



School of Education

Staff Research Seminars 2009 - 2010

12.15 - 1.30 Room 7.02.

School of Education, Department of Educational Studies, 388
Glossop Road



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Overview of Seminars

	Presenter	Topic
20th October 2009	Freda Chapple	'Pedagogy and policy in intermedial adaptations'
24th November 2009	Pat Sikes	'Truth and Stories'
23rd February 2010	Tom Billington	Working with Children - problems?
30th March 2010	Andrey Rosowsky	Heavenly Singing: the sanctification of community languages in UK Muslim communities
25th May 2010	Greg Brooks	Research on family literacy and numeracy in Britain and beyond
29th June 2010	Wilf Carr	What is Educational Research?

Staff and students are welcome.
Please let Judi Duffield know if you plan to attend.
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20th October 2009

Pedagogy and policy in intermedial adaptations

Freda Chapple

The paper argues that learning and teaching in the emergent field of *adaptation studies* places the student and the teacher in an intermedial position as they engage with material that crosses and merges medial and textual boundaries. Adaptation in the arts is an intermedial form that needs the medium of the bodies and minds of receivers to complete it: it is a post-structural postmodern chain linking together interdisciplinary, intertextual, intercultural and intermedial fields of knowledge. This belief guides my pedagogical approach – so the paper draws on my personal experience of designing and teaching an undergraduate programme that examines the relationship between literature, theatre, film and digital media; the student responses to their study, and reflects on the challenges, problems and pleasures of delivering an intermedial programme.

The theoretical framework of the paper is provided by the insights of Foucault, which seems to be appropriate, given that the curriculum as a whole is a political as well as a cultural product in higher education. How we teach (as well as what we teach) is a political as well as an institutional matter and this affects the academic staff: we too, are part of the process. Therefore I conclude with a short reflection on the intermedial position of academic staff that research and teaching in higher education institutions in the United Kingdom, which continue, by and large, to promote discrete forms of disciplinary study. I ask whether academics are disadvantaged by operating in-between disciplines and faculties; or empowered by the ability to cross medial boundaries and so connect to global changes in intermedial pedagogy and practice.

24th November 2009

Truth and Stories

Pat Sikes

In this seminar I will be discussing some of the issues around 'truth' which assumed central importance in research (undertaken with Heather Piper) that investigated the perceptions and experiences of male school teachers, and of members of their families, their friends and colleagues, who had been accused of sexual misconduct with female students which they say they did not commit and of which they were eventually cleared or the case was dismissed (Sikes & Piper, 2009). In particular I will talk about the methodology, methods and style of representation that we decided to use and the dilemmas that our choices entailed. Given that we were interested in knowing how accusations of sexual abuse were perceived and experienced by everybody touched by them, we opted for an auto/biographical life history, narrative approach. This approach raised questions about potentially giving voice to people who actually were guilty of what they had been accused of and who were using the chance to participate in our research as an opportunity to create a story and identity of innocence. Protection of informants assumes particular significance given the nature of our inquiry and so I will also talk about our chosen strategy of creating composite, fictionalised stories for reporting and representing our findings.

Sikes, P. and Piper, H. (2009) *Sex and Lies in the Classroom: Researching Allegations of Sexual Misconduct in Schools* London, Routledge/Falmer

23rd February 2010

Working with Children - problems?

Tom Billington

There is increasing evidence to suggest that relationships between adults and young people are seen by government as problematic and warranting special techniques of surveillance (for example, registration for all those having regular contact with children).

To what extent should interactions between young people and professionals from across the Children's Workforce assume taken-for-granted, 'natural' forms of human engagement or should such relationships conform to special rules? This session considers the implications of the above and takes the following 'five questions' as a prompt for critical debate:

'How do we speak of children?

How do we speak with children?

How do we write of children?

How do we listen to children?

How do we listen to ourselves [when working with children]?' (Billington, 2006, p.8)

Billington, T. (2006) *Working with Children: Assessment, Representation and Intervention*. London: Sage.

30th March 2010

Andrey Rosowsky

Heavenly Singing: the sanctification of community languages in UK Muslim communities

The use of sanctified texts such as traditional religious poetry and songs in multilingual Muslim contexts is a religious, artistic and literacy practice currently enjoying widespread popularity. For those taking part, such activity is an important element in the construction of their religious and linguistic identities. The traditional is matched by a growing engagement with popular forms of verse, music and performance in a dramatic example of the blend, or hybridity, of older and newer literacy and artistic practices fashioning newer spaces, including virtual ones, for private and public, sacred and sanctified practices.

This simultaneous interest in traditional Islamic poetic practice and in more popular Western poetic and musical forms exemplifies how many (particularly the young) are engaging with both the traditions of their heritage and forging new pathways which engage equally with modern and Western cultural forms – and is an example of how the growth of religiosity and identity in the twenty first century is enacted in so-called 'moderate' practice rather than in more publicised forms of 'radicalisation' and 'religious extremism'.

This seminar will attempt to share some early thoughts, findings and reflections on this practice across three interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives:

1. Within sociology of language, to what extent, and in which manner, is the