What makes 'educational research' educational? A Living Theory approach to professional development.

Jack Whitehead, University of Cumbria

DRAFT 28/02/19.

Abstract

This paper uses a Living Theory approach to educational research and professional development to analyse what makes 'educational research' educational. The approach redefines the distinction between education and educational research Whitty (2005) makes to emphasize the knowledge-creating capacities of educational researchers. Some implications of accepting this distinction between education and educational researchers are explored in terms of a Living Theory approach to enhancing professionalism in education through educational research.

My contention is that BERA, if it accepts Whitty's distinction between education and educational research, will be contributing to a distortion or elimination of the educational knowledge created by researchers researching their educational practice. By educational researcher I am meaning those researchers who are generating evidence-based explanations of educational influences in learning.

The paper also uses this idea of educational research to distinguish a given curriculum from a living curriculum. The analysis includes the recognition of the influence of power relations in what counts as educational research and shows the inclusion of both a living curriculum and a given curriculum in generating explanations of educational influences in learning.

The paper presents the creative methods of empathetic resonance and empathetic validity with digital, multi-media data, to clarify and communicate the meanings of the embodied values that practitioner-researchers are using as explanatory principles in their explanations of educational influence in learning. Issues of rigour, validity and significance are also considered.

Keywords educational research; educational knowledge; educational theory; education research.

Introduction

The author of this paper accepts Biesta's (2006) argument that a new language of learning has been developed that is redefining the process of education in terms of an economic transaction. With this change in language education becomes a commodity – a "thing" – to be provided or delivered by the teacher or educational institution to be consumed by the learner. (pp. 19-20). This author also accepts Biesta's argument that the educational responsibility of educators is not only to support the coming into the world of unique and singular beings; it is also a responsibility for the world as a world of plurality (p. 117) and difference. This paper can be understood as offering an educational language that resists

the move to create a language of learning to replace a language of education (p. 118). The language of education of those engaged in educational research, described in this paper, is used to produce educational knowledge in Living Theory research.

The paper also explores the implications for educational research of using a definition of a living-educational-theory as an individual's explanation of their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations that influence practice and understanding with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity (Whitehead, 1989). Reiss and White (2013) in their work on an aims-based curriculum consider the significance of human flourishing in schools:

> What are schools for? In very general terms, their aims are the same as those of a home with children. The task of both institutions is two fold and simplicity itself, to equip each child:
>
> 1. to lead a life that is personally flourishing
> 2. to help others to do so too.   (p.1)

I understand the complexity in clarifying and communicating meanings of human flourishing. Reiss and White (pp. 6-7) acknowledge that there are many accounts of the flourishing life in terms of leading a personally flourishing life with basic needs and personal qualities. In the living-educational-theories described below, each individual explains their educational influences in learning with values that they believe carry hope for the flourishing of humanity, their own and others (Whitehead, ibid)

My thinking and educational research has also been influenced by the ideas of Foucault on power knowledge, especially his distinction between struggles on behalf of truth and struggles around the conditions that influence what counts as truth. Following Foucault (Rabinow, 1991, p. 73), I understand that a regime of truth is a system of power relations that produces and sustains what counts as truth. By truth, Foucault means the ensemble of rules according to which the true and the false are separated and specific effects of power attached to the true. By truth, Foucault does not mean the ensemble of truths that are to be discovered and accepted. Foucault says that the essential political problem for those he calls intellectuals, and who he says mainly work in Universities, is to contribute to constituting a new politics of truth. At the heart of this new politics of truth is a battle not on behalf of the truth, but of a battle about the status of truth and the economic and political role it plays. I am suggesting that educational researchers, who are seeking academic legitimation for their educational knowledge, are necessarily engaging with both contributing to the ensemble of truths which are to be discovered and accepted and the power relations that are sustaining the ensemble of rules, in the process of legitimation, according to which the true and the false are separated and specific effects of power attached to what is accepted as true.

All educational researchers who submit their writings for university accreditation, or for publication in refereed journals, are influenced by particular regimes of truth. I want to be clear that I see this paper as a contribution to the ensemble of truths, that are to be discovered and accepted about the nature of educational knowledge and theory. My

problem is not Foucault's problem in the sense that he focused on the power relations that influence what counts as truth. My problem is one of changing people's consciousnesses of what counts as educational knowledge and theory. However, as I engage with this problem, I have found it necessary to engage with Foucault's problem of the regimes of truth.

In his paper, 'Why Educational Research Has Been So Uneducational: The Case for a New Model of Social Science Based on Collaborative Inquiry,' William Torbert (1981) calls for a new politics and ethics. He argues that educational research has thus far failed to greatly improve education because it is based on a model of reality that emphasizes unilateral control in both research and practice. He argues that a new model is needed that considers the educational researcher to be an interactive participant, rather than a detached observer, in the situation under consideration.

In a Living Theory approach to professional development the close-to-practice questions, that are focused on improving practice, are of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing in my professional practice?' The inclusion of 'I' in the question highlights the importance of 'self-study' in the educational enquiry. Whilst much has been done since 1981 to develop this new approach to educational research, with its new politics and new ethics there is still much more to be done to democratise knowledge generation and legitimation (Rowell and Feldman, 2019).

