

Response to ‘Analysing and understanding research findings: practitioner / researcher interaction’

This is an interesting article using an innovative approach to presenting research to students on a professional development course. The follow up questions ask: What have I tried? Well I have a different but related story.....

Working as a nursery teacher for several years, I used a mixture of qualitative case study and action research to develop my understanding of early years education as part of a masters degree. I then went into FE and later HE and I am now lecturing at Bradford College as the course tutor for a BA(Hons) Early Childhood Studies Level 3 top-up degree. I have used the teaching of practitioner research as the main driving force behind the course, empowering students to draw on their professional and personal experience with a newly developed level of data collection, analysis and presentation which they have not experienced before.

This has involved me in researching my own teaching of practitioner research and sharing the findings with the students. The first project I did as regards this was a piece of action research on my teaching of action research! I reported in the same format as that asked of students. This was then followed a few years later by a piece of research looking into developing a greater understanding of supporting student information skills, in particularly including electronic sources and their integration of this secondary data with primary data. This research led to a new module for this year titled ‘Developing Theoretical Sensitivity Including the Use of Electronic Resources’.

I am currently carrying out an investigation, which I am sharing with the students as they do their own research, on making practitioner research and professional development more practical. At the same time, I want to introduce a new module from next academic year on disseminating research – this will be an option for students on the course or available for past students, enabling them to gain accreditation towards a masters programme. The aim is that students will develop more than just the skill of reporting in traditional academic dissertation format and learn to disseminate their research in more user-friendly and appropriate ways.

Entwistle *et al.* (2000) use an approach that involves giving ten selected articles to students as part of a process of supporting them in reflecting on the conceptions and beliefs about ‘good teaching’. I am interested in any sources that might help me to develop practical approaches to practitioner research and research dissemination.

Has anyone out there any other suggestions for Simon? If so, please contact j.moyles@ntlworld.com

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