

CARN Conference 2025

Digitalization, social justice
and transforming societies



Book of Abstracts

UNIVERSITY OF KLAGENFURT,
AUSTRIA



Welcome!

We warmly welcome you to the CARN Conference 2025 at the University of Klagenfurt. Many colleagues, from about 25 countries and four continents, have followed the call.

Global crises - ecological, social, and economic – are posing challenges to societies and, at the same time, digitalization is transforming our lives by creating both opportunities and challenges. In this context, participative and reflective research is gaining in importance. In which ways can action research help address these challenges? We look forward to lively conversations and the chance to discuss these issues, among others.

The Collaborative Action Research Network (CARN) was founded in 1976. Since that time it has grown to become an international network drawing its members from educational, health, social care, commercial, and public services settings. CARN aims to encourage and support action research projects (personal, local, national and international), accessible accounts of action research projects, and contributions to the theory and methodology of action research. We say thank you to the support of the CARN Coordinating Group.

The University of Klagenfurt (AAU) is a young, lively, innovative university located in the Austrian state of Carinthia, a meeting point of three cultures. The University is Carinthia's largest academic institution and a hub for the whole of the Alpe-Adria-Region in terms of knowledge acquisition, exchange and transfer. The university's lively, diverse atmosphere and sense of openness makes it the cultural centre for the region. One of the University of Klagenfurt's key tasks is to push boundaries through the research, teaching and many active co-operation projects taking place in the region. We would like to express our thanks to the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Education for financial support.

Thank you as well to those of our colleagues who have been willing to serve on the Local and International Advisory Board of this year's conference. (You will find their names on the next page).

We wish you a rewarding and satisfying conference.

Franz Rauch, Christine Lechner, Julia Braunecker, Gertraud Benke, Angela Schuster, Markus Messerschmidt, Josef Hoedl, Nicole Irmann

Sincere thanks to the CARN Conference 2025 Advisory Board

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Nicole Mockler

Hans Karl Peterlini

Katharina Rosenberger

Katherina Soukup-Altrichter

Dane Stickney

Andrew Townsend

Tara Webster-Deakin

Lesley Wood

Michael Wright

Ellen Zhang

Space to come together

This year the first full day of the CARN Conference will open with a “Space to come together”.

Many CARN regulars will be eager to meet up with their networks and discuss recent action and activities.

There will be rooms available for:

- Local networks
- Networks based on a common working language
- National networks
- Groups working on a theme
- Specific content networks
- A moderated open space for those new to CARN
- More open spaces

Please inform us about plans at the registration on Thursday to ensure that rooms can be organized.

Please welcome new people to your groups, CARN is a welcoming space/place

Contribution ID: 8

Type: **Presentations**

Pubcasting as Participatory Communication: Sharing Action Research through Audio

This session examines the emerging practice of pubcasting—abridged, audiobook-style recordings of scholarly publications read by their authors—as a promising tool for action researchers committed to accessible, community-centered research communication. Situated between scholarly podcasting and traditional academic publishing, pubcasts offer a low-barrier, freely available for-mat that enables researchers to share their work beyond academic circles. As action research emphasizes collaboration, relevance, and the democratization of knowledge, pubcasting represents a natural extension of these values, particularly in its potential to reach educators, practitioners, students, and community members who may be excluded by paywalls or dense academic language. This session will explore how the format fosters connection between authors and listeners and how it might be further developed to support reflective practice. It will also offer basic instruction and function as a “how-to” session for researchers interested in this medium.

I’ll share example academic pubcasts, the process for creating one, and language to use with publishers.

Keywords

knowledge mobilization, pubcasting, accessible research, democratization of knowledge

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 9

Type: **Presentations**

AI-Integrated Action Research: Designing Student-Led Approaches to Ethical AI Engagement for Community Impact

This practitioner inquiry brings readers inside an undergraduate action research course where students and I wrestled with the promises and perils of emerging technologies. We framed generative AI tools as living questions: systems capable of producing text, images, and simulations that ex-tend and complicate human creativity.

From the first week, students asked: Who decides how these technologies are used? What counts as authorship when a system contributes words or visuals? How do we weigh questions of bias, access, and environmental cost? Together we designed classroom policies, experimented with tool use in real-world projects, and reflected on the ethical tensions that surfaced along the way.

Students first co-authored a shared policy, then applied it as we built customized AI tools using ChatGPT Edu. In our co-designed GPT (customized AI bot), students engaged in conversational simulations to role-play with imagined community leaders, surfacing multiple perspectives before approaching stakeholders directly. Students generated design sketches that made abstract ideas concrete enough for critique and revision. They paused often to consider whose voices were amplified, whose were obscured, and how their own agency might expand or contract when technologies entered the room.

Findings highlight the contradictions of AI integration into higher education learning spaces. Students voiced unease and excitement in equal measure, naming risks of surveillance and exploitation alongside moments of creativity, efficiency, and unexpected insight. For many, the act of co-writing the rules mattered as much as the rules themselves. Policy became a living record of their values and a mirror for their emerging sense of responsibility as researchers.

This session will share stories, strategies, and guiding questions that attendees can adapt within their own classrooms, programs, or communities. It offers a potential model for centering student agency in the complicated, vital work of ethical engagement with new technologies in higher education.

Keywords

action research, generative AI tools, student agency, AI ethics, higher educations

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 10

Type: **Presentations**

Empowering Future Practitioners: Collaborative Action Research in Social Work and Psychology Education for Advancing Social Justice

As societies face escalating inequalities, ecological crises, and the erosion of welfare systems, social work and psychology education must evolve to prepare future professionals for complex societal challenges. Despite comprehensive discrimination laws in Sweden, government policy requires only gender mainstreaming to permeate all levels of university work, allowing limited educational focus on broader social justice frameworks. This presentation explores how collaborative and participatory action research (PAR) can foster critical engagement, amplify student voices, and integrate social justice perspectives into social work and psychology education.

Drawing on a scoping review of Nordic social work curricula and focus groups with Swedish social work students, significant gaps are revealed in global, structural, and critical perspectives within professional training. While students recognize the importance of addressing systemic injustices, their education primarily emphasizes technical competencies at the expense of deeper engagement with power structures, marginalization, and intersectional inequalities. Similarly, an internal re-view of LGBTQI+ themes in a Swedish psychology program further highlights the dominance of normative, individual-centered approaches. Importantly, students in both subjects describe feeling anxious about their limited knowledge and (in)capacity for critical reflection on the sociopolitical dimensions of mental health, identity, and well-being.

This study positions PAR as a model for fostering critical consciousness, student agency, and collaborative, interdisciplinary knowledge production between social work and psychology students. By centering student experiences and voices, PAR bridges theory and practice, enabling students to co-create their education and critically examine their professional roles. This shift could equip future social workers and psychologists with theoretical and practical tools and strengthen their ability to challenge systemic injustices and drive transformative social change.

Keywords

social work education, psychology education, participatory education, social justice, student voices, critical pedagogy, globalization, power dynamics

Presenting Authors

CJ Giles and Layan Amouri

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Contribution ID: 12

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

'Participatification' –Using a participatory methodology in novel and generative ways for reimagined conceptualisations of emancipation

This session will reflect on our experiences and learning from two occasions where Vaughn and Lochmueller's (2014) participatory methodology, Group Level Assessment, was used as an inspiration to generate vibrant discussions amongst all participants not just those with the 'loudest' or 'most important' voices. In this respect, we will claim that the usefulness of the methodology lies beyond its original conceptualisation but maintains its emancipatory core.

In this highly participatory session, you will have the opportunity to take a full and active part and develop your appreciation of Group Level Assessment as a pedagogy and as a resource on which to build participatory meetings and conferences. Prepare to be participified!

Keywords

knowledge mobilization, pubcasting, accessible research, democratization of knowledge

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 13

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Co-Teaching and Co-Designing Action Research: Innovative Methodologies That Enhance Graduate Learning Spaces

This presentation explores how co-teaching and co-design enrich graduate Action Research education, fostering inclusive, participatory, and ethically grounded learning spaces. Drawing from three years of co-facilitation and collaborative co-teaching, we examine how methodologies such as Self-in-Field and Participatory Action Research (PAR) create dynamic, student-centered pedagogies that prioritize emergence, collective knowledge generation, and reflexivity. Engaging in meta-action research, we critically reflect on the evolving nature of facilitation, classroom collaboration, and adaptive teaching strategies that support both students and educators. We also consider how work-life integration in academia intersects with co-designed learning environments, emphasizing the role of flexibility and care in sustaining inclusive spaces. For example, we share case narratives from graduate courses where co-design encouraged students to reframe tensions between academic expectations and lived experiences, resulting in emergent learning pathways that were meaningful to both participants and instructors. By centering innovative, student-driven methodologies, this work contributes to broader discussions on how co-teaching and co-design can transform graduate learning spaces. The presentation will also engage participants through interactive elements such as reflective prompts and collaborative design activities, aligning with the participatory spirit of Action Research. Additionally, we address challenges and tensions that arise in co-teaching partnerships, such as balancing roles, negotiating differences, and sustaining shared leadership, as opportunities for growth and deeper reflexivity. Ultimately, this work equips scholars with tools to navigate complexity through shared agency and ethical practice, while advancing a vision of graduate education rooted in inclusion, adaptability, and co-constructed knowledge.

Keywords

action research, co-teaching, self-in-field methodology, co-design, PAR

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 14

Type: **Poster presentations**

Storytelling as a teaching strategy to strengthen informal learning in the absence of parental structures

Background and motivation

In an era where social media influences learners' lives, frequently replacing real-life interactions, employing informal learning techniques like storytelling may be crucial for sustaining learners' engagement and interest. This strategy may resonate with learners as it reflects the social media formats they frequently engage with during their leisure time. Nonetheless, social media often depicts a fabricated environment, contrasting with the realities experienced by these learners. A potentially impactful teaching strategy can emerge by integrating storytelling with authenticity and guidance from role models as quasi-parents. The primary aim of this study, therefore, was to determine how storytelling can strengthen informal learning in the absence of parental structures.

Research Design and Methodology

Through a qualitative approach using Participatory Action Learning and Action Research, the study collected stories from 21 participants from various age groups to represent the community via interviews, Photovoice, journal entries, and observations. Participants shared and reflected on personal narratives over four cycles, each reinforcing previous insights and enabling deeper understanding.

Conceptual and theoretical framework Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model (1975;1998) provided a foundational theoretical framework, elucidating how individuals are influenced by inter-actions across multiple social and cultural systems.

Findings show that storytelling fosters individual growth, social cohesion, and resilience by connecting learners to their social and cultural contexts. By developing storytelling skills, participants influenced their immediate and broader communities, highlighting the importance of interdependent relationships in the learning process. Storytelling provided quasi-parental support and role modelling, filling educational gaps and enhancing learners' identity, language, and emotional development.

This study suggests that a community-based storytelling culture can enrich both academic and social-emotional learning, promoting resilience and a positive worldview in learners. Storytelling thus holds the potential to strengthen education by connecting learners to authentic narratives that reflect their lived realities.

Keywords

storytelling as a teaching strategy, Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory, quasi parental role, action research

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 17

Type: **Presentations**

Navigating Collaboration: Lessons Learned During the Development of Regional Stroke Rehabilitation Networks using Participatory Action Research

One of the transformations currently affecting Dutch society is the promotion of home-based stroke rehabilitation (HBSR) as a potentially cost-effective alternative to inpatient rehabilitation. Although the government encourages HBSR, professionals, clients, and their caregivers encounter barriers in providing effective HBSR. Within three regions, participatory action research (PAR) projects were initiated. In each region, the regional requirements for implementing HBSR were investigated, and actions were subsequently formulated, executed, and evaluated. Various lessons were learned within these three projects, which we would like to share with the CARN members. The strengths of the PAR approach and important preconditions for using PAR will be explored. We would like to discuss the lessons learned based on reflexivity: what influence did the researcher have on the research process, and what influence did the research process have on the researcher? We invite CARN members to engage in a discussion to further explore these findings and their implications for future research and practice. The results of this discussion and these reflections will help the researcher validate and enrich the findings of the projects' process evaluations.

Keywords

PAR, lessons learned, reflexivity

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 18

Type: **Presentations**

Enhancing Physics Teaching through TPACK: A Design-Based Approach in Georgian Classrooms

In recent years, the integration of digital technologies in education has gained increasing attention as a powerful means to enhance teaching and learning. In science education in particular, the use of digital tools - such as mobile applications - offers teachers innovative ways to engage students, deepen learning, and create interactive classroom environments (Zhai, Liu, & Li, 2022). However, effective implementation of such technologies requires not only access to the tools but also strong pedagogical and content knowledge to use them meaningfully (Mishra & Koehler, 2006).

The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework offers a comprehensive model for understanding how technology, pedagogy, and subject content intersect in effective teaching (Mishra & Koehler, 2016). TPACK highlights the importance of integrating these domains to enable educators to make informed and contextually appropriate decisions about technology use in the classroom. This approach has shown particular value in physics education, where complex concepts often demand thoughtful and strategic use of technology to support student understanding (Angeli & Valanides, 2019).

The present study explores the implementation of the TPACK framework to enhance the technological skills and collaborative teaching practices of physics teachers in Georgia. A year-long professional development program was designed to support teachers in integrating mobile applications into their physics instruction. The program included hands-on training, collaborative projects, and ongoing feedback, with the goal of developing both individual technological proficiency and collective instructional strategies.

A design-based research (DBR) methodology which corresponds with Action Research was employed, incorporating several iterative cycles of development (action) and evaluation (reflection)). The study investigated how the training program increased teachers' confidence and strengthened their technological competence, while simultaneously cultivating a professional learning community that encouraged collaborative support and ongoing professional development.

Keywords

physics teaching, technological pedagogical content knowledge, design-based research

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 19

Type: **Presentations**

Practicing What We Research: A Lesson Study on Flow in Arts-Based, Socially Just Classroom

The contribution presents a Lesson Study conducted within the European Erasmus+ Teacher Academy project “ACIIS –Academy for Creative, Innovative and Inclusive Schools,”exploring immersive learning (“flow”) in drama-based educational settings. Set against the backdrop of global societal transformation, digitalization, and increasing demands for educational justice, this research investigates how flow experiences—defined as deep, autotelic engagement—can foster inclusive and participatory learning cultures.

The study employs the method of Phenomenographic Enhanced Video Analysis (PEV), integrating digital tools to systematically analyze learner experiences across four transnational workshops. These sessions included adolescents and adults, with a focus on embodied and narrative forms of expression. Digital post-session quick-tests and subsequent video-based coding enabled a nuanced mapping of atmospheric moments where flow emerged.

Findings were organized into four key categories: (1) collective cohesion, (2) dynamic interaction, (3) embodied presence, and (4) creative agency. These dimensions point to the potential of aesthetic and performative pedagogies in generating learning environments that counteract alienation and marginalization—an essential task in socially just education.

The approach also challenges conventional metrics of educational success by embracing embodied, affective, and relational indicators of learning. Situated within Immergenz theory, the study argues that digital, aesthetic, and social learning modes must be seen not as oppositional, but as synergistic tools for navigating the complexities of 21st-century education.

This Lesson Study contributes to the field of action research by offering a reflective, digitally integrated, and practice-based model for recognizing and cultivating transformative learning spaces—particularly relevant for educators and researchers striving to advance social equity and resilience in digitally evolving societies.

Keywords

Lesson Study, flow, immersive learning, drama-based education

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 21

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

CareACT in Communities. Theatre interventions for justice-oriented and social-ethical learning processes in Caring Communities. A participatory Workshop

In this workshop, we share insights from the CareACT project. Together we will explore how participatory theatre interventions, as part of a participatory and action-oriented research design, can contribute to justice-oriented processes in Caring Communities (CC). CC are local initiatives that strengthen everyday solidarity through civic engagement and neighbourhood support. They aim to link informal and formal care, raise public awareness, and create alternative responses to social exclusion, ageing, vulnerability, loneliness, illness, death, and mourn-ing. Through embodied and dialogic processes, theatre became a catalyst for social-ethical learning –enabling participants to engage with issues of care, exclusion, and justice not only intellectually but also emotionally and physically. The theatre interventions opened spaces of democratic participation, where new solidarities were explored. Our findings contribute to current debates on equity-oriented development of Caring Communities and offer insights into the methodological potentials and challenges of using theatre in participatory action research. The workshop concludes with a collective reflection process. We will offer the participants to experience theatre-based techniques to deepen understanding of democratic learning and ethical action in the context of community care. Participants are invited to connect research, practice, and lived experience in ways that are collaborative, affective, and future-oriented.

Keywords

caring communities, participatory theatre, social-ethical and democratic learning, theatre and participatory action research, social justice

Presenting Author

Michael Wrentschur

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Contribution ID: 23

Type: **Presentations**

Transforming HRM in Developing Countries with ChatGPT: A Self-Efficacy Adoption Model

This study investigates how ChatGPT can strengthen human resource management capacity in developing countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan nations such as Liberia, where weak human capital, high turnover, and fragile HR structures limit growth. Liberia's history of conflict, health crises, and limited education result in capacity gaps, forcing many firms to outsource core HR functions. Although AI use in HRM is expanding globally, little is known about how firms in low-capital contexts can adopt such technologies effectively. In Sub-Saharan Africa, where AI skepticism and traditional practices remain strong, self-efficacy provides a psychological foundation for overcoming resistance and bridging digital skills gaps. Rooted in Bandura's self-efficacy theory, the study develops the Self-Efficacy Adoption Model (SEAM) as a practical framework for HR managers to integrate ChatGPT into training. SEAM builds on the four established sources of self-efficacy, namely, mastery, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and physiological state, and introduces a fifth step, replication. The replication stage positions HR managers as adopters and enablers who transfer adoption across their staff and supports institutionalization of AI practices within organizations. The research employs participatory action research, supported by case study methods, using a mixed-methods design to capture context and co-develop solutions. Data is collected using baseline questionnaires in the pre-deployment phase, ethnographic observations during deployment, and semi-structured interviews in the post-deployment phase. Pilot findings show that mastery experiences and social persuasion were the strongest drivers of adoption, while vicarious learning, physiological state, and replication also contributed to acceptance. These results suggest that SEAM provides a replicable and practical pathway for embedding ChatGPT into HR training. The study contributes theoretically by extending adoption research in resource-constrained contexts, offering a scalable approach to workforce capacity building, sustainability, and organizational transformation.

Keywords

human-resource management, ChatGPT, self-efficacy adoption model, workforce training, developing countries, AI adoption, organization transformation

Presenting Author

Mazen Halabi

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Contribution ID: 25

Type: **Presentations**

A Guide for teachers from students. Impact of an intervention into pedagogical and didactic arrangements via a learning poster

“Teachers are policy makers [for diversity and inclusion]” (Mel Ainscow at the IAIE Conference 2024). But where do they „get“ their policies from? From the perspective of my ongoing research project with pupils as my co-researchers: Not from the students. In that sense one of our shared research goals is to influence the teachers to teach more like, how oppressed students think it should be. Therefore the research team consists of students at German vocational schools, who experience different forms of oppression (Young, 1990, p. 39-65). To achieve this impact we created a learning poster for teachers as an intervention into their pedagogical and didactic arrangements, especially in civic/citizenship/sociological/political education. The poster can be understood as an asynchron learning arrangement in hallways or used as a method in teachers trainings.

