How does developing competencies to both read _and_ write educational research enable teachers to contribute to teaching and learning for an inclusive interconnected world?

Marie Huxtable, University of Cumbria, UK.

Abstract

'How does developing competencies to read _and_ write educational research enable professional educators to:

i)   Contribute to enhancing the quality of Teacher Education for an inclusive, interconnected world?
ii)   Work cooperatively to establish environments that promote teaching and learning for an inclusive, interconnected world?

The research topic and questions are directly related to the aims of ATEE and the 2022 Winter Conference.

The theoretical framework is Living Educational Theory Research approach to continuing teacher professional development. In this approach teacher-researchers generate and share valid, evidence values-based explanations 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. Its methodological design is influenced by the methodological inventiveness of each educational-practitioner as they research the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I understand, improve and explain my professional educational practice?'

The conclusions include the claim that as teachers engage in Living Educational Theory Research they promote teaching and learning for an inclusive, interconnected world. Accounts of educators working in diverse national and cultural contexts are drawn on as supportive evidence and invite contributions to establishing an inclusive, interconnected world.

Introduction and context

I believe I am like many, if not most, Teachers and Teacher Educators in wanting to:
    i)   Contribute to enhancing the quality of Teacher Education for an inclusive, interconnected world and
    ii)   Work cooperatively to establish environments that promote teaching and learning for an inclusive, interconnected world

I began my career in Education as a schoolteacher enthusiastically looking for answers to questions of the form, 'how can I improve what I am doing?' and 'how can I improve the process of education here?' (Whitehead, 1989). Such questions continued to drive a great deal of my professional development when I moved from class room teaching to qualifying and practiced as an educational psychologist working for a number of English Local Authorities.

As time went on other questions began to nag at me. Questions such as:

- Why was I doing what I was doing?
- What difference did I want to make?
- Was I making any educational difference to the learning of the children and young people in the schools I was working with?'
- How would I know whether what I was doing was making the difference I wanted to make?
- Was what I was doing unintentionally contradicting the difference I wanted to make?

Questions such as those Swaroop Rawal (2022) recently neatly summarised as:

- Why do I want to improve my practice?
- How does living my values more fully in practice help?
- What is education and how does making it better help?

These are fundamental questions I believe all professional educators, such as Teachers and Teacher Educators, should continually be trying to answer as they accept their professional responsibility to improve their educational practice and contribute to the evolution of a global educational knowledgebase for the benefit of all. To do so they need to develop the competencies necessary to read educational research. These are the competencies that enable them to acquire knowledge and critically and creatively engage with it to improve their educational practice. As professionals they also have a responsibility to develop the competencies necessary to write educational research. These are competencies that enable them to recognise, value and work with the valid educational knowledge they create as they research their practice to improve it and contribute the educational knowledge to the growth of a global educational knowledgebase for the benefit of all.

Educational research is distinguished by the nature of the knowledge generated. Educational knowledge is knowledge generated through a lifelong, values-driven process of learning to live a satisfying, productive and worthwhile life humanely for self and others and which contributes to the learning of Humanity to flourish in an inclusive, interconnected world. By 'Humanity' I mean a global social formation, which transcends time and space. An inclusive interconnected world is one where individuals and communities recognise and value themselves and others and accept their educational responsibility to contribute to their own learning, that of others and social formations local, national and international. The purpose of which is to contribute to bringing into being a peaceful world where the

needs of all (animate and inanimate) that comprise the complex ecology of our planet and universe, are responded to with humane values.

In this paper I present some of the educational research literacy competencies I identified in the course of preparing to present this paper at the ATEE 2022 Winter Conference. The competencies I particularly focus on are those of writing educational research and the practical implications for me as a professional educator and educational-practitioner.

The paper is organised as follows:
• Theoretical framework
• Methodological design
• Data and its analysis
• Discussion of what emerged
• Conclusions - So what and what now?

The theoretical framework

The theoretical framework is that of Living Educational Theory Research (Whitehead, 1989) as continuing professional development and community based educational research (Whitehead & Huxtable, 2022). In this approach educational-practitioners accept their professional educational responsibility to research their educational practice. They research their educational practice to create and share valid, evidence and values-based explanations 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.

