Learning Research as a Human Science

William R. Penuel
Kevin O'Connor
Editors

National Society for the Study of Education
The 109th Yearbook | Issue 1

The Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education ISSN 0077-5762 (print), ISSN 1744-7984 (online) is published biannually by Teachers College, Columbia University, with editorial and general offices at 525 West 120th Street, Box 103, New York, New York 10027. Phone: (212)678-3774, fax (212)678-6619; e-mail: tcr@tc.edu; www.nsseyearbook.org.

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS For new institutional orders, renewals, back issues, sample copy requests, claims, change of address, and all other subscription correspondence, please contact Teachers College Record, Subscription Office, PO Box 11127, Birmingham, AL 35202. Phone: 1-800-633-4931, outside of the USA and Canada: 205-995-1567, Fax: 205-995-1588, email: tcr@ebsco.com. For personal subscriptions, please visit the NSSE Yearbook website www.nsseyearbook.org.

ADVERTISING For information on advertising in both the print and online versions of the yearbook, email tcr@tc.edu.

COPYRIGHT All rights reserved. With the exception of fair dealing for the purposes of research or private study, or criticism or review, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission in writing from the copyright holder. Authorization to photocopy items for internal and personal use is granted by the copyright holder for libraries and other users by the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC), 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923 (www.copyright.com), provided the appropriate fee is paid directly to the CCC. This consent does not extend to other kinds of copying, such as copying for general distribution for advertising or promotional purposes, for creating new collective works or for resale.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTRIBUTORS Proposals for yearbooks should be submitted using the online submission system at: http://eval.tc-library.org. Information on the preparation of yearbook proposals is available at: http://nsse-chicago.org/ProposalGuidelines.asp

INDEXED/ABSTRACTED *Book Review Digest, Historical Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts, Psychological Abstracts, Social Science Citation Index, Educational Administration Abstracts, College Students Personal Abstracts, Current Contents: Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Academic Search Elite; Academic Search Premier; America: History and Life; Current Index to Journals in Education; Catchword; Distance Learning Collection; EBSCO MasterFILE Elite; ECSCO MasterFILE Premier; EBSCO MasterFILE Select; EBSCO Online; Education Abstracts, Education Index; Educational Research Abstracts; Educational Resources Information Center; Info Track OneFIle; Ingenta; JCR Social Sciences Edition; JSTOR; Online Computer Library Center Firstreach Electronic Collections Online; Periodical Abstracts Research 11; Professional Development Collection; ProQuest Education Complete; ProQuest Education Plus Text; PsycINFO; Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection; Sociological Collection; TOPICsearch, Academic ASAP, Expanded Academic ASAO, Current Contents/Social & Behavioral Science and Exceptional Child Abstract.*

Editorial and General Offices
Gary Natriello, Executive Editor
Teachers College, Columbia University
525 West 120th Street, Box 103
New York, New York 10027
Phone: (212) 678-3774
Fax: (212) 678-6619
e-mail: tcr@tc.edu
worldwide web address: www.nsseyearbook.org

National Society for the Study of Education
The 109th Yearbook | Issue 1

OVERVIEW OF THE HUMAN SCIENCES APPROACH

Introduction: Principles of a Human Sciences Approach to Research on Learning 1

KEVIN O'CONNOR AND WILLIAM R. PENUEL

This essay introduces the issue, Learning Research as a Human Science.

Educational Research as a Reflexive Science of Constitution 17

MARTIN PACKER

The author suggests that questions in educational research are often about constitution, and that to answer such questions we want a methodology that goes beyond randomized clinical trials and customary qualitative research methods. The author focuses on the contributions of ethnographic fieldwork to research on constitution, though interviews and detailed interaction analysis are also important components.

INTERPRETING LEARNING

Values That Occasion and Guide Mathematics in the Family 34

ROY PEA AND LEE MARTIN

In the spirit of deepening our understanding of the social conditions of everyday uses of mathematics, the authors studied 20 diverse families with a middle school child by interviewing family members together at home about their occasions of mathematics use.

Studying Identity in Learning Contexts from a Human Sciences Perspective 53

NA'ILAH SUAD NASIR

This chapter highlights two important challenges in studying identity in learning contexts from a human science perspective. The first challenge is integrating different perspectives and potential contradictions in accounts of identity. The second is considering both presented and authentic selves in accounts of identity. Both of these challenges stem from a concern with understanding the complexity of identity in learning contexts and with capturing critical nuances in theoretical accounts of identity.

Interpreting the Meanings of Schooling, Hybridity, and Multicultural Citizenship in Diaspora Communities 66

SUNIL BHATIA

This chapter analyzes how global immigrant youth living in diaspora communities are transformed by participating in real and imagined cultural practices of their homeland and practices of schooling, peers, and various forms of popular culture in their new host nations. In particular, the chapter examines how Somali youth draw on transnational cultures, local schooling practices, political affiliations, and specific hip-hop and racial practices as they define their identities as new migrants in Canada. Further, the chapter discusses how Somali youth frame and interpret their sense of race, ethnicity, and multicultural citizenship in the public school system in Canada.

Learning as a Members' Phenomenon: Toward an Ethnographically Adequate Science of Learning 82

REED STEVENS

This article argues for treating learning as a "members' phenomenon," one that participants to an interaction organize, sustain, and evaluate themselves from "within" their interactions. This endogenous approach to studying learning is contrasted with the traditional exogenous approach. An empirical example is provided to ground the concept. Implications for further development of this approach are discussed, including possible tensions and complementarities with the exogenous approach to studying learning.

