

57 - Chapman, V.-L. (2004). Using critical personal narratives: A poststructural perspective on practice. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education*(102), 95-103.

Following discussion of critical and poststructural perspectives on education, the author focuses on critical personal narrative as a tool of research and teaching. Critical personal narrative recognizes the play of power and knowledge in creating meaning, employing story telling techniques with the aim of creating stories that will prompt associations of meaning and connection. While revealing specific techniques used in teaching, the author suggests that employing such practices through biography or ethnography, educators can create alternative relationships with power and knowledge in teaching and research activities.

The value of this paper is in its clear demonstration of critical personal narrative within the article itself as the self reflection of the author creates the opportunity to connect with the concepts of the paper through a personal response to knowledge. While the paper may appeal to educators as being useful in offering specific techniques that could be employed in an educational setting, the value is also in its potential contribution to research design.

58 - Macpherson, A., Jones, O., Zhang, M., & Wilson, A. (2003). Re-conceptualising learning spaces: developing capabilities in a high-tech small firm. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 15(6), 259-270.

Through a case study of a small entrepreneurial manufacturing company in England, the authors examine the features impacting on managerial learning. While acknowledging issues such as time and cost, the paper focuses on learning networks as being more crucial in providing opportunities for learning making the most pertinent observation that while learning within an organizational emphasises routine and learning-by-doing, a firm's potential for external learning is dependent on environmental factors and learning-by-interacting.

Although the scope of this paper is focused entirely on one small business, it offers a highly relevant perspective on the process of learning that small businesses face with their limited resources. In this way, the paper offers potential to construct research material or observation strategies based around the described features of small business learning.

59 - St. Clair, R. (2004). A Beautiful friendship? The relationship of research to practice in adult education. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 54(3), 224-241.

Balancing both theory and practical research, this paper reports a research project based at the Texas Adult Literacy Clearinghouse, that aimed to examine who utilised the research material distributed through the clearinghouse, what use was made of this material and what could be deduced about the nature of the relationship between research and practice. The key correlative relationship was between the perceived usefulness of the research and frequency of use of the material. The more research was used, the more likely key changes in practice were based on research. The authors assert that applying research to practice is dependent on knowledge of both the research and practice, hence signifying transferability of information as being the most crucial aspect in the use of research. In subsequent discussion, the authors suggest that research is best understood as an act of translation and, as such, they postulate that the concept of best practice and evidence based-programmes are less effective in ensuring practitioners access and utilize research.

The simple, innovative approach of this study and its broad discussion gives this paper relevance for both practitioners' and research perspectives and its findings have applications for policy makers.

60 - Falk, I. *Sleight of hand: Literacy, social capital and social disadvantage*. Retrieved September 2, 2004, from http://www.staff.vu.edu.au/alnar/publications/00forumianfalk_paper.html

In examining the reasons why some people cannot become employed, Falk centres on two proposed causes: the lack of social capital in policy and the nominalization of literacy which removes it from process and converts it to state of being. The paper draws on both research and theory to refute, as myth, the assumption that literacy will lead to employment and to assert, instead, that social capital, the knowledge of networks and connection that build social cohesion, is essential for effective learning. The author argues that by failing to include social capital in the dominant economic discourse governing employment, the range of responses to unemployment is constrained and identities are constructed around disillusionment, despair and lack of self esteem.

The perspective on literacy and employment as bridging discourse, politics and personal identity, highlights the interconnected nature of literacy as a process. From this perspective the paper offers valuable conceptual models from which research and policy can be drawn.

61 - Billett, S. (2000). Defining the demand side of vocational education and training: Industry, enterprises, individuals and regions. *Journal of Vocational Education & Training: The Vocational Aspect of Education*, 52(1), 5-30.

