

Developing international Scholarship of Teaching and Learning with Living Educational Theory Research.

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Introductory slides at

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jw2023issotl051123.pptx>

Introductory video-clip at

https://youtu.be/wrBFC-V_01A

Abstract

Evidence, from a range of international, educational contexts. will be used to explain how the scholarship of teaching and learning in higher education is being generated and legitimated through Living Educational Theory Research. This is research in which individual researchers generate and share their living-educational-theories as valid, values-based explanations of educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located. The presentation will focus on the implications for SoTL of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve educational influences in learning within my context of teaching with values of human flourishing?' Educational values in this SoTL will be clarified and communicated with digital visual data from educational practice, through the use of a method of empathetic resonance. These values are used in SoTL, as explanatory principles in an individual's explanation of their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located.

Evidence is provided to explain how the validity and rigour of the explanations of educational influence in learning can be enhanced, through the use of validation groups. Examples will be given of how international SoTL has impacted students' learning and the learning of social formations. This will include evidence on the importance of collective agency, collective imaginary and collective intention in community-based Living Educational Theory Research in improving teaching and learning in a range of global contexts, including South Africa. Participants will be provided with access to web-based resources to start the generation of their living-educational-theories and to engage in dialogue with communities of Living Educational Theory Researchers who are supporting the generation and sharing of living-educational-theories. A response will be given to Schön's (1995) call for the development of a new epistemology for the new scholarship with Living Educational Theory Research

Introduction

This presentation is guided by an educational pedagogical approach to teaching and learning developed with Living Educational Theory Research. The distinguishing

characteristic of this research is that the researcher creates and shares a valid, evidence and values-laden explanation of their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located (Whitehead, 1989). Interaction with participants will focus on: the use of living-posters to support the creation of communities and networks of professional practitioners engaged in Living Educational Theory Research. the clarification of the meanings of embodied values in educational practices; the use of these values as evaluative standards of practice and as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in one's own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice is located; Generating and submitting these explanations to the Educational Journal of Living Theories. Access to over 50 living-educational-theories at <https://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml> will be used to demonstrate how context influences the scholarship of teaching and learning, in the explanations of educational influence in learning. The presentation will emphasise the importance of integrating insights from the disciplines of education into explanations of educational influences in learning within a scholarship of teaching and learning.

The paper accepts the conference pedagogy as an approach to knowledge-sharing that is scholarly, engaged, inclusive, and collegial. In particular I accept the following five principles of this conference pedagogy: embracing the "S" of SoTL by taking a scholarly approach; engaging with my audiences, and sharing my work interactively; Inviting and embracing diversity by being inclusive, making my work accessible, and provide a variety of ways for people to engage; because I am committed to ISSOTL's diversity, I am collegial in ways that express inclusivity.

My scholarship of teaching and learning is also influenced by a new Collective Imaginary (Drewell & Larsson, 2019, pp. 65-68) with collective intention (Bijker, 2022)

If we intend to pursue the "new forms of scholarship" that Ernest Boyer (1990) presents in his *Scholarship Reconsidered*, I agree with Schön (1995) that we cannot avoid questions of epistemology, since the new forms of scholarship he describes challenge the epistemology built into the modern research university. Boyer envisions three new forms of scholarship: the scholarship of integration; the scholarship of application; the scholarship of teaching. I also agree with Schön that as a researcher supporting the new scholarship I must produce knowledge that is testably valid, according to criteria of appropriate rigor. The claims to knowledge of Living Educational Theory Researchers must be open to public and intellectual debate within academic (among other) communities of inquiry. In this paper I answer the questions of what are these kinds of knowledge, claims to validity, and criteria of appropriate rigor? And how do they stand in relation to the "old" scholarship of discovery?

A new 'Collective Imaginary' for a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

The idea of a 'Collective Imaginary' (Drewell & Larsson, 2019, pp. 65-68) is one that I have recently integrated within my Living Educational Theory Research. Generally, we simply cannot see the process of coming-into-being of our social reality. Yet, our collective ability to create social reality is perhaps our most defining human capacity. This social reality is sometimes termed our *Collective Imaginary*. According to Drewell and Larsson a Collective

Imaginary is an emergent property of the complex self-organisation of many minds with the capacity for symbolic language. It is unique to human beings. The examples they give of our Collective Imaginary include money, nations, marriage, presidents, the market and democracy. These are all collective agreements. They only exist because we collectively believe in them and use our collective resources to reinforce their existence (p. 65).