Institutional Perspectives on Organizational Change and Educational Reform 98

HUGH MEHAN, LEA HUBBARD AND AMANDA DATNOW

This chapter explains and expands on the co-construction perspective using examples from studies the authors have conducted on educational reform. They begin by contrasting the technical-rational and co-construction perspectives on school reform. They then describe how their formulation of co-construction takes into account issues of power and authority. The authors then elaborate on the perspective by presenting different cases of co-construction of reforms by actors at different levels of the educational system.

Conceptualizing and Tracing Learning Pathways over Time and Setting 113

BRIGID BARRON

This chapter makes a case for research on learning that captures the dynamics of learning across setting and time and that focuses on sustained engagement in learning activities. A focus on engagement is warranted by social theories of learning that emphasize the value of understanding learning as a process of becoming. Examples drawn from a program of research that uses biographical methods illustrate one approach to advancing research on engagement across setting and time.

A Dialogical Epistemology for Educational Evaluation 128

WILLIAM R. PENUEL

This chapter contrasts the approach to educational evaluation championed in recent educational policy-making with a dialogical epistemology of evaluation. A dialogical epistemology, drawn from the writings of M. M. Bakhtin, enjoins evaluators to consider multiple voices and their relative authority and power in making judgments of the worth or merit of programs. Further, it positions them as participants in policy discussions rather than arbiters of program value whose authority stems from the methods they use.

The Passions of Learning in Tight Circumstances: Toward a Political Economy of the Mind 144

RAY MCDERMOTT

Novelists and economists often imagine and theorize characters who learn to survive under difficult circumstances. Mainstream educational research, in contrast, has missed the intelligence of people battling real-life pressures, and research accounts of what people cannot do in school appear more as symptoms of a sorting system than a resource for reform. Educational research might be better focused on people's accomplishments and learning in demanding situations.

INFORMING AND PARTICIPATING IN ENDEAVORS TO IMPROVE LEARNING

Learning as the Organizing of Social Futures 160

KEVIN O'CONNOR AND ANNA-RUTH ALLEN

This chapter argues for a view of learning as a collective accomplishment that is a matter not only of gaining particular knowledgeable skills through participation in social practices, but also of organizing the conditions under which participation becomes recognized as valuable. This requires that research on learning place a central focus on this organizing work, which takes place in different locations and on different timescales, in order to adequately examine the processes through which participation is made to be consequentially successful or not.

Expansive Learning as Production of Community 176

LINE LERCHE MØRCK

This chapter contributes a framework for analyzing learning as an expansive process in which ethnic minority young men come to partly transcend marginal positions as part of the social street work in Copenhagen, Denmark. The chapter draws on social practice approaches, such as situated learning, learning by expanding, and Danish-German critical psychology, in investigating marginalizing and expansive learning in relation to dilemmas, directionality of personal and societal trajectories, and struggles realizing common interests.

Political and Cultural Dimensions of Organizing Learning Around Funds of Knowledge 192

NANCY ARES

Organizing learning around funds of knowledge requires that human sciences researchers attend to important cultural, social, historical, and political dimensions that lend complexity to incorporating youth cultural practices into school mathematics teaching and learning. An example of youth participatory action research into a nondominant youth practice—Spades card play—grounds this chapter in a practice view of culture.

Teacher–Researcher Collaboration as a Human Science 207

LESLIE RUPERT HERRENKOHL, LEZLIE SALVATORE DEWATER AND KEIKO KAWASAKI

This chapter discusses a teacher–researcher partnership oriented toward phronesis, or wise action used to solve practical problems. The three practical problems the authors emphasize are: (1) How did they use their work together to improve teaching and learning? (2) How did they relate to each other in the work? and (3) How did they organize their time and resources to do the work, given their organizational settings and constraints?

Lesson Study as a Human Science 222

CATHERINE C. LEWIS, KIYOMI AKITA AND MANABU SATO

This chapter examines lesson study as an example of human science. Lesson study is a form of educational research that originated in Japan and is credited for several important instructional improvements. Using two elementary school cases, the chapter examines lesson study as a form of research that (1) explicitly articulates values, (2) focuses on knowledge that teachers find useful, (3) places teachers and researchers on a level playing field, and (4) emphasizes spread of knowledge through development of the knower and knowledge embodied in print and artifacts.

Productive Tensions in Youth Participatory Action Research 238

BEN KIRSHNER

This chapter examines productive tensions that arise for research and learning when university researchers collaborate with young people to identify, study, and act on relevant social problems. These tensions are explored through a discussion of an intergenerational and interracial youth participatory action research (YPAR) project to study the impact of a high school closure on students. The chapter identifies tensions and dilemmas experienced by participants, including the author, and discusses insights that these generate for doing research in partnership with youth.

"You Can't Get There from Here": Research and Redirections 252
SUZANNE DE CASTELL AND JENNIFER JENSON
This chapter presents a discussion of obstacles and impediments to and immobilities of a study of queer street-involved youth. The authors' specific purpose is to identify and consider several specific "blockages" that the study brought to light and to try to say something useful about what these blockages might mean for reconceiving the ways, means, and ends of education and educational research for and with students outside the mainstream.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Learning Research as a Human Science: Old Wine in New Bottles? 268
WILLIAM R. PENUEL AND KEVIN O'CONNOR
This concluding chapter revisits the question of why a human sciences approach to research on learning is necessary and summarizes major themes from across the chapters. The conclusion highlights the need for a democratic practice of educational research, the importance of researchers' making explicit and participating in the imagination and constitution of new social futures, and the expansion of possibilities for understanding, action, and "liminal" participation in practice as potential teloi of learning.