

0247

'How are we sustaining educational relationships to improve educational practices with teachers and pupils in the generation of educational knowledge?'

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Background

Teacher professional development, students learning for life, the development of an educational epistemology, and improving educational practice and provision, are the subject of national and international interest to politicians, and educational practitioners and researchers. However, the dynamic inter-relationships between these interests and the connection with the expression of meanings of energy-flowing ontological values are often lost in research, practice, academic writings and policy papers because of limitations of traditional epistemologies and research methodologies and print-based media in communicating these meanings.

This presentation is concerned with a multi-media narrative that explains our educational influences in improving our values based educational practice. It is focused on sustaining educational relationships, which support learners and educators creating and offering knowledge of the world, themselves and themselves in the world, in different settings.

Research Questions

There are three inter-related questions; How have we:

- Researched our own practices as educators in higher education to explain how we have influenced the learning of educators and students to develop talents in becoming more fully emancipated in their own learning and life and to gift the educational knowledge they create to enhance their own wellbeing and well becoming and that of others?
- Researched to improve educational practice and the creation and legitimation of an educational epistemology which is contributing to the transformation of the complex ecologies (Lee and Rochon, 2009) in which we live and work?
- Developed new living standards of judgment (Laidlaw, 1996) that are grounded in the embodied expressions of energy-flowing values, which contribute to improving educational practice and evaluating the validity of claims to educational knowledge (Adler-Collins, 2008)

Methods

The methods of empathetic resonance (Whitehead, 2009) and empathetic validity (Dadds, 2008) are used **to clarify** the meanings of energy-flowing ontological values in the educational practices of educators and their students.

Visual narratives are used **to communicate** the meanings of the energy-flowing values as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning.

Action reflection cycles are used **to transform** the embodied expressions of energy-flowing ontological values, in explanations of educational influences in learning, into publically communicable, epistemological standards of judgment.

The methods for **enhancing the robustness of the validity and rigour** of the explanations include the use of validation groups that draw on Habermas' four criteria of social validity, learning in

communicative action and relation to the other (1976, 1987, 2002), and Winter's (1989) six criteria for enhancing rigour.

Frame

The idea that gives coherence to the educational knowledge presented here is that individual educational researchers can generate their living educational theories as explanations of their educational influences in learning (Whitehead, 1989). This learning can include one's educational influence in one's own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which we live and work. The idea that gives methodological coherence is that individuals express their methodological inventiveness (Dadds and Hart, 2001) in the generation of an appropriate methodology in the course of exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'

Answers to the research questions include insights from a number of theoretical frames including Bernstein's (2000) mythological discourse; Biesta's (2006) language of education; Bourdieu's (2000) ideas of habitus and social formation and Whitehead's (1989) ideas of living educational theories.

Research findings

- A relationally dynamic understanding of standards of judgment in educational theory.
- Inclusional explanations educational influences in learning as distinct from the propositional and dialectical explanations produced by researchers in the disciplines of education.
- The use of multi-media narratives in clarifying the influences of complex ecologies in the living boundaries that are constituted by energy-flowing ontological values of loving recognition, respectful connectedness and educational responsibility, with humour.

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