

## Conference Report

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<b>Conference Name:</b>	The sixth International Conference on Researching Workplace Learning
<b>Purpose and theme:</b>	A series of symposia to enable the exchange of research findings in the area of workplace learning.
<b>Date of Conference and Venue:</b>	Roskilde University Copenhagen Denmark. 28 <sup>th</sup> June – 1 July 2009
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The conference was structured into a series of symposia, thirteen in all. Each symposium had a dedicated theme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Action research and dialogue</li> <li>2. Education and work what are the common spaces</li> <li>3. Human and social sustainability in turbulent work organisations</li> <li>4. Integrating workplace learning and institutional learning</li> <li>5. Open pool (non themed)</li> <li>6. Practising the co-production of work knowledges and identities</li> <li>7. Professions and professionalisation</li> <li>8. Reports on research under the auspices of the South African Qualifications Authority</li> <li>9. Re-thinking workplace learning</li> <li>10. Social movements and trade unions</li> <li>11. Understanding workplace learning organisational change and the relations between them</li> <li>12. Vocational education and training – new models of apprenticeship</li> <li>13. Work identities gendered and other diversities and learning</li> </ol> <p>Within each symposium various researchers presented their research, an attendee was appointed as chair and another as discussant for each session. Abstracts were provided before the conference to enable you to make a decision as to which symposia you wished to attend. It was asked of each delegate to try and stay with the same symposia for at least the day, to enable robust discussion etc.</p> <p>Over the four days of symposia I chose 4, 12 and 13. I will highlight three presentations from each of the three symposia and have attached for your information the abstracts of ALL of the symposia and ALL of the presentations from each of the 3 symposia I attended.</p>
<b>Summary of Symposium 4 Presentation: 3</b>	<p><b>Becoming a teacher in the learning and skills sector: the interrelated influences of workplace, course and individual factors. – Bronwyn Maxwell Sheffield University.</b></p> <p>This was interesting because this is the English system of training for teachers who want to enter the “further or adult education” system. Basically when someone</p>

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	<p>wishes to enter learning and skills sector as a teacher they undertake Initial Teacher Education (ITE). The learning and skills sector (LSS) in England comprises further education colleges, sixth form colleges, personal and community development learning, work based training and learning in other adult settings. The majority of LSS teachers undertake initial teacher education (ITE) on a part-time in-service basis after they have begun teaching. Maxwell in another paper had proposed that that trainee teachers conceptual and practice development may be represented as continua, where trainees have different starting and end points, and progress at different speeds. The aim of this paper was to illuminate the factors that promote and inhibit in-service trainee teachers' progression along these continua and consider the implications for supporting trainee development. Basically the development of the trainee teachers differs dependant upon a variety of factors, but that there should be things in common that would support their development as teachers.</p> <p>Six longitudinal case studies of in-service trainees over their first year of ITE were undertaken. Each case study comprised three interviews with the trainee, two observations of their teaching by the researcher, and documentary analysis of their ITE teaching observation reports and other course work</p> <p>The vocational areas each of the trainee teachers were based in were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performing arts</li> <li>• Photography</li> <li>• Fire service training</li> <li>• Community development</li> <li>• Islamic studies</li> </ul> <p>The research essentially found that the trainees found feedback from observations taken whilst they teach to be extremely useful. Participating in the course introduced them to new concepts and strategies that challenged their understanding. Their own previous experiences as learners had a huge influence, whether that experience was negative or positive.</p> <p>Essentially there were three categories of influencing factors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Personal</li> <li>2. The programme itself (feedback on observations of teaching)</li> <li>3. The workplace (extent and nature of teaching experiences and access to participation in communities of practice with learners)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Summary of Symposium 12 : Presentation 8</b></p>	<p><b>Servicing the Horse racing industry: apprenticeships past and present. – Deborah Butler Warwickshire University</b></p> <p>This was the presentation of Deborah's PhD thesis and was incredibly interesting. Effectively she compared two training systems. The old system in the UK for apprentices in the racing industry, was indentured, that is they worked whilst they learnt. The new modern apprenticeship scheme requires them to attend training schools first (PTE's), this has been set up by the Skills Council (like an ITO but for a wider range of industry sets). She was trying to look at the effect of community's</p>

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	<p>of practice for learners, one based wholly in the workplace, and the other based in an institutional setting.</p> <p>Deborah interviewed 11 people who had trained through the old system of indentured apprentices and 11 people who had come the British Racing School. Those who came through the school were also followed through their 9 weeks of training.</p> <p>The research essentially found that though their pathways were incredibly different (read about the life of an indentured apprentice in the full presentation!!!), they still learnt from communities of practice, or in other words, the people they were training with and the skilled workers who were training them.</p> <p>What was also incredible was that even though indentured apprentices had no qualifications to study towards modern apprentices showed no interest in the qualifications that were on offer as they saw that it had little value in their career progression.</p> <p>Great presentation, have a read!</p>
<p><b>Summary of Symposium 13: Presentation 2</b></p>	<p><b>Doing, knowing, being: Notes from a naval shipyard on competency and social identity in the skilled trades – John Meredith University of British Columbia</b></p> <p>Another interesting presentation that confronted the perceptions of “trade”. The status of the skilled trades worker in Canada is contested, both in public opinion and among social scientists. For some, the skilled trades conjure comforting images of old-world craftsmanship, honest toil, brotherly solidarity, practical ingenuity, and the satisfaction of a job well done. There is also a perception of the skilled trades as dirty, mind-numbing, and often poorly-paid jobs for those with few other choices. The research presented in this paper examines conceptions of occupational identity among skilled trades workers within a large industrial workplace, and relates these perceptions of “trade pride” and “trade stigma” to current developments in public training policy and schools of social thought.</p> <p>This was a large body of research undertaken as the naval shipyards. It involved a group of 49 people who were interviewed 10 times as a group (workers, union reps and managers). In addition they completed a pen and paper survey.</p> <p>Some of the more interesting findings were very similar to studies conducted in NZ and that was that they wished to protect the pathway to trades as being disassociated to an educational prerequisite, in other words, they didn’t see the importance of a formal school qualification in relation to being a trade apprentice. Yet it was clear that ‘trades’ people suffered from low foundation skills in the area of literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>It clearly showed that whilst ‘trades’ people more often as not earn good salaries given their lack of education etc, but are at risk of remaining competitive in an open labour market.</p> <p>Things that are being looked at is the acceptance of qualifications as part of the pathway and increasing participation for under-represented groups.</p>

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<b>Website links for keynote and plenary address slides or downloads</b>	Files are attached on the ESITO website
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