The paper also raises the uncomfortable possibility that education researchers, from the disciplines of education, who are influential in terms of de Sousa Santos' analysis of the influence of epistemologies of the North, are sustaining BERA's regime of truth. This possibility is related to de Sousa Santos' (2014) analysis of the way in which the domination of Western epistemologies is contributing to the elimination of indigenous knowledges. It also raises the uncomfortable possibility that those education researchers, who are committed to the logic of Aristotle and Popper (1963) as well as the dialectical logic of Ilyenkov (1977), may be contributing to this distortion or elimination by their failure to recognise the nature of the educational knowledge that can be generated from evidence-based explanations of educational influence. I am thinking of explanations that draw their evidence from data in the form of digital visual recording of practice in situ and educational conversations which happen in a physical place or virtual place, such as SKYPE

The first part of the part of the paper is focused on the expression of social justice by Whitty, Young and others, that resulted in my tenured contract at the University of Bath with the protection of Academic Freedom between 1977-2009. This contract enabled me to focus on my research programme into a contribution to the reconstruction of what counted as educational theory. There is a tension in the paper between the recognition that this expression of social justice enabled me to make the contributions to educational theory and educational research and my use of this contribution to justify my criticisms of Whitty's (2005) distinction between education and educational research, and Young's (2019) conceptualisation of curriculum that focuses solely on a given curriculum without any conceptualisation or theorising of a living curriculum.

The second part is an analysis that is focused on the original contributions to knowledge in the living-educational-theories of educational researchers I supported in my academic life at

the University of Bath, UK. A living-educational-theory is understood as an individual's explanation of their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formation that is influencing practice and understanding (Whitehead, 1985, 1989). I understand a living-educational-theory to be part of a living curriculum in the sense of a curriculum vitae or the course of one's life. A living curriculum is distinguished from a given curriculum. I understand a given curriculum to be the course of study that forms what is taught or transmitted in schools, universities and continuing professional development programmes in other workplaces.

Original contributions to educational theory are used to argue that a regime of truth within BERA, that accepts OSTED's (2019) and Young's (2019) definition of curriculum, in a given curriculum, may be unwittingly contributing to the masking, distortion or elimination of the educational knowledge being generated by educational researchers in their living curriculum. The analysis is grounded in close-to-practice questions (Wyse, 2018) of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing in my professional practice?' It makes the assumption that part of a professional's responsibility is to contribute to their professional knowledge-base. Hence the analysis includes a Living Theory approach to enhancing professionalism in education to demonstrate what could be gained in enhancing professionalism in education by embracing this approach with the above distinctions between education and educational research and a living curriculum and a given curriculum. A Living Theory approach to enhancing professionalism is focused on the generation and making public the living-educational-theories of practitioner-researchers.

The third part is focused on an analysis of data generated from research methods and used as evidence in the generation of living-educational-theories. The data are used as evidence in pointing out limitations in printed text representations of educational explanations, such as those in the British Educational Research Journal. The data includes multimedia data, such as images and video and digital recording of educational conversations or live streamed broadcasts.

The fourth part is focused on issues of rigour and validity and the fifth part examines the significance of the paper. Its significance is focused on the danger that any educational researcher, including myself, might unwittingly be contributing to a neglect of the contributions to truth of educational researchers in analyses that focus solely on the power relations in a regime of truth. It focuses on the use of ontological values as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning. It shows how a clear distinction between the concepts of educational and education, in emphasising the importance of including the educational knowledge generated by educational researchers, as distinct from education research, has significance for educational practice and policy. The understanding of 'educational' in this paper, with its relationship to the explanations that individuals generate to explain their educational influences in their own learning as their living curriculum, challenges the OFSTED view that a (given) curriculum determines what pupils will get out of their educational experience. The challenge is in the recognition of the importance of the individual's generation of their living curriculum, in relation to the given curriculum, as determining what they get out of their educational experience. The significance includes the recognition of the importance of contributing to a global movement of

practitioner-researchers who are concerned with Knowledge Democracy (Rowell & Feldman, 2019)

1) Social justice in an educational engagement with the power relations in a regime of truth

In his Presidential Address to BERA Geoff Whitty (2005) calls for greater clarity and more care in using the terms 'education research' and 'educational research'. Whitty uses education research to characterise the whole field, but says that within that field we should reserve the term educational research for work that is consciously geared towards improving policy and practice. Whitty recognises:

> One problem with this distinction between 'education research' as the broad term and 'educational research' as the narrower field of work specifically geared to the improvement of policy and practice is that it would mean that BERA, as the British Educational Research Association would have to change its name or be seen as only involved with the latter. (pp. 172-173)

The distinction I am making between 'education research' and 'educational research' does not accept treating educational research as the narrower field of work specifically geared to the improvement of policy and practice. I am using educational research as the broad term that subsume the insights from education researchers within the explanations of educational influences in learning that distinguish the knowledge generated by educational researchers from the knowledge generated by education researchers.

In his appreciation of the life of Geoff Whitty, Menter (2018) makes the point:

> Geoff was truly what Gramsci would have called an 'organic intellectual'. He was deeply committed to social justice in and through education, and wrangled throughout his career with ideas, policies and interventions that could further these aims. He collaborated extensively with others committed to social justice, but also took his commitments into the corridors of power.