Naturally via working with the poster our next research questions appeared: **How does the intervention gets distributed and is applied? What are the reason’s to dismiss or adapt students ideas articulated through the poster?** Data from observation and interviews will be included to the ongoing situational analysis (Clarke, 2005).

The presentation will give insights to the developing process of the learning poster as well as the final product and the empirical basis from our participatory situational analysis. Additionally we will present the first results of interviews about impact of the intervention.

Keywords

political education, student participation, pedagogical intervention

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 26

Type: **Presentations**

"Participatory Learning in Early Childhood through Action Research: Freinet's Class Councils as a Core of Democracy and Co-Constructed Learning"

This presentation outlines an action research initiative conducted in a Greek kindergarten (pre-primary school) classroom with children aged 4 to 6, aiming to promote participatory practices in both school life and the learning process, while supporting inclusive strategies grounded in differentiated instruction.

The study was spearheaded by the presenting author, the special education teacher of the school, working in collaboration with classroom educators. A reflective, participatory action research methodology shaped the project, combining systematic observation, ongoing reflection, and the adaptation of pedagogical strategies to enhance children's engagement.

Central to the process were Freinet-inspired Class Councils—deliberately designed and modified to align with developmental needs of young children—which served as the principal tool for both planning and evaluating educational activities. Through these Councils, children co-designed thematic units, expressed their preferences regarding activities, and participated in evaluating the outcomes. They discussed interpersonal issues, developed collaborative skills, and reflected on their roles within their small collaborative working groups. The Councils offered a meaningful and developmentally appropriate space for children to share their thoughts, emotions, and suggestions.

Children's participation was integrated into different stages of action research: from initial planning and subsequent re-designing of activities, to active engagement during open-ended collaborative tasks, and finally, to evaluation processes through group reflective dialogues, reflective personal interviews, and individual portfolios.

Ultimately, this presentation demonstrates how embedding participatory practices in early childhood education can foster democratic competencies, personal responsibility, active participation, empathy, and agency. By centering children in the learning process and embracing inquiry-based pedagogies, educators can effectively nurture collaboration, reflection, and decision-making from the earliest years of schooling.

Keywords

participatory learning, action research, early childhood education, Freinet, class councils, inclusive education, collaborative tasks

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 27

Type: **Presentations**

Voices in Motion: Walking Interviews as Tools for Empowerment and Inclusion in Poverty Research

People who are living in poverty with literacy challenges often remain underrepresented in research. Participatory action research has emerged as a valuable approach in health equity research, integrating the expertise of community members with diverse backgrounds. Building upon existing literature, our participatory action research project sought to fill the gap in using walking inter-views with persons living with literacy challenges. We used an innovative approach guided by the need to enhance inclusivity, accessibility, and relevance of research methodologies for marginalized populations. The walking interview method facilitated gathering perspectives on health and healthcare access within the community. All the participants contributed to: 1) data collection, 2) data interpretation and 3) knowledge transfer, including with decision-makers. The participants included eight persons who were members of community organizations in two urban areas in Québec, Canada. All participants were aged between 55 to 75 years old. Three specific themes emerged from the thematic analysis: 1) socio-cultural barriers to access healthcare and health services, 2) neighborhood gentrification, and 3) social participation. In this presentation we will share some of the results but also reflections about opportunities and challenges of doing participatory research. We will also reflect on the integration of invisibilized populations into the knowledge translation process as a means of fostering social change. (co-construction of a web tool with photos, meetings with decision-makers, conferences, stakeholder engagement seminars).

Keywords

literacy, poverty, walking interviews

Presenting Authors

Christine Loignon and Isabelle Wilson

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Contribution ID: 28

Type: **Poster presentations**

Action Competence in Teacher Educators: A Framework for Sustainability in Teacher Education

In the face of escalating global challenges such as poverty, inequality, health crises, and environmental degradation, sustainable development has become an essential framework for fostering systemic change. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) plays a pivotal role in this trans-formation, with teacher educators (TEs) emerging as key agents in preparing future teachers to address sustainability issues. While much is known about the role of teachers in ESD implementation, less attention has been given on how TEs acquire the competencies necessary to lead such efforts. Given their multiplier effect in ESD, addressing this research gap is highly critical. This study examines and proposes the adaptation of Vukelić's (2022) Teacher Action Competence in ESD model to this context. The original model integrates four dimensions—knowledge and abilities, motivational beliefs, self-efficacy, and willingness to act—highlighting the central role of self-efficacy in translating sustainability knowledge into action.

Guided by the following research questions—(1) How do TEs understand and experience ESD in the context of teacher education? (2) What challenges and enabling conditions do TEs identify as ESD-related knowledge, skills, motivational beliefs into implementing ESD? (3) Do TEs' knowledge, skills, and motivational beliefs predict their self-efficacy for implementing ESD? (4) Does self-efficacy mediate the relationship between TEs' knowledge, skills, motivational beliefs, and intention to implement ESD? —these questions aim to elucidate a potential mechanism for translating sustainability-related competencies into meaningful action. Applying this model to TEs provides a valuable framework for their professional development and for advancing systemic integration of ESD in teacher education.

Reference:

Vukelić, N. (2022). Teacher action competence in education for sustainable development. *Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies*, 73(2), 180-194

Keywords

sustainability, teacher education, ESD

Presenting Author

Kimberly Siacor

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Contribution ID: 29

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

How Action Research Help to Foster Long-Term Sustainability Practices

How can action research help to enhance sustainability education and mentorship in teacher training and youth-led sustainability projects? This proposed study explores the potential of action re-search as a method for evaluating and improving the effectiveness of sustainability-focused training programs for teacher educators and teachers involved in mentoring youth-led sustainability initiatives. By using action research, the study will engage participants in a reiterative process of reflection, action, and adaptation to assess how sustainability competencies are integrated into teaching practices. The proposed research will focus on MOOCs and workshops aimed at enhancing teachers' and teacher educators' knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward sustainability education. It will investigate how these programs influence teaching practices, mentorship strategies, and the long-term integration of sustainability into educators' professional lives. This approach fosters an ongoing dialogue about the challenges and successes of integrating sustainability into education, while promoting continuous improvement and adaptation of practices. Ultimately, this workshop mainly aims (1) to raise awareness on the significance of teacher training in strengthening ESD integration (2) to engage in the ideation of possible platforms to conduct action research in Austria and (3) to source for potential participants for the proposed project.

Keywords

sustainability, teacher education, ESD

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 30

Type: **Presentations**

Promoting Equity and Diversity in Teacher Education

This paper reports on data drawn from a wider project derived from a large-scale EU-funded project (focusing on issues of equity and diversity) aimed at mapping and interpreting official documents (macro) and institutional (meso) levels and the practices (micro-level). The research question revolves around if and how issues of equity and diversity are addressed in teacher education policies, curriculum and practices. It draws on document analysis as well as on data from focus groups with student teachers and with teacher educators. Findings from the focus group point to positive views of existing practices in initial teacher education. For instance, student teachers spoke of the inspiration and model provided by some teacher educators who address equity and diversity exemplarily, but they also identify the need for more specific practical and theoretical training. The action research approach embedded in practicum is seen as an important opportunity to raise awareness and to develop more equitable and inclusive pedagogical practices. In turn, teacher educators see opportunities for development through internal and external initiatives, such as the Council of Europe, as well as volunteering programmes and international projects. However, there is consensus about the need for greater institutional support and specific continuous training programmes for equity and diversity. In order to contribute to the fostering of equity and diversity in teacher education, an action research project was developed with student teachers to investigate and discuss their relevance for their education and practice as future teachers. Data reveal that student teachers welcome such an approach but they also agree that equity and diversity are complex and controversial issues that deserve a long-term perspective linked to their actual teaching practices with real students. Thus, a more systematic and intentional approach is needed with a more explicit focus on equity, inclusion, and diversity. This approach must be supported by a robust institutional commitment and innovative and inclusive pedagogical practices. These and other aspects will be discussed further in the paper.

Keywords

equity, diversity, teacher education, action research

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Contribution ID: 31

Type: **Presentations**

Generation Z in the Lecture Hall

The paper shows a self-improvement process in teaching, in an introductory course in visual communication for undergraduate students, at an academic college, within the School of Communication in Israel. The development of the course went through stages of improvement and regression, but ultimately, it led to results of change and improvement and several insights.

The Practitioner –a lecturer who began teaching with a sense of mission, determined to enrich and develop the thinking of students who came from backgrounds as “first-generation scholars”. Most students are aged 21-25.

The Action Research was conducted according to Lewin’s action research approach, which, in addition to observation and interpretation, comprises research and effective learning. The data involve self reflection by the lecturer/practitioner, notes and feedback from a critical friend of the lecturer as well as feedback from students orally and in written form. The process took three semesters.

The lecturer concludes that changes in teaching methods are essential because everything is changing: the target audience and its habits, culture, and technological means. These factors necessitate that every lecturer be attentive to changes, feelings, and their own teaching methods, adapting them to the target audience. Through personal reflection, significant improvements in teaching methods can be achieved, leading to more meaningful teaching for both the lecturer and especially for the students.

Keywords

generation Z, undergraduate students, teaching, visual communication, self-improvement, action research

Presenting Author

Amir Har-Gil

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Contribution ID: 32

Type: **Presentations**

Empowering Innovation in Resource-Limited Contexts: The Role of Action Research in Multi-Cycle Design Research Studies

This paper explores the role of Action Research as a critical engine within a Design-Based Research (DBR) study that implemented a Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching (TMTBLT) approach to enhance the pedagogical self-efficacy of pre-service English teachers in a resource-constrained Indonesian university. Rooted in Action Research principles, the study followed iterative cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, which structured the three-phase DBR design. TMTBLT functioned not as a research methodology but as a central instructional strategy that guided the development of classroom activities using widely accessible digital tools such as Flipgrid, Jamboard, and WhatsApp. Across three cohorts, student teachers actively participated in co-design, critical reflection, and classroom experimentation, fostering a dynamic and contextually responsive learning environment despite infrastructural and curricular limitations.

Set against structural challenges-ranging from limited infrastructure to rigid curricula-the research foregrounds how Action Research can enable adaptive, collaborative responses that not only have proximal impact but also have the power to contribute to theory as part of a more wide-ranging methodological approach. Grounded in Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy, the study illustrates how teacher-learners developed confidence through iterative, low-stakes digital tasks, peer mentoring, and situated pedagogical risk-taking. This research positions Action Research not as a parallel process but as an integral methodological stance within DBR-empowering participants as co-inquirers and shaping innovation in real time. It offers transferable insights for scholars of teacher education, digital equity, and educational transformation, especially in contexts where traditional reform approaches are unlikely to succeed.

Keywords

action research, technology-mediated task-based language learning, reflective practice, teacher self-efficacy

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Contribution ID: 33

Type: **Presentations**

Is it Worth It? Sustaining Learning Outcomes from Internship-Integrated Practitioner Research over Two Years of Initial Teacher Education

Research-based learning should enhance professional learning by promoting research orientation (OECD, 2017). Practitioner research, rooted in action research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009), is an approach of research-based learning within teacher education, following the principle that practitioners develop and improve their own practice by researching and reflecting on it (Fichten & Meyer, 2014; Altrichter et al., 2023). Thus, the implementation of practitioner research in teacher education is expected to promote professional, practice-related, as well as research-related learning, among teacher students. These learning outcomes should be sustainable throughout their studies and beyond, as practitioner research is a professionalisation strategy that can be used to address challenges and contribute to the development of teaching and schools (Fichten & Meyer, 2014). Our mixed-methods longitudinal study addresses the under-researched question if internship-integrated practitioner research fosters sustainable learning outcomes of teacher students during their internships. Across three semesters, teacher students (n=103-115) reported current, and retrospectives influences of internship-integrated practitioner research. We explore whether practice-related and research related learning outcomes of practitioner research projects are sustainable, and whether teacher students benefitted from learning outcomes of previous projects during subsequent internships. The aim is to determine whether these effects are general or specific, with a view to integrating research-based learning in teacher education.

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OECD. (2017). *Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession*. OECD Publishing.

Keywords

internship integrated practitioner research, research based learning, initial teacher education, sustainable learning

Presenting Author

Katharina Heissenberger-Lehofer

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Educational Responses to Sociocultural and Sociolinguistic Diversity in Portuguese Schools: Contributions from Action Research in Teacher Education

The symposium will address the educational policy and institutional responses from teacher education programs to the increasing number of immigrant (and refugee) children in Portuguese schools. It has the following general aims: to map national educational policies and practices for welcoming immigrant and refugee children and to characterise action research practices identified as such in the grey literature.

The symposium includes three presentations: the first outlines the sociocultural and sociolinguistic changes in Portugal over the last decade, national educational policies, and their educational implications; the following presentations report on systematic reviews of grey literature (theses, dissertations, practicum reports) presented in the period 2015–2024, on action research projects developed with immigrant students.

Preliminary results evidence a change in social and educational policies regarding the integration of immigrants and refugees. Even though Portugal ranks high in welcoming policies and practices, there is still much to be done in the pursuit of effective inclusion in schools. This is evidenced in the scarce focus on educational work with immigrant (and refugee) pupils in the 'grey' literature. However, (student) teachers seek to develop an educational approach that promotes intercultural competence (Byram, 1997) and democratic citizenship (Council of Europe, 2018), moving beyond reactive or compensatory approaches to diversity, toward a proactive and transformative educational perspective.

References

Byram, M. (1997). Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. *Multilingual Matters*.

Council of Europe. (2018). Reference framework of competences for democratic culture. Volume 1: Context, concepts and model. Council of Europe. 16807bc66c

Paper 1: Educating other people's children: social measures and schooling responses to integrate immigrant children in Portugal (Maria Alfredo Moreira, CIEd-UMinho)

Data from the UNICEF indicates that in 2023, more than 473 million children lived in conflict-affected areas, a number that has very likely increased in 2024, with estimates suggesting it will rise even further in 2025 (UNICEF, 2025). There are 49 million displaced children worldwide and half of the 14.8 million refugee children do not have their right to education guaranteed (UNHCR, 2023).

Portugal ranks among the top Ten MIPLEX countries, scoring 83 on the MIPLEX 100-point scale (MIPLEX, 2023). The foreign population in Portugal with legal residency status tripled from 2015 to 2023. Currently, there are 20 foreigners for every 200 inhabitants, a situation that puts some pressure in social services. Immigrant children represent nowadays 11,3% of the schooling population in Portugal, a trend that is expected to rise. Portugal's education policies for welcoming these students have remained stable since 2018 and rank third among EU countries after Finland and Sweden. The country has implemented various measures to facilitate access to education that include promoting the skills of migrants, simplifying access to higher education and research, including intercultural education in the national curricula and multidisciplinary teams to support learning, or even classes on Portuguese as a Non-Native Language (Comissão Europeia/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019). However, there are still challenges that need to be

addressed, such as improving the emotional well-being of these students and their academic success, or capacitating teachers to develop culturally appropriate pedagogical responses to sociocultural diversity. To achieve this aim, collaborative action research can play an important role.

Paper 2: Action research practices and perceptions about sociocultural diversity of kindergarten and elementary school student teachers in practicum contexts

Deolinda Ribeiro –Polytechnic of Porto, Portugal; & EstreiaDiálogos

Ana Peixoto - Polytechnic of Viana do Castelo, Portugal; (InED) Centre for Research & Innovation in Education & EstreiaDiálogos

This presentation addresses a systematic review study that sought to understand how prospective teachers develop their action research projects and which interculturality and citizenship education strategies they use to promote the inclusion of children from different countries. Data was collected from the Practicum Reports of kindergarten and primary trainee teachers doing their master's degree in teaching, namely from their narratives of action research practices and their perceptions about intercultural and citizenship education. The research method consisted in locating, in the Open Access Scientific Repositories in Portugal (RCAAP), Practicum Reports that were written in the period from 2015 to 2024 and the following search keywords were used: action research; immigrant; intercultural and/or citizenship education. Perhaps due to the specificity and complexity of the topic, not many documents were found within the established time limits, having only 11 Practicum Reports been identified and analysed. Special attention was paid to the involvement of participants (trainee teachers, children, families and supervising teachers, among other educational actors) in the processes of knowledge construction and coexistence transformation among different cultures (Freire, 1970), as a starting point towards a more democratic social life in educational contexts and a more humanistic education.

In some cases, the action research processes included an interdisciplinary project approach to the curriculum, accounting for contextualized practices that aimed to promote intercultural interaction skills (Byram, 1997) and evidencing the emergent value recognition of children's own culture within teaching-learning groups. The benefits of action research projects are mainly related to the progressive well-being of children in care settings and their progress in various learning areas, as well as to the construction and development of trainee teachers' professional knowledge.

References

Byram, M. (1997). Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. *Multilingual Matters*.

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Paper 3: Action research and sociocultural inclusion as documented in the grey literature

Isabel Barbosa (EstreiaDiálogos)

The constant and rapid change of today's world, namely as a consequence of recent migration waves driven by multiple reasons, implies the need to take intentional action to promote socio-cultural inclusion, namely in the educational field, since schooling plays a determining role in the development of the necessary competences, of teachers and (young) learners alike, to face the demands of a multicultural environment (Comissão Europeia/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019).

This presentation focuses on data collected from the two PhD theses and three master's dissertations that satisfy the search criteria used in our repository search procedure –being written between 2015 and 2024 and combining action research and intercultural inclusion practices. Thus, the aim of this documentary research is to identify teaching-learning strategies aimed at promoting sociocultural inclusion in school contexts and understand the extent to which adopting action-research as a teacher development tool contributed to

achieve that goal.

The method of analysis consists in a systematic review of the documents, with a particular focus on three main dimensions: 1) inclusion processes and practices, 2) benefits/gains, and 3) limitations/difficulties. As part of the first dimension, the following subdimensions are considered: 1) main focus, 2) conceptual framework, and 3) action research aims. The other two dimensions apply to 1) learner/trainee development, 2) teacher/trainer development, and 3) educational context. The findings reveal that, despite some contextual difficulties, such as resistance to change, lack of time to get engaged in new projects, organizational obstacles to teacher collaboration, and teachers' and learners' low levels of intercultural awareness, all the participants benefited from the teacher development/ teaching-learning strategies adopted, which resulted in higher motivation and engagement levels, improvement of learners'(intercultural) communication skills, and teachers' stronger awareness of the importance of intercultural education. Reference Comissão Europeia [European Commission]/EACEA/Eurydice. (2019). A integração de alunos de origem migrante nas escolas da Europa: Políticas e medidas nacionais. [The integration of students with a migration background in European schools: National policies and measures]. Serviço das Publicações da União Europeia.

