

## **Evidence-based practice, pedagogic research**

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### **Abstract**

Focusing on pedagogic research into the question, 'How do I improve my pedagogic practice?', the presentation will include evidence-based explanations of educational influences from practitioner-researchers who have asked, researched and answered this question. These explanations are offered in the form of multi-media narratives that draw insights from self-study, action research and auto-ethnographic methodologies. The idea of a living-educational-theory as an explanation of educational influences in the individual's learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations, will be used to show how the ontological and relational values a pedagogue uses to give meaning and purpose to their lives can be used as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences. The presentation will draw insights from evidence-based practice from global contexts to explore the potential of Living Theory research as a social movement for enhancing the flow of values and understandings that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

### **Introduction**

In September 1967, as I was teaching my very first science lesson as a new teacher at Langdon Park School in London's Tower Hamlets I found myself thinking – 'I've got to do this better, How do I improve what I'm doing?'. Some 51 years later I'm still asking what appears to be the same question, 'How do I improve what I'm doing?' but the meanings of 'how', 'I', 'improve' and 'doing' have been transformed through the educational influences of contexts, the ideas of others and reflection. Through sharing some of the evidence from my learning from these educational influences in my pedagogic practice I am hoping that you will find the evidence useful in improving your own professional, pedagogic practice and in enhancing your contributions to the educational knowledge-base of our profession.

I'll begin by focusing on educational pedagogic research into the question, 'How do I improve my pedagogic practice?'. I'll then move on to evidence-based practice and explanations of educational influences from practitioner-researchers. This is followed by explanations in multi-media narratives that draw insights from self-study, action research and auto-ethnographic methodologies. The explanations are grounded in classrooms with 10 year olds in Croatia and 6 year olds, 17 year olds and Ph.D. researchers in the UK. I then focus on how the ontological and relational values a pedagogue uses to give meaning and purpose to their lives can be used as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences with living-posters. Finally, I draw insights from evidence-based practice from global contexts to explore the potential of Living Theory research as a social movement for enhancing the flow of values and understandings that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. This includes the use of living-posters and evidence of sustaining educational

conversations with an example from the evidence-based practice and pedagogic research of Living Theory researcher in the Network Educational Action Research Ireland.

### 1) Focusing on educational pedagogic research into the question, 'How do I improve my pedagogic practice?'

I'll begin by clarifying my meaning of educational pedagogic research by agreeing with Lin Norton (2009) that pedagogical action research is a sustainable form of **educational research** (p.57) and that research means not just the systematic collection, interpretation and dissemination of one's findings, but also systematically studying action research principles so that **educational theory** continues to grow (p. 59):

The fundamental purpose of pedagogical action research is to systemically investigate one's own teaching/learning facilitation practice, with the dual aim of improving that practice and contributing to theoretical knowledge in order to benefit student learning. (p. 59).

I also agree with Arnold and Norton (2018) that action research is a type of inquiry that is:

- Practical as it involves making change to practice;
- Theoretical as it is informed by theory and can generate new insights;
- Collaborative as it encourages engagement with others in the process;
- Reflexive as it requires practitioner researchers to keep their own knowledge, values, and professional activities under review;
- Contextual as it acknowledges institutional, national, historical and societal influences. (p. 9)

What I now want to do is to clarify my meanings of educational pedagogic research, living-educational-theory and evidence-based practice.

The significance of placing educational before pedagogic research is that the phrase includes in the meaning of pedagogy not only teaching and learning. It highlights the importance of accounting for one's research as educational. By this I mean that the research not only involves learning but that the learning includes values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. There is much agreement that education is a value-laden practical activity. The way I use 'educational' is to refer to learning with values. What counts as values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity is problematic and open to question. What I do is to hold myself accountable to public criticism for claiming that my values carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. I do this by opening my explanations of educational influences in learning, to public criticism. In this process I am influenced by Popper's insight:

I have since generalized this formulation; for inter-subjective *testing* is merely a very important aspect of the more general idea of inter-subjective *criticism*, or in other words, of the idea of mutual rational control by critical discussion." (Popper, 1975, p.44)

In my initial studies of educational theory during 1968-72 I was influenced by the 'disciplines' approach to educational theory. In this approach educational theory was constituted by the disciplines of education such as the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. By 1972 I had rejected the approach on the grounds that no discipline of education, either individually or collectively could produce a valid explanation of my educational influences in my own learning or in the learning of my pupils. It wasn't that I rejected insights from the disciplines of education. I rejected the disciplines approach to educational theory. This rejection led me to become a Lecturer in Education in 1973 at the University of Bath to see if I could contribute to a reformulation of educational theory.