In this paper I include evidence of Whitty's commitment to social justice and his engagement with the power relations in a regime of truth that offended his sense of justice. Indeed, as you will see below, it was such an engagement that, in 1976, helped to overcome an attempt to terminate my academic life in a university. The engagement ensured that I was enabled, within a tenured contract, to fulfil my aim of contributing to the reconstruction of educational theory, in a working life at the University of Bath between 1973-2012.

As well as recognising this debt of gratitude to my productive life in education and educational research (Whitehead, 1993) I want to offer an analysis that also places Whitty, with his distinction between education and educational research, within a regime of truth of BERA, that I claim is supporting 'epistemicide' (de Sousa Santos, 2014) in the sense of the elimination of the knowledge-creation of practitioner educational-researchers in transforming what counts as educational knowledge and theory.

A letter from the Personnel Officer of the University of Bath on the 12th March 1976 included the statements confirmed by Senate that I was not to be offered a tenured appointment on the grounds that: I had not given satisfaction in the teaching of prescribed courses assigned to me; that there was an absence of evidence to suggest that I had pursued research of sufficient quality as well as to perform proper teaching and other administrative tasks; that I had exhibited forms of behaviour which have harmed the good order and morale of the School of Education.

I could not have survived this attempt to terminate my academic employment if I had been left on my own. Indeed, one of the most depressing moments I can still vividly recall was the response to my request for help from the Chairman of the Bath University Association of University Teachers. He advised me that my attempt to resist the University was hopeless and that I should look for other employment.

In marked contrast to this advice was the support I received from Geoff Whitty, Mary Tasker and Cyril Selmes, three of my colleagues in the School of Education and Paul Hunt an education student. Geoff Whitty in particular provided bedrock support. He advised me to contact the Campaign for Academic Freedom and Democracy. I went to see John Griffiths, a Professor of Public Law at the London School of Economics. After looking at the letter from the University of the 12th March 1976 and the procedures for probationary lecturers he agreed to write to the University on my behalf. Geoff organised petitions around the School to confront the judgements that I had disturbed the good order and morale of the School of Education. Paul Hunt organised petitions from students and teachers in local schools which confronted the negative judgements on my teaching. Geoff advised me to send my research papers to Michael Young at the Institute of Education of London University and to a Dr. David Hamilton, a Visiting Professor at the Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation of the University of Illinois, who was a well respected educational researcher. All this had to be organised between the 12th and the 29th March. I look back with gratitude and some incredulity at what others were prepared to do on my behalf. One political lesson is very clear to me. A regime of truth requires organised resistance if it is to be overcome. As an individual, without this support, I would have been overcome.

I responded to the University on the 1st April 1976 with submissions including a letter from John Griffiths. Given his position as a Professor of Public Law I think it carried significant force in the regime of truth in the University.

I finally received an offer of tenure from the Personnel Officer on the 11th February 1977:

> I am writing to inform you that Senate recently approved a recommendation from the Academic Staff Committee that you be offered a permanent appointment in the University with effect from the 1st September 1977.

My tenure ended in August 2009 and I finished my supervision of doctoral research programmes at the University of Bath in 2012. Whilst my educational research and supervision has continued as a Visiting Professor of Education at the University of Cumbria (2013-2018), my research programme, into the reconstruction of educational theory, could

not have taken place at the University of Bath without the political engagement of those mentioned above. This political engagement was motivated by a passion for social justice.

Part of my research programme at the University of Bath included supervising, to successful completion, some 32 doctoral theses between 1996-2012, with no withdrawals and the award of one MPhil degree. This was the highest number of successful supervisions between 1996-2012 of any member of academic staff in the Department of Education. Each doctoral thesis was submitted by a practitioner-researcher as a living-theory and judged by examiners as an original contribution to knowledge, hence emphasising the knowledge-creating capacities of educational researchers, rather than diminishing this capacity through focusing on issues of policy and practice. These accomplishments rest on the expressions of social justice of those above who engaged most successfully in overcoming the judgements of a University's regime of truth.

I now turn to the nature of the knowledge legitimated by Universities in the living-educational-theories of practitioner researchers and explore the possibility of enhancing professionalism in education through a Living Theory approach that engages with a given curriculum in generating a living curriculum.

2) **Original educational knowledge-creation in the living-educational-theories of practitioner researchers.**

2a) The original idea of a living-educational-theory

My professional life as an educational researcher has focused on contributing to Educational Theory because of my desire to enhance professionalism in education by contributing to the professional knowledge-base. This desire was based on the belief that one of the distinguishing qualities of a profession was that it had an academically legitimated knowledge-base.

My initiation between 1968-1972 into what counted as 'educational theory' was in the Academic Diploma and MA programmes at the Institute of Education of the University of London. Through the influence of two of the leading Philosophers of Education at the Institute, Richard Peters and Paul Hirst, I agreed with them that educational theory was constituted by the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. This approach became known as the 'disciplines' approach to educational theory.

