

Bringing Living Citizenship As A Living Standard Of Judgment Into The Academy.

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Abstract

Living citizenship emerging from reflection on an international educational partnership makes a unique contribution to the field and importantly fulfils the AERA (2012) aim of improving educational practice for the public benefit. The BERA professional user review of 2003 asks: How do we learn to become good citizens? Members of the 5x5x5 = Creativity project team, suggest:

“a democratic society depends on everyone taking responsibility and contributing what they can, which is possible only when each of us feels we belong and are seen as uniquely creative, capable and self-determining individuals.” (John and Pound, 2011: 1)

This paper explores the conceptual framework of “Living Citizenship” as a means for developing international continuing professional development (i-CPD) through action research projects. The research focuses on videocases that present findings from the development of an international educational partnership between two schools in England and South Africa. Adapting Whitehead’s (2005) living educational theory approach to action research, “Living Citizenship” supports and problematises international educational partnerships’ through the influence of enabling participants’ as critically active citizens. Such pro-active fieldwork links the values and objectives of social justice and knowledge exchange to proffering educational change within authentic i-CPD professional learning environments.

The Research Project

The notion of ‘living citizenship’ has emerged from the study of an international educational partnership between the researchers own school, Sarum Academy in Salisbury and Nqabakazulu School in the black township of Kwamashu in Durban, South Africa. The research focuses on how to make a difference to people’s lives by embedding and sustaining an international educational partnership and evaluating how the education of the participants has been influenced through the activities of the partnership. It addresses questions about how to deliver the goal of more informed citizens through enabling an ‘authentic’ citizenship education and through research identifies the transferable pedagogical protocols as *new knowledge* for designing and developing international education as part of a new CPD framework. Advice is then provided for government agencies on how best to extend and validate educational partnerships through an i-CPD framework.

The principal researcher for this PhD project is an educational practitioner-researcher who seeks to live out his values more fully as part of his professional life, with the aim of making an original contribution to educational knowledge and theory that will inspire others to do the same. Building on the African notion of Ubuntu (Louw, 1998; and Tutu, 1999), the project seeks to bring humanity closer together through the medium of living citizenship.

Using Sayers (2002) notion of effective citizenship education as something which touches the hearts of students and encourages them to be good citizens, the research seeks to show how through establishing, developing, embedding and sustaining an international educational partnership the participants in this form of i-CPD can become better citizens as they critically engage to live out their values of social justice, equal opportunities and humanity (Ubuntu) more fully.

The project looks at how over a ten year period the partnership activities between the two schools have influenced the continuing education of the participants. Through a series of reciprocal visits, some funded by the British Council, and through curriculum activities, fundraising activities and personal contacts the partnership has developed to become a powerful influence on the lives of the participants. As it has developed certain underpinning values have emerged. These values have been articulated as social justice, equal opportunities and the African notion of Ubuntu, or humanity. The partnership between the schools has enabled the teaching of these values in a meaningful context.

Research Methods

The research methodology adopted is a self-study participant living theory action research approach. This authentic action research field approach enables methodological inventiveness within practitioner research and validates the importance of allowing practitioners' the opportunity to critically account for their own learning and the learning of others through a range of creative means and methods. Real life social research is also validated by Harré (1993) who argues for authentic social data in the form of *'real strips of life'* that are used as evidence for discursive discourse analysis. Harré (1993) also validates a social science paradigm in which the participant researcher is engaged in *"critical reflection on the nature of the world to be investigated"* (p. 24). Gardner and Coombs (2009) maintain that a: *"critical self-reflective encounter of practice could also be understood as an experiential research paradigm"* (p.53) and also describe this process as *"an empowering philosophy that puts freedom to research for the researcher into the same democratic situation as Rogers' (Rogers and Freiberg, 1994) original conception of freedom to learn for all participant learners"* (p.61).

Such a biographical case study approach towards action research is also validated by McNiff (2006) who proffers the living educational theory paradigm of developing case study narrative as authentic research evidence. By engaging in a self-study reflective research paradigm one can see how practice as a professional educator can be improved through such narrative-based inquiry and fed back as improvement to teaching (Doyle & Carter, 2003). Such an applied social research process underpins Doyle and Carter's concept of

'Learning to Teach' and espouses the ethical virtues of Schön's (1995) reflective practitioner as a means of authentic on-the-job CPD and the subsequent development of a meaningful curriculum through such 'anchored instruction' (Brown, J., Collins, A. & Duguid, P., 1989) as situated learning. Consequently, the principal researcher formulated his own question and found meaningful ways of solving it. Wright-Mills (1959) maintains that the "*methods must not prescribe the problems; rather, problems must prescribe the methods*".