In Living Educational Theory Research:

(i)   Education is taken to refer to a life-long values-laden process of learning to live humanely a satisfying, productive and worthwhile life for self and others and helping others to do so (Huxtable, 2012). It is a continual process of learning to create and contribute knowledge of the world, of self and self in and of the world that contributes to Humanity learning to flourish in an inclusive, interconnected world. (Huxtable, 2012). This is consistent with the purpose UNESCO gives to 'education':

> Education is a basic human right and a global good. It is the foundation for personal transformation and resilience, peace and a sustainable planet. Its unique mandate to promote lifelong education for everyone was born in the aftermath of World War II and has evolved to meet the global challenges of a digital era and a planet threatened by climate change, conflict and other crises. https://www.unesco.org/en/education/action

The strap line of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) puts a purpose of education for an inclusive interconnected world succinctly: 'Building peace in the minds of men and women'

Methodological design

The methodological design of educational research is influenced by the 'methodological inventiveness' (Dadds & Hart, 2001, p. 216) of each educational-practitioner as they accept their professional educational responsibility to research the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I understand and improve my professional educational practice and generate a valid explanation of my educational influence in my own learning, the learning of others and the learning of the social formation which is the context of my practice?'

Data and its analysis

An educational-practitioner who accepts their professional educational responsibility has to develop competencies that enable them to improve their practice, test their claim to be having the educational influence in learning they are claiming *and* communicate the educational knowledge they create in the process. This includes communicating their embodied values, which give meaning and purpose to their work and serve as their evaluative standards and explanatory principles of their practice. The purpose of the analysis of the data here is to identify and clarify competencies of writing educational research which:

- Enhances educational influence in learning, and
- Makes the educational knowledge the educational-practitioner generates accessible to others

An example of educational influence in the learning of children as young as KS1 can be seen in this video of Joy Mounter's 6/7 year old pupils explaining their multidimensional learning theory.

Children's representation of their learning theory (Mounter, 2006)

Children explaining their learning theory. (video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hH2-5xexbAQ Mounter, 2006)

An example of the educational influence in the learning of 10-year-old pupils in Croatia is provided by the account by Bogna and Zovkof (2008).

An example of educational influence in the learning of KS 4 students is provided by Sally Cartwright's Masters account (Cartwright, 2008) of her work with pupils engaged in their AS level Extended Project. Sally brought her students up to the university for a research group with Jack as she was experiencing working on her Masters. They give an account themselves of the educational influence in their learning when they explained their development as researchers and educational practitioners to a regional group of strategy advisers

AS Extended Project as a life enhancing educational experience (Huxtable, 2009, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMpaItNH7kg)

Finally an example of a multimedia text credited at doctoral level is provided by the doctorate of Meyer (2021) awarded by North West University, South Africa.

Two key competencies teachers and their pupils developed as educational practitioners were those of reading and writing educational research. Developing competencies to read research provides an educational-practitioner with access to the knowledge of others and the ability to critically and creatively engage with it to improve their own practice. Developing competencies to write educational research provides an educational-practitioner with the wherewithal to critically and creatively engage with their own knowledge to improve their own teaching and learning and also to fulfil their other responsibility, to contribute to the growth of a global educational knowledgebase for the benefit of all.

So what and what now?

Over the years I have had to extend my research literacy skills so I can critically and creatively engage with educational knowledgebases as well as the knowledge bases of the various disciplines associated with education, such as psychology, sociology and philosophy.

I worked with Jack Whitehead on a chapter as a contribution to Boyd, Szplit and Zbróg, (2021) edited book, titled, Developing Teachers' Research Literacy: International Perspective. It is that work which provides the context for this research into,
'How does developing competencies to read *and* write educational research enable professional educators to:

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In the process of creating this paper for presentation I have become increasingly aware of how important it is for professional educators and educational practitioners to develop the competencies of reading and writing educational research. Attention is given mainly to developing the competencies of reading research created in the disciplines of Education rather than educational research but that is for another time. Very little attention is paid to identifying and developing competencies of writing educational research that are integral to the improving the process and product of educational research.

A professional accepts their educational responsibilities to both research their practice to improve it and to communicate the educational knowledge they create in the process as a contribution to the growth a global educational knowledgebase for the benefit of all.

A great deal more research is needed to understand what those competencies are, their use value and how to develop and use them.

I conclude with an invitation to you to test my claim yourself that as you as a teacher engages in Living Educational Theory Research as CPD you promote teaching and learning for an inclusive, interconnected world.

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