I began to question this approach to educational theory when, in 1970 as Head of Science of Erkenwald Comprehensive School I focused on my question, 'How do I support my pupils in developing their scientific understanding?' To help to improve my practice I believed that I needed to integrate insights, into the process of improvement, an educational theory that could explain my educational influences in my pupils' learning. I began to appreciate that no insights from the disciplines of education, taken together or in any combination, could produce the valid explanation of my educational influences in my pupils' learning that I needed to improve my professional practice. Drawing on this insight I began to generate my own explanation of my educational influences in my own and my pupils' learning. I joined the University of Bath in 1973 to see if I could contribute to a reformulation of educational

theory that included the explanations that individual educators produced to explain their own educational influences in their own learning and in the learning of others. I later included, in this unit of appraisal for living-educational-theories (Whitehead 1989) an explanation of educational influences in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understandings.

In 1983, Paul Hirst one of the most influential supporters of the disciplines approach to educational theory, acknowledged the following mistake in the approach:

> …principles justified in this way have until recently been regarded as at best pragmatic maxims having a first crude and superficial justification in practice that in any rationally developed theory would be replaced by principles with more fundamental, theoretical justification. That now seems to me to be a mistake. Rationally defensible practical principles, I suggest, must of their nature stand up to such practical tests and without that are necessarily inadequate. (p. 18)

Whilst studying for the Academic Diploma (1968-70) and the MA (1970-72), and teaching full time in comprehensive schools, I experienced an intuition that the disciplines approach was mistaken because I couldn't derive a valid explanation, for my educational influences in my own learning and in the learning of my pupils, from the explanations of the disciplines of education either individually or in any combination.

Between 1985 – 1989 I developed the idea of a living-educational-theory as an individual's explanation of their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understandings in enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice as a professional educator and educational researcher?' Insights from the explanations of the disciplines of education could be included within an individual's living-educational-theory, without subsuming an individual's explanation of educational influence within a theoretical framework of a discipline.

One epistemological issue in generating a living-educational-theory concerns contradiction. For over 2,500 years there have been arguments between formal and dialectical logicians about the academic legitimacy of including living contradictions in correct thought. The problem can be understand in a relationship between experience and statements. I can experience myself as a living contradiction in the sense that I hold together the experiences of 'I am free/I am not free'. However, as soon as I represent such an experience within statements I am faced with the problem defined by Ilyenkov (1977):

> If any object is a living contradiction, what must the thought (statement about the object) be that expresses it? Can and should an objective contradiction find reflection in thought? And if so, in what form? (p313).

   It was Ilyenkov's point about a 'living contradiction' that led me to create the idea of a living educational theory (Whitehead, 1985, 1989) as I explored the implications of living life as a living contradiction and of explaining my educational influences in my own learning and in the learning of others.

In focussing on the validity and academic legitimacy of a view of educational theory that includes the explanations that individual educators generate to explain their educational influences in learning I am drawn to MacIntyre's (1988) point that:

> The rival claims to truth of contending traditions of enquiry depend for their vindication upon the adequacy and the explanatory power of the histories which the resources of each of those traditions in conflict enable their adherents to write. (p. 403)

My contention is that Living Theories, with their original contributions to knowledge, offer the resources that demonstrate the explanatory power of these educational researchers to explain their educational influences in their own learning. My claim is that no education theory taken individually or in any combination can produce a valid explanation for an individual's educational influence in learning. This is not to say that insights from education theories are not useful in the generation of a living-educational-theory.

2b) Distinguishing educational research from education research

If educational researchers accept Whitty's distinction between education and educational research then 'education research' is the broad term and 'educational research' is the narrower field of work specifically geared to the improvement of policy and practice. I am using educational research to refer to the generation of explanations of educational influences in learning that draw in insights from education research. Rather than seeing educational research as the narrower field of work specifically geared to the improvement of policy and practice I see educational research as being focused on the generation of explanations of educational influences in learning as well as being 'specifically geared to the improvement of policy and practice.' This focus, on the generation of explanations, highlights the role of educational researchers as knowledge-creators as well as acknowledging the role of insights from education researchers in the generation of living-educational-theories. The educational knowledge created by educational research is likely to have implications for improvements of policy and practice as the researcher explores the implications of asking close-to-practice questions about improving practice, but its primary role, **as research**, is, like education research, to generate contributions to knowledge

In clarifying my meaning of educational research, as being focused on the generation of explanations of educational influences in learning, I identify with a conversation between Giles Deleuze and Michel Foucault which considers the necessity for the practitioner of speaking on his or her own behalf:

> You were the first to teach us something absolutely fundamental: the indignity of speaking for others. We ridiculed representation and said it was finished, but we failed to draw the consequences of this 'theoretical' conversion - to appreciate the theoretical fact that only those directly concerned can speak in a practical way on their own behalf. (Foucault 1980)

2c) Distinguishing a given curriculum from a living curriculum

The idea of individuals speaking in a practical way on their own behalf is central to the distinction I am making between the 'given curriculum' and the 'living curriculum'. In making this distinction I draw on my definition of something that is educational involves learning with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. In their conceptualisations of the curriculum, Young (2019) and OFSTED (2019) refer to what I am calling the 'given curriculum':

> 'a framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage (intent); for translating that framework over time into a structure and narrative, within an institutional context (implementation) and for evaluating what knowledge and understanding students have gained against expectations (achievement). As such, the curriculum lies at the heart of education, determining what pupils will get out of their educational experience.' (Muijs et al 2109, p. 29)