The research methodology and paradigm assumes a participatory action research approach supported by the use of video, pictures and commentary to show and elicit the educational influence on the lives of the people in these communities. This has enabled the principal researcher to reflect on how the activities of the partnership have influenced the education of himself and his fellow participants. The research design adopted two content-free framework methods for analysis of video data from exchange visits in 2006 and 2007. These frameworks comprised of:

1. Using a systematic process for the analysis of qualitative data developed by the principal researcher building on the work of Coombs (1995). Coombs and the principal researcher have built upon Harri-Augstein and Thomas' (1991) academic model of self-organised learning, Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory and Slater's (1976) ladder-up scaffolding procedure. This epistemological framework underpins Coombs (1995) Talkback scaffolding procedure by articulating a series of experiential 'content-free' templates that provide a sequence of stages for eliciting findings from qualitative data. The researcher has used these templates to analyse some of the video data captured for the research project in order to make discursive sense and derive useful findings from the data.
2. Using ATLAS.ti© software (1993)¹ which flexibly allows for a similar qualitative analysis process to be embedded within it.

Both approaches use a process of researcher derived discursive discourse analysis (Gardner and Coombs, 2009). This is a process in which conversations between participants are systematically analysed by the researcher who then, supported by the analysis tools, holds an inner conversation critically checking and re-formulating the interpretation of the data matching it to pre-agreed focus issues. The manual method and the electronic (ATLAS) method are compared, contrasted and evaluated using authentic case study examples drawn from the research project (Coombs and Potts, 2009). Some useful insights toward the adoption of a *video-case* research methodology are provided for other researchers faced with resolving similar problems with qualitative data. Video case studies (or videocases) are becoming increasingly popular as a way of bridging the gap between theory and practice in pre-service education (Cannings and Talley, 2003; Stigler and Hiebert, 1999). The videocase allows not only the demonstration of practice, but also helps the development of reflective practice for learning (Cannings and Talley, 2003). Both of the methods referred to enable the researcher to critically analyse the qualitative video data and elicit findings from it in a systematic way and using a *universal procedure* that is transparent. These methods can be used within different research frameworks because of their universality and the potential

¹ (<http://www.atlasti.com/demo.php>, accessed: Jan-09)

to transfer to any other similar project. Potentially this form of qualitative data collection and analysis represents a new contribution and validity to the field of social research.

Findings

a) Clarification and communication of shared values to distinguish international educational partnerships

The following shared values emerged from the dialogue surrounding the partnership and the activities that were developed. It is recognized that they are contested concepts and so their meaning in the context of the research project is explained.

Ubuntu

In Ubuntu the individual is defined in terms of his/her relationship with others (Shutte, 1993). Being an individual in this sense means “being-with-others” (Louw, 1998). This is not the same as the Western concept of individuality as a solitary aspect of human life, where an individual exists independently from the rest of the community or society. In an Ubuntu sense the individual is not independent of others but is interdependent with others. Khoza (1994) argues that Ubuntu needs to broaden respect for the individual and tackle the negative elements of collectivism. Ndaba (1994) points out that Ubuntu describes how the individual can thrive in a situation where they have on-going contact and interaction with each other. In this sense Ubuntu requires dialogue and this preserves the uniqueness of the other in his/her otherness. Ubuntu in the sense of the thriving individual describes very well the way that the participants have come to behave in engaging in the activities of, say, an international educational partnership. Through dialogue and interaction the individual participants in this research project have thrived and been able to identify and live out their values more fully. Thus, we have assumed an interpretation of Ubuntu which sees the individual participant as interdependent with others.

Social Justice

The term social justice has been understood in the sense that Rawls (1971) uses it to mean an increase in egalitarianism and equality of opportunity. This is the meaning of social justice shared by other participants in the partnership as shown by this statement by Siyabonga, the School Pupil President when commenting on the higher education bursaries that are provided: *“If two or three learners get successful or achieve their goals that will make a huge difference in their lives and in the life of South Africa, because they will be able to help other pupils”* (Potts, 2012: 235). This idea of social justice as engagement by the participants in social acts to increase equity and fairness as part of the social improvement research goals and *“social manifesto”* (Coombs, 1995 and Coombs & Smith, 2003), is included in the notion of ‘living citizenship’ and forms its unique academic paradigm. The pursuit of social justice, along with Ubuntu, becomes another of the underpinning principles that distinguishes our meaning of ‘living citizenship’.