By 1985 I had developed the idea that a living-educational-theory was an individual's explanation of their educational influence in their own learning. This was more fully worked out in my 1989 publication on Creating a living educational theory from questions of the kind, "How do I improve my practice?" (Whitehead, 1985, 1989). This idea of a living-educational-theory is very different from traditional views about the nature of Theory. In traditional views an explanation for an individual's educational influence is **derived** from the general conceptual frameworks of a theory. In a living-educational-theory the theory is the explanation **generated** by the individual to explain their educational influences.

In focusing on evidence-based practice I want to be clear that I am not using this practice to mean that it provides a framework for understanding the role of research in educational practice that 'not only restricts the scope of decision making to questions about effectivity and effectiveness, but that also restricts the opportunities for participation in educational decision making' (Biesta 2007, p.1).

My meaning of evidence-based practice includes Biesta's view of interrelations among research, policy, and practice that 'keep in view education as a thoroughly moral and political practice that requires continuous democratic contestation and deliberation' (ibid).

I am claiming that evidence-based explanations of educational influences in learning with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity includes this view of education and educational practices.

I believe all educational researchers who are interested in evidence-based practice and pedagogic research should engage with de Sousa Santos' (2014) insights on Epistemicide and Hawkesworth's ideas on embodied power and on the importance of demystifying disembodied politics. I give more details of their work in section 3. At this point I want to highlight Santos' point that Western academic traditions could be killing off the knowledges which contain important insights from indigenous knowledges and Hawkesworth's point that these traditions could be contributing to *not seeing* processes of gendering as integral to State enactments of embodied work.

I'll begin the narrative of my educational learning with evidence-based practice, in generating my living-educational-theory, from some visual data from my classroom practice in 1972, when I was Head of the Science Department at Erkenwald Comprehensive School in Barking, London. The Inspectorate had provided me with a video-camera and recorder and asked me to explore its educational potential in the Science Department. The first thing I did

was to video-tape myself in a class in which I believed that I had established enquiry learning, in the sense that the pupils were asking me their questions and I was responding. My shock on seeing the video was in my experience of myself as a 'living contradiction'. I believed that I had established enquiry learning, in my practice I was given the pupils their questions. The visual data enabled me to see myself as a 'living contradiction' and to respond to this by focusing on eliciting the questions from my pupils.

My learning about evidence-based practice in pedagogic research now moves to 1976 when I was a Lecturer in Education at the University of Bath, participating in and evaluating the Schools Council 11-14 year olds Mixed Ability Exercise in Science with 6 teachers over some eighteen months as we worked and researched to improve pupils' learning and our own.

I submitted my first draft evaluation report to the teachers in March 1976. I was surprised when they said that they could understand the academic models I had used to explain their practice and their learning, but that they could not see themselves in the report. I used the following models of innovation, change in teacher and learning and evaluation to explain and evaluate our educational influences:

## PART II INTERPRETATION OF THE PROJECT

### **As a synthesis of four models of innovation**

- a) Social Interaction/Diffusion
- b) Research Development Dissemination
- c) Problem Solving
- d) Creativity
- e) The Mixed Ability Model

### **As a change in the teaching learning process**

**Formal Instruction - Informal Instruction - Discovery - Inquiry**

### **As a model of evaluation**

- a) The democratic model of evaluation studies
- b) A general research strategy
- c) An aid for improving learning
  - Norm, criterion and illuminative evaluation procedures
- d) A new view of the curriculum (Whitehead, 1976a, p.1)

The teachers asked me to go back to the data and reconstruct the report so that they could see themselves in it. Here is the new introduction:

Many teachers are experiencing serious problems in their attempts to improve educational standards in mixed ability groups. This report shows how one group of teachers have tackled their problems and:

(1) created a network of in-service support (2) organised resources for enquiry learning (3) established a process of self-evaluation.