A given curriculum, according to OFSTED, determines what pupils will get out of their educational experience. Young (2019) in his conceptualising of curriculum makes similar points when he says that:

> …the distinctive feature of the curriculum is that it organises concepts not according to any pupil's experience but according to principles established by specialists, which are ordered into subjects, such as science, history, and literature, in ways which are often at least initially 'foreign' to most if not all pupils. (p.14)

> A curriculum does not replace the knowledge that pupils bring to school: it challenges it and enables pupils to transform and extend it by engaging with new and often troubling ideas with a teacher who they have learned to trust. The curriculum presents pupils with an opportunity to enquire about the world. (p.15)

A living curriculum is focused on an individual's educational experiences in learning, often through engagements with a given curriculum and can be understood in relation to what Buber refers to as the special humility of the educator for whom the life and particular being of all his pupils is the decisive factor to which his 'hierarchical' recognition is subordinated. (Buber, 1947, p. 122)

In exercising this special humility of the educator I understand a living curriculum to be the educational learning that emerges when the educator seeks to encourage the meanings generated by the learner whilst engaging with the 'hierarchical' recognition of a given curriculum. I am suggesting that an educational researcher should also be guided by this special humility in seeking to explain the educational influences in an individual's learning in the generative relationship between a given curriculum and a living curriculum. A living curriculum involves more than recognising and supporting the knowledge-creating abilities of each person. It is also to do with each individual recognising skills, knowledge, abilities, and understandings that they need to develop to live a life that is personally satisfying and productive and worthwhile and pursuing a curriculum that will enable them to progress along that evolving path.

I want to be clear that I am referring to a living-curriculum as a curriculum vitae in the sense of the course of one's life. Young (2019) points out that a (given) curriculum, does not replace the knowledge that pupils bring to school, it enables pupils to transform and extend it (p. 15). It is such transformations and extensions that I am referring to as a living curriculum. A living curriculum is concerned with learning to live a satisfying, productive and worthwhile form of life with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. Joy Mounter is an educator and educational researcher whose work and research provides evidence of the educational significance of this distinction between a living and a given curriculum.

Joy Mounter is the MA and Course Leader at The Learning Institute (TLI) in Cornwall. As part of her living-theory doctoral research programme Mounter has designed and successfully submitted, on behalf of the Learning Institute, a Masters programme for validation to Newman University. The programme is based on a Living Theory approach to enhancing professionalism (Mounter 2019) and includes a given curriculum. A Living Theory approach to enhancing professionalism of educational-practitioners is based on a view of educational research that is focused on the knowledge-creating capacities of the practitioner-researcher as they explore the implications of asking, researching and answering close-to-practice questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my professional educational practice?' The following educational enquiries constitute the first complete Living Theory Masters programme to be given academic legitimacy by a University as a student engaged with its given curriculum. The titles below of Mounter's successfully submitted Master units are offered as evidence of a Living Theory approach to enhancing professionalism in education and the contribution such work makes to the development of a language of education in the process of its use.

(2006a) *How Can I Live My Personal Theory Of Education In The Classroom To Promote Self Reflection As A Learner?*

(2006b) *How do I recognise the move from the language of learning to the language of educational responsibility?*

(2007) *If I Want The Children In My Class To Extend Their Thinking And Develop Their Own Values And Learning Theories, How Can I Show The Development Of Their Learning? How Do I Research This In My Classroom?*

(2008a) *How Can I Work Within The Government's Perspective Of 'Gifted And Talented' But Still Remain True To My Own Living Values?*

(2008b) *Can Children Carry Out Action Research About Learning, Creating Their Own Learning Theory?*

(2008c) *How can I enhance the educational influence of my pupils in their own learning, that of other pupils, myself and the school?*

(2012) *As A Headteacher Researcher How Can I Demonstrate The Impact And Self-Understandings Drawn From Living Theory Action Research, As A Form Of Continual Professional Development In Education?*

Mounter (2008b) provides evidence of a co-created account with her 6 year old pupils that demonstrates how pupils can creatively generate their own living curriculum. I think that it is worth emphasising that a living curriculum is more than an individual's knowledge-creating as it contributes to other aspect of learning involved in living a satisfying, productive and worthwhile life. These could include confidence, communicating, dialogic discourse, and recognising valuing and working with their knowledge creating abilities. There has been much recent, national interest in mental health and well-being and these could also be important to include and address in an individual's living curriculum.

The evidence includes digital visual data of the pupils in educational conversations between themselves and Mounter. The visual data provides evidence of the conversations that Mounter uses to answer the question, *Can Children Carry Out Action Research About Learning, Creating Their Own Learning Theory?*

Branko Bognar and Marica Zovko (2008) have provided similar digital visual data with pupils that provides evidence of 10 year old pupils in Croatia, using action research principles to improving something important in their lives. This data was collected in a different cultural context to that of Mounter and with different ages of pupils:

> In this report we reveal how ten-years-old pupils take over the whole processes of action research themselves. We realise that action research is not a teaching strategy for gaining better educational results, neither is it a preparation for life: it is life itself. We believe that traditional schooling cannot create a conducive atmosphere for pupils to carry out their own action research. Our research shows that it is possible to do this only in a child-oriented school whose main purpose is the development of the creative potentials of all participants. In our inquiry the pupils determined their own challenges with the aim of improving something important in their own lives. We show that action research is meaningful only if students engage with it on their own terms, on the basis of their own needs, interests and self-chosen values. Anything that hinders pupils' freedom will only compromise the foundations of action research itself and any educational value accrued from it. (p.1)