Equal Opportunities

Whilst recognising the criticisms levelled at the notion of equal opportunity and that it is controversial as to which form of equal opportunity, if any, is morally acceptable, the way that the term is assumed in the research project is in the substantive sense. Chomsky's (1976) reference to the need in a decent society to overcome inequality of condition in order to enable individuals to be accorded their intrinsic human rights in the sense of equality of rights echoes the arguments of Rawls (1971) and Parekh (2000). Potts (2012) refers to the participants in the partnership as having a "moral duty" to address the inequality of condition between the pupils at the two schools. When participants provide bursaries for pupils at Nqabakazulu School to attend University there is an attempt to address inequality of condition and create fairer equality of opportunity in the Rawlsian sense, as these pupils would not otherwise have access to the funds to enable them to pay the entry fees. When participants learn about fair trade through the partnership there is a recognition that fair trade can, if the money is spent by the recipients for example on education, lead to less inequality of condition and fairer equality of opportunity. Our value of equality of opportunity becomes, alongside Ubuntu and social justice, another standard of judgement applied to the actions of the participants in the partnership and another value that we use to distinguish our meaning of 'living citizenship'.

b) Transferable pedagogical protocols for teaching citizenship through international educational partnerships (IEPs)

Another key contribution is to the field of citizenship education with the identification of a set of pedagogical protocols for *active* citizenship education based around an international educational partnership. This set of protocols provides a practical application of Sayers (2002) notion of citizenship education as touching the hearts of participants. They are informing practice through publication on open source websites (<http://www.capdm.net/bc-dev/login/> and www.global-schools.org) and through their inclusion in the Global Schools Partnership Sustainability Toolkit. They help to address the concerns of Martin (2007) about international educational partnerships as a means of tackling negative prejudice. The absence of a pedagogy for citizenship education led to the question being posed by Gearon (2003): *How do we learn to become good citizens?* The set of protocols address this question, as well as the question posed by Zammitt (2008) regarding what a partnership based on equality, mutual respect and understanding would look like. The fact that these questions were posed illustrates the need for pedagogical protocols in citizenship education and in international educational partnerships. The protocols build on the work of Crick (1999) with an emphasis on citizenship education as a means of exploring and identifying values and developing human relationships. In a wider context the protocols provide a practical example of Sachs (1999) notion of an *activist teaching profession* concerned with eliminating exploitation, inequality and oppression.

The pedagogical protocols that can be derived from this research can be summarised as follows:

- The development of a common set of socio-educational values and a shared language through dialogue between the participants. These shared and common values serve to provide purpose and direction for the activities of the partnership.
- The encouragement of participation and a democratic approach to the activities of the partnership. Widening participation leads to greater sustainability of the partnership and widens the sphere of influence of the partnership, providing more participants with the opportunity to live out their values. A democratic approach is important because of the opportunity that it provides for modelling this important value.
- The activities of the partnership are most effective when they touch the hearts of the participants and inspire them to live out their values more fully. These activities give the values of the partnership meaning to the participants and engage them in becoming better citizens. Personal contact and the development of friendships between the participants is an important element in this.
- The development of activities that tackle stereotypes and encourage a critical approach from participants. Participants must be challenged to assess their own prejudices and to reflect on their own views of each other so that a different perspective can emerge. This process is facilitated by emphasising the shared values and language of the partnership. Again, the development of personal relationships and trust is important in this respect.
- The activities of the international educational partnership should aim at nothing less than meaningful social change identified and agreed by partners. In a partnership where there is clear evidence of inequality and social injustice then correcting these injustices through social change becomes a key motivational factor for the participants. Social change can be achieved through frame alignment (Snow and Benford, 1988), by reaching agreement between participants on the need for change and then through the development of activities that meet this need.
- The importance of developing activities that have long-term impact and sustain the partnership. Funding from supportive bodies, such as the British Council, does not last forever. To sustain the partnership beyond the provision of external funding, activities with a wider scope are needed. Thus, involving members of the wider community, setting up sustainable curriculum projects and inspiring participants to continue their involvement over a sustained period of time are strategies that are needed.
- Participants should be encouraged to construct narratives that are put in to the public domain to encourage discussion and debate, thus raising the status of international educational partnerships as a means of leveraging up standards and providing teacher participants with evidence of professionalism as part of an official i-CPD process.