In tackling their problems, the teachers received one of the first local curriculum development grants from The Schools Council in, "The Swindon Area Mixed Ability Exercise in Science".

Whilst this report is addressed to teachers who are improving learning in mixed ability science groups, it is hoped that other teachers, educational researchers, and providers of in-service support will find, in sections 2 & 3, useful guidelines for action.

The report begins with statements from teachers in mixed ability science lessons, of their problems and possible solutions. These problems included the improvement of relations between teachers and pupils and the organisation of resources for enquiry learning. In response to these problems, the network of in-service support, described in section 4, was created. This network involved a Resource Collection and Evaluation Service from Bath University and financial assistance from Wiltshire L.E.A. and The Schools Council.

A central focus in the report is the process of self-evaluation, by the teachers, of the relationship between what they intended to do and what they achieved in practice. The teachers were assisted, in this process of evaluation, by video tapes of their classroom practice and interview data on their own intentions and their pupils' responses. This information was provided by the Science Centre of Bath University. You will see that improvements in learning occurred through the creative and critical powers of individual teachers and a high degree of cooperative activity. If you feel that it may be helpful to share your problems with the individual teachers, their names and location are given on the back cover. Do please contact them. (Whitehead, 1976b, p.3).

This was the first time that I had explicated an action-reflection cycle in relation to the enquiry, "How do I improve what I am doing?". The teachers all agreed that this report was a valid explanation and evaluation of our educational influences. I now want to focus on the ideas of evidence-based practice and evidence-based explanations.

## **2) Evidence-based practice and explanations of educational influences from practitioner-researchers who have asked, researched and answered this question. 'How do I improve my pedagogic practice?'**

What I mean by evidence-based practice from a Living Theory perspective is that the practice is informed through asking, researching and answering a question of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?' Using action-reflection cycles of expressing concerns, imagining possibilities for improvement and choosing an action plan, acting and gathering data to make a judgement on the effectiveness of the actions, evaluating the effectiveness of the

actions, modified concerns, ideas and actions in the light of evaluations, the practitioner-researcher offers evidence-based explanations of educational influences in learning that are integrated within the evidence-based practice.

Evidence-based explanations have been produced by i) pedagogue Branko Bognar and Marica Zovko (2008) in their action research with 10 year pupils in Croatia; ii) with Joy Mounter in her living-theory research with 6 year pupils in the UK; iii) with Sally Cartwright in her living-theory research with 17 year old pupils; iv) with myself in evidence-based practice and pedagogic research in my doctoral supervision.

i) These explanations have been produced by Branko Bognar and Marica Zovko in their pedagogic research in Croatia with 10 year old pupils. Marica was the class teacher with Branko as the pedagogue. The video evidence from the pupils, included in the above paper, shows the pupils using action-reflection cycles to improve their learning and their use of their classmates as a validation group to evaluate the validity of the claims they are making.

Bognar and Zovko reveal and explain how ten-years-old pupils take over the whole processes of action research themselves. The pupils determined their own challenges with the aim of improving something important in their own lives. (ibid, p.1)

ii) Such an explanation has been produced by Joy Mounter (2007) in her master's unit on 'Understanding Learning and Learners assignment, can children carry out action research about learning, creating their own learning theory?'

The exciting thing is in sharing the journey with my class, they are exciting companions and look at the world through very different eyes. We talked about the research I am carrying out about learning. They were surprised and challenged me immediately, if I was writing about learning, didn't I need their help! From the tone of the comment child C couldn't even comprehend that I could write about learning without the classes help. It made me take a step back and look at learning in my classroom from a different perspective. Their ideas are thought provoking, challenge my thinking and help me to see as a learner through their eyes.