In their original contributions to educational knowledge Laidlaw (2015) and Briganti (2015) in their living-educational-theories, make the points:

> I conclude that 'conscientisation' has become a living standard of judgement in the evaluation of my work in the service of humanity as I seek to lead a better life in the direction of particular values, such as love, compassion and now, conscientisation. Because of my emphasis on the latter – amongst other things – I believe I am now contributing to Living Theory as a social movement through living-global-citizenship (Coombs, Potts and Whitehead, 2014). (Laidlaw, 2015, p. 32)

Briganti's research is focused on her living-theory of international development:

> The project I am working on in Albania represents an evidence-based example of how my practical work evolves, together with my embodied and developmental values. I show how these aspects of my humanity can influence the people and the social formations I work with and how these have an influence on my daily work in the developing world and on myself. (p. 76)

The implications for this kind of educational research for creating a profession of educators has previously been explored in an analysis of the living-theories of Master and Doctor Educators (Whitehead & Huxtable 2016).

The originality of this Living Theory approach to enhancing professionalism in education through educational research is focused on the nature of the educational knowledge that is being generated by educational researchers who are exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering close-to-practice questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing in my professional educational practice?' The originality of this educational knowledge is focused on over 40 Living Theory doctorates, that have been legitimated by Universities around the world, between 1996-2018. They have been academically legitimated for the originality of the explanations of practitioner-researchers of their educational influences in their own learning the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understanding.

Each doctoral thesis is publicly and freely available from:

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

The Abstract of each thesis outlines the originality of the knowledge-creation. For example Liz Campbell's (2018) Abstract for her thesis on 'How has love influenced me as a teacher, researcher, and learner? A narrative inquiry into a teacher's abrupt awakenings.' states:

> My interpretive qualitative study explores the generation of my living educational theory as I introduce love into my practice and discover the obstacles and challenges to living more fully according to my values of love, hope, and joy.

The original contributions to educational knowledge of a Living Theory approach to educational research are focused on the explanations of educational influences in learning being generated and legitimated. I have previously presented analyses of this knowledge to BERA and elsewhere (Whitehead, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2017). The analyses reveal limitations in the language and logic of those who follow the propositional logic of Aristotle and Popper (1963) and those who follow the dialectical logic of Ilyenkov (1977).

3) **Research methods for gathering data to use as evidence in generating living-educational-theories**

In developing Living Theory research as a global social movement (Coombs, Potts & Whitehead, 2014) it is necessary for Living Theory researchers to contribute to extending their influence from within communities of Living Theory researchers and beyond.

Researching this process from a relationally dynamic perspective has included the development of the following creative methods:

3a) Living Posters

Here is the guidance for creating and contributing a living poster from http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/livingposterletterA.pdf :

You could create and contribute your living poster and encourage others to do the same by:

- Creating and uploading a 2-3minute video-clip to YouTube of you communicating the essentials of: your context, interests, research passions, practice and values as the explanatory principles and living standards of judgment to which you hold yourself accountable in your practice.
- 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.
- Sending us two files of your living poster i) as a PDF and ii) in whatever programme you have used to create it e.g. WORD, Pages, PowerPoint. Please use 'insert' (not copy and paste) and use low resolution images otherwise your file becomes huge!
- Give us 1-4 keywords that summarise the essence of what you are about and send, together with your living-poster, to jack@actionresearch.net.

You can learn more about Living Theory research and individual's living-theories by visiting http://ejolts.net/ and http://actionresearch.net/ and reading Jack Whitehead's latest book:

Whitehead, J. (2018). *Living Theory research as a way of life*. Bath UK: Brown dog books. ISBN printed book: 978-1-78545-275-8 ISBN e- book: 978-1-78545-276-5

The homepage of living posters presented to the June 2017 meeting of the 1st Global Assembly on Knowledge Democracy in Cartagena can be accessed from: http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage020617.pdf

These include the living-poster of the weekly Breakfast Café Conversations.

3b) Using educational conversations in educational communities as an educational research method

In his writings on conversational realities revisited, Shotter, (2008) makes the following point about dialogically-structured relations:

And it is the unique transitory understandings (that also give us a sense of 'where they stand' in relation to us), as well as the unique action guiding anticipations (that also give us a sense of 'where they might go next' in relation to us). That can only arise in our spontaneously responsive, dialogically-structured relations with another person – that can give us that possibility of being that the voice (or of introducing another voice) that calls to them: *"become what you are? become in reality what ideally you are in design?"* (p. 168).

The weekly breakfast café conversations are video-recorded. This gives participants and others the opportunity to document, through time, the educational influences in learning that emerge as unique transitory understandings and unique action guiding anticipations that can be related to what the individual is doing as they generate their living-theory of their educational influences in learning.

The living-poster of June 2018 of the Breakfast Café Conversation can be accessed at http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/concafe250518.pdf . The live urls of participants who have contributed can be accessed to show the narratives of the 'spontaneously responsive, dialogically structured relations' with others in the conversation.