Beginning with the acknowledgment that vocational education and training is demand driven, the author examines the features of the demand side of the training industry, identifying education enterprises as having distinct demands from industry, and individuals as having distinct demands from regions. By recognizing that each of these aspects places different levels of importance on flexibility, quality, and the customization of courses, the author asserts that reconciliation of these demands needs to occur through a process that is sufficiently decentralized in deciding outcomes but sufficiently centralised around strong principles of quality. The author concludes this need for balance presents a challenge to centralized policies and views local communities as holding the key to modifying demand driven training to meet local and individual need.

In conceptualizing a matrix model of demand factors in education training, the author offers a potential structure to researchers and policy makers that embrace more of the interweaving complexity of factors that drive the provision of education training.

62 - Chappell, C. (2003). Researching vocational education and training: Where to go from here? *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 55(1), 21-32.

This paper draws on organizational theory to present a matrix model of the research on vocational education and training based around organizational and socio-economic complexity. Following a description of both the organizational complexity axis and the socio-economic complexity axis, the author describes four categories of problems emerging from this framework which researchers may address: tough problems, rough problems, familiar problems and obscure problems. The author suggests that most research has focussed on the familiar domain.

As the author suggests, this model is a useful theoretical framework for constructing research methodology, indicating how specific problems could be researched across all four clusters types, for example. In this way, the model could extend to act as a system audit for research.

63 - Sun, H.-C. (2003). Conceptual clarifications for 'organizational learning', 'learning organization' and 'a learning organization'. *Human Resource Development International*, 6(2), 153-166.

Relying heavily on linguistics, this paper defines and clusters categories of definitions of the terms listed in its title and presents a theoretical reference for researchers engaged with these concepts.

With further analysis, researchers may find the categorization of definitions useful to employ in their work.

64 - Poell, R. F., & Van der Krogt, F. J. (2003). Learning strategies of workers in the knowledge-creating company. *Human Resource Development International*, 6(3), 387-403.

This comprehensive paper utilizes the theory of Nonaka and Takeuchi to examine the interplay of individual workers' relationship to learning, the nature of learning opportunities in organizations and the type of knowledge created. The authors conclude that the assumptions of management control on worker learning in the theory of Nonaka and Takeuchi present some problems in applied settings and offer an alternative that encompasses the diversity of relationships possible in workplace learning.

The value of this paper lies in its potential for providing a framework to embrace detail around the key concepts of personal agency, situated learning and participation that other researchers in the field of adult literacy and workplace learning have examined.

65 - Naquin, S. S., & Holton, E. (2003). Motivation to improve work through learning in human resource development. *Human Resource Development International*, 6(3), 355-370.

Following a concise, well researched summary of literature on motivation in workers, the authors challenge accepted views on motivation as simply a desire to learn and assert that the concept of motivation has greater validity in organizational settings if the outcome of learning is viewed as the desire to create improvements in work outcomes or productivity. Through a statistical analysis of a study using factor analysis, the authors conclude that this reconceptualization could be justified from a human resource perspective.

This paper offers both useful background information on motivation studies through the summary of research, and also a worthwhile reconceptualisation of this important aspect of individual learning in a workplace setting.

66- Gorard, S. (2003). Patterns of work-based learning. *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 55(1), 47-63.

Using data from three datasets, this paper examines patterns of work-based learning in a community in South Wales. By interspersing the article with interview excerpts from employers, trainees and providers of educational services, the author personalises the key factors shaping work-based training before then examining these trends in adult education in a community within the context of broader patterns influencing work-based training. The author quotes participation figures which indicate a decline in work-based training, and challenges a basic premise that lifelong education is a requirement of the workforce due to increased job flexibility, concluding instead that job flexibility is instrumental in reducing the level of training in workers. The author challenges the current economic focus of adult learning and challenges the assumptions of its necessity, quoting numerous examples of individuals who have changed jobs with no training.

By contextualising personal insights into work-based training within a discussion of the broader hegemony, this paper reveals patterns in training that represent a compelling challenge to assumptions surrounding the need and practice in this field. Its value is in its capacity to reveal to researchers some of the subversive realities of adult education practice.