I am interested in the work of Branko Bognar who works with children in a class in Croatia focusing on the action research process, on creativity and on validity. I am interested whether this process has been combined with an exploration of themselves as individuals, as part of a learning community, as 'receivers' of learning in traditional roles and curriculum's. But perhaps the worrying part will be later in the process. Will this open the children to dissatisfaction for the system they find themselves? Will they have a 'student voice' to articulate their ideas and theories? Will tradition and results allow that voice to be heard? (p.3)

iii) Another evidence-based explanation of pedagogic practice. has been produced by Sally Cartwright (2008) in her work and research with 17 years in the enquiry, 'How can I enable the gifts and talents of my students to be in the driving seat of their own learning? '

Sally died at the age of 52 from a double brain tumour and I was honoured (Whitehead, 2015) to be asked to give the eulogy at the posthumous postgraduate award ceremony for Sally at the University of Bath in 2015 - See

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/sallycartwrightmastereducatorjw140415.pdf>

Here are the titles of Sally's Master's Units. You can access these from the above url.

- 1) GWIST Accredited Professional Development Programme. Educational Management – BANES, 2001.
- 2) How can I help my students understand and develop the skills of independent learning? 2007
- 3) A Pilot Project: The application of the TASC process across 5 subjects to Year 7 students
- 4) How can I enable the gifts and talents of my students to be in the driving seat of their own learning? 2008
- 5) How can leadership qualities improve my practice as a teacher? 2009
- 6) How can I research my own practice? 2010
- 7) A Critical Reflection on My Learning and Its Integration into My Professional Practice. 2010

I do hope that you will access unit 6 on 'How can I research my own practice?' as an exemplar of how to generate evidence-based practice in pedagogic research.

iv) I produced my own evidence-based explanation, in *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, (Whitehead, 1999) of my educational influence in my pedagogic practice in higher education as a doctoral supervisor of Kevin Eames (1995) enquiry *How do I, as a teacher and an educational action-researcher*. This explanation was grounded in three insights. I owe the first insight to Michael Polanyi (1958) as I was moving, in 1971, from the position of a positivist researcher committed to the disciplines approach to educational theory:

I followed Polanyi's decision to understand the world from my point of view, as a person claiming originality and exercising his judgement with universal intent. I decided to focus my educational enquiries on questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'. My own creativity enabled me to accept the truth of experiencing 'I' as a living contradiction in my enquiry. My understanding of the significance of including 'I' as a living contradiction in claims to educational knowledge emerged from understanding Ilyenkov's text on Dialectical Logic where he asked, *If an object is a living contradiction, what must be the thought (statement about the object) be which expresses it?* (1977, p. 320 ). By 'I' existing as a living contradiction I am meaning that 'I' hold together values which are mutually exclusive opposites. For example, I experience myself as a living contradiction in those moments when I am conscious of holding certain values whilst at the same

time denying them in my practice. It is an experience which all the teachers I work with recognise in their own lives. It does however, as Evans reports ( Evans, 1995, p. 232) take time and reflection for curriculum theorists to understand the significance of including 'I' as a living contradiction in their curriculum practices and in their claims to educational knowledge.

The second insight was to see that action-reflection cycles of the following form can emerge from questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', and provide a methodical approach to the curriculum enquiry:

- \* I experience a concern when my values are not being fully lived in my practice.
- \* I imagine what to do and form an action plan.
- \* I act and gather data which will enable me to judge the effectiveness of my actions in living my values more fully.
- \* I evaluate my action
- \* I modify my concerns, plans and actions in the light of my evaluations.

The third insight was to see that individuals necessarily create their own living curriculum theories as they describe and explain their own learning. These explanations can be communicated in their own unique form of representation and with their own constellation of values which make them uniquely themselves. (See the Theses of Eames, 1995; Evans, 1995; Holley, 1997; Hughes, 1996, 1998; Laidlaw, 1997; D'Arcy 1998 - from the Homepage, <http://www.actionresearch.net>). Each of these theses, which can be understood as a 'curriculum vitae' in the sense of the course of one's life, has been presented in a way which opens the explanations to public test using Habermas' (1976, pp.1-2) criteria of social validity. That is, we can ask of the explanations for the individual's learning:

- \* Are they comprehensible?
- \* Are the propositional assertions sufficiently justified with evidence?
- \* Is the value-base communicated clearly and justified?
- \* Is the account authentic?

### ***Claiming to know my educative influence with Kevin Eames***

On 17.12.91 and 19.12.91 Eames took part in three conversations which changed his ideas on how he regarded educational knowledge, and on how he saw it as a dialectical form of professional knowledge. The first conversation took place with ten people in a research group at Bath University. Eames had been invited to talk about his research into professional knowledge. He started his presentation by locating his account of the logic of education and curriculum theorising of the philosopher of education, Paul Hirst (Hirst & Peters, 1970).