3c) Empathetic resonance and empathetic validity

I use the ideas of empathetic resonance and empathetic validity to develop a shared understanding of inclusional meanings of expressions of life-affirming energy with values. I first encountered the idea of empathetic resonance in the writings of Sardello (2008). For Sardello, *empathetic resonance*, is the resonance of the individual soul coming into resonance with the Soul of the World (p. 13). I use *empathetic resonance* to communicate a feeling of the immediate presence of the other in communicating the living values that the other experiences as giving meaning and purpose to their life.

For Dadds, empathetic validity is the potential of practitioner research, in its processes and outcomes, to transform the emotional dispositions of people towards each other, such that greater empathy and regard are created. Dadds distinguishes between internal empathetic validity as that which changes the practitioner researcher and research beneficiaries and external empathetic validity as that which influences audiences with whom the practitioner research is shared. (Dadds, 2008, p. 279).

Naidoo, (2005), in clarifying and communicating meanings of embodied expressions of 'a passion for compassion' in an Alzheimer's patient and her career, uses both empathetic resonance and empathetic validity in her original contribution to educational knowledge. Naidoo uses digital visual data to clarify and communicate her meanings of a passion for compassion.

In using the methods of empathetic resonance and empathetic validity I follow Shotter's (2011) suggestion 'open ourselves to responding to it' I am thinking here of 'turn ourselves responsively to it' where 'it' refers to digital visual data of embodied expressions of values in educational practice:

This suggests that, when facing a uniquely difficult situation – one that does not present us with a well-defined problem to solve, but which requires a first-time struggle from us to overcome it – instead of turning away from such an event, and burying ourselves in thought in an attempt to *explain* it within an appropriate theoretical scheme, we should act quite differently. We should turn ourselves more responsively toward it, and instead of responding to it in *our own* already established general terms, open ourselves to responding to it (or to at least aspects of it) both *in its own* terms, i.e., as uniquely itself, and *in terms of other's utterances*. Indeed, we can begin an extensive and intensive, i.e., nuanced and detailed, two-way (dialogically-structured) exploratory interaction of the unique situation, approaching it *this* way and *that* way... while being 'moved' to act in *this* way and *that* in accord with the beneficial 'reminders' (Wittgenstein, 1953, no.127) or 'pointers' donated to us by those who have found such 'pointers' useful in their own similar such explorations. (189-190.)

4) Rigour and validity

The rigour of a Living Theory approach to enhancing professionalism in education through educational research is ensured by applying Winter's (1989) six principles of reflective and dialectical critique, risk, plural structure, multiple resource and theory practice transformation. The principles are applied in Validation Groups of between 3-8 people who also seek to enhance the validity of the explanations by applying four questions derived from Habermas' (1976) four criteria for ensuring social validity: comprehensibility; evidence to justify assertions; sociocultural and sociohistorical understandings of these influences in practice and understanding; authenticity in the sense that the values used by the researcher, to distinguish their research as educational, are being lived as fully as possible. The four questions can be asked in variations of the following:

i)   How can the comprehensibility of my explanation of educational influence be improved?
ii)   How can I strengthen the evidence I use to justify the claims I make in my explanation?
iii) How can I deepen and extend my understanding of the sociohistorical and sociocultural influences in my practice and explanations?
iv)   How can I enhance the authenticity of my explanation in the sense that I am showing how I am living my values as fully as possible.

The rigour of the research, in clarifying and communicating the embodied expressions of the meanings of the ontological values used by the researcher to distinguish their research as educational, is focused on the use of digital, visual data from educational practice with the methods of empathetic resonance (Sardello, 2008) and empathetic validity (Dadds, 2008)

I conclude with what I understand as the significance of the paper for educational researchers as they engage with explanations of educational influences in learning that constitute their living curriculum in relation to a given curriculum.

5)   Significance

The significance of this paper for educational researchers includes an educational language that moves beyond a language of learning. Using this educational language it includes explanations of educational influences in learning with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. This educational language to distinguish educational research from education research.

The paper acknowledges the commitment to social justice of those individuals who helped to secure the tenured contract of employment that enabled me to fulfil my vocational commitment. This was a commitment to contribute to the generation of a view of educational theory that could produce valid explanations of an individual's educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understanding. Acknowledging my profound debt to these individuals has not prevented me for raising the possibility that their views on education research and a given curriculum, when seen within a regime of truth of BERA are limiting the development of educational research and a living curriculum.

The paper challenges the OFSTED view that a (given) curriculum determines what pupils will get out of their educational experience. The challenge is in the recognition that it is in an individual's generation of their living curriculum in relation to a given curriculum that determines what they get out of their educational experience.

The paper explains how the embodied expressions of the ontological values of educational researchers that can distinguish research as educational, can be clarified using digital visual data of practice, with the creative methods of empathetic resonance and empathetic validity, living-posters and educational conversations. The digital visual data is used as evidence multi-media narratives of living-theories within which individuals generate their curriculum vitae in the sense of the course of their professional lives.

References

Biesta, G. J. J. (2006) Beyond Learning; Democratic Education for a Human Future. Boulder; Paradigm Publishers.