In developing an international Scholarship of Teaching and Learning with Living Educational Theory Research I am referring to a conscious shift in our Collective Imaginary.

I find the idea of Collective Imaginary helpful as I engage with the idea collective action in spreading the global influence of Living Educational Theory Research with values of human flourishing. For many years I focused my professional activities in education to demonstrating the academic validity and legitimacy of the valid, evidence and values-laden explanations that professional educators and other practitioners, produce for their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which the practice was located. As my priorities developed from my local concerns, with supporting individual Living Educational Theory Researchers, into my global concerns of contributing to the global influence of Living Educational Theory Research, I recognised the importance of collective action. I experienced the lack of a collective concept or commitment. Hence my interest in the potential of the idea of a 'Collective Imaginary' to provide a collective concept that can help to motivate a collective commitment to action with a collective intention (Bijker, 2022) to contribute to enhancing the global influence of Living Educational Theory Research with values of human flourishing:

I believe that in my professional practice, dialogues about the intention of our field of practice should be held more often. I hope my articulated ontological values contribute to the collective intention of good (teacher-) education and research in the Social Sciences. An important question that remains open is, what exactly I can contribute from my (different) roles and positions to the collective vision in the (power) structures of the environments I work in. (p. 39)

There are many historical examples of 'Collective Imaginaries' that have inspired collective actions and transformations. Mahatma Gandhi articulated a 'Collective Imaginary' of nonviolent resistance in a successful campaign leading to India's Independence from British rule in 1947. Nelson Mandela articulated a 'Collective Imaginary' for the future of South Africa in the Constitution that came into effect in February 1997. Not all 'Collective Imaginaries' are grounded in values of human flourishing. Hitler's 'Collective Imaginary' led to millions of deaths in the Second World War and successful prosecutions for crimes against humanity. What I want to focus on is a 'Collective Imaginary' for Living Educational Theory Research that embodies values of human flourishing. This focus is because I see Living Educational Theory Research as a vehicle for creating a Collective Imaginary for a humane, peaceful world where people and the social formations they create can learn to flourish and help others to learn to flourish too. I believe that this contributes to Humanity fulfilling its responsibility to flourish and enabling all that constitute the planet to flourish too.

The 'Collective Imaginary' for Living Educational Theory Research that I am suggesting for general acceptance, is grounded in a flow of life-affirming energy with values of human flourishing. My meaning of values refers to judgements of right and wrong, good and bad. Values are embodied in what I do as a professional, educational practitioner. Their meanings are clarified in the course of their emergence in practice as they research their practice to understand and improve it and to generate a valid, values-laden explanation of their educational influences in learning. These meanings are embodied expressions of meaning. They need linguistic and lexical definitions to communicate their meanings, but they also need ostensive expressions of meanings being expressed in practice. Limitations, of purely printed text expressions of meanings of values, have been clarified previously through contrasting these meanings with those that can be communicated through ostensive expressions of meaning with digital visual data (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2006, a & b).

My meanings of values of human flourishing, include the following value of living a productive life. I identify with Fromm's (1960) point that:

... if a person can face the truth without panic they will realise that there is no purpose to life other than that which they create for themselves through their loving relationships and productive work (p.18).

In responding to the question 'What does it mean to produce something as a human being?' Bernstein, (1971, p. 48) draws on the early writings of Marx to say that we are twice affirmed. I agree. In producing and sharing a living-educational-theory and seeing others using insights from my own research, in the production of their own living-educational-theory, I am twice affirmed.

I am affirmed in my production of my living-educational-theory as I objectify my individuality. In the course of the activity I have enjoyed an individual life. In viewing my accounts of my living-educational-theories, generated over years, I experience the individual joy of knowing myself as an objective, sensuously perceptible, and indubitable power. I am affirmed in your satisfaction and your use of my product. I have the direct and conscious satisfaction that my work satisfied a human need. I created an object appropriate to the need of another human being (p. 48).

So, my 'Collective Imaginary' for Living Educational Theory Research includes shared flows of life affirming energy with the value of human flourishing of living a productive life in the generation and sharing of living-educational-theories.

A Living Educational Theory Research approach to SoTL

This approach to the scholarship of teaching and learning has been clarified in a range of living-educational-theories that have been accredited for doctoral degrees by Universities from different national and cultural contexts.