These protocols are transferable to other educational partnerships and can help to provide a pedagogical framework for the delivery of citizenship education in a way that enables participants to become living citizens.

c) Implications for Educational Practice and Recommendations for the Design of International CPD.

Table 1 - Implications of evidence.

Evidence in Terms of Implications for Educational Practice.	Evidence in Terms of Implications for Future Design of and Policy for International Educational Partnerships.
The importance of establishing international educational partnerships as a means of delivering effective citizenship education and of levering up educational standards.	The UK government should be encouraging the establishment of international educational partnerships as a vehicle for social and educational change to support the work of DfID and other organisations and to fill the vacuum left by the discontinuation of the national curriculum framework.
The focus on socio-educational values as a key part of international citizenship education in the UK curriculum and as part of the 'civic education' in the US.	Governments should provide guidelines which emphasise the importance of embedding values in establishing an international educational partnership.
The establishment of a network of dialogues between participants to encourage discussion of the underpinning values that are shared. This can take many years.	Participants in international partnerships should develop channels of communication to encourage discussion of values so that they can reach consensual agreement on the core underpinning values.
The extension of participation and the importance of a democratic approach to decision making in the partnership.	Guidelines should emphasise the importance of the adoption of a democratic approach to decision making. This is on two levels, between schools and in each of the communities, recognising the existence of hierarchies in some communities making the democratisation process difficult.
The development of a shared language to communicate the common values and the shared vision of the partnership.	The Partnership Agreement between the partners should emphasise the values that underpin the partnership and provide a shared vision. Recognition that this is a <i>living</i> document that will evolve over time as part of the educational development process and hence, will need to be reviewed and updated

	regularly.
The development of activities that touch the hearts (affecting the engagement of the emotional side) of participants and encourage them to live out the agreed values of the partnership more fully, thus becoming active, socially responsible citizens. These values underpin the nature and quality of subsequent actions by the participants.	Guidance can be given on the sorts of activities that can encourage wider participation and that promote learning and active citizenship. This to be linked to the UK's DfE/QCA guidance on citizenship education and is related to raising standards through the development of socio-educational values.
The importance of embedding shared values for educational change. Identification of the activities that have had the most impact on learning through challenging pre-conceptions, changing values and dispositions leading to frame alignment and motivating action.	Emphasis to be given to those activities that challenge values, change dispositions and lead to actions and the embedding of the partnership as a form of 'living citizenship'.
Development of activities, other than visits, that effectively replicate the benefits of direct experience, e.g. embedding of video in to practice.	Consideration of the second order impact tools, i.e. those tools that have most impact for those who cannot afford, or do not have the opportunity to have, direct experience of the other culture through the partnership.
Pursuit of a reflective, action based approach to international CPD giving additional status to international education. This links to the national professional standards for teachers in modelling values for students.	<p>Implications for the design of international CPD with a focus on an action research approach with an attendant accredited postgraduate qualification.</p> <p>Encouragement of participants (teachers and others involved in international development work) to put the findings from research projects in to the public domain and to have them validated through accreditation by universities.</p> <p>Possible transferability to other cultural contexts, e.g. disability</p>

d) Clarification of the notion of 'living citizenship' in CPD for participants in international projects.

"I want to see if I can captivate your imaginations with the idea of your living educational theory. I see your accounts of your learning, to the extent that they are explaining your educational influence in this learning, as constituting your own living educational theory" (Whitehead, 2005).

The living theory approach to action research is one that best suits the perception of people as human beings who live in relation to each other and who are participants in educating themselves and creating their own lives. This links to a more authentic and humanistic research policy as espoused by Heron (1981), who argues that humans are intelligent creative beings; who are self-determining; and, who take up freely the thinking that determines their actions. It also fits with Rom Harré's (1998) notion of people as:

"active beings using all sorts of tools, including their own brains, for carrying on their life projects according to local norms and standards" (P.1).

Drawing on this notion of living theory, "Living Citizenship" in relation to an international educational partnership can be understood as explaining the educational influence of the participants' actions as active citizens upon themselves; others in the partnership; and, on the social formations of the communities in which they live. In this form of i-CPD the living citizen acts publicly and is accountable for his/her own actions. They hold themselves to account for their actions as citizens and their potential influence on the lives of others in the partnership.