Eames then gave a fifteen-minute summary of his work on dialectical logic and listed the following questions:

- \* *Is there evidence of dialogue?*
- \* *Is there evidence of contradiction?*



*\* Is there negation of the negations?*

*\* Is there a role for practice?*

And that's as far as he got. Here are the reasons he gave for abandoning the presentation at that point.

*As I was giving the presentation, the conviction that there was something wrong grew on me. I became increasingly aware that what I was saying missed the richness of the evidence I had been looking at ..... The OHTs (like the ones immediately above) were abstract, desiccated, lifeless - the opposite of what I felt (and had stated explicitly in the earlier chapters) that a dialectical process should be. So I stopped. I said:*

*The meaning of what I'm trying to sketch out cannot be contained within the propositional form of some guy standing in front of a machine and putting pictures on to a piece of paper. I suppose I was using a propositional form, but I feel that it's a most inadequate account of it so far.*

He then sat down and joined in the discussion which followed.

The discussion was taped, and Eames used the dialogue with his commentary to describe the ways in which he believes his understanding was changing. I want to stress that all the commentaries I included within the Whitehead, 1999, paper which follow the transcripts from the conversations are written by Eames and not by me. The extracts from his Ph.D. Thesis (Eames 1995) were condensed from some thirty-six pages of text. They were chosen as they enabled me to understand the nature of my educational influence in Eames' learning. I want to emphasise that I am not claiming to 'have educated Eames'. In my view of education each individual can claim to have educated themselves. However, I do claim to have influenced his education as the evidence in the paper shows.

### **3) Explanations in multi-media narratives that draw insights from self-study, action research and auto-ethnographic methodologies.**

When you ask, research and answer the question, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' and produce your own living-educational-theory as an explanation of your educational influences in your own learning, the learning of others and the learning of the social formations that influence your practice and understandings, I am claiming that you will also be generating your own living-theory-methodology that explains how you conducted your enquiry. The significance of this claim is that it differs from much educational research where the researcher pre-specifies the methodology they are going to use in their enquiry.

There are a number of insights from different methodologies that you could draw on in your enquiry. Creswell (2007) has provided excellent descriptions of narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case studies. Ellis and Bochner (2000) have shared their ideas on autoethnography; Whitehead and McNiff (2006) have clarified ideas on action research and Living Theory research; Tight (2016) has originated ideas on phenomenography. If you trust your own creative and critical capacities in generating your own living-theory-methodology in exploring the implications of asking, researching and

answering, ‘How do I improve what I am doing?’, you might encounter pressure from research supervisors and others to pre-specify your methodology. To transcend this pressure, I have outlined a justification for your creation of a living-theory-methodology in the creation of your living educational theory (Whitehead, 2018).

My reasons for stressing the importance of multi-media narratives in generating an explanation of educational influence are focused on a limitation of a printed text-based media for communicating the meanings of embodied expressions of energy-flowing ontological and relational values.

I draw on ideas from Vasilyuk (1991), Thayer-Bacon (2003) Hawkesworth (2016) and de Sousa Santos (2016) to focus attention on the importance of the meanings of these values as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influence.

In his writings on ‘The Energy Paradigm’ Vasilyuk (1991, p. 63-64), rightly points out that whilst we know how ‘energetically’ a person can act when positively motivated we have very little understanding of relationships between energy and motivations, energy and meaning and energy and value or of the ontological status of these relationship. By focusing on clarifying and communicating these relationships in evidence-based explanations of educational influences in learning, I am claiming that pedagogic research is making original contributions to the energy paradigm.

In her writings on ‘Relational (e)pistemologies’ Thayer-Bacon (2003) offers a relational perspective of knowing. My own relational epistemology is grounded in an awareness of space and boundaries that are connective, reflective and co-creative (Whitehead & Rayner, 2006). I agree with Thayer-Bacon in seeing that the standards of judgement we use in our theories of knowledge are capable of being corrected. Our standards are socially constructed and continually in need of critique and reconstruction whilst being inclusive and open to others (Thayer-Bacon, 2003, p.7).