For example, Qutoshi's (2016) doctoral research on 'Creating living-educational-theory: A journey towards transformative teacher education in Pakistan' contributes to a scholarship of teaching and learning:

My aim in this research was to identify alternative ways of addressing research problem which invoked me to generate a host of research questions that came up with five key emergent themes of my inquiry: 1) Dictating and communicating views of leadership; 2) Narrowly conceived traditional view of curriculum images; 3) Conventional and somehow learner-centered pedagogies; 4) Assessment as 'of' learning and 'for' learning approaches; and 5) Objectivist and constraint pluralist research practices.

My purpose with these research themes was to demonstrate my embodied values through exploring, explaining and interpreting the themes arising from research questions, and to envision a transformative teacher education and research practices with reflexivity, inclusive logics, multiple genres and perspectival language as multiple ways of knowing. (Abstract)

Another example is Spiro's Ph.D. (2008) Thesis, 'How I have arrived at a notion of knowledge transformation, through understanding the story of myself as creative writer, creative educator, creative manager, and educational researcher':

My premise is that 'knowledge transformation' involves the capacity to respond to challenge, self and other, and is central to the notion of creativity. I consider how far this capacity can be transferable, teachable and measurable in educational contexts, arriving at a notion of 'scaffolded creativity' which is demonstrated through practice in the higher academy.

My journey towards and with this theory draws on my experience of four personae, the creative writer in and outside the academy, and the educator, team leader, and researcher within it; and explores the strategies and issues raised by bringing these roles and intelligences together. This theory of 'knowledge transformation' represents an aspirational contribution to our understanding of what it means to be 'creative'. It explores how educational objectives can lead to deep learning and positive change. It also explores how values can be clarified in the course of their emergence and formed into living standards of judgment. (Abstract)

Educational Values in SoTL

The educational values in my scholarship of teaching and learning are being clarified and communicated with digital visual data my educational practice, with the use of a method of empathetic resonance. These values are used in my SoTL, as explanatory principles in my explanations of my own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which my practice is located. My formal professional development began in 1968 with my enrolment in the Academic Diploma course at the Institute of Education of the University of London. At this time the Institute was internationally recognised as being at the forefront of the development of the disciplines approach to education. Richard Peters

(1966) was one of the originators of this approach and the Academic Diploma course included the study of Ethics and Education (Peters, 1966). At the heart of 'Ethics and Education' was the justification of the claim that the values-laden nature of education included, freedom, justice, consideration of interest, respect for persons, worthwhile activities and the procedural principles of democracy. Whilst the justification, based on a Kantian form of transcendental deduction, has been questioned, I continue to recognise and include these values in my values-laden educational practices. As well as these values I include a flow of life-affirming enquiry with other values of human flourishing. For example, one of these values relates to the dignity of human labour in which individual's generate and share their living-educational-theories with their values of human flourishing.

I also recognise that any claim to know the values of human flourishing could be contentious and open to challenges between different claims. Such contests between values are likely to involve conflicts between the power relations of different interest groups. I use the procedural value of democratic evaluation to submit my own values-laden claim to knowledge to the power of rational argument, through Popper's (1975, p. 44) idea of the mutual rational controls of critical discussion. Whilst taking account of such democratic evaluations I also base my judgements about my knowledge-claims with my personal knowledge where Polanyi (1958, p. 327) points out that:

I must understand the world from my point of view, as a person claiming originality and exercising his personal judgement responsibly with universal intent.

On the 12th September 2023 I listened to the citation which justified the award of a D.Litt. Degree, Honoris Causa, from the University of Worcester (see the 7.37 minute video at https://youtu.be/PHxu_3vxx9Y). In my response to the citation (see 7.11 minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GX-M6kcwUQs>) I emphasise the value of remembering those who gave their lives in the Second World War and opened up possibilities for me to benefit from health, economic, educational and political opportunities in living my values in my scholarship of teaching and learning as fully as possible (see the 3:49 minute video at <https://youtu.be/rGiG93m6EmM>)

Validity and Rigour in SoTL

Research into the scholarship of teaching and learning with Living Educational Theory Research, involves the generation and sharing of knowledge-claims. Validity and rigour are important in ensuring that the knowledge-claims are as truthful as possible.

