice and to mentally make

104 explicit what was implicit.

105   Some of the conflicts that arose from the narrator were typical v. atypical, acceptance v.

106 denial, late diagnosis v. early diagnosis, acceptance v. prove them wrong, my kid v. someone else,

107 and my fault v. my lot. The authors are at different levels of awareness as they all try to make

108 meaning of the Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis. Though evident to me, through coding and

109 analysis, the narrator's were not yet aware of the explicit structures of understanding ableism and

110   what society defines as normal, parsing the rage a Black man feels when a white man tells him

111   what he (or his son) can't do, the realization or lack thereof that disability does not equal

112   imperfection, and the shame and guilt that Black women feel when their bodies fail them.

113   Overall, I felt that this form of analysis was powerful. By reflecting on the structures and

114   intentionality of the stories, patters and relationships emerged. The themes of ableism, guilt, anger

115   and resolve were at times overwhelming, as I momentarily lived these courageous parents' lived

116   experiences. I look forward to broadening this work and continuing to use a form of structural

117   analysis in the process.