Keywords

educational policy, Portugal, intercultural and/or citizenship education

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 35

Type: **Presentations**

Growing Home Community Revival: Building Strong Community Partnerships through Participatory Research in the Appalachian Region

Whitesburg, Kentucky was devastated by flooding in 2022 and the effects of this and later events are still apparent in the region. These communities have seen the toll that coal mining and logging can take on the environment, but they also reflect cultures that are rich in traditions of music, writing, and activism to protect the people and natural environment of the area. The Flooding in Appalachian Streams and Headwaters (FLASH) Initiative aimed at mitigating the impacts of climate change and flooding by bringing together participatory research, civil engineering, forestry, and environmental education in a community-based collaboration. This presentation focuses on perspectives of a local community leader and a university-based participatory action researcher on how to build effective community-university partnerships to address critical local issues. We will discuss strategies for building strong collaborative relationships, developing research questions and processes that address local concerns, and will feature specific participatory research initiatives we have created together. These include collaborations with our state-level environmental education program to offer an Outdoor Learning Symposium and training a group of local interns to conduct community-based research including a photovoice project around the theme of water. We emphasize the importance of dialogue, respect for local expertise, and relationship building as key contributors to establishing and sustaining effective partnerships.

Keywords

PAR, flood mitigation, community engagement

Presenting Authors

Valerie Horn and Mary Brydon-Miller

Authors: BRYDON-MILLER, Mary (University of Louisville); HORN, Valerie (Cowan Community Action Group)

Contribution ID: 36

Type: **Presentations**

From Language to Life: A Literacy Educator's Journey into Environmental Action Research

This presentation offers a reflective account of a four-year journey designing and implementing environmental education projects within the Korean language curriculum. Rather than simply describing how the classes unfolded over the past four years, I explore the challenges both my students and I encountered, how we responded, and how we were shaped by the experience.

As a literacy educator grounded in the traditions of Korean language education, I had long viewed my role as one of transmitting structured knowledge and cultivating critical reading and writing. However, confronted with the ecological and social complexities of our time, I felt compelled to move beyond the classroom and engage more directly with the world. This shift led me into unfamiliar territory—collaborating with students, communities, and interdisciplinary partners.

Through this process, I learned to navigate uncertainty, embrace participatory approaches, and recognize lived experience as a vital form of knowledge. The projects not only deepened students' engagement but also reconfigured my own understanding of what it means to teach, to learn, and to act. This journey—from language to life—has been one of unlearning and reimagining my role as a teacher educator.

I argue that action research provides a generative framework for this shift, empowering educators to respond with agency, empathy, and creativity. This research shows how stepping across disciplinary boundaries and into the world can open up transformative possibilities. Furthermore, it shows that the act of teaching is not only about delivering knowledge, but also about reconstructing our identities and participating meaningfully in the world. Ultimately, this research leads us to view educational practice as an evolving narrative—a narrative never completed but constantly in the making.

Keywords

environmental education in Korean language education, action research, reflective teaching, teacher identity, participating in the world

Presenting Author

EunYeul Yeum

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Contribution ID: 38

Type: **Presentations**

Voice Surveys for Action Research: Enhancing Participation and Data Richness in Digital Contexts

We present voice surveys—speech-based, asynchronous online surveys—as a methodological ex-tension to action research (AR) that sits between written questionnaires and interviews. Unlike text surveys, voice surveys capture spontaneous narrative data; unlike interviews, they scale asynchronously with minimal facilitation. This makes them a distinctive alternative and adjunct for AR teams aiming to widen participation while preserving qualitative depth.

In a comparative study (N = 98) on student procrastination, participants answered open-ended questions via voice or text. Voice responses were longer on average (97.5 vs. 21.7 words), encompassed more distinct themes per question (8.07 vs. 3.36), and required less completion time. Although response rates were slightly lower for voice, the resulting material showed greater spontaneity and detail, yielding richer analytic leverage.

For AR, the added value is threefold: (1) Participation & inclusion: lower barriers for people less comfortable with writing, typing, or extended screen use; (2) Fit for context: seamless use in mo-bile, decentralized, or resource-constrained settings (asynchronous capture, short prompts, low researcher load); (3) Data richness for cycles of reflection–action: narratives that surface local language, tacit knowledge, and context cues useful for co-interpretation with stakeholders.

We outline practical design guidance (prompt framing, brief onboarding, privacy cues, lightweight transcription/analysis) and illustrate application areas in education, organizational change, and community projects. Overall, voice surveys offer the AR community a scalable way to enhance participation and qualitative depth, providing concrete methodological impulses for more inclusive, context-sensitive inquiry.

Keywords

voice surveys, student procrastination, participation & inclusion, data richness

Presenting Author

Dominik E. FROEHLICH

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Practitioner Perspectives on Network Maps: Understanding Interpretation to Strengthen Action Research Tools

Network maps are widely used in action research (AR) to scaffold collaborative reflection in practice settings. In AR cycles that blend online preparation with offline workshops, these visuals are often treated as “intuitive.” Yet we know little about how non-experts actually read them without facilitation.

This study examines sense-making of standard sociograms (with common cues such as node size, color, and clustering) by typical AR co-researchers: teachers, organizational consultants, and laypersons involved in community projects. Ninety think-aloud protocols were collected during an online task in which participants completed brief graph-based questions while verbalizing their reasoning. Transcripts were analyzed inductively and then related back to AR’s broader de-sign logic—namely, how visual tools mediate joint inquiry and decision-making in subsequent, in-person sessions.

Findings show strong initial engagement but recurrent misreadings of visual features (e.g., interpreting node size as “importance,” confusing centrality with frequency of contact, or over-ascribing meaning to clusters). Such patterns matter because they can derail the reflective and participatory aims of AR if left unaddressed.

We contribute (1) an empirically grounded account of how practitioners interpret network visuals across practice fields; (2) design guidelines for digital network mapping that enhance the broader collaborative process (e.g., brief onboarding, legend-first tasks, staged prompts that connect visuals to theory and local practice); and (3) a concrete integration pathway: using online sense-making tasks as pre-work, then re-interpreting the maps together with practitioner co-researchers in facilitated workshops. The 90 protocols serve as inputs for these joint interpretation sessions, helping align visual design, theoretical constructs, and lived practice to support deeper, more equitable inquiry.

Keywords

collaborative reflection, sociograms, misreadings, online sense-making tasks

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 40

Type: **Presentations**

Reclaiming the Unit of Analysis in Action Research

Action research often blurs boundaries between who is studied and who participates. While this fluidity supports collaboration, it also obscures a core methodological choice: the unit of analysis. Without clarity on what—or whom—the research is ultimately about, claims risk becoming analytically weak or ethically unclear.

This paper argues that explicitly defining the unit of analysis is essential for action research. Drawing on examples from education and community settings, we show how ambiguous units—individuals, groups, organizations, or practices—can undermine both rigor and participation. We propose a simple framework distinguishing analytic, practical, and political units to support researchers in making these choices visible and negotiable.

As action research expands into digital and hybrid contexts, unit boundaries become even less obvious. Re-centering this concept helps clarify data interpretation, ensure representational fairness, and support meaningful change.

We urge action researchers to treat unit selection not as a technical formality, but as a vital site of reflection and accountability.

Keywords

blurred boundaries, explicitly defining the unit of analysis, data interpretation

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 43

Type: **Presentations**

A (somewhat) Grand (partially) Unified Theory of Action Research

One hallmark of Action Research is in how it expands what we consider to be legitimate forms of knowledge and the ways in which we conceptualize and contribute to the processes of knowledge generation. What's less clear is how they all fit together. Heron and Reason (1997) describe an ex-tended epistemology of four forms of knowledge—experiential, presentational, propositional and practical, to which Coghlan and Shani (forthcoming) add relational—each of which offers unique ways of engaging in knowledge production and exchange. Similarly, Gibbons et al.'s (1994) earlier work on Mode 1 and Mode 2 forms of knowledge offers a strategy for going beyond conventional forms of research to embrace forms of research that are transdisciplinary, heterogenous, and socially accountable. Ortiz Aragón and Brydon-Miller (2021) have identified five realms of action re-search that include but go beyond traditional forms of inquiry—the realms of empathetic relators, emergent designers, dynamic sense-makers, as well as advocates and activists. In this workshop we suggest an integration of these ways of knowing with the realms of action research to present a more integrated model of knowing through and within action research and invite participants to help us in imagining how these and other ways of knowing might work together to create an inclusive epistemology. This Grand Unified Theory, like Einstein's is incomplete and a bit fuzzy even to us, but we welcome comment and suggestions for bringing it into clearer focus through this presentation and discussion.

Keywords

theoretical frameworks, extended epistemology, ways of knowing, realms of action research

Presenting Authors

Mary Brydon-Miller, Alfredo Ortiz Aragón

Authors: ORTIZ ARAGÓN, Alfredo (University of the Incarnate Word); COGHLAN, David (Trinity College Dublin); BRYDON-MILLER, Mary (University of Louisville)

Contribution ID: 46

Type: **Presentations**

Fostering research competence and inquiry habit of mind through research-based service-learning: a study in Austrian teacher education

In the face of growing calls for transformative and participatory educational practices, this study explores how research-based service-learning (RBSL) can foster reflective, research-literate pre-service teachers. RBSL refers to academic engagements in which students conduct research projects on behalf of a community partner. At the University of Vienna, RBSL is implemented in a teacher education seminar where pre-service teachers conduct collaborative practitioner research with in-service teachers to address authentic classroom challenges (Froehlich et al., 2021). The study examines how such structured collaboration influences the development of research competencies, inquiry habits of mind, and proactive social informal learning behaviours. A quasi-experimental, longitudinal mixed design was used, including a control group, pre- and post-intervention measurements, and four interim questionnaires to track changes in informal learning behaviours. Data was collected from 62 pre-service teachers over three semesters. Validated instruments included a researcherly disposition scale (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2016), a perceived research competence scale (Marrs et al., 2022), and proactive social informal learning scale (Crans et al., 2023). This presentation will share emerging findings and reflect on how RBSL engagement shapes inquiry dispositions and informal learning strategies in practitioner research projects.

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Tack, H., & Vanderlinde, R. (2016). Measuring Teacher Educators' Researcherly Disposition: Item Development and Scale Construction. *Vocations and Learning*, 9(1), 43–62. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12186-016-9148-5>

Keywords

research-based learning, service learning, teacher education, collaborative practitioner research

Presenting Author

Dominik Fröhlich

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Contribution ID: 47

Type: **Presentations**

Working together to address health disparities: a rapid review to guide local research partnerships

Background: Health disparities can be more effectively addressed at a local level by affected communities, policymakers and academics collaborating to solve common problems. The Oxford-shire Community Research Network (OCRN) was established to facilitate collaborative, local re-search with the ultimate aim of reducing health inequities. To inform OCRN's development, we undertook a rapid review to identify enablers and barriers to place-based research partnerships between community, government and academic entities addressing health disparities. **Methods:** The review team comprised academic, community and government partners from OCRN. We conducted a systematic, rapid review of literature, then held a multi-stakeholder workshop to share our findings and co-produce recommendations for OCRN. **Results:** Three key enablers for effective research partnerships emerged: (1) achieving partnership equality or equity; (2) linking re-search to meaningful action and change; (3) developing capacity, support and skills for community research. These were mirrored in the obstacles our review team had to address to work together effectively. Twenty-three local stakeholders co-produced fifteen recommendations for OCRN. **Conclusion:** Our work demonstrates the potential value and challenges of multi-stakeholder collaborative action research in addressing local health disparities.

Keywords

health, partnership, equity, action, capacity building, community

Presenting Author

Joanna Crocker

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Contribution ID: 48

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Backstage processes in PAR and what we can learn from them

Contents of the session

In participatory action research (PAR) beneath the surface of the stories being told, there are often other stories waiting to emerge, such as stories about challenging incidents, sensitivities, anxieties, moral dilemmas, failures, or poor decisions. In the literature these unspoken elements are indicated as the complexities that 'are brushed under the carpet' (Lenette et al, 2019), the 'backstage processes' (in a current Special Issue of the International Journal of Qualitative Methods <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/IJQ>) or even 'the dark side' (Bartels & Friedman, 2022) of PAR. In this dialogue session we will share experiences with backstage processes in action research. We will have three short 10 min presentations, followed by dialogue amongst the participants. The presentations include:

Laura Mudde - Does exchange equal learning? Rethinking Communities of Practice through a moral lens

Halfway through a series of meetings with a Community of Practice (CoPs), participants emphasized how much they valued the opportunity to share experiences and perspectives with peers. This raised a critical question for us as researchers: is sharing really the same as learning?

Chloe Beeris - Backstage Reflections on Participatory Action Research and Resilience

This presentation offers a behind-the-scenes account of a Dutch Participatory Action Research project on resilience and experiences of loss. Drawing on Goffman's concept of frontstage and backstage, and Habermas's Theory of Communicative Action, we reflect on whether and how communicative spaces could emerge.

Gaby Jacobs – Will I live to see it? The undercurrents in participation in Collaborative Action Research

In this presentation I will discuss the challenges to fully understand and work with the undercurrents in participation in a large and complex collaborative project in healthcare. I will offer some examples and will reflect on these using Chris Argyris' theory of organizational learning and the feminist psychoanalytic theory on self-protection by Jessica Benjamin.

Keywords: PAR, health care, interpersonal dynamics, undercurrents, reflection

Presenting Authors

Gaby Jacobs, Chloe Beeris, Laura Mudde

Authors: JACOBS, Gaby (University of Humanistic Studies); BEERIS, Chloe; MUDDE, Laura

Contribution ID: 49 & 136

Type: **Symposia**

Symposium 1. Creating the conditions for educational transformation through action research.

Symposium 2. Participation and transformation in teaching and learning through action research.

This proposal is for two symposia from an innovative project currently underway in Kazakhstan. The aim is to develop a sustainable structure and activity to use action research to lead national school and teacher development. The symposia focus on two different aspects - school development and enabling conditions and the development of pedagogy through action research. The papers share practice, thinking, rationale and current research on and in the network entitled the NIS/SHARE project.

The aim is to use action research in schools as a tool for national transformation in the education system. The NIS schools were charged with this over a decade ago.

Symposium 1: Creating the conditions for educational transformation through action research

Chair: Professor Colleen McLaughlin, Professor Emeritus, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.

Keywords: action research: schools; collaborative; building conditions for school and teaching and learning change

Paper 1: **Building for sustainable transformation – using action research.**
Presenter: Colleen McLaughlin

This paper forms an introduction to the evidence-based conceptual and contextual framework used. The project builds on two other projects one in the capital's schools and one in the NIS schools over the last 13 years. The aim is to create schools that use action research for school development and to build, prepare and train schools and teachers to work with other schools. Networks are built through this pathway. The aim is to prepare approximately 60 such schools over three years. The key concepts are these:

1. Teacher/school action research as a vehicle for school development and the development of teaching and learning
2. Teaching and learning –students and teachers
3. Collaboration + leadership for learning
4. Understanding change, learning and teaching –this includes creating the enabling conditions

The paper will explore how these concepts arose from practice and the learnings about the facilitation and resources needs to try to build a sustainable network; the factors that facilitate and impede and the importance of the historical context.

References

- McLaughlin, C., Winter, I. and Yakavets, N. (2024) Mapping Educational Change in Kazakhstan. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.
- McLaughlin, C. and Ayubayeva, N. (2021). 'The Teacher and Educational Change In Kazakhstan.' In Fielding, N. (Ed.) Kazakhstan at 30: The Awakening Great Steppe. London: The Embassy of Kazakhstan in London.

There follow three papers exemplifying the work in the schools.

Paper 2: **Empowering Teachers through Reflective Practice: Using Gibbs' Cycle to Address Challenges in Differentiation**

Presenter: Boranbayeva Zhadyra Askhatkyzy

Authors: Buzhanov E.K., Kanybekov K.G., Boranbayeva Zh.A., Karatayeva A.M., Kenzheeva G.S. NIS School, Atyrau, Kazakhstan

In the face of growing educational diversity and the demand for inclusive teaching, this action research project investigates how reflective practice can support teachers in addressing one of the most persistent pedagogical challenges: effective classroom differentiation.

The central research question is: How does applying Gibbs' Reflective Cycle to post-lesson analysis contribute to the development of differentiated teaching strategies? Despite ongoing professional development efforts, previous observations and teacher feedback indicated that differentiation remained inconsistently applied and often overwhelming in practice. To address this, a team of teachers, administrators, and support staff collaboratively developed a digital 'Teacher Reflection Journal' using Gibbs' six-phase model. The tool aimed to help teachers reflect on their planning and teaching, with a particular focus on differentiation strategies and student outcomes.

This journal was piloted by a volunteer focus group of teachers over one month. Although formal data collection is ongoing, early reflections suggest that the structured nature of Gibbs' model fosters greater awareness of student needs, stronger lesson planning, and more thoughtful teacher-student interaction. Teachers reported that the digital format made reflection more accessible, efficient, and meaningful, fitting naturally into their practice without additional workload.

This study responds directly to CARN 2025's call to explore participative and reflective research in transforming professional practice. It offers an example of how school-wide collaboration and teacher-led inquiry can enable change from within. The implications suggest that embedding structured reflection into regular teaching routines can be a sustainable pathway to more equitable and responsive pedagogy. Engaging in reflective journal writing significantly enhanced teachers' sense of responsibility and shifted their attitudes and perspectives on differentiation. Further exploration of this model may support long-term development in schools aiming to adapt to the complex realities of 21st-century classrooms.

References

Gibbs, G. (1988) *Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*. Oxford: Further Education Unit, Oxford Polytechnic.

Paper 3. **Researching together –building a culture of collaborative enquiry.**

Presenter: Balzhan Amandzholova, School 90 Astana, Kazakhstan.

This paper explores the transformative journey of the 90th Gymnasium through its engagement in the SHARE/NIS Project, shifting teacher professional development from a compliance-driven model to one grounded in reflective practice and collaborative enquiry. Central to this transformation was the role of lesson-based reflection in shaping a strong professional culture among teachers. This took the form of pre-lesson reflection where teachers collaboratively discussed upcoming topics, analyzed preliminary data, and anticipated potential student difficulties. This process supports the selection of differentiated tasks aligned with learning goals and encourages intentional, responsive planning. It also encouraged professional dialogue.

At the school, structured action research further deepened this culture. Teachers posed classroom-based questions, collected evidence, experimented with pedagogical strategies, and reflected collectively. One team, investigating communication skills, introduced role-play strategies informed by scholars such as Zh. Aymaulytov, M. M. Andreeva, and I. I. Ivanets. Despite initial low engagement, assigning purposeful roles during group tasks improved motivation and confidence, especially for low self-esteem learners.