In her writings on ‘Embodied Power: Demystifying Disembodied Politics’ Hawkesworth (2016) explains why pervasive practices of racialization and gendering remain unrecognized and unstudied in the context of mainstream political science. I draw parallels with Hawkesworth’s analysis of what is happening in political science and what is happening in educational research. I am thinking particularly of the methods, methodologies and forms of representation in educational research rendering embodied power particularly difficult to perceive. Hawkesworth’s analysis explains how privileging institutional analysis and methodological individualism contribute to a way of *not seeing* processes of gendering as integral to state enactments of embodied work. The analysis includes the claim that:

Indeed, processes of racialization and gendering developed over the past five centuries under the auspices of “science” have been embedded in law, custom, accredited knowledge and diverse social practices, lending coherences to forms of unknowing that continue to haunt political science in particular and public life more generally. (p. 5).

I draw on the insight of 'forms of unknowing' to emphasise the importance of including digital visual data that communicates meanings of embodied expressions of energy-flowing values in explanations of educational influence. De Sousa Santos (2016) uses the idea of a 'sociology of absences' to point to the ways in which Western Academic traditions have contributed to what he calls 'epistemicide' in killing off insights from indigenous traditions, by Western epistemologies.

The following explanations in multi-media narratives are in the current issue of the Educational Journal of Living Theories (EJOLTS). They include insights from self-study, action research and auto-ethnographic methodologies. They highlight the importance of these narratives in clarifying and communicating embodied expressions of meanings of energy-flowing values in explanations of educational influence.

### **December 2017 Contents of EJOLTS**

**Editorial Foreword** (pp. i-ix)

*Caitriona McDonagh*

#### **Papers**

**Journey to Living Theory Development of a Black African (Zulu) Male Educator: The Challenge of Doctoral Research** (pp. 1-19)

*Jerome Thamsanqa Gumede*

**(Re)inhabiting Waldorf Education: Honolulu Teachers Explore the Notion of Place** (pp. 20-50)

*Neil Boland and Jocelyn Romero Demirbag*

**Travels in Education: Towards Waldorf 2.0** (pp. 51-81)

*Neil Boland*

**Our Understanding of Mutuality when Reflecting on our Values and Experience of Caring** (pp. 72-109)

*Amy Dyke and Sonia Hutchison*

#### **Book reviews**

**Review of Sean Warren's and Stephen Bigger's, 'Living Contradictions: A Teacher's Examination of Tension and Disruption in Schools, in Classrooms and in Self', by Sean Warren and Stephen Bigger. Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing Limited.** (pp. 110-113)

*Jack Whitehead*

#### **Living-theory theses and dissertations**

**Review of Jerome Thamsanqa Gumede's Doctoral Thesis, An Auto-Ethnographic Enquiry: Critical Reflection on the Influences in the Development of a Black African Male Educator** (pp. 125-127)

*Jacqueline Delong*

**4) Using the idea of a living-educational-theory as an explanation of educational influences in the individual's learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations, to show how the ontological and relational values a pedagogue uses to give meaning and purpose to their lives can be used as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences. Creating and sharing living-posters.**

I first put forward this idea of a living-educational theory in the 1980s (Whitehead, 1985; 1989). The idea was to establish an alternative to the idea that educational theory was constituted by the disciplines of education, such as the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. I didn't want to deny the value of insights from the disciplines in educational theory, but I rejected the idea that an explanation of an individual's educational influences in learning could be derived from any discipline either individually or in any combination. From the ground of explaining my educational influences in my own learning and the learning of others, I appreciated the importance of the embodied expressions of energy-flowing ontological and relational values in my explanatory principles. Even as I write these words I am aware that my face-to-face communication of my meanings involves my embodied expressions of their meanings. This printed-text loses important qualities in these embodied expressions. This loss can be ameliorated through the use of digital visual data that is included as evidence in explanations of educational influence. You might appreciate this loss and how to overcome it, in two presentations. The first is a multi-media text:

Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2006) How are we co-creating living standards of judgement in action-researching our professional practices? Multi-media text presented at the World Congress of ALARPM and PAR 21-24 August 2006 in Groningen.

