

Themes: Practitioner Research, Educational Effectiveness and Improvement, Research Methodology in Education.

Title: Living Educational Theory Research CPD: Practitioners researching to improve the effectiveness of their practice and professionalism as values-inspired practitioners.

A workshop presentation by Jack Whitehead and Marie Huxtable on the 14th September 2023 at the British Educational Research Association Conference in Manchester, UK.

Focus

The focus will be on professional practitioners developing their professionalism and realising their professional responsibilities through Living Educational Theory Research (Whitehead, 1989, 2019), to improve their values-laden praxis (Huxtable, 2012) and contribute to: the evolution of a professional international educational knowledgebase; the development of educational practice, policy and theory within their employing organisation/institution and; local, national and international discourses concerning the development and implementation of educational policies to have a profound and positive influence on society.

At a conceptual level Living Educational Theory Research is a well-established distinct paradigm and methodology. At a practical level Living Educational Theory Research is a form of professional practitioner educational research engaged in by a practitioner to realise their professional responsibilities to hold themselves to account for their practice and contribute the values-laden knowledge they generate in the process to take their field forward with values which carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

The focus of the workshop will be on participants becoming acquainted with a Living Educational Theory Research approach to Continual Professional Development (CPD) and resources they can access for use subsequently.

Suitability

The session format will be consistent with the principles of what constitutes educational practice. Participants will be invited into an educational research conversation to share and develop understandings of education as a life-long, values-laden practical process and the implications for improving their educational practice and CPD and that of fellow professional practitioners.

During the workshop participants will:

- Be introduced to Living Educational Theory Research as a transformational methodology and method for continual professional development and learning where they can access web-based resources. These include an archive of valid accounts of Living Educational Theory Research created by practitioners working in diverse fields of practice and contexts, and numerous living-educational-theories that have been accredited at Masters and Doctoral level by universities around the world. The resources also include examples of how Living Educational Theory Researchers have integrated knowledge created through education research and scholarship, and various research methods, such as those developed in Action Research, Narrative Enquiry and Auto-ethnography.
- Explore issues and questions, such as, 'What kind of data can help me to make judgments on the quality and effectiveness of my practice and clarify and communicate my embodied ontological values that form my explanatory principles and living standards of judgment?', 'What about feasibility, validity and rigour of Living Educational Theory Research?', and 'How can I use digitalised visual data to help me recognise and communicate the values which enable me to explain and evaluate the effectiveness of my practice?'
- Cooperate to extend their own educational research literacy (Boyd, Szplit & Zbróg, 2021, 2022) and that of the group. This literacy involves both understanding the contributions that research can make to improving practice and to generating a values-laden explanation of educational influences in one's own learning, in the learning of others and

- in the learning of the social formations that form the context of the practice (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2022)
- Be encouraged to contribute to dialogue with one or two others and the whole group to begin to clarify their practice, context and formulate an initial question to research which will help them improve the effectiveness of their practice and professionalism. Shown how to explicate the unique constellation of values, which provide their professional motivations, explanations and evaluative standards for their professional practice. The dialogues will include a focus on **the rigour and validity** (Habermas, 1976, pp. 1-2) of the explanations of educational influences in learning. They will emphasise the importance of enhancing objectivity, based on intersubjective criticism, with the mutual rational controls of critical discussion (Popper, 1975, p. 45; Kok, 1991).
 - Learn about research methods developed by Living Educational Theory Researchers, such as 'empathetic resonance' to analyse digital data (Whitehead, 2010) and 'living-posters' (Huxtable, 2023), and approaches used to test and enhance the rigour (Winter, 1989) and validity (Habermas, 1976) of Living Educational Theory Research.
 - Be introduced to an international community of like-minded professionals through their living-posters at <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2021.pdf> . Learning how they can contribute to the global educational knowledgebase and helping others do so too. Learning about the significance of their valid accounts of their Living Educational Theory Research to contribute for the realisation of BERA's "... vision is for educational research to have a profound and positive influence on society. **The significance of the workshop for practice, policy and theory** will be focused on the spreading influence of a Living Educational Theory approach to professional development (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2016; Huxtable & Whitehead, 2022, Whitehead, 2023).

References

- Boyd, P., Szplit, A. & Zbróg, Z. (Eds) (2021) *Developing Teachers' Research Literacy*. Wydawnictwo LIBRON
- Boyd, P., Szplit, A. & Zbróg, Z. (Eds) (2022). *Developing teachers' research literacy: International Perspectives*. Wydawnictwo LIBRON – Filip Lohner.
- Habermas, J. (1976) *Communication and the evolution of society*. London : Heinemann
- Huxtable, M. (2012) *How do I Evolve Living-Educational-Theory Praxis in Living-boundaries?* PhD, University of Bath. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/living/mariehuxtable.shtml>
- Huxtable, M. (2023) *Homepage of Living Posters*. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2023.pdf>
- Huxtable, M. & Whitehead, J. (2022) *How can the living-educational-theories of Teacher Educators promote teaching and learning for an inclusive, interconnected world?* Presented to the ATEE 2022 Winter Conference in Sestri Levante, Italy 20-22 April 2022. Available from <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/mhfw2022atee200422.pdf>
- Kok, P. (1991) *rigur in an action research account* . Presented to the International Conference of the Classroom Action Research Network, University of Nottingham, 19-21 April 1991. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/peggyrigour.pdf>
- Popper, K. (1975) *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, London; Hutchinson & Co.

Shaik-Abdullah, S., Noor, M. S. A. M. & Whitehead, J. (2023) Delving into Living Educational Theory (LET) research: A conversation with Jack Whitehead. *Malaysian Journal of Action Research*, 1(1). 11-22. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/MARNManuscript.pdf>

Whitehead, J. (1989) Creating a living educational theory from questions of the kind, "How do I improve my practice?". Published in the *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 19(1); 41-52. Retrieved from <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/livtheory.html>

Whitehead, J. (2010) Meanings of Empathetic Resonance and Validity in Visual Narratives: A passion for compassion and loving what we are doing. Retrieved from <https://actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwempatheticresonancepaperopt.pdf>

Whitehead, J. (2019) Creating a living-educational-theory from questions of the kind, 'how do I improve my practice?' 30 years on with Living Theory research. *Educational Journal of Living Theories*, 14(2); 1-19. Retrieved from <https://ejolts.net/node/344>

Winter, R. (1989) *Learning from Experience*. Falmer; London.