This transition had challenges. Teachers initially faced skepticism, rigid hierarchical norms, and time constraints. Leadership played a vital role in addressing these barriers through trust-building, modelling vulnerability, and offering consistent support. Ultimately, embedding reflective practices significantly contributed to the development of a professional culture, showing the potential of enquiry-based learning to drive lasting educational change.

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Ivanets, I. I. (1997). Педагогикалық рефлексия және кәсіби даму.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. Basic Books.

Stoll, L., Bolam, R., McMahon, A., Wallace, M., & Thomas, S. (2006). Professional Learning Communities: A Review of the Literature. *Journal of Educational Change*, 7(4), 221-258.

Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement*. Routledge.

Paper 4. From Insight to Action: Advancing School Development Through Enquiry and Evidence.

Presenter: Issakhanova Saniya Serikovna, Nazarbayev Intellectual School of Physics and Mathematics in Semey, Kazakhstan

This paper explores the school's engagement in action research arising from a desire to enhance teaching and learning by embedding enquiry into school development processes. The project aimed to support school readiness for transformation through action research and data-informed decision-making. Specifically, it sought to understand how involvement in structured professional enquiry can support change readiness according to Lewin's model of change.

The research adopted a collaborative action research model involving cycles of observing, planning, acting, and reflecting. Data collection included surveys and interviews with both teachers and students, alongside lesson observations. The process was grounded in reflective practice and ongoing peer dialogue within the school.

Key findings revealed that participation in the project helped the school prepare for transformational change by strengthening its culture of research-based practice. Teachers reported increased confidence in using data to inform practice. Student feedback highlighted areas where differentiation could be enhanced, aligning with our goal of "Challenge for All Students." These insights have informed new initiatives to support tailored instruction and more inclusive classroom strategies. Another direction of school enquiry identified three key criteria for high-quality teaching: interaction, student expectations, and teaching strategies. The survey helped clarify participants' perceptions of these elements, which formed the basis for further steps to improve teaching quality.

This project illustrates how school-based inquiry can bridge the gap between insight and action, enabling schools to move beyond reflection toward meaningful transformation. The research will be continued by developing a booklet with methodological recommendations informing what the high-quality teaching and learning are, thus moving to the next stage of change cycle.

References

Lewin, K. (1947). *Frontiers in group dynamics: Concept, method and reality in social science; social equilibria and social change*. *Human Relations*, 1(1), 5-41.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/001872674700100103>

Paper 5. Rebooting Schools: Transformation and Action Research as a Foundation for Quality Education for Each Student.

Presenter: Saule Askarova, English teacher of school-Lyceum #50 Astana, Kazakhstan, Sauleaskarova75@mail.ru with Zhumabekova, Z., Imankulova, ZR, Kezembayeva, R. and Askarbekova, B.

The main aim of this paper is to show how Action Research can help make education fairer and more effective for all students. Our school has been participating in the SHARE project since 2019. The project involves representatives of all levels of the educational community – the headmaster, the deputy teacher, teachers and students.

In 2024-2025, four collaborative studies were conducted at our school. They included the following topics:

1. The impact of the development of emotional intelligence in English lessons for 5th grades. The inclusion of strategies mood measurement, games, storytelling, reflection, art exercises contribute to better memorization, concentration and assimilation of material.
2. The Student's Voice project. The study was conducted in 9th grade for students with low academic motivation by math teachers.

3. Teacher's reflection for effective learning teachers of 10 grades of the Kazakh language participated in the study.
4. Reading better. The study was conducted by teachers in 2 grades to improve reading speed and comprehension using adaptive strategies.

A total of 126 students and 14 teachers participated in the projects. The methodology included collaborative planning, lesson observations, questionnaires, focus group interviews, and teacher reflection journals. The thematic analysis showed that students felt more involved when their voices influenced the learning process. 5th grade students demonstrated better memorization of the material when emotional tools such as a mood thermometer based on Plutchik's wheel of emotion were used in the lessons. The teachers emphasized that reflexive practice had changed their planning towards a student-centered approach.

Symposium 2: Participation and transformation in teaching and learning through action research

Chair: Nazipa Ayubayeva/Colleen McLaughlin

Keywords: action research: collaborative; schools; building conditions for school and teaching and learning change

Paper 1. Managing and examining the participation and transformation

Presenter: Dr Nazipa Ayubayeva/Colleen McLaughlin. President of the National Academy of Education, Astana Kazakhstan

This paper provides an overview of the empirical work which led to this collaborative action re-search project which has been developed over a decade in order to promote systemic change and details about the context and structure of the project. The focus of the work is developing teachers and their reflective ability through action research. It will include a study of the cultural and historical context and how it has impacted upon teachers and this project.

The issues related to the facilitation of such a project and the use of it to foster systemic change through the NIS schools and later the city schools in the capitol as a reform strategy is unusual and will be discussed. What has been learned will also feature.

An additional feature is to research the reform strategy too and share the empirical and professional findings. The remaining papers in the symposium explore different aspects and school based work.

References

McLaughlin, C., Winter, I. and Yakavets, N. (2024) Mapping Educational Change in Kazakhstan. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.

McLaughlin, C. and Ayubayeva, N. (2021). 'The Teacher and Educational Change In Kazakhstan.' In Fielding, N. (Ed.) Kazakhstan at 30: The Awakening Great Steppe. London: The Embassy of Kazakhstan in London.

Ayubayeva, N. (2018). Collaborative teacher learning in Kazakhstan. PhD thesis. University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.

Paper 2. Redefining Engagement: Shifting Mindsets Through Reflection

Presenter: Gulnara Abeshova. NIS Astana School of Physics and Maths Authors: Abeshova, G., Mainova, I., Kaiyrkenova, R., Bekbolatov, Zh

This case study at a selective school with a STEM focus investigated underachievement in two Year 8 classes (8_1 and 8_2) as part of a wider initiative to differentiate teaching. Initial student surveys revealed overall dissatisfaction with the variety and individualization of instruction, but did not explain why some classes performed significantly lower. The investigation shifted to engagement and metacognition as possible causes.

The results showed that many students perceived themselves as engaged, but equated

engagement with fun or entertainment rather than cognitive effort. In addition, teachers and students had different understandings of engagement: teachers focused on visible behaviour, while students focused on emotional interest. These conflicting definitions masked the real problem - students' limited awareness of how they learn.

A targeted intervention introduced structured reflection routines based on Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle and supported by self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Students were guided to move from passive completion to active reflection through post-task prompts, modelled responses, and discussions between teachers and students about the results of reflection. However, follow-up interviews showed that many students still engaged in reflection superficially - often performing it to meet teacher expectations rather than to gain insight into their own learning.

Although the academic improvement was modest, the qualitative results included greater open-ness, self-awareness and collaboration. This study underscores that engagement is not just behavioural or emotional, but primarily cognitive. Teaching reflection as a skill - rather than a compliance task - can help students take control of their learning. These results align with Hattie's (2012) evidence that reflective practice strongly influences learning, we emphasize treating reflection as a metacognitive skill rather than a perfunctory task. Future research might explore long-term impacts of reflection-centered pedagogy in similar educational contexts.

References

Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible learning for teachers: Maximizing impact on learning*. Routledge.

Paper 3. Two Case studies of action research in teaching and learning

3a. The Transformative Power of Action Research in Teacher and School Development: The NIS/SHARE Project Experience

Authors: Suleimenova, Z., Dyussenova, AZ. and Boranbayeva, B., School-Lyceum No. 72, Astana, Kazakhstan

This paper explores the transformative potential of action research as a powerful catalyst for teacher professional development and systemic change in schools using the NIS/SHARE project as an example. The NIS/SHARE project, initiated by the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools Center for Pedagogical Excellence in collaboration with Evans Educational Consultants Ltd., aims to improve the quality of education and student motivation through the targeted application of text comprehension methods in 7th grade. The paper demonstrates how systematic problem diagnosis, iterative refinement of research questions, and adaptation of methodological approaches (e.g., abandoning a control group in favor of a "pedagogical" focus) lead to teachers' deep understanding of their own practice and the formation of an evidence-based approach to teaching.

The results indicate a noticeable improvement in the activity, engagement and quality of assignments by students, as well as significant professional growth of teachers, deepening their understanding of the systemic relationship between pedagogical interventions and learning outcomes. The study emphasizes that "action research" not only improves individual practices but also contributes to the development of the school as a self-learning organization capable of continuous adaptation and innovation. This is confirmed by the international TALIS-2024 data on the involvement of Kazakhstani teachers in research and national legislative requirements for the development of research skills of teachers, which makes the NIS/SHARE project particularly relevant and significant.

References:

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education", Article 51. TALIS-2024. International study TALIS-2024.

Mekuria, A., Woemego Bushisho, E, and Wubshet, H. (2024). 'The Impact of Reading Strategy Training on Reading Strategy Use and Critical Reading Ability of Students in English as a Foreign Language Reading Classes'. *Cogent Education*, February 2024 Golden Jubilee Special Issue 2024. 'Taking Stock of Teacher Education: Celebrating 50

Years of the Journal of Education for Teaching: international research and pedagogy.'Teacher Education and Development Volume 50, 2024.

Paper 3b. Title: From Insight to Action: Advancing School Development Through Enquiry and Evidence

Authors: Zhakishева Meiramgul, , zhakishavam@mail.ru.; Sultanova, GA, , Sakhmurzaeva Toktarovna, Akhmetova Valentina Abdullayyvna, Ernazarova Zaida Altynbekovna. School-lyceum №59, Astana, Kazakhstan.

This paper presents a mini case study of an action research project conducted at whole school level which led the school development agenda for 2024-2029 focused on improving teaching and learning quality. The school focused on developing favourable conditions for teacher learning and development through action research. The research question was, 'Does feedback help students take responsibility for their knowledge and regulate themselves?' The research team included 6 groups and 32 team members who were clearly interested in the project, working like-minded and collaboratively. Research work was carried out in 5 research classes.

We do not hide the fact that during the implementation of the NIS/SHARE project, there were a number of difficulties in attracting teachers to the project. The motives of some teachers to participate in the project were associated with personal interests rather than the desire for professional development. However, this attitude has gradually changed, as participation in research projects is currently one of the requirements for raising the professional category of a teacher in the appraisal process. The various motivating factors will be discussed and the effectiveness of certain strategies for teacher motivation discussed. Through this project, the aim was to monitor positive changes in teaching practices and serve as an example for other educators.

Paper 4 Fostering Research-Informed Practice: Exploring the Impact of the NIS/SHARE project in Kazakhstan

Authors: Karabay A., Issabekova, A, Baimyrza, M, Zhumbayeva, A

Presenter: Issabekova Assem

Action Research is widely recognized as a powerful approach for fostering professional learning, promoting evidence-informed practice, and building collaborative school cultures (Mills, 2011, Darling-Hammond, 2006). Literature highlights its potential in enhancing teacher agency, critical reflection, and problem-solving capacities (Carr & Kemmis, 2003), while a lack of such collaborative structures has been linked to teacher isolation and burnout. This underpins the aims for the SHARE/NIS Project which prepares 10 NIS and 10 Astana City schools each year for three years.

This paper explores research on the perceived impact on teachers' professional development, classroom practices, and school-level change. The research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How has the project influenced teachers' research skills and professional growth?
2. How have teachers used AR to inform and transform their teaching and students' learning?
3. What changes, if any, have occurred in school culture or practices as a result of the project?

Using a mixed-methods case study design, data collection is currently underway. The first phase involves survey responses from school staff, followed by interviews and focus groups with principals, deputy principals, and teachers. In addition, training materials and project outputs are being analyzed to trace learning trajectories and evidence of change. The findings will inform recommendations for sustaining and scaling enquiry and development practices within and beyond the participating schools. By sharing early insights from this ongoing study, we aim to contribute to conversations on how school-based action research can drive meaningful, systemic change in diverse educational contexts.

References

Carr, W., & Kemmis, S. (2003). *Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and action research*. Deakin University Press.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Mills, G. E. (2011). *Action research: A guide for the teacher-researcher (4th ed.)*. Pearson.

Keywords

action research, schools, collaborative, building conditions for school and teaching and learning change

Presenting Authors

Colleen McLaughlin,

Authors: MCLAUGHLIN, Colleen (Professor Emerita University of Cambridge Faculty of Education + independent consultant)

Fostering Inclusive Communication in Early Childhood Education Through Action Research: A Neurodiversity-Affirming Approach

This workshop introduces a new action research project (starting January 2026) that explores communication and interaction in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Tyrol, with a focus on neurodiversity. The project is grounded in interactionist and socio-constructivist developmental theories and understands neurological diversity as a natural dimension of human cognition.

At its core, the project uses Collaborative Action Research (CAR) to co-develop strategies for diversity-sensitive and neurodiversity-affirming communication. Educators and families are not only participants but active co-researchers: they are involved in shaping research questions, co-analysing data (e.g., observations, interviews, focus groups), and co-designing practical tools such as reflection cards, guidelines, and workshops for everyday practice.

The workshop will serve as a collaborative testing ground: after a short introduction to the project's framework, participants will engage in interactive activities that mirror the co-research process. Together, we will reflect on inclusive communication challenges and experiment with formats that can later become part of the project's toolkit.

For participants, the workshop offers twofold benefits:

- **Professional learning** through exposure to neurodiversity-affirming approaches and practical reflection tools for inclusive communication.
- **Research contribution** by shaping the design of a real-world CAR project that aims to foster systemic change in ECEC.

In this way, the session not only shares the project's goals but also enacts its participatory spirit, inviting the conference community into the role of co-researchers.

Keywords

neurodiversity-affirming practices, inclusive education, Early Childhood Education and Care, educator-family collaboration, participation and social inclusion

Presenting Author

Laura Trott

Author: TROTT, Laura (Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol)

Contribution ID: 52

Type: **Presentations**

Storytelling cafés as a participatory research method –a critical discussion

Previously, narrative approaches have partly been included in group methods in research projects (Heimerl et al. 2023). Further advanced is the systematical use of the storytelling café as a participatory research method (Pichler et al. 2023).

The format developed in Vienna, in the 1980s (Dressel et al. 2023), as a new form of participatory orientated education (Blaumeister/Wappelsheimer 1987) and evolved, in line with other comparable methods “naturally in different settings of education” (Dausien et al. 2023; own translation). Within the Sparkling Science project *Caring Cultures at the end-of-life together with us*, Students and Citizen Scientists do research in intercultural and intergenerational exchange. We organized together with trainees in nursing professions 13 storytelling cafés on the topic of “Stories about the end of life”, in which mainly trainees, older people and people with dementia participated and which took place in (semi-)public spaces.

The research components change the conditions and prerequisites for the implementation of storytelling cafés, the format itself, its design, the aims, potentially the narratives as well as the social participation. Yet, as the experiences show, the systematic use of the storytelling café as a participatory research method is promising: The participation of students as co-researchers not only served to generate knowledge, their participation was accompanied by a transformative learning process (Pichler et al. 2024).

In our presentation at the CARN conference, we will demonstrate the method’s ‘narrative impulse, so the audience can experience how the storytelling café typically gets started.

Keywords

storytelling, group methods, PAR, end of life

Presenting Authors

Evelyn Hutter, Katharina Heimerl

Authors: HUTTER, Evelyn (Department of Nursing Science, University of Vienna); HEIMERL, Katharina (University of Vienna); PICHLER, Barbara (Association Sorgenetz/Careweb, Vienna); DRESSEL, Gert (University of Vienna); RE-ITINGER, Elisabeth (University of Vienna)

ACTION RESEARCH AND TEACHER EDUCATION

This symposium focuses on the role of action research in teacher education as a strategy to promote social justice and address the challenges posed by global crises and digitalisation in education. The discussion will cover the ethical and political implications of digital transformation, particularly in the context of initial and continuing teacher education, analysing experiences in Brazil and Portugal. Digitalisation, understood both as a potential means to democratise access to knowledge and as a risk of deepening inequalities, will be examined in the light of the participatory and reflective methodologies offered by action research. Each paper, drawing on different theoretical and empirical approaches, will explore how action research contributes to formative practices that combine the critical use of technologies, the strengthening of teacher identity, and the promotion of more inclusive and collaborative educational processes.

Paper 1: Maria Assunção Flores

Key issues and global concerns in teacher education: the role of action research

We are living in exceptional times, which challenge our educational systems, and teacher education in particular, as we seek to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. Conflicts, migration, climate change, digitalisation and artificial intelligence are just some of the key issues pressing researchers and teacher educators to rethink the future of teacher education. Responding to these various global challenges requires well-prepared teachers who are capable of understanding and making sense of the complex settings in which they have to operate given the increasing importance of diversity, equity and inclusion. Meeting the demands of a rapidly changing world is complex and challenges us to question not only the form but also the content of teacher education and its purpose. In this paper I look at the challenges and possibilities of teacher education in such challenging times. The role of action research will be explored considering the context of professional practice and of teacher education.

Paper 2: Mariangela Lima de Almeida

Data production through discursive spaces: Habermas' discourse ethics in knowledge construction

This study, grounded in Jürgen Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action, discusses Discursive Spaces as an innovative methodological proposal for data production in educational research, over-coming reductionist perspectives. Based on discourse ethics, Discursive Spaces privilege communicative practices free from coercion, promoting rational argumentation, sensitive listening, and mutual understanding. The methodology, anchored in action research, has been developed in Brazil in face-to-face, virtual, and hybrid formats, which has broadened the diversity of voices and opportunities for participation. While this digital dimension expands reach, it also presents ethical challenges related to equitable access, interaction quality, and preservation of the dialogical dimension. In the experiences conducted, participants reflect on their trajectories and practices through their own academic texts, fostering collective knowledge construction and valuing situated knowledge. This approach, particularly in the field of human sciences, contributes to the formation of argumentative communities committed to provisional and horizontal consensus. By integrating digital and in-person environments, Discursive Spaces demonstrate how action research can interweave technology, ethics, and social justice, strengthening the autonomy and voice of teachers and researchers. Thus, data production through this methodology establishes an ethical and democratic dialogue, countering technicist and positivist approaches, and fostering an inclusive, collaborative, and transformative education.

Paper 3: Rafael Carlos Queiroz**The communicative teacher identity: contributions of critical action research**

This study investigates how critical action research, grounded in Jürgen Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action, contributes to the construction of a communicative teacher identity. This approach integrates theory and practice in an emancipatory way, fostering critical-reflective development and the active engagement of

researchers and participants in transforming educational policies and practices. The research, carried out in Angola, Brazil, and Portugal, adopts the principle of "researching the research" and is organised into three phases: a) documentary and biblio-graphic analysis of the contexts under investigation; b) epistemological analysis of dissertations and theses; c) implementation of Discursive Spaces with author-researchers who use action re-search as a methodological foundation. Part of the interactions took place in synchronous and asynchronous digital environments, expanding international participation but also posing ethical and methodological challenges such as equitable access and the preservation of the dialogical dimension. These face-to-face and virtual meetings fostered argumentation and dialogue as the basis for consensus and the collective construction of knowledge. The findings indicate that the articulation between action research and communicative action enhances the development of a communicative teacher identity, integrating reflective, formative, participatory, and transformative dimensions. This identity also demands critical competences to address the opportunities and risks of digitalisation, ensuring more democratic and inclusive educational practices.

