

Reconceptualising International CPD as a Form of 'Living Citizenship'

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Background

This paper originates from the principal researcher's perception that there is a lack of pedagogy underpinning the teaching of citizenship education, which was introduced as a compulsory subject in UK Schools from 1999. Since then the UK Government has promoted strongly the notion of international educational partnerships between schools (DfES, 2004). Despite this concurrency of policy, there has not been an attempt to rigorously research the pedagogical potential and benefits of international CPD educational partnerships. There has been a failure to address questions about how to deliver the goal of more informed citizens, or indeed, to address the question as put by Gearon (2003) in the British Educational Research Association's (BERA) professional user review of 2003: How do we learn to become good citizens? This is what the principal researcher aims to do in his PhD research project from which this paper overviews.

Research Questions

Using Sayers (2002) notion of effective citizenship education as something which touches students and encourages them to be good citizens, the researcher seeks to show how through establishing, developing and sustaining an international educational partnership the participants in it become better citizens as they live out their values of social justice and humanity (Ubuntu) (Louw, 1998) more fully.

This PhD research project addresses the following action research questions:

1. How has my engagement in this research enabled me to improve my practice and contribute to educational theory?
2. How have my actions in developing the partnership enabled me to live out my values of social justice, equality of opportunity and humanity (Ubuntu) more fully?
3. How can I develop the sense of the voices of others within my narrative and show what I mean by influencing their learning? What evidence can I bring to show that others are learning from the journey that I have taken through this story and are living out their values more fully as a result?
4. To what extent have I encouraged participation and democracy through my actions in linking with the South African School?
5. How can I validate my narrative and answer questions about the quality of rigour within my research?
6. What are the transferable pedagogical protocols for designing and developing international education as part of a new CPD framework?

Methods

The research methodology adopted is a self-study participant living theory action research approach (McNiff, 2006) and video footage is the prime source of data. This qualitative data is then systematically analysed using discursive discourse procedures (Gardner and Coombs, 2009) to elicit findings.

The researcher validates his actions with reference to capturing conversational evidence as case study narrative accounts from participants engaged in the partnership activities. This will be in the

form of video and text data as evidence that will be conversationally analysed in a discursive manner to show the influence of these activities on the learning of others.

Frame

The video footage is obtained from real life incidents of action research and is analysed using a systematic and transferable discursive discourse analysis procedure. This procedure is obtained from the qualitative analysis framework provided by Gardner and Coombs (2009) that links action research narrative to reflection and writing about work within authentic work-based settings. It is also linked to the conversational learning paradigm of Harri-Augstein and Thomas (1991). An analysis of the educational literature to define and understand what we mean by the terms 'living citizenship' and 'international CPD' will be explored in this research paper and subsequently related to any findings.

Research findings

From the evidence obtained we draw conclusions about how such active international educational partnerships can inform the curriculum design and thereby improve the delivery of citizenship education and hence, play a central role in promoting the attitudes and values of global citizenship (Fountain, 1995). We also summarise any key recommendations the research evidence suggests towards developing a framework for enabling international CPD policy for in-service teacher education.

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