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwmh06ALARPMmulti.pdf>

The second is the printed text that conformed to the requirements for publication in the Conference Proceedings:

Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2006) How are we co-creating living standards of judgement in action-researching our professional practices? Printed text in the Conference Proceedings of the World Congress of ALARPM and PAR 21-24 August 2006 in Groningen.

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwmhalarpmttext06.pdf>

One research method I have found useful in developing evidence-based practice in pedagogic research is that of a 'living-poster'. A living-poster involves:

- Creating an attractive A4 poster including text and images, and the url to your YouTube video, which provides brief details of your: context; interests; the values that motivate you and give your life meaning and purpose; research passions; details of a few of your key publications; the url to your website if you have one and your contact details. (Living-posters, 2017).

You can access the evolution of living-posters from 2015 to 2017 to 2018 from the 'What's New' section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>.

Living Theory researchers and networks developing educational knowledge, theory, practice and opportunities that contribute to the flourishing of humanity.

You can access some individual living-posters directly and others from the group/network pages. Dip in to find practitioner-researchers to share thoughts and values-based research with.

**HOW to CREATE and SHARE your LIVING-POSTER...**

[Living-poster homepage & poster archive](#)

You might decide that you would like to create and share your own living-poster in this space as a contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement.

**5) Drawing insights from evidence-based practice from global contexts to explore the potential of Living Theory research as a social movement for enhancing the flow of values and understandings that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.**

At first glance the question, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' could mistakenly be taken to involve an 'I' that was completely autonomous as if it existed independently of sociocultural and sociohistorical influences. The question could also be mistakenly taken to focus on methodological individualism as if the individual was not to be understood in terms of ontological and relational values within social and community formations.

Over the last 50 years, since I first asked, 'How can I improve what I am doing?' in my first class as a science teacher at Langdon Park School in London's Tower Hamlets, my question might appear to remain the same, but it's meaning and context has changed as I continue to focus on my evidence-based practice in my pedagogic research. Here is some evidence from global contexts in which I am exploring the potential of Living Theory research as a social movement for enhancing the flow of values and understandings that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity within my pedagogic practice and research.

Working at the University of Bath gave me opportunities to present and engage with international conferences, world congresses and workshops. These have enabled me to

share ideas in the hope that they can contribute to Living Theory research as a global movement. There is some evidence of the educational influences in the spread of these ideas in the following contexts:

**i) In the contents of the recent issue of EJOLTS (see above) there are:**

- a) A contribution from Jerome Thamsanqa Gumede on his Journey to Living Theory Development of a Black African (Zulu) Male Educator.
- b) A contribution from Neil Boland and Jocelyn Romero Demirbag on (Re)inhabiting Waldorf Education: Honolulu Teachers Explore the Notion of Place.

The journey is being taken against the backdrop of the Steiner Waldorf curriculum with the idea of disrupting tradition by discussing the 'un-sayable' and, through this, to allow an original, authentic living educational theory to evolve; we believe that (re)inhabiting the curriculum is necessary for meaningful, relevant teaching.

The paper includes a video of Romero Demirbag explaining her meaning of the embodied spiritual expression of Aloha in her explanation of educational influences in her pedagogic practice that includes:

...a warmth, acceptance, and inclusion extended to everyone. In addition, the Hawaiian cultural belief that the land is alive with spirit was one that eventually connected me intimately to the cosmos and then led me to anthroposophy, the philosophy which stands behind Waldorf schools. (p.21).

**ii) The Living Theory doctorates at:**

<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml>

include the following contributions from different global contexts. These are flowing through the internet and accessible to all those throughout the world who have access:

**The Netherlands**

[Anne Keizer-Remmer's doctorate on - Underneath The Surface Of Cosmopolitanism: Searching For Cosmopolitanism In Higher Education. University of Humanistic Studies, Utrecht, the Netherlands.](http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/keizer/keizer.pdf)

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/keizer/keizer.pdf>

**South Africa**

[Bruce Damon's doctorate on - A Collaboratively Constructed Process Model For Understanding And Supporting The Work Of The Community Volunteer In A Community School. 2017 Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa.](http://www.actionresearch.net/living/damons/damonsphd.pdf)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/damons/damonsphd.pdf>