Keywords

action research, teacher education, teacher identity, communicative action, social justice

Presenting Author

Mariangela Almeida

Authors: FLORES, Maria A. (University of Minho/Portugal); ALMEIDA, Mariangela (Federal University of Espírito Santo/Brazil); QUEIROZ, Rafael (Federal University of Espírito Santo/Brazil)

Contribution ID: 55

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Lived Experiences of Social Justice Transformation

Ice Breaker

The session will start by an interesting part called “the hidden object” 10 minutes

Part 1

In this part which will be around 30 minutes in a “Human Spectrogram” format with main question: Where do You stand on the future of social justice action research? Participants will physically move to indicate their agreement/disagreement)

Format: Human Spectrogram

Description: 2 signs to be placed on the 2 opposite sides of the room, with one end representing “Strongly Agree” and the other “Strongly Disagree.” The facilitator reads a series of provocative statements related to social justice, technology, and action research. In each round of statement participants physically move to stand along between the 2 signs and invited to briefly explain their stance, fostering open discussion.

Expected Outcome: A dynamic and engaging way to explore varied perspectives on complex issues, identify areas of consensus and divergence, and stimulate critical thinking.

Part 2

Lived Experiences of Social Justice Transformation

Format: Storytelling Circles (small, intimate groups sharing personal narratives) Duration: 50 minutes

Description: Participants form small circles (4-5 people). Each person is invited to share a personal story (4-5 minutes) related to a moment of social justice transformation they have witnessed or been a part of, either through their work, community involvement, or personal life. The stories should highlight the role of action, collaboration, or learning in achieving change. After each story, the group offers active, empathetic listening and asks clarifying questions, focusing on the impact and lessons learned.

The last part of the session each group will give one statement summarize their experience from the different stories.

Expected Outcome: A powerful and emotionally resonant session that highlights the human impact of social justice work.

Keywords

social justice transformation, storytelling, human spectrogram, lived experience

Presenting Author

Ahmed Elshazly

Authors: Dr ELSHAZLY, Ahmed (Heliopolis University for Sustainable Development); ANWAR SHAHEEN, Mohammed (Heliopolis University)

Contribution ID: 57

Type: **Presentations**

Understanding of Sustainability and One Health Among Students in an Environmental Management Program

Human-driven environmental change in the Anthropocene poses a threat to human health, as three decades of research on climate, land-use, urbanization, and biodiversity loss attest (Tong et al., 2021). The One Health paradigm links the health of humans, animals, and ecosystems, under-pinning the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Zinsstag et al., 2023). Adopting an action research stance, we implemented an initial Plan–Act–Observe–Reflect cycle embedded in the course’s kick-off lecture. A pre–post survey was completed by 25 Bachelor’s and Master’s students enrolled in an Environmental Management program at a university of applied sciences in Austria. Within the kick-off lecture on “Sustainability and One Health” participants responded to open-ended questions on (1) their definition of sustainability within the human–animal–environment nexus, (2) domains in which they already act sustainably, and (3) the importance of sustainability for their career and employer choices. Results indicate that the majority of students primarily associate sustainability with environmental awareness and conservation. Few students critically questioned the concept, noting that sustainability is often framed from an anthropocentric perspective. When asked about sustainable practices, most students emphasized mobility and energy consumption, reflecting a strong awareness of climate-relevant behaviours such as emissions reduction and renewable energy use. Many also expressed a desire to integrate sustainability into their careers. Framed as action research, this first cycle foregrounds the iterative links between research and practice, using student attitudes as inputs for collective reflection to inform subsequent teaching.

Keywords

sustainability, one health, action research, environmental management education

Presenting Author

Ulrich Hobusch

Authors: BEZELJAK CERVA, Petra (University of Vienna); HOBUSCH, Ulrich (University College of Agricultural and Environmental Education)

Contribution ID: 58

Type: **Presentations**

Designing Action Research to Make Practice Visible: Exploring Teacher Pain Points, Pedagogical Intentions, and AI-Supported Reflection

This study explored how in-service teachers engaged in the design of classroom action research (CAR) as a way to identify pedagogical “pain points” in their practice and to extend reflection into the frame of action research (AR). Rather than stopping at teacher dialogue, the project situated CAR design as an entry point into iterative AR cycles, where lesson planning and research de-sign served as tools to make teaching intentions visible. 23 teachers participated in an intensive professional development workshop in which they revisited findings from prior school-year AR projects and collaboratively reformulated new research settings for the subsequent year. Within this context, AI tools were introduced not to generate lesson or research plans but to prompt re-flection, reformulation, and critique. Data sources included lesson and research plans, teacher reflections, and AI-assisted prompt iterations, all of which were analyzed inductively. Findings indicate that designing CAR functioned as a powerful reflective process aligned with the Plan stage of AR. Teachers began by naming specific challenges—student disengagement, conceptual misunderstanding, assessment tensions—and then formulated targeted questions and strategies. Prompts supported teachers in externalizing tacit thinking, clarifying aims, and articulating pedagogical options. At the same time, the process revealed tensions, including reliance on generic templates and difficulties in framing inquiry-worthy problems. The study argues that CAR design, when embedded in iterative AR processes, extends reflection beyond dialogue to systematic inquiry. It also suggests that critically used AI could make teachers’ ideas visible, contestable, and more actionable, thereby supporting teacher agency from reflective practitioner with noticeable practitioner within AR cycles. Implications highlight the potential of professional learning spaces that nurture inquiry-oriented teacher communities while advancing knowledge of how AR methodology can distinguish between generic reflection and inquiry-driven practice.

Keywords:

action research, reflective practice, AI-supported reflection, professional development

Presenting Author

Tharueseon Prasoplarb

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Contribution ID: 66

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Monitoring the continuation of impact: How to capture intended and unintended effects in a community-based approach to promoting physical activity?

As action researchers, we face a dual challenge: supporting health and wellbeing while also capturing changes. This brings us to our key question: How can we capture ongoing intended and unintended longer-term impacts throughout the (research) process across the community/neighbourhood? In 2023, we started a community-up approach in a Dutch urban neighbourhood –Leiden Zuidwest.

The aim was to gain insights into the needs and aspirations of both residents and professionals and to enhance health and wellbeing. Participatory Action Research (PAR) was used to support the community-up approach. Over two and a half years, more than 200 residents and 50 professionals in health, welfare, and policy participated. Residents and professionals were jointly involved in identifying needs and creating interventions. Notably, progress was also made in terms of social justice—defined here as a commitment to collaborative research that empowers people in marginalised groups, challenges structural inequalities, and generates knowledge for transformative social change.

In addition to direct impacts, such as a weekly residents' lead exercise group and a partnership between health and welfare professionals, we also observe indirect impacts, also called ripple effects. To capture these, we carried out Ripple Effects Mapping (REM). This contrasts with other projects where impact is often measured through a linear model, typically assessed at the end of a project. However, PAR is characterised by continuous interaction, with impacts emerging throughout. As in our case, valuable and unexpected impacts already surfaced during the first conversation in the pre-orientation phase.

Join us to explore how both intended and unintended longer-term impacts can be captured in PAR. We will begin by presenting our initial approach, then reflect critically on REM together, and finally, we invite you to brainstorm and exchange alternative approaches and frameworks for capturing impact.

Keywords

community-up, health and wellbeing, impact, Ripple effects mapping

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 69

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Tracing Pedagogical and Organisational Learning in an Action Research Process

This joint research project, conducted by the Private University of Education, Diocese of Linz, and the University of Klagenfurt, explores how organizational learning and leadership professional learning can be supported through structured supervision processes. Grounded in a social constructivist paradigm (Creswell, 2003) and applying qualitative-interpretive methods, we systematically synthesize knowledge generated from supervision, coaching, and research on supervision practices. Five sub-projects with differing focal points share a common aim: to investigate the conditions under which theoretical knowledge can be effectively translated into practice, and change processes can be traced at both individual and collective levels. Based on Altrichter and Posch (2018), action research is understood to be inseparably linked to school development. The research project aims to explain in detail how theoretically grounded and structured supervision can contribute to organizational learning in schools (BMBF 2020; Mynarek et al. 2021; Oberreiter 2021), focusing on the production and analysis of case studies. In the interactive workshop, we would like to discuss the design of three subprojects: one focusing on organizational learning, one on group dynamics, and one on language-oriented school development.

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Keywords

coaching, action research in schools, group dynamics, social development

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 74

Type: **Presentations**

A research cooperation as a “learning laboratory for sustainable development”

Biosphere reserves serve as model regions for sustainable development, expected to ensure on-going access to scientific knowledge, innovation, and new technologies. In 2013, the Nockberge Biosphere Reserve (Carinthia, Austria) launched the research initiative SCiENCE_LINKnockberge (SLn) in collaboration with Alpen-Adria University Klagenfurt and the Carinthian University College of Teacher Education. The goal is to establish the region as a “learning laboratory for sustainable development” through cooperative, practice-oriented research. SLn enables students to apply academic knowledge in real-world contexts by conducting bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral theses on regionally relevant sustainability topics. Alongside formal research, SLn emphasizes informal and experiential learning through guided hikes, interactive workshops, and dialogue with local stakeholders. Qualitative methods such as narrative interviews support socially responsible, user-oriented research.

The SLn approach is inspired by the principles and methodology of action research. Students, re-searchers, and local actors collaboratively engage in a cyclical process of inquiry, planning, action, observation, and reflection. This approach fosters mutual learning and links scientific knowledge with practical relevance. Research questions emerge directly from local sustainability challenges and are addressed through participatory formats such as workshops and interviews. This iterative process enables continuous adaptation and learning—both academically and in regional practice. Institutional differences—such as varying epistemologies and organizational rhythms—pose challenges for collaboration. However, ongoing communication and trust-building have helped to bridge these divides over time.

Now in its twelfth year, SLn has evolved into a dynamic platform for co-creative research and education. It demonstrates how science and practice can be meaningfully integrated, with the biosphere reserve functioning not only as a subject of study but also as an active educational environment. Through SLn, sustainability becomes something that is not only researched, but actively lived, shaped, and co-developed within the region.

Keywords

Education for Sustainable Development, collaboration, action research, hands-on learning

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Contribution ID: 76

Type: **Presentations**

“A challenging lack of professional knowledge”: Establishment of a professional learning community in preschool

Quality preschool practices improve children’s learning and well-being. The professionalism of preschool teachers influences educational quality. Iceland, like many other European countries, faces a continual shortage of preschool teachers. This action research aims to enhance professionalism in preschool by identifying effective practices, conditions, and leadership strategies that foster quality and support staff’s professional development. The first author led the development of professional practices, working alongside preschool principals, while the second acted as a critical friend during the research.

In this action research, we focus on cultivating professionalism in one Icelandic preschool. The data consists of research journal logs, meeting minutes and interviews with principals. Narrative inquiry, discourse analysis, and reflections with a critical friend were employed to extract stories from the data, facilitating an understanding of the experiences and situations they described.

The preliminary findings point to the everyday professional challenges principals face in balancing management with their vision of quality and professionalism. A recurring idea was the importance of developing a shared understanding of the preschool’s values and recognising the role of head teachers as middle managers who can bridge the gap between principals and staff. Consequently,

in collaboration with the principals, we are developing guidelines to support the development of a professional learning community, with emphasis on head teachers’ roles as professional leaders and regular collaborative reflection across all staff members.

Every child deserves access to preschool where quality prevails as a core principle. Active dialogues among all staff members can help to achieve quality practices. We argue that principals and head teachers must utilise resilience and pursue solutions that allow time for collaborative reflection throughout the preschool environment. In conclusion, we recommend establishing guidelines to support staff professional development, as this could foster a professional learning community and ultimately enhance preschool practice.

Keywords

pre-school education, professionalism, quality practices

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 77

Type: **Presentations**

Ethical challenges in participatory health research in nursing homes and their reflection by researchers: results of a meta-ethnography

As in most European countries, the proportion of people requiring care is increasing in Germany. While the majority are still cared for at home by relatives, the growing number of people living in nursing homes emphasizes the important role of inpatient care facilities. Health research demonstrates that opportunities for participation and involvement positively impact health and quality of life. Nevertheless, many people requiring care are concerned that moving into a nursing home means relinquishing their independence, self-determination, and right to participate in decisions affecting them. Consequently, there is growing interest in participatory action research in nursing homes to give voice to residents in this setting.

The specific structural and institutional power dynamics in such facilities, combined with residents' vulnerability associated with their care needs, pose various ethical challenges for participatory action research. These challenges encompass not only procedural ethics, such as ethical approval by an IRB, but also everyday ethics in research practice. Researchers and co-researchers require a high degree of ethical reflexivity to adequately address these challenges.

To date, various reviews, position papers, and articles have addressed research ethics questions in participatory research generally. However, no comprehensive overview exists of challenges specific to nursing home contexts. This presentation discusses findings from a meta-ethnography of studies from various participatory research projects involving nursing home residents. This approach enables, first, a synthesis of ethical problems in research practice within nursing home settings and, second, provides an overview of ethical frameworks and methodological approaches researchers employ to reflect on their actions. This contribution aims to promote ethical reflexivity among researchers and co-researchers engaged in participatory action research in nursing homes.

Keywords

ethics, nursing home, participation, action research, power dynamics, vulnerability

Presenting Author

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Framing impact in YPAR: how can we verify transformational change?

Youth-led Participatory Action Research (YPAR) offers powerful potential for advancing inclusive education, democratic school development, and social innovation. However, identifying meaningful indicators of its impact remains a key challenge, as change in YPAR is often emergent, relational, and difficult to capture through traditional evaluation. For researchers, educators, and practitioners, there is a growing need to better understand and communicate the multi-level effects of PAR/YPAR, from individual empowerment to systemic transformation.

This presentation draws on a three-year PAR/YPAR project in Iceland aimed at creating collaborative pathways between children and adults in school development. We share preliminary insights from developing an impact framework informed by inclusive education, children's participation, transformative agency, social innovation, and design thinking. Particular attention is given to the productive role of disruption, emotional messiness, and communicative spaces as catalysts for transformational learning and shared inquiry. Our central question is: How can indicators of im-pact in YPAR be framed to capture transformational change?

Findings highlight that impact can range from shifts in young people's confidence and leadership to changes in relationships, practices, and structures. We argue that impact often emerges in moments of disruption and dialogue, where power is negotiated, assumptions are challenged, and new understandings emerge.

The session concludes with a reflective dialogue, inviting participants to explore how we might frame, support, and recognize impact in PAR/YPAR in ways that are responsive to its emergent, messy and relational character. By drawing in the Icelandic context while connecting to inter-national debates, the presentation provides a valuable opportunity for conference participants to consider how we can foster deeper and more sustainable change in schools and communities.

Keywords

YPAR, inclusive education, transformational change, democratic school development, impact frameworks

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Contribution ID: 80

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Action Research in (English) Language Education: Exploring the Role of Image in Developing Intercultural Competence

This workshop explores the role of image in (English) language education, the importance of intercultural dialogue in (English) language teacher education, and the position of action research in the planning, observing, and reflecting on these specific elements in the language classroom. The workshop will comprise two sections: the applied linguistics focus with the theoretical and practice-based framework, which integrates critical reading for translation, critical thinking, and translanguaging to facilitate the introduction of (culturally) sensitive topics and cultural aware-ness in the classroom, and the pedagogical focus with the theoretical foundation and examples on image-based strategies for teaching intercultural competence and approaching controversial topics in the language pedagogy classroom. The aim of the workshop is to highlight that using image-based strategies as part of an action research approach helps teacher educators identify and address common challenges in teaching intercultural competence, by providing support with valuable data and insights for refining instructional materials and methods for addressing sensitive issues in language classrooms, leading to deeper understanding in fostering intercultural and linguistic competence in teachers and learners.

Keywords

image, action research in language education, critical reading, intercultural competence, teaching controversial topics and sensitive issues

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Contribution ID: 81

Type: **Presentations**

"Anything is Possible": Ten Years of Asset-based Community Development and Community-based Participatory Research in Gloucestershire

Gloucestershire Gateway Trust (GGT) recently celebrated their tenth anniversary of supporting asset-based community development in the Southwest of England. This pioneering model of social investment draws upon a unique partnership between the Trust and the Westmorland Family, a family-owned company running unique motorway service stations. For the past eight years, GGT has also served as the site of an on-going action research collaboration. In this presentation, based on our current work to create an oral history of this initiative, we provide an overview of this model, including how the services work to create job opportunities in the area, support local suppliers as well as contributing to the success of local non-profit organizations. We then discuss how community-based participatory research has been used to guide organizational decision-making and capacity-building in our local communities and explore the strategies we have used to maintain this partnership over time. We highlight current action research projects designed to lead the Trust into the future as they implement a major new child and family services initiative.

Keywords

asset-based community development, social enterprise, PAR, capacity building

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 83

Type: **Presentations**

Transforming the Teaching of Social Determinants of Health: Results from a community-university participatory project

An in-depth understanding of the social determinants of health (SDOH) and how they shape people's life courses is essential to social engagement of healthcare professionals. However, many health science training programs promote a simplistic conception of SDOH rooted in biomedical paradigms, which limit students' understanding of the broader conditions of health. At the same time, community organizations have in-depth knowledge and lived experience of SDOH; most of them have also developed innovative popular education initiatives to raise their members' awareness of the conditions that affect their health.

The aim of this participatory action research project was to strengthen community-university collaborations to improve the teaching of SDOH in health sciences programs. The project team, comprising researchers from Laval University (Québec, Canada), representatives of community organizations and people with lived experience in Québec, worked together at every stage of the project, from the formulation of the initial idea (design of the study) to the analysis and interpretation of the results.

The project involved many steps, such as an environmental scan of SDOH-related community initiatives in the Quebec City region, interviews and focus groups with community (n=14) and academic (n=9) stakeholders to explore their experiences and perspectives on collaboration. The final stage of the project consisted in a deliberative workshop attended by 38 stakeholders. The workshop discussions identified a set of recommendations to support more effective and reciprocal collaborations between universities and community organizations in understanding and teaching SDOH. These include a concern for the needs of community organizations, the importance of nurturing community ties, the need to coordinate and sustain collaborations and reciprocity in collaborations.

The project's outcomes suggest a structuring impact on university-community collaborations in health science education, not only at Université Laval, but also in other higher education establishments wishing to embark on a similar approach in Quebec and internationally.