In ensuring the validity of my own living-educational-theory I use a modification of Hamermas' (1976, pp. 2-3) four criteria of social validity in his work on communication and the evolution of society. These criteria focus on comprehensibility, evidence, rightness and authenticity. I have modified these criteria in the four questions, I ask members of validation groups of some 3-8 peers, to answer in relation to my explanations of my educational influences in learning:

How could I improve the comprehensibility of my explanation?

How could I strengthen the evidence I use to justify the knowledge-claims in my explanation?

How could I deepen and extend my understanding of the sociohistorical and sociocultural influences in my explanation?

How could I enhance the authenticity of my explanation in terms of demonstrating that I am living my values as fully as possible?

Others, such as Winters (1989) prefer to use the idea of rigour, rather than validity. Kok (1991) uses Winters' six criteria of rigour to enhance her living-educational theory. These six criteria are, reflexive and dialectical critique, risk, multiple resource, plural structure and theory-practice transformation.

Community-based Living Educational Theory Research and Transformative Educational Research in Sustainable Development.

Developing my own international Scholarship of Teaching and Learning with Living Educational Theory Research is now focused on community-based research connected to my role as Extraordinary Professor in Community-based Educational Research at North West University in South Africa and in supporting the planning for the 4th International Conference on Transformative Education Research and Sustaining Development, in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2024.

You can access my latest research by accessing the homepage of living-posters at:

<https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2023.pdf>

and clicking on the living-posters from Durban University of Technology at:

<https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/dut23.pdf>

Nalini Chitanand is an Academic Development Practitioner-Scholar at Durban University in South Africa. Chitanand is striving toward Transformative and Sustainable Academic Development with values of Respect, Love & Care -- Embodied within the philosophy of Ubuntu (an African philosophical approach). Do please access Chitanand's living-poster at:

<https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/nalini22.pdf>

Chitanand organised a webinar series on the scholarship of teaching and learning and invited me to participate. See:

<https://www.dut.ac.za/celt-hosted-a-successful-webinar-series-on-scholarship-of-teaching-and-learning/>

The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) at the Durban University of Technology (DUT) recently hosted a webinar on Living Educational Theory. The webinar was facilitated on MS Teams by CELT's Nalini Chitanand: Scholarship of

Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Programme Coordinator and Shubnam Rambharos: Teaching and Learning Development Practitioner.

Chitanand explained that the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is a professional development programme that aims to foster and promote research informed and scholarly higher education practices. The programme introduces participants to several theoretical and methodological approaches. One of the methodologies, Living Education Theory is a values-based methodology for improving educational practices through asking questions such as, 'How do I improve my practice?'

CELT Acting Director, Prof Livingstone Makondo delivered a warm welcome message to the guests. "We are here to ensure that our staff are better equipped to execute diverse teaching and learning roles that they find requisite in whatever they do, day in day out."

Professor Jack Whitehead (UK and visiting professor at University of Cumbria) and panellists of practitioner-researchers Dr Pip Bruce Ferguson (New Zealand, Teacher, staff developer, researcher), Dr Swaroop Rawal (India, Actor, International Life skills educator, Author and researcher), Rev Dr Delysia Timm (South Africa, Research Associate, coach), and Mrs Marilynne Coopasami (DUT, Lecturer, PhD Candidate) engaged in interactive discussions and shared their experiences and research of generating their own living-educational-theory.

Prof Whitehead introduced the Living Educational Theory and shared the global resources and exemplars on his website (<http://www.actionresearch.net>). He explained that this was an international resource for action researchers who are generating their own living-theories with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity from enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'

"When you are on my website, if you go into the what's new section of the 2021 academic year, you can access the issue of the journal of the Living Educational Theories. I am hoping that the brief introduction to the resources available for you will assist you in improving your own Living Educational theories and share those with global community," said Prof Whitehead.

A 2023 Learning and Teaching Imbizo on 'Cultivating the use of Living Educational Theory Research for enhancing multimodal professional practice and reshaping the future of higher Education' (Chitanand, et al., 2023) shows how this work is being continued.

You can also access my latest contribution, to developing my own international Scholarship of Teaching and Learning with Living Educational Theory Research, with the planning group for the 4th International Conference on Transformative Education Research and Sustainable Development to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia, 2024. See <https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/indonesiangp23.pdf>

Schön (1995) called for the development of a new epistemology for the new scholarship. I am suggesting that this new epistemology has been created by Living Educational Theory Researchers (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2024) rather than by action researchers, as Schön suggested.

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