

Open Access

Yvonne Crotty

Foreword

DOI 10.1515/ijtr-2016-0007

Welcome to the fourth issue of the International Journal for Transformative Research, an initiative of the International Centre for Innovation and Workplace Learning (ICIWL) at Dublin City University (DCU). The philosophy of the Journal mirrors that of the Centre; it supports researchers in making explicit how they are bringing about change in a range of workplace settings with transformative outcomes for themselves and others. It also chronicles the innovative methodologies and technologies that researchers are using in practice. Often we are so busy focusing on the destination that we miss the real value of the odyssey. The richness of the research process and the emphasis on dialogue is very important to the journal. In this issue the authors share their research narratives and show how they are endeavouring to make a positive impact in the world. We hope you take time to enjoy the articles.

In paper 1 the author Susanna Saracco, University of Sydney, Australia argues for the philosophy of childhood and the philosophy for children to be seen as complementary. She draws on the work of Gareth Matthews to illustrate this point. She then elaborates on a project centered on Plato's philosophy to illustrate the transformational potential of children's minds. The project is based on learning units designed for students from 8 through to 12 years of age, which involves the students working online to reflect critically, and to freely express themselves as rational beings.

In paper 2 authors Sabrina Fitzsimons and Margaret Farren, Institute of Education, Dublin City University (DCU), Ireland explore the use of virtual world field trips

(VWFTs) in the context of initial teacher education. The paper shows how the virtual world can enable students to access places not possible in the offline context, the importance of dialogue with others and the creative use of virtual world field trips in offering a space for teachers to experience innovative pedagogical practices. Ethnographic methods were employed in the study to contribute to a comprehensive description of the actions within the virtual world.

In paper 3 Noriyuki Inoue, University of San Diego, USA argues that in mentoring teachers practice improvement research often requires us to embrace teachers' intuition, tacit knowledge and personal meaning-making. This is in contrast to Western cultures with its central role of objective reasoning. The paper examines this challenge through three case studies of in-service teachers' action research projects. The paper suggests that it is important to be mindful of the subjective and intersubjective elements of the research process in a way that supports the personal trajectory of teachers.

Paper 4 from Joan Walton, York St John University, UK is a response to Noriyuki's paper. The claim made in this paper is that the illusion of knowledge, which still dominates social and educational research, is the ontological assumption that matter is the primary constituent of the universe. The argument put forward is that theories that originated in the physical sciences continue to influence – often unconsciously – the development of social and educational research, and have created an 'illusion of knowledge' that is constraining developments in epistemology and research methodologies.

In the response to Walton's paper (paper 4), Noriyuki Inoue points out that in the United States, the quality of teaching is often discussed in objective terms such as meeting teaching standards and performance goals. In this response Inoue refers back to his own paper in this issue (paper 3) to suggest that the core of teacher expertise development does not end with just setting criteria no matter how 'objective' they may appear. Inoue discusses his view of teachers' subjective sense-making in the Japanese culture and his observations in the United States.

*Corresponding author: Yvonne Crotty, Institute of Education, Dublin City University, Dublin 9, Ireland, E-mail: yvonne.crotty@dcu.ie

In paper 5 Michael Hammond, University of Warwick, UK explores the ideas of transformative learning. He then considers the role of the academics who support the principles of transformative learning but are uncertain about writing about their own learning. He points out that critical reflexivity is not mainstream academic practice, and our failure in this regard means that academic writing can become “reified” – taking on an objective quality. Hammond suggests that blogs offer a space for more reflexive accounts of doing research in academia.

Dr. Yvonne Crotty,

Institute of Education,

St. Patrick's Campus,

Dublin City University,

Dublin 9

Director: International Centre for Innovation and
Workplace Learning – <https://www.dcu.ie/iciwl/index.shtml>

E-mail: yvonne.crotty@dcu.ie