Keywords

community-university partnership, social determinants of health, health sciences pedagogy, critical pedagogy, community knowledge, participatory research

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Contribution ID: 84

Type: **Presentations**

Enhancing learner support with culturally responsive pedagogy in rural South African schools with technology

Educators in South African rural schools face the challenge of meeting the diverse needs of learners amidst cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic differences. The current use of technology in these settings often inadequately supports secondary education. This conceptual paper explores the integration of culturally responsive pedagogy with technology to support diverse learners, proposing a contextually relevant learner support framework. Through a desktop narrative literature review of peer-reviewed journals and case studies, six themes were analysed: learner support dimensions, pedagogical integration of technology, cultural and technological barriers, diversity, equity, and inclusion in pedagogy, best practices in technology use, and technology for future preparedness. The analysis is grounded in Constructivist Learning Theory, African Ubuntu philosophy, and Connectivism. Findings from studies between 2015-2025 indicate that while technology can enhance academic and motivational support, it may lack in providing emotional support without careful integration. Cultural barriers can significantly limit technology's effectiveness, facing resistance from learners and teachers. Historical inequalities between affluent and rural schools in South Africa result in varied success due to resource limitations and infrastructure challenges, leaving learners unprepared for rapid technological changes. We propose a framework based on these triple theories and suggest its application within action research paradigms. By fostering partnerships with local rural schools and South Africa's Department of Basic Education, universities can contribute to innovative teaching methods grounded in culturally responsive teaching. This framework can be continuously tested and refined, aligning with action research principles to address educational challenges in underserved South African rural schools. We conclude by advocating for forward-thinking educational strategies that cautiously integrate emerging technologies into rural-based schools. This approach is essential to decolonise the uncritical ways technology is currently used, without considering the unique geographic and diverse learner contexts. We recommend fostering community partnerships to provide additional resources and support for technology initiatives and creating environments that encourage experimentation with innovative teaching methods.

Keywords

culturally responsive pedagogy, South African rural schools, education technology integration, learner support, diversity and inclusion, African Ubuntu philosophy

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 86

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Future-proof renovation of houses at scale: a participatory journey with homeowners

The Netherlands is known for its reclaimed land. Two major 'new towns' have been developed since the 1970s and currently face modern challenges of sustainable renovation, such as making houses energy efficient. The research, development and innovation project Future-proof Renovation with Integrated Quality Assurance aims to make the future-proof renovation of homeowners' houses affordable at scale. We explore the so-called customer journey of these homeowners with a participatory approach. This is the first part of a larger study: We collaborate in a large consortium of four universities of (applied) sciences, and seven market players.

Our focus in the study is on how homeowners can be approached and involved in future proof renovation of their houses. The aim is to identify what homeowners need in order to participate in the municipality's sustainability program, with the ultimate aim of improving the quality of housing. The idea behind the project is to create an attractive, large-scale renovation offer in which homeowners want to participate in. Two neighbourhoods of the two 'new towns' are part of the study.

Research already showed that homeowners with an income below modal are more likely to lack a financial scope for sustainability (Nibud, 2020). Market supply and all kinds of government incentives contributing to energy transition are fragmented. Coherence and integrality are lacking. The assumption is that this hinders the homeowner making sustainable choices. The initial findings of the study show that trust in the government and certainty about affordability play an important role for homeowners.

During the conference, we plan to use a creative approach to interactively go through the customer journey with the conference participants. We use the preliminary findings of the exploratory phase of our study. We are curious to learn about your views in this homeowner journey-approach and what we may be overlooking.

Keywords

sustainable renovation, trust in government, affordability for homeowners, collaboration in the neighbourhood

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 87

Type: **Presentations**

Guidelines for Child Participation- A Swedish Perspective

Sweden was one of the first countries to bring the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into national law. However, realizing these rights has been challenging, especially among children in vulnerable situations. Barriers, including language, limit their opportunities to be heard, and when they are included, it is often symbolic or tokenistic. Despite interest in involving children more authentically, adults working in research and policy often lack understanding of how children themselves experience participation. Thus, there is a need for tools that are not only evidence-based, but also easy for children to understand and use. The Dutch Learning Network, with young people and participatory researchers, developed such guidelines which was later re-fined by researchers in Kids in Action Network. The study aimed to validate and socio-culturally adapt these guidelines together with children in disadvantaged neighborhoods in Sweden.

This research involved children aged 9–12 from an ongoing community-based participatory pro-gram at a leisure-time center in disadvantaged neighborhoods of Malmö. Participants were purposefully selected due to their prior experience as co-researchers in the Community-Based Participatory Research program and a pre-existing trust-based relationship with the researcher. By integrating Freire’s critical pedagogy with participatory methods, the research process facilitated children in questioning, reinterpreting and reshaping the original guidelines. This approach moved beyond symbolic inclusion, fostering genuine, transformative participation rooted in dialogue and shared meaning-making

The children in this study emphasized that participatory research guidelines should prioritize honesty, emotional safety, and equality. They also suggested avoiding complex language, and using creative, engaging formats to better connect with other children in similar contexts. In this interactive presentation, we will explore how children adapted the guidelines through a child-centered, participatory process. We will share both the theoretical and methodological foundations of this approach, along with key insights and reflections contributed by the children themselves.

Keywords

guidelines, child participation, child rights, PAR, community-based research

Presenting Author

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Action Research Communities for Language Teachers: A Global Response to Global Challenges

Symposium Abstract

Featuring global perspectives, this symposium will highlight the European Centre for Modern Languages' (ECML's) "Training and Consultancy Programme (TaC) of the Action Research Communities (ARC) for Language Teachers", a long-standing initiative within the Council of Europe which is dedicated to promoting reflective language teaching practices and supporting professional development. The ECML's core philosophy centers on empowering language teachers for quality language education. Within a rich array of different programmes, ARC serves as a vital instrument for cultivating reflective language classrooms and enabling a strong link between professional teacher networks, expert knowledge, and effective teaching, leading to increased teacher confidence and professionalism. The symposium will detail the "why, how, and what" of action research provided through the workshop programme in various European contexts, offering specific examples of programme insights, activities, strategies, and methods. Additionally, it will explore the rationale, implementation, and outcomes of the TaC Programme across different educational cultures and social environments, sharing practical insights and strategies from the past workshops.

ARC team members will also share reflections on their international collaboration opportunities and contexts, highlighting how it has enhanced their intercultural competence and broadened their understanding of action research's relevance to their professional local communities, global regions, and future contributions to language education, particularly in today's world and continuously transforming societies, where addressing issues like social justice, peace and conflict, digitalization, and other emerging global issues, represent concerning challenges to be addressed through education.

Paper 1: An overview of the Action Research Communities Project in an International Context

Christine Lechner

This paper will give an overview of the context of a Council of Europe programme and provide insights into the challenges and success factors of an ongoing project initiated in 2015. It aims to serve as an introduction to examples and discussions on supporting teachers to set off on their own action research journeys at all levels of education, from Primary to Tertiary.

Doing action research often means convincing others of the value at different levels. Our first challenge was during the application phase when the original team members from Austria, Iceland, Italy, Romania, and the UK needed to explain the value of action research at their own institutions and at a European institution, the European Centre for Modern Languages. Secondly, during the life of the project, we have been challenged to show how Action Research Communities (ARC) for Languages is contributing to language learning against the backdrop of a strong focus on the development of teaching and testing materials. On a third level, when we started to go out into ECML member states to run action research workshops, we had the challenge of convincing participants at our workshops why action research is worth the time and the effort. This proved to be particularly complex in very different local and national contexts from northern Scandinavia to the Caucasus. The pandemic brought digital challenges and enormous learning opportunities; travel in times of global turmoil always brings uncertainties.

Paper 2: Communities of Practice and Teacher-Researcher Collaborations*Renata Zanin and Marjan Asgari*

This presentation will focus on the 'Communities of Practice' (CoPs) and their application in 'Teacher-Researcher Collaborations'. We emphasize that CoPs focus on improving professional practices and can operate without hierarchies or formal meetings. The goal is to encourage individuals to publicly share their experiences, thoughts, and actions rather than keeping them to themselves. We will draw on empirical research based on collaborations between the University and different educational institutions.

Paper 3: Engaging and supporting learners through action research approaches in the language classroom*Angela Gallagher-Brett*

This paper draws on evidence from the Action Research Communities for Language Teachers (ARC) project (Council of Europe, ECML) to show the potential for action research to engage and support students at different educational levels of their language learning journeys. Language teachers participating in ARC have brought a wide range of questions and concerns about their teaching practice, which predominantly focus on their students' language skills, especially speaking, motivation, intercultural knowledge, and the changing role of technology in the classroom. These concerns are broadly similar across diverse European countries and languages, not just English. The paper presents findings from action research projects developed, implemented, and evaluated by teachers, which demonstrate positive impacts on learners' motivation, confidence in speaking, vocabulary skills, and intercultural awareness in both southern and northern European contexts.

Finally, the paper concludes with recommendations for integrating action research more widely into language teaching environments, given its likely capacity for both encouraging learners and empowering teachers.

Paper 4: Pedagogical and Linguistic Research in Action Research - Reflections from Sarajevo*Nejla Kaladžisalihović and Larisa Kasumagić-Kafedžić*

The presentation addresses challenges that the participants of the ECML training titled "Enhancing Language Learning and Teaching through Action Research Communities for Language Teachers" (held in Sarajevo from October 4 to 5, 2024) defined as particularly relevant for promoting and applying action research methodology to create reflective classrooms. The results presented on the challenges the workshop participants were facing support collaborative efforts to improve language education by combining professional networks, domain-specific knowledge, and effective teaching methods. The teachers' reflections often highlight that involving students in discussions about significant issues and examining these topics together can effectively resolve initially challenging situations. Even more so, these reflections emphasise the value of scientific and linguistic research.

Although addressing these issues may require more time and more comprehensive research in language and culture(s) to define and frame emerging challenges as meaningful, language teachers need to be trained in reflective pedagogy and reflection principles through action-research-oriented projects. Furthermore, it is important to emphasise how the theoretical background offered during the training may enhance the participants' role as researchers in the whole process by focusing on domain-specific terminology, contemporary English, and recent technological advancements.

Paper 5: An Overview of the ARC ECML Webinar 'Exploring the potential of action research in language education: Opportunities and challenges in local and global contexts'
Jane O'Toole

This presentation provides an overview of the ARC ECML Webinar resource 'Exploring the potential of action research in language education: Opportunities and challenges in local and global contexts' which was created by the ARC T&C Team and presented by Jane O'Toole in May 2024. The presentation will firstly explore why action research is a potentially useful and transformative methodology for language educators, examining how action research can readily support language educators both in terms of practice in the classroom, and in terms of research. Opportunities and challenges that arise when engaging in action research as a language educator are also explored. Finally practical considerations in relation to how language educators may go about integrating action research into their practice are also presented which include suggested first steps, and a whistle-stop tour of international action research networks. The presentation also draws on the Irish language context which serves to demonstrate how action research can support language education in endangered or minority language settings. The presentation provides insights into the comprehensive ARC webinar which is available to view in full on the ECML website at <https://www.ecml.at/en/Resources/Webinars>

Keywords

action research communities for language teachers, addressing global issues through action research, intercultural competence, international collaboration, ECML, professional development

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Contribution ID: 90

Type: **Presentations**

The generation-friendly city. Storytelling Cafés about intergenerational encounters as participatory research method

The aim of the Sparkling Science project is to research the generational friendliness of a city using the city of Wiener Neustadt as an example. On the one hand, the focus is on intergenerational relationships and, on the other hand, on researching specific ways in which young people and older people interact with their social and spatial environment. Within the first working package we conducted six story telling cafés with students, trainees, teachers, elderly community dwelling persons and elderly nursing home residents living in or near the community of Wiener Neustadt. The storytelling cafés served a twofold purpose: to increase awareness about encounters with the other generation and to make experiences in intergenerational encounters. The storytelling cafés were tape recorded and transcribed. Initial findings of the thematic analysis show that there is a heartfelt wish to meet the other generation. At the same time there are images about the other generation that are rooted in very different experiences. Many places in the city that the younger participants describe as (not) good for them are equally describes as (not) good by the older participants. In many of the small stories told in the cafés, intergenerational encounters proved to be intercultural encounters. The findings are fed back into the action research cycle of the project "The generation-friendly city" and serve as basis for further participatory inquiries.

Keywords

generation friendliness, story-telling café, participatory health research

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 92

Type: **Presentations**

Envisioning Possible Futures: Photovoice as Participatory Action Research in Middle Schools

Current global crises confront us with interwoven challenges. Responding to these effectively requires the advancement of a social-ecological transformation which involves collectively rethinking our ways of living to co-create more just and sustainable futures. This, in turn, calls for a fundamental shift in educational practice towards approaches that are participatory and transformative.

Participatory action research provides a framework for realizing this shift. As a practice-oriented methodology, it aligns with the goals of transformative learning by embedding inquiry within real-world action and reflection. Within the classroom, this means creating spaces in which students explore their own positionalities, critically engage with the complexities of current challenges and experiment with alternative futures.

This contribution discusses the potential and challenges of participatory action research for a social-ecological transformation in the context of the interdisciplinary Photovoice research project EAT+CHANGE (10/2022–9/2025). Together with middle school students from Graz (Austria) we focused on questions of (un)sustainable food consumption in their everyday lives and explored change on a micro-level. The focus is on the conceptual foundation, the research design, insights into the project as well as challenges on the role of emotions in participatory action research projects.

Keywords

photovoice, PAR, transformative learning

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 94

Type: **Presentations**

The Reflective Loop: How Action Research Drives Formative Assessment Innovation

Formative assessment plays a crucial role in guiding students along their learning journey. Educators worldwide are increasingly adopting formative assessment strategies, which not only enhance student learning by highlighting knowledge and skill gaps but also contribute to teachers' professional growth. One effective approach to developing and evaluating these strategies is action research, which —like formative assessment—relies heavily on reflective practice. Together, they support the cultivation of an adaptive and responsive learning environment.

This systematic review examines peer-reviewed studies indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases that employ action research methodology for the development, implementation, and reflection of formative assessment tools. The review aims to compile practical reflection tools applicable from primary to higher education contexts, serving the needs of students, teachers, and teacher educators. Ultimately, the findings will inform the methodological framework of my thesis by identifying effective practices from existing research and highlighting potential directions for future inquiry.

Keywords

education research, formative assessment, action research, systematic review, assessment innovations, teacher professional development

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 95

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

What is the (p)AR the world needs today & tomorrow, considering our biggest local & global challenges?

We are currently editing a book entitled “a Modern Guide to Action Research”, which, in collaboration with our contributing authors, we have defined as:

An urgent guide to AR: What is the AR the world urgently needs today and tomorrow, considering the overwhelming challenges we face from climate change, violence and conflict, authoritarianism, deeply inequitable economic realities, patriarchal anti diversity movement, non-critical, professional education, etc.?

A boundary pushing guide to AR: How do our approaches take us beyond normal science, beyond professionalized ways of knowing, and towards knowledge democracy, so that we don't reproduce the status quo through palliative approaches?

A political, decolonizing guide to AR: How do our approaches engage adverse territories, including our own colonized bodies, institutions, worldviews and ways of knowing? How do we contribute to political and epistemic participation and justice?

An innovative guide to AR: How are we incorporating new approaches and working with other fields that bring new angles, methods and practices into action, research, praxis, interaction, de-sign, etc.?

A relational guide to AR: How do we center participation, co-creation and co-operation? How are we locating ourselves in the same picture we are trying to change? How do we reveal the fractal nature of 1st to 3rd person thinking, connecting our work to broader social movements and systems?

In short, a modern guide to AR is an urgent, boundary pushing, innovative, relational and politically aware guide to AR. In this workshop, we will use an adapted version of Critical Utopian Action Research (CUAR) to **1) critique, 2) envision (utopian lens), and 3) move towards action in defining the AR** the world needs moving forward, including AR education, drawing from a parallel project that Ciji and Alfredo (with consultation from Mary and Miriam and others) have been engaging in.

Keywords

epistemic justice, decolonizing methodology, praxis, critical utopian action research, action research education

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 96

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Shifting lenses and moving positions: experiments with ethics in participatory research for social justice

This workshop draws on the latest thinking and practices of the ethics co-laboratory (e-co-lab) approach developed by the ethics working group of the International Collaboration for Participatory Research. The e-co-lab is a collaborative working space and methodology for critical exploration of ethical issues in participatory research. The space is characterised by openness (sharing, risk-taking, experimenting - a 'brave space') and boundedness (protected time, a holding space for challenging experiences and emotions - a 'safe space'). The methodology is grounded in a participatory paradigm, valuing inclusivity, diversity and engagement in research for social transformation; and a conception of ethics as embodied, embedded and entangled in people, their everyday practices and the contexts in which the practices are situated.

Our methods focus on in-depth, slow exploration of real-life ethics cases from different perspectives and positions, taking account of spatial and social positioning. This involves case discussions, creative writing, dancing and participatory theatre.

This workshop will focus on visualising a case and its context, using drawing, collaging and other creative methods to view the case microscopically and telescopically, ultimately leading to a varifocal viewing of its ecosystem and the problematization, identification and mapping of its social justice strands. We may consider the question: 'What does this case and our viewing and analysis

of it tell us about the moral ecology of social justice in participatory research?'

Keywords:

participatory ethics, collaborative space, creative methods, social justice, moral ecology

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 97

Type: **Poster presentations**

A new publication! Action Research Communities for language teachers: Diverse European contexts – common educational challenges

Action Research Communities for language teachers (ARC) is a professional development pro-gramme funded by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) of the Council of Europe. ECML conducts initiatives to encourage excellence in language teaching. ARC is the only project focused on action research and ARC team members plan and facilitate workshops for language teachers across diverse European contexts. Evidence suggests that for language teachers, action research is associated with improvements in self-efficacy (Caraboglu, 2014) and the development of sustainable research skills (Edwards, 2021). The aims of ARC are therefore to make techniques for action research more widely available to language teachers and to establish a community of practice enabling them to innovate in their classroom teaching within that community.

In this poster presentation we share insights from a forthcoming book which disseminates language teachers' own stories of starting out on action research in 11 countries. The book draws attention to common challenges these teachers have experienced across very different educational environments, from teaching speaking to grappling with the demands of technological changes. It features the distinctive voices of educators from a wide range of languages working in primary, secondary and tertiary education. This poster specifically focuses on the action research experiences of language educators in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Ireland and Italy.