The notion of living citizenship emerged from the research project as a synthesis of the research approach adopted and the actions of the participants as global intercultural citizens. It can be defined as a description of the way that participants in international educational partnerships can identify and then live out their values in a practical way, through their actions. In relation to living citizenship we are accepting Habermas' (1998) point that *"The private autonomy of equally entitled citizens can only be secured only insofar as citizens actively exercise their civic autonomy."* (P.264). Participants who are living their values of living citizenship in a practical way are exercising civic autonomy and as a consequence they are securing the private autonomy of equally entitled citizens.

Moreover, living citizenship is a creative act. It can be linked to the values and aspirations of the 5x5x5 = Creativity project (John and Pound, 2011). Living citizenship is about the development of human relationships to unlock participants' creativity in their response to problematic situations where they see the need to live out their values as citizens more fully. It supports the development of a democratic society in the sense that *"a democratic society depends on everyone taking responsibility and contributing what they can, which is possible only when each of us feels we belong and are seen as uniquely creative, capable and self-determining individuals."* (John and Pound, 2011, p.2)

The key ideas that underpin the notion of living citizenship are those that have been discussed in this paper: Ubuntu, social justice and equal opportunities. By 'doing Ubuntu' participants are showing their humanness and their respect for each other and demonstrating community connectedness, and cross-cultural understanding. By taking actions to help those that are marginalised by society to have equal access to education, participants are promoting social justice in the Rawlsian (1971) sense of the creation of a more just or equitable society. Their actions are an attempt to address inequality of condition and create fairer equality of opportunity. The actions must be taken as a result of genuine dialogue that values the voice of all of the participants and that gives priority to the southern participants so that they are able to drive the partnership forward to realise their own vision of progress and development. The research project highlights the originality of living citizenship, as a relationally dynamic standard of judgment that includes a holistic appreciation of Ubuntu, social justice, equal opportunity, partnership and development.

This notion has epistemological significance for the nature of educational knowledge. The idea of using living citizenship in the creation of one's own living educational theory focuses attention on a process of accountability that engages with issues of power and privilege in society. The research can be seen as a response to Ball and Tyson's (2011) claim that educational researchers have fulfilled the American Educational Research Association (AERA, 2012) mission to advance knowledge about education and to encourage scholarly enquiry related to education, but have only weakly fulfilled the mission to promote research to improve practice and serve the public good. This action research project is grounded in a commitment to both improve practice and to generate knowledge that serves the public good, through the living standard of judgment of living citizenship.

Conclusion

"Living citizenship" can be both understood and achieved through enabling practical project examples, such as participants living out their values through acts to further social justice, equality of opportunity and Ubuntu (humanity). The intention of citizenship education (QCDA, 2007) is to equip people to play an active role in society as global citizens. Clearly, there is a powerful and synergetic link here between the curriculum of citizenship and the goals of international education and exchange partnerships. Living citizenship illustrates three of the conceptions of the "good" citizen as outlined by Westheimer and Kahne (2004): *"personally responsible, participatory and justice orientated"*. Living Citizenship i-CPD projects can address the question posed by Gearon in the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Professional User Review in 2003: *How do we learn to become good citizens?* Such i-CPD recognised projects provide examples of State support and status given for groups rewarding civic virtue (Cooter, 2000).

The Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study conducted by UK's National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER, 2010) shows that schools need help with embedding citizenship education into the curriculum, school culture and wider community. International educational partnerships offer an opportunity to embed citizenship education as an authentic form of "living citizenship" to achieve this goal. We present findings that suggest the need for BERA Conference: 4-6 September, 2012 – University of Manchester

an international dimension and reconceptualisation of continuing professional development and how this might lead to useful applied social research impact evidence. We argue for an international educational i-CPD policy that validates, levers, and celebrates the activity of living citizenship fieldwork.

Research into living citizenship enables individuals to create their own living theories that advance knowledge, encourage scholarly inquiry and improves practice for the public good. Clarifying and communicating the meanings of living citizenship through an international continuing professional development project with the creation of an action researcher's living-educational-theory, makes an original and significant contribution to the field of Living-Educational-Theory.

Furthermore, living citizenship carries a message of hope for humanity. Participants within i-CPD partnerships are actively engaged in negotiating, discovering and then living out their shared values more fully and in so doing real lives are improved and the research social manifesto achieved. In this way living citizenship can become *normalised* as an authentic socio-educational research process that seeks wider community engagement through enabling a living consensus agenda as an act of society.

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