### **Pakistan and Nepal**

[Sadruddin Bahadur Qutoshi's doctorate on - Creating Living-Educational-Theory: A Journey Towards Transformative Teacher Education in Pakistan. 2016 University of Kathmandu, Nepal.](http://www.actionresearch.net/living/sadruddin.shtml)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/sadruddin.shtml>

### **South Africa**

[Elizabeth Wolvaardt's Doctoral Thesis, Over the conceptual horizon of public health: A living theory of teaching undergraduate medical students, 2013 University of Pretoria.](http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/wolvaardtphd/Wolvaardtphd2013.pdf)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/wolvaardtphd/Wolvaardtphd2013.pdf>

### **United Kingdom**

[Marie Huxtable's Ph.D. \(2012\) Thesis, How do I Evolve Living-Educational-Theory Praxis in Living-boundaries? University of Bath.](http://www.actionresearch.net/living/mariehuxtable.shtml)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/mariehuxtable.shtml>

### **Australia**

[Phil Tattersall's Ph.D. \(2011\) Thesis, How am I generating a living theory of environmental activism with inclusionality? Graduating April 2013 from the University of Western Sydney.](http://www.actionresearch.net/living/tattersallphd/philtphd.pdf)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/tattersallphd/philtphd.pdf>

### **Israel**

[Anat Geller's Ed.D. Thesis \(2010\) Within Dialogue and Without: How has 'Being in the Unknown' become a value in my developing as a better dialogical educator? University of Bath.\(live connections to video clips from the text need adding](http://www.actionresearch.net/living/geller/anatgelleredd.pdf)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/geller/anatgelleredd.pdf>

### **Japan**

[JeKan Adler Collins' Ph.D. \(2007\) Thesis, Developing an inclusional pedagogy of the unique: How do I clarify, live and explain my educational influences in my learning as I pedagogise my healing nurse curriculum in a Japanese University? University of Bath.](http://www.actionresearch.net/living/jekan.shtml)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/jekan.shtml>

### **Republic of Ireland**

[Mairin Glenn's Ph.D. \(2006\) Working with collaborative projects: my living theory of a holistic educational practice. Limerick University. Supervisor, Jean McNiff.](http://www.jeanmcniff.com/items.asp?id=50)  
<http://www.jeanmcniff.com/items.asp?id=50>

### **India**

[Swaroop Rawal's Ph.D. \(2006\) Thesis, The role of drama in enhancing life skills in children with specific learning difficulties in a Mumbai school: My reflective account. Coventry University in Collaboration with the University of Worcester.](http://www.actionresearch.net/living/rawal.shtml)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/rawal.shtml>

### **Canada**

[Jackie Delong's Ph.D. \(2002\) How Can I Improve My Practice As A Superintendent of Schools and Create My Own Living Educational Theory? University of Bath.](http://www.actionresearch.net/living/delong.shtml)  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/delong.shtml>

The freely available resources <http://www.actionresearch.net> include 10 years of Educational Journal of Living Theories (EJOLTS - <http://ejolts.net> ). They are an international resource for action researchers who are generating their own living-theories with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. These theories are generated from inquiries of the kind, “How do I improve what I am doing? In which ‘I’ exists as a living contradiction.”

#### **iii) Living Theory Research as a Way of Life.**

I am continuing to publish ideas from my research in the hope that they will be useful to you in enhancing contributions to Living Theory research as a social movement and in generating and sharing your own living-educational-theories. You can access my latest book (Whitehead, 2018) on Living Theory Research as a Way of Life at <https://amzn.to/2suwR59> .

In this interim conclusion I want to encourage you to accept the invitation from Mairin Glenn Mary Roche, Caitriona McDonagh and Bernie Sullivan (Glenn et al 2017) to contribute to The Space For Reflection at <http://www.eari.ie/a-space-for-reflection/>

...we are inviting you, having reflected on our book, to reveal your passion and your enthusiasm for learning together, for your own benefit and the benefit of those with whom you work. We invite you to continue this narrative by sharing your story with us on [www.eari.ie](http://www.eari.ie) . (p.164)

You could also contribute your own living-poster to the homepage of living-posters at <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage020617.pdf> as a way of contributing your own evidence-based practice from your pedagogic research to Living Theory research as a social movement that is focused on enhancing to spread of values and understandings that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.



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