Keywords

language teaching, professional development, languages other than English, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary education

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 98

Type: **Presentations**

Impact of Learner Autonomy on Education Quality through Project-Based Learning in a Liberian High School

In fragile education systems like Liberia's in West Africa, where learners face frequent disruptions and limited resources, fostering learner autonomy is crucial to improving education quality. Although a growing body of literature exists on the role of digitalization in improving educational attainment, this study extends the discussion by examining how project-based learning (PBL), supported by accessible digital tools such as smartphones, can serve as a strategy for ICT integration into learning to foster autonomy and empower learners. Grounded in the theories of Holec and Perrenoud, this action research study followed a cycle of planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting on a thematic classroom project within a multicultural Liberian high school. The process involved engaging in iterative adjustment of the project design, documenting classroom dynamics, and guiding students to collaborate, investigate, and share knowledge using authentic materials. While this is a language class project, the approach is transferable across subjects to reflect on pressing social issues like climate change, discrimination, or inflation. Data from student feedback, collected through a project evaluation questionnaire, were analyzed to measure outcomes. Findings reveal that PBL is an effective strategy for integrating technology, promoting inclusion in the classroom, and developing 21st-century skills. Moreover, its participatory approach converts learning into visible and useful real-life skills (SDG 4) and contributes to building inclusive societies (SDG 16), while helping to transform limited cultural capital contexts by narrowing gaps in digitalization and social justice.

Keywords:

fragile education, project-based learning, learner autonomy, digital tools, education quality, social justice, action research

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 99

Type: **Presentations**

Action Research Facilitators: Their roles, perceived challenges and practices

Research into the roles, challenges and practices of teacher educators has been an established area of research for decades (Cochran-Smith 2003; Swennen & White 2021). Similarly, research projects have begun to focus on the important roles of language teacher educators (Yuan & Lee 2021) who are of central importance for foreign and second language teacher education in times of manifold challenges in society.

In many institutions of language teacher education action research has become an established element of teacher education, e.g. fostering the link between university courses and practicum phases. Recent research has started to examine the various roles, challenges and practices of action research facilitators (e.g., Burns 2019). First research results point to the complexity of action research facilitation on a cognitive, affective and discursive level. Furthermore, recent projects illustrate that the roles of action research facilitators are largely context-dependent (Yuan et al. 2024).

The presentation will introduce the results of two in-depth interviews exploring the complex roles and practices of two action research facilitators who teach university-level courses on action re-search.

The collected data was subjected to a thematic analysis to gain insights into the work of action re-search facilitators. The results of the study will be discussed in relation to implications for practice and for further research into action research facilitation.

Keywords:

teacher educators, action research facilitators, roles and practices

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 100

Type: **Presentations**

The ReaLiTea project –a response to challenging times in teaching

Teachers are lifelong learners in constant need of professional development to respond to today's and tomorrow's challenges in teaching and learning brought about by newest advances in the field of technology and society. A constructive response to these challenges calls for engagement in and with research throughout the teaching career. Teachers' research engagement has been found to promote reflection (Kostoulas et al., 2019) and higher self-efficacy beliefs (Eginli & Dikilitas 2022), both of which have a significant positive impact on teaching practices. However, studies have also shown that in-service teachers rarely engage in and with research (Sato & Loewen 2019). Research engagement requires a specific set of professional skills and knowledge subsumed under the term research literacy. It is developed through focused training in pre-service teacher education and constitutes a fundamental prerequisite for engaging in action research, formulating a theory of action and enhancing pedagogical understanding. Therefore, teacher education needs to emphasise the significance of research and research literacy to teaching and professional development.

The Erasmus+ project ReaLiTea foregrounds the connection between research and teaching in language teacher education. It aims to create teaching modules for the development of research literacy in language teacher education, a teacher educators' guide and a companion framework for research literacy.

Keywords:

language teacher education, research literacy, research engagement, professional development

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 101

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Caring is a Collective Matter! Experiencing Participatory Research and Practice through a Mini Future Workshop on Care

The care crisis is not a sectoral issue –it affects us all. And it should be addressed by all. This interactive workshop explores how participatory research and practice can contribute to reimagining care as a collective, democratic responsibility.

Drawing from the Austrian action research project “Care Räte/Care Councils as Models of Participatory Care Policy, we invite participants to experience a fast-paced Future Workshop –a method that has been used to bring together citizens, care workers, relatives, local politicians and professionals in so-called Care Councils. These councils are local spaces of co-creation, aimed at strengthening inclusive decision-making and collective solution-building around pressing care issues.

Rather than simulating a council, we embody its spirit: Participants identify real-life care challenges, imagine alternative futures, and reflect on first steps towards action. In doing so, they engage with the multiple layers of care governance –combining civil society engagement, local political responsibility and professional expertise.

The workshop demonstrates how participatory infrastructures like Care Councils can support democracy from below –by enabling shared responsibility, voice, and negotiation in one of the most pressing societal questions of our time: How do we care – and who decides?

We conclude with reflections on the transformative role of participatory action research in building caring communities and care-informed democracies.

Keywords:

care crisis, caring communities, care councils, citizen participation

Presenting Author

Michaela Moser

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Contribution ID: 103

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Building the living environment together: sense of community, shared ownership and joint decision making

In all neighbourhoods and local areas, there are groups of residents who work together to improve the living environment. From neighbourly help to shared facilities and housing cooperatives, the initiatives respond to current social issues such as loneliness, sustainability and the need for more connectedness. But how do these groups work in praxis? And what does this require from governments, professionals and institutions in relation to residents? This workshop is two-folded and hosted by two Universities of Applied Sciences. In the first part (45 min), we share insights from research projects that explore these questions.

1) Research at Hochschule Fulda focuses on shared and communal living as a possible future model. It explores how collective housing forms take shape in practice, how the social and spatial environment influences them, and which organizational forms can support sustainable housing communities (Fenster 2004; Honneth 1995; Brückner, 2010).

1) In Almere (Netherlands), we examined two citizen initiatives: residents unite for the sake of 'precaution' and a housing cooperative. Despite their differences, both initiatives share a vision: a pleasant living environment is created through involvement and care for each other.

The common essence: the dynamics within communities and their interaction with the surrounding living environment. We are curious to hear about other projects in this field. In the second part (45 min) we host an interactive session, in which we will use the method of Lego Serious Play, we address the concepts of Fensters comfort, belonging and commitment in their link to joint decision-making processes as usually pursued in action research. We attempt to invite the views and experiences of the workshop participants in order to think about community building which contains these concepts.

Finally, we are looking forward to exploring whether there is potential for collaboration in a new international research project!

Keywords

housing, communal living, neighbourhood, citizen initiative, sense of community, shared ownership, joint decision making, social innovations

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 104

Type: **Presentations**

Integrating environmental education into existing courses for pre-service teachers: Teacher educators' practices based on a loose solidarity and learning community

In promoting teacher education for environmental education (EE), Cheongju National University of Education in South Korea has been integrating it into existing courses since 2022, supported by the Korean Ministry of Environment. The program is incorporated into various elementary school subjects such as Korean language, mathematics, social studies, science, and practical arts, along with required subjects in pre-service teacher education. In each course, students participate in activities like selecting and reading books related to environmental education, exploring local environmental issues, proposing policies to combat climate change, and visiting local communities such as zoos or upcycling centers. These activities help students develop environmental literacy and build competencies in EE. The project, originally not intended as an action research initiative, evolved over four years to include action research features. At first, integrating environmental education into existing courses required minimal deliberation on contents, pedagogy, and levels of integration. As the project progressed, teacher educators created and refined lesson plans, holding regular meetings to enhance content and teaching methods. Professional learning communities were also established, enabling faculty members to share teaching strategies and learn from each other. This collaborative process resulted in a deeper integration of environmental education topics and pedagogies in the program. The case demonstrates the effectiveness of action research, highlighting how collaborative planning, implementation, and reflection can support the integration of environmental education into pre-service teacher education. Moreover, loose solidarity and mutual learning through professional learning communities can significantly enhance the development of both faculty and students.

Keywords

environmental education, pre-service teacher, teacher educator, professional learning community

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 107

Type: **Presentations**

Trauma-informed CBPR with refugee communities: The role of cultural brokers and community leaders in creating culturally safe spaces

This presentation will share our experiences of working together with cultural brokers and community leaders to engage Syrian refugee communities in conversations about psychosocial adaptation. We draw on a 3-year community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) project in Canada, which sought to: a) examine the psychosocial adaptation needs and challenges of different Syrian groups, and b) understand the process of developing and implementing community learning for empowerment groups (CLEGs; see Yohani et al. 2023). Focus groups were conducted with cultural brokers and leaders reflecting on their experiences facilitating community learning for empowerment groups and supporting community action. We draw on the focus groups findings and highlight the multiple roles cultural brokers can take in action research with refugee and migrant communities. We outline five roles for cultural brokers. These included: a) liaising with community on an ongoing basis and identifying community leaders; b) offering cultural guidance to the research team and contributing to the creation of culturally safe community research spaces; c) co-facilitating community conversations; d) mediating between the community, community leaders and/or research team to resolve tensions; and e) catalysing for change and co-mobilizing findings. We end with critical considerations for researchers who wish to engage with cultural brokers in action research and discuss contributions to literature on cultural safety and trauma-informed practice in participatory action research.

Keywords

inclusion, action research, early years

Presenting Author

Rebecca Georgis

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Contribution ID: 108

Type: **Poster presentations**

'When inclusion works': Collaborating to identify barriers and solutions for families of children with SEND turned away from early learning and care

This poster presentation will share findings from a collaborative participatory action research (PAR) project involving Alton Community Playschool (ACP) and researchers at the University of Exeter. ACP serves a resource-limited area of the borough of Wandsworth, London. This project emerged in response to challenges facing the early years sector in supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) amidst continuing sector challenges related to limited funding, spaces, and training support. Amidst this context, this project aimed to: a) Make visible the realities of families with young children with SEND and the challenges they experience in accessing early years supports; and b) Document how a nursery supports these families, capturing community solutions that have the potential to inform wider practices for inclusion of families with complex needs. This poster will share the initial findings from this PAR project, which involved interviews with five mothers with children with SEND and 5 professionals from the nursery. The poster will also share how the partners are mobilising the findings to inform wider actions. Lastly, we share reflections on this collaborative work, the process of working together with the nursery and families, the emotional space researchers can find themselves in and how we navigated tensions and challenges in mobilising findings to inform action.

Keywords

inclusion, action research, early years

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 112

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Methods to engage youth in action research: An experiential workshop

In regard to ecological, economic, and social challenges, youth are often portrayed as victims of these adult problems. As experienced youth participatory action research (YPAR) scholars and practitioners from Iceland, the UK, and the United States, we see this as short-sided. Our research indicates that youth have valuable lived experience about real-world problems. They should be active partners in examining the effects of social issues and creation of policy solutions. YPAR provides a concrete way to support this shift by linking critical inquiry with meaningful youth–adult collaboration.

But what exactly does YPAR involve and feel like as a participant? We hope to answer both those questions through an interactive workshop featuring key principles and practices of YPAR. By focusing on practical approaches, we highlight how YPAR can strengthen young people’s participation in shaping both their natural and social environment.

Our learning outcomes tie directly to conference themes around social problems and action research-generated solutions. Participants will:

Hear from scholars and practitioners about what YPAR is

Leave with a praxis understanding linking YPAR theory with discrete activities

Consider the challenges in shifting from status quo educational offerings to participatory practices Collaborate with the authors in future work

Participants will actively engage in a three-step YPAR-inspired cycle: 1) work creatively with a real issue (using photos, drawings, etc); 2) share, discover, and unpack meaning through dialogue; and 3) collaboratively generate possible solutions or next steps for action and inquiry. Participants are encouraged to bring with them a burning issue that they would like to unpack and take further into the YPAR process.

With insights drawn from diverse contexts in Iceland, Britain, and the United States, the workshop will highlight both opportunities and tensions in youth–adult research partnerships, and extend an invitation for continued collaboration beyond the conference.

Keywords

YPAR, children’s and youth participation, action research methods, collaborative spaces

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Contribution ID: 113

Type: **Symposia**

Challenging Power in Participatory Research. A transdisciplinary workshop-symposium on power, ethics and inclusion in community-based research

A transdisciplinary workshop-symposium on power, ethics and inclusion in community-based re-search

Participatory research aims to democratize knowledge production. Yet even with critical reflection and sincere intentions, academic actors often remain entangled in the very power structures they seek to challenge. In this transdisciplinary workshop-symposium, we speak from our positions as university-based researchers, aware that we represent only one side of the participatory equation. This session is thus both a space of inquiry and a moment of discomfort: a self-critical reflection on our roles, responsibilities, and the structural barriers to truly shared authorship, visibility, and participation in academic spaces. It invites us to ask not only how power operates in participatory research, but how it might be more radically shared, dismantled, or reimagined.

The session brings together three researchers from Austria and Germany working across social work, education, theatre, and inclusion. Drawing on concrete experiences and projects, we explore how power operates and how it might be shared more equitably. Michaela Moser (St. Pölten UAS) reflects on epistemic injustice and the need to open research to plural knowledge cultures. Michael Wrentschur (University of Graz and InterACT) shows how participatory theatre methods can reveal and transform power relations. Annette Korntheuer (Munich University of Applied Sciences) shares practical tools for “doing ethics” in transdisciplinary projects. Participants will engage in forum theatre and group work on ethical dilemmas, while reflecting on structural questions: How can co-researchers be meaningfully included in academic spaces? And how can we, as academics, move beyond rhetorical inclusion and take concrete steps to share or relinquish power?

This session blends workshop and symposium formats to create a space for academic and non-academic actors to explore more just ways of doing research with people.

Keywords

participatory, research power relations, epistemic justice, inclusion, ethics

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 114

Type: **Presentations**

Co-creating and implementing a One Health Curriculum in Agricultural Education

Background –Global health threats arise at the intersection of agriculture, environment and society. One Health (OHHLEP et al., 2022) provides a systems approach to these challenges. Integrating One Health into vocational education through interdisciplinary, real-world learning is increasingly important (Hobusch, Michenthaler & Salzmann-Schojer, 2023; Hobusch et al., 2025). **Purpose** –This study examines how the One Health (OH) framework can be integrated into Austrian agricultural education from diverse perspectives and identifies factors and barriers to implementation in vocational practice and pedagogy.

Design / Methods –As part of a participatory action research project at the Upper Secondary Agri-cultural College Pitzelstätten, 70 prospective teachers with practitioner backgrounds collaborated under the guidance of 7 practising teachers. Together, they developed a modular OH curriculum through thematic concept mapping, curriculum prototyping, RE-AIM feasibility/applicability assessments (Reach, Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation, Maintenance) and co-creation workshops. Additional data collection included practitioners' future visions to identify attitudes, values, influencing factors and barriers to a OH transformation in agricultural and food production practices. Qualitative data were analysed using Kuckartz's content analysis, combining structuring and type-building. Quantitative data was descriptively analysed by SPSS.

Results –Six curriculum modules were developed (e.g. antimicrobial resistance, policy and law, future food systems). RE-AIM results show tensions between innovative goals and feasibility, including curriculum overload, gaps in systems thinking and variable teacher readiness. Proposed solutions include smaller learning groups, project-based fieldwork, portfolio assessment and targeted teacher training.

Conclusions –The participation of prospective teachers proved highly valuable, fostering engagement and motivation. Barriers in school practice can be addressed through institutional, structural/didactic adjustments. Integrating values, attitudes and key competencies within a holistic approach is essential, as is embedding professional practice through hands-on teaching, collaboration with practitioners, teaching influencing factors and minimizing barriers, to ensure effective transformation.

Keywords

One Health Education, vocational agricultural curriculum, PAR, RE-AIM, transformation

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 116

Type: **Presentations**

Stepping Back to Move Forward: Moral Repair and Shared Understanding in Participatory Action Research

To increase insight in health inequalities we explored how syndemic vulnerabilities shape everyday life in a disadvantaged area in The Netherlands. As part of an ongoing PAR project, co-researchers designed a new community initiative. However, it failed to gain traction due to trust issues. While the project drew on a 'building community resilience' model (Ellis & Dietz, 2017) and aimed to build on 'shared understanding' to enable action, persistent challenges required a critical shift in direction. It became evident that before any action could emerge, previously (com-promised) collaborations needed to be addressed. Across four focus groups (N=6-12) and two multi stakeholder policy labs (N=35), all participants shared past experiences: being overlooked, misunderstood or wrongly blamed. Yet, the sessions also revealed moments of recognition and connection. Our preliminary analysis showed that shared understanding is not a fixed milestone, but a fragile, relational condition. A key shift occurred when the focus moved from explanation to inquiry, not defending positions, but seeking to understand others' realities. These dialogical moments created space for what Walker (2006) describes as moral repair: the recognition of harm and space for rebuilding moral relationships. In this PAR project we had to step back in order to move forward. Only by first opening a space for compromised relationships through moral understanding, the groundwork for renewed shared understanding and action was laid. In this presentation we share and discuss our experiences and reflections on stepping back to move forward in PAR.

Keywords

PAR, collective action, co-researchers, moral understanding

Presenting Author

Marieke Breed

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Contribution ID: 117

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Metaphors of Mistrust: A Creative Approach to Conflict in PAR

In our PAR project addressing health inequalities in a Dutch neighborhood, collaborations between residents, professionals and civil servants repeatedly stagnated. Earlier conflicts and failed initiatives had left behind hurt and mistrust, causing people to withdraw whenever new friction emerged—reinforcing a cycle in which every new effort risked reopening old wounds.

To explore these sensitive dynamics, we developed a method based on Wonderlab (Hansen, 2021)

where participants transform specific conflict moments into fairytales. We worked with homogeneous stakeholder groups (residents, professionals, and civil servants separately) each creating their own fairytales. This fantasy approach lets people explore painful experiences from a safe distance. Through metaphor, participants could finally express things that had remained unspoken. The fairytales became a starting point for renewed collaboration, as professionals and civil servants showed new willingness to work from residents' perspectives, doing justice to their lived experience and fostering moral repair.

In this workshop, participants will experience the method firsthand. Working in small groups, they will transform difficult moments from their PAR projects into fairytales through Socratic questioning and guided storytelling. We will reflect on how fantasizing can open deeper exploration of moments of conflict and what they reveal about collaborations.

Keywords

PAR, health inequalities, conflict transformation, metaphors, storytelling, Wonder Lab, fairy tales

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 118

Type: **Presentations**

Informing Health Equity Considerations in Public Health and Clinical Guideline Development Frameworks through Theories of Social Justice and Participatory Approaches

Public health and clinical guidelines strongly influence the decisions of practitioners and policymakers, and thus shape health inequities across populations and individuals. Yet, operationalizing health equity within guideline development remains conceptually and methodologically challenging. This presentation outlines a proposed research project that seeks to (1) examine the potential of normative theories of justice to inform how health equity is defined and used in guideline development frameworks, and (2) explore the role of participatory action research in including the voices of affected populations. Two frameworks will serve as case studies: GRADE (Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluation) is a widely used tool for assessing the certainty of evidence and drafting recommendations. WHO-Integrate was developed in line with the World Health Organization's norms and values to ensure that equity, human rights, and other societal considerations are core to decision-making. These frameworks are central to how guidelines are produced and applied, and their influence extends beyond technical recommendations: they shape clinical practice, resource allocation, and policy priorities. Examining them therefore provides critical insights into how health equity is currently considered in evidence-based decision-making. The project will proceed in two phases: first, concepts of health equity will be identified and compared with key dimensions of social justice in global health literature. Second, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with patients who have previously taken part in participatory approaches during guideline development. Findings will be synthesized in a normative analysis to critically reflect on how health equity is currently addressed in guideline development. By combining philosophical theories of justice with the lived experiences of patients, the project aims to develop a richer understanding of what health equity entails in theory and practice, and how it can be more effectively operationalized.