Bognar, B. & Zovko, M. (2008) Pupils as action researchers: improving something important in our lives. *Educational Journal of Living Theories*, 1(1), 1-49. Retrieved 20 February 2019 from https://ejolts.net/node/82

Briganti, A. (2015) Generating my own living-theory: An interim report. Educational Journal of Living Theories. 8(2), 76-99

Buber, M. (1947) Between Man and Man. London; Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd.

Coombs, S., Potts, M. & Whitehead, J. (2014) *International Educational Development and Learning through Sustainable Partnerships: Living Global Citizenship* (London; Palgrave Macmillan).

Dadds, M. (2008) Empathetic Validity in Practitioner-Research. *Educational Action Research*, 16(2), 279-290.

EJOLTS (2019) *Procedures for Review*. Retrieved 2 February 2019 from https://ejolts.net/review

Foucault, M. (1980) in Gordon, C. (Ed.) *Power Knowledge* (London, Harvester).

Hirst, P. (Ed.) (1983) *Educational Theory and its Foundation Disciplines* (London, RKP).

Laidlaw, M. (2015) How I am trying to lead the best possible life: towards a more helpful framing of my practice. *Educational Journal of Living Theories*, 8(2), 32-75

MacIntyre,A. (1988) *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London, Duckworth).

Mentor, I. (2018) Geoff Whitty: An appreciation. *Research Intelligence* 137, 5-6.

Mounter, J., Huxtable, M. & Whitehead, J. (2019) Using TASC and Spirals in Living Theory research in explanations of educational influences in a global social movement. *Gifted Education International*. (A 2019 issue, in press). Retrieved 13 February 2019 from http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/JMMHJWPapergei181218.pdf

Muijs, D., Passingham, A., O'Shaughnessy, K. & Vidal-Hall, C. (2019) Curriculum Matters Ofsted's research on the curriculum. *Research Intelligence*, 137, 29-30.

Naidoo, M. (2005) *I am because we are (A never ending story). The emergence of a living theory of inclusional and responsive practice*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. Retrieved 11 March 2009 from http://www.actionresearch.net/naidoo.shtml

Rabinow, P. (1991) *The Foucault Reader: An introduction to Foucault's thought* (London, Penguin).

Reiss, M. J. & White, J. (2013) An Aims-based Curriculum: The significance of human flourishing for schools. London: Institute of Education Press.

Research Intelligence (2018) Quality in Close-To-Practice Educational Research. *Research Intelligence,* Issue 137, Autumn 2018.

Rowell, L. & Feldman, A. (2019) Knowledge democracy and action research. *Educational Action Research*, 27(1), 1-6.

Sardello, R. (2008) Silence: The Mystery of Wholeness (Berkeley, Goldenstone Press).

Shotter, J. (2008) Conversational Realities Revisited: Life, Language, Body and World. Ohio: Taos Institute Publications.

Shotter, J. (2011) 'Getting it':   Withness-thinking and the dialogical in practice (New York, Hampton Press).

Thayer-Bacon, B. (2003) Relational (e)pistemologies (Oxford, Peter Lang).

Torbert, W. R. (1981) Why Educational Research Has Been So Uneducational: The Case for a New Model of Social Science Based on Collaborative Inquiry, pp 141-151 in
Reason, P. & Rowan, J. (Eds.) (1981) Human Inquiry, John Wiley and Sons, Ltd.

Whitehead, J. (2017) Legitimation of Post-Formalism with Living Theories. Pre-publication draft of a chapter published in Letiche, H, & Jensen, H. (eds), (2017), ' Post Formalism, Pedagogy Lives: as inspired by Joe Kincheloe' (London, Peter Lang). Retrieved 13 February 2019 from http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwkincheloechpt.pdf

Whitehead, J. (2013) A living logic for educational research. A presentation at the 2013 Annual Conference of the British Educational Research Association, University of Sussex, 5th September. Retrieved 2 February 2019 from
http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwbera11dr040911opt.pdf

Whitehead, J. (2011) Developing a relationally dynamic epistemology for educational knowledge - Presentation at the British Educational Research Association Conference, 7th September 2011. Retrieved 2 February 2019 from
http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwbera11dr040911opt.pdf

Whitehead, J. (2010) Creating An Educational Epistemology In The Multi-Media Narratives Of Living Educational Theories And Living Theory Methodologies. Action Researcher in Education 1(1); 89-109. Retrieved 2 February 2019 from
http://www.actionresearch.gr/i1contents

Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2016) Creating a Profession of Educators with the living-theories of Master and Doctor Educators, *Gifted Education International*, 32(1), 6-25. Retrieved 2 February 2019 from
http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/gei2015/geicontents2016.pdf

Whitty, G. (2005) Education(al) research and education policy making: is conflict inevitable? Presidential Address to the British Educational Research Association, University of Glamorgan, 17 September 2005. *British Educational Research Journal* 32(2), 159–176.

Woods, L., McAteer, M. & Whitehead, J. (2019) How are Action Researchers Contributing to Knowledge Democracy? A Global Perspective. *Educational Action Research* 27(1), 7-21.

Wyse, D., Brown, C., Oliver, S. & Poblete, X. (2018) The BERA Close to Practice Research Project, *Research Intelligence,* Issue 137, pp. 15-16.

Young, M. (2019) Conceptualising the Curriculum. *Research Intelligence*. 138; 14-15.