Keywords

health equity, guideline development, normative theories of justice, just decision-making

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 119

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Navigating uncertainty

Societies worldwide and even locally are increasingly polarized, with contradictions and beliefs becoming more entrenched. This division often leads to heightened conflict and a decreased will-ingness to cooperate, making challenges harder to address. Participatory action research (PAR) offers a solution by empowering participants to transform unjust aspects of their social contexts, fostering individual and collective flourishing. PAR emphasizes transformative learning and ac-tion, where change is both facilitated and studied through communicative action. This process is crucial for shifting values and beliefs. Unlike traditional research, action researchers actively en-gage with participants, working collaboratively throughout the change process and encouraging involvement in the research itself. Facilitating relational connectedness is a skilled, intentional act designed to foster value and perspective transformations across individuals, groups, and con-texts. However, this process is not aimed at facilitator growth but at the participants' transformation. Facilitators face constant challenges due to the ongoing influences on relationships, including intrapersonal, interpersonal, and contextual factors. Being an effective facilitator requires navigating uncertainty and complexity. This workshop will explore researchers' experiences in facilitating relational connectedness while fostering professional identity and reciprocity in action research. Through Musework—creative, artistic activities designed to stimulate personal growth and expression—we aim to create a space for new reflective practices. This will help participants see differently, listen more deeply, and uncover fresh perspectives on relational dynamics in action research.

Keywords

facilitator's growth, navigating uncertainty, transformative learning and action, relational correctedness, communicative action, muse work

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 120

Type: **Poster presentations**

Conceptual Reflection of Participatory Approaches in the GRADE Framework to Promote Health Equity

The importance of incorporating health equity into clinical and public health guideline development frameworks is widely acknowledged. My review of related documents showed that health equity is predominantly conceptualized in terms of structural injustice, emphasizing the need to address marginalized populations in consequence particularly. This also applies to the GRADE (Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluation) approach, a method for rating the certainty of evidence for guidelines, where patient perspectives are included through considering “values and preferences” of “typical patients”, empirically identified through participatory approaches. Thereby, a greater variability in “values and preferences” is more likely to lead to a weaker recommendation. It remains unclear how this approach adequately reflects the diversity of affected populations. This raises ethical concerns, particularly regarding the potential exclusion of marginalized groups. From a perspective of a physician, it may be challenging to determine whether the individual patient during the consultation can be considered “typical” in the sense intended by the framework, or whether their “values and preferences” align with those empirically identified. These observations lead me to question whether the current application of the GRADE framework truly aligns with its stated commitment to advance health equity. I argue that a conceptual reflection on the criteria could be a valuable opportunity to enhance the potential for promoting health equity.

Keywords

health equity, guideline development, diversity, structural injustice

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 122

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

How does knowledge change when machines (co)decide

A future in which machines make decisions independently or with human support seems within reach. Perhaps we are already living in this future—one in which machines, sometimes more, sometimes less visibly, (co)shape decision-making processes. What does this mean for our understanding of knowledge? This is the question we explore as practitioner-researchers at the Oberstufen-Kolleg Bielefeld, an experimental school in North Rhine-Westphalia. As teachers embedded in the everyday life of the school, we also engage in research on instructional development.

We have designed a workshop for teachers and students that makes the functioning of a categorizing network tangible through analog and enactive methods. We ask how knowledge and understanding change when automated decision-making systems are used on a large scale—either independently or with humans in the loop. The goal of the workshop is to critically reflect on processes of societal change.

From the perspective of action research, we are particularly concerned with the question: How can educational processes be designed to be participatory and enactive? Our workshop actively involves participants and allows them to experience our methodological approach first-hand. It concludes with a meta-reflection on possible ways to deepen and further develop such formats. decision-making systems are used on a large scale—either independently or with humans in the loop. The goal of the workshop is to critically reflect on processes of societal change.

From the perspective of action research, we are particularly concerned with the question: How can educational processes be designed to be participatory and enactive? Our workshop actively involves participants and allows them to experience our methodological approach first-hand. It concludes with a meta-reflection on possible ways to deepen and further develop such formats.

Keywords

categorizing AI models, knowledge and understanding, action research, societal change, meta reflection, enactive methods

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 123

Type: **Presentations**

Co-Creating a Community-Driven Digital Health Promotional Intervention in a Socio-economically Vulnerable Neighbourhood

This presentation will share insights from a participatory digital health promotion initiative in Lindängen, Malmö, where residents are co-developing a mobile based digital tool to promote oral health and diet. The project brings together Design Thinking and Participatory Action Research to address challenges of digitalisation in a socially and economically disadvantaged neighbourhood. Although these approaches come from different fields, they share key features. Both are iterative, collaborative, and grounded in local contexts. They prioritise the knowledge and experiences of those most affected. In this project, they support a process where residents are not just participants but co-creators of digital solutions. Design Thinking has helped structure the process from identifying needs to generating ideas and developing prototypes. Participatory Action Research has kept the work rooted in the lived experiences of residents, especially women from families with young children.

Through photo voice workshops and community mapping, participants identified barriers to oral health including limited access to culturally tailored care, language and literacy challenges, and difficulty understanding preventive practices. Diet also emerged as a concern, especially the lack of accessible, culturally relevant dietary information. These insights led to materials such as multilingual hygiene tips, community made brushing videos, and diet related content. Drawing on Freire's concept of conscientisation, participants reflected critically on their everyday realities, questioned assumptions, and identified knowledge gaps. In dialogues with the women, oral health is no longer discussed as a set of instructions from the dentist, but as part of a broader conversation about access, hygiene routines and everyday struggles. This awareness is shaping the digital tool as a space where knowledge is built collectively, grounded in lived experience and shaped by community priorities.

This presentation will also reflect on practical challenges such as time, facilitation, and sustainability, and what it can teach about inclusive digital health development.

Keywords

digitalisation, oral health, diet, PAR, design thinking, community-based research

Presenting Authors

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Contribution ID: 124

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Expanding participatory Action Research (p)AR Praxis through Community Power & Service Design

In this session, we will explore how Service Design and Community Power each offer unique lenses and practices to expand (p)AR praxis towards epistemic justice and knowledge.

How can Service Design & Action Research help people co-create and move to action with their own knowledge?

Like participatory forms of Action Research (p)AR, Service Design (SD) is a field that takes a holistic, research based, participatory and iterative approach to leveraging people's knowledge to design relevant services that address their needs. SD and AR—two fields that have engaged in minimal dialogue—have much to gain from each other. By inviting primary stakeholders to be full co-researchers in the AR team, SD “co-creation” can benefit from AR's practices of deep participation and co-control. AR can benefit from SD's use of action as a research method, through prototypes and boundary objects that help value and make visible the experiences and knowledge that people bring to the table. In this session, we will explore synergies and differences between the two practices.

Community Power: Cultivating belonging through Participatory Knowledge Praxis
Since July 2023, we have been engaging in a community power (CP) learning exchange with CP groups, allies and practitioners from the USA, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Ghana, Uruguay and Uganda. Although the connections between CP and PAR have been ever-present in our interactions, we have not overtly framed our CP work as PAR, nor have we worked as a group to explore how these worlds might overtly strengthen each other. In this session we will explore what might be gained by framing CP as PAR and making CP more central to PAR.

We will share aspects of our experiences with each topic, leaving time at the end to create a practical framework for incorporating Service Design and Community Power into (p)AR processes.

Keywords

community power, service design, prototyping, co-design, co-research, participation

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Contribution ID: 125

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Networks and Action Research

Social networks can be understood as organizational attempts to shape cooperation in the differential fields of structure and process, specification and freedom, voluntariness and commitment and practice and research. According to Per Dalin, functions of networks especially in the field of education include an information function (exchange of relevant knowledge), a learning function (reciprocal learning and competence development), a political function (assertion of concerns) and a psychological function (strengthening of individuals).

Starting from insights into networks in which the workshop leaders have been active for many years, in this workshop will reflect together with the participants on how action research can support network development and network dynamics. Participants will be invited to join discussions about success factors as well as challenges and obstacles that may occur and how these may be overcome.

Keywords

networks, voluntariness and commitment, reciprocal learning, knowledge exchange, dynamics

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Contribution ID: 126

Type: **Presentations**

Bioblitzing in the Digital Age - Are Biologists Losing Their Roots or Gaining New Wings?

It is a common joke that biologists studying different taxonomic groups can be distinguished by their specific behaviors, temporal activity patterns, and postures. A Bioblitz, (also known as "GEO-Day of Biodiversity") provides an excellent opportunity to observe these differences. During a Bioblitz, biologists with various specializations have 24 hours to compile a comprehensive inventory of species in a given area. Due to its active and interventionist approach, a Bioblitz can certainly be classified as action research.

In this study, we observe and discuss how the behavior of different specialists is or will be influenced or transformed by the use of modern technologies. This is achieved through ethnographic observation and interdisciplinary analysis, using case studies from Bioblitz events conducted in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Nockberge, the Hohe Tauern National Park, and the UNESCO Geopark Karawanken.

By examining the interplay between traditional fieldwork methods and modern technologies, we aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of how scientific practices adapt to technological innovation in the context of recording and monitoring biodiversity.

Keywords

biodiversity, citizen sciences, protected areas, conservation technologies

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Contribution ID: 127

Type: **Poster presentations**

Iterative development of course modules for the culturally sensitive training and further education of teachers in the field of sustainability-related STEM education

Transformative education, which aims to develop design skills for the development of a sustainable society, cannot be limited to conveying normative recommendations for action. According to the principles of action research, it is much more important to create a basis for responsible action, taking into account different perspectives in one's own living environment. Diversity of perspectives, an approach geared towards individual living conditions and participation in the design of local solutions are central components of science education geared towards developing personal and social relevance.

In the Erasmus+ project PRESS, didactics experts from six countries developed joint modules for initial and further teacher training, which were adapted to the respective needs on the basis of common core elements and concretized in an action research based iterative process for implementation in the respective national teacher training.

One focus in the development process were the importance of networks that support schools and teacher education institutions in the development of meaningful and relevant teaching in science and sustainability and an introduction to action research as a method of reflective teaching practice.

The poster presentation will outline the structure, process and findings of the PRESS project.

Keywords

design skills, sustainable society, teacher education, networks

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Contribution ID: 128

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Group Level Assessment: a democratic and critical facilitation approach that allows for, and values, the messiness of participatory action research

This workshop offers an introduction to, and engagement in, Group Level Assessment (GLA). GLA is a group activity in which “timely and valid data are collaboratively generated and interactively evaluated with relevant stakeholders leading to the development of participant-driven data and relevant action plans” (Vaughn & Lohmueller, 2014:336). GLA opens up spaces for those involved to articulate what they think and know, and to use that to move from what is known to what can be known, and what might be done.

Action research (AR) and participatory action research (PAR) are complex, recursive, intertwined processes that defy neat compartmentalising of their parts. Developing questions, generating and analysing data, disseminating findings, and the learning that is vital to this practical form of re-search, do not occur in a neat, preplanned forms but emerge at any, or many, points in our research. Facilitating activities that allow for the purposeful messiness of AR, and that generate spaces for shared agency, can seem daunting. GLA offers facilitators structure whilst at the same time embracing and complimenting the knotted processes that are action research.

Thanks go to Prof Kristen Kalsem, University of Cincinnati, for introducing me to GLA. Vaughn, L M, & Lohmueller, M (2014). Calling All Stakeholders: Group-Level Assessment (GLA) – A Qualitative and Participatory Method for Large Groups. *Evaluation Review*, 38(4), 336-355. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0193841X14544903>

Keywords

PAR, group level assessment, purposeful messiness, methods: collaborative learning

Presenting Author

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Contribution ID: 129

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

The University as an Engine for Social Transformation: Empowering Local Initiatives to Become Reflective Communities

The Challenge: Educational inequality remains a significant and ongoing concern in our societies. Tackling this complex “wicked problem” requires innovative and systemic models that can foster resilience, promote adaptability, and involve the wider community in working towards meaningful social change.

Our Initiative: UP! (Unlimited Potential!) started as a practical response to educational inequality, training volunteers—secondary school students and adults—to provide effective, free tutoring for children in need. To broaden this impact, we are now applying Educational Design Research (EDR) to develop a network of self-sustaining local hubs. Central to this are new university-developed ‘train-the-trainer’ and ‘train-the-leader’ courses, open to participants from all three sectors (education, business, and civil society). These hubs are interconnected through a digital network that uses AI support to enhance human capacities, freeing up time for mentoring and deep reflection. These programmes aim to empower local communities to become reflective practitioners who evaluate and improve their own community-based initiatives.

Workshop Focus: Co-Designing University-Led Transformation: This engaging workshop invites participants to explore how universities can lead such transformative efforts. Together, we will address the following questions to refine the concept:

- How can we most effectively design a “Train-the-Leader” course that integrates leadership expertise from various sectors such as education, the business world, and civil society?
 - What are effective methods to establish systematic and accessible reflection processes for different groups involved, and how can AI tools that serve as thinking partners support these efforts?
- Intended Outcomes & Contribution:** We will present the UP! concept and its expansion, aiming to collaboratively discuss and further develop its core principles and features. By sharing knowledge and fostering collaborative action, we believe it is possible to collectively enhance local capacities for sustainable educational development, ultimately resulting in more equitable societies that function well together.

Keywords

health, partnership, equity, action, capacity building, community

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Contribution ID: 130

Type: **Presentations**

Gaia Gartenberg: Co-Creating a Space of Diversity and Biodiversity in a Garden for and by Women*

As part of the Graz case study 'Bio-/Diverse Edible City' in the Horizon Europe project PLANET4B –which examined biodiversity-related decision-making and its links to intersectionality –we explored how to involve citizens not typically engaged in environmental issues in the co-creation of urban (edible) green spaces, making biodiversity more tangible and relevant to them.

The action-oriented research process created two interconnected learning spaces: one at the institutional level, through developing partnerships between civil society actors and municipal departments; the other at the citizens level, where a diverse group of women* collaboratively designed and built the garden. Creative and participatory methods –such as community mapping, storytelling, and experience-strolls –supported shared reflection on the interplay of social and biological diversity.

The garden became both a meaningful place for the group and a catalyst for further initiatives, including a second open-access garden and two orchards –one with traditional, one with climate-resilient varieties.

This presentation shares methodological insights into how action research enabled capacity building, reflexivity, and agency, while navigating institutional constraints related to co-creating (edible) green spaces.

Keywords

edible city, biodiversity, access to green, co-creation, intersectionality

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Contribution ID: 132

Type: **Presentations**

From knowledge to know-how - Digital knowledge management in the process of conceptualization, practice and adaptation of courses for digital competences for refugees.

Global crises such as climate change and wars drive rising refugee movements. In 2024, 123.2 million people worldwide were displaced (UNHCR, 2025), posing challenges for host countries. Although asylum applications in Germany have declined slightly compared to the previous year, the need for integration measures persists (BAMF, 2025). Simultaneously, the state and federal governments promote support services in cases of refugees' voluntary return (Schneider & Kreienbrink, 2010, S. 94). Our nationally and EU-funded project addresses this group and offers face-to-face and online courses (based on the DigComp framework (Vuorikari et al., 2022) to enhance refugees' digital skills. The project aims to promote professional self-determination and global employability of participants and builds a bridge between educational research and practice.

The **study focuses** on knowledge management of team members who develop and those delivering the course on site. Analysing this action research process, two dimensions are distinguished:

1. Form of the knowledge management (process).
2. Content adaptation through iterative creation and testing of teaching materials (content).

This lays the groundwork for two questions: 1. How can knowledge management within inter-disciplinary teams transform conceptual knowledge into project members applicable know-how?

1. Which content and structure adjustments of the courses improve alignment with participants' needs?

Preliminary findings indicate that iterative feedback loops between theory and practice may improve results of processes or products (Baker et al., 2022). The team –consisting of researchers and trainers with different professional backgrounds –systematically reflects on their knowledge management. Key insights of the joint self-reflection are discussed in the presentation.

The **study results** culminate in a model for successful knowledge management conditions in our participatory action research project. An outlook presents planned research extensions involving participants in course conceptualization. That way assumptions about participant needs can be identified (Newman, 2000) and corrected through participants' feedback.

Keywords

digital competence, knowledge transfer process, PAR, knowledge management, feedback loops, practice-theory interaction, refugees, employability

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Contribution ID: 133

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Using action research to develop rehabilitation opportunities for foreign national prisoners in UK custody

A team of prison educators used action research in UK 'foreign nationals'(FN)* prisons to provide equity of access to courses/prison work when catering assessments are in English. We trialed an AI-powered translation tool to create opportunities for FN prisoners by creating learning materials in prisoners' first languages. This action research helped us collectively evaluate AI as a way to support prison learning; to help FN prisoners have more fulfilling prison lives; and to prepare for life after prison.

Based on prisoners' and staff's experiences of our interventions, we would like to share some of our challenges and opportunities when attempting educational action research in prison. We wish to focus on these key questions within the practical workshop session:

1. How might we use what we have learned from the participating prisoners'and prison educators' experiences?
1. What approaches will maximise the future participation of FN prisoners in helping us evaluate and develop our work with them?
1. To what extent can AI create opportunities for teachers and learners to engage in more critical thinking?
2. To what extent are prison education and non-custodial forms of adult education similar and different for learners and their educators? We hope that workshop participants can provide insights to help us progress our thinking and our practice.

*FN prisoners do not have indefinite leave to remain in the UK + may be repatriated to their home nations after release.

Keywords

prison education, English for Speakers of Other Languages, AI, adult learning, vocational learning, action research

Presenting Author

Claire Cullinan

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Contribution ID: 135

Type: **Workshops and open formats**

Getting Your Action Research Published in Educational Action Research Journal and beyond

The Educational Action Research Journal (EARJ) is a peer-reviewed academic journal which is concerned with exploring the learning that is generated between research and practice in a wide range of professional settings. In this session, we consider what EARJ editors are looking for from action research submissions and we offer guidance which will hopefully steer writers towards publication.

We hope those joining the session will be helped to identify an appropriate space for their potential writing whether it be in the Conference Bulletin, CARN Praxis or the EAR Journal itself.

All are welcome and CARN editors will be happy to discuss potential sites of publication with participants

See also:

Bulletins: <https://www.carn.org.uk/resources/carn-bulletins/> CARN Praxis:
<https://carnpraxis.org/>

EARJ:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=react0>

Keywords

publishing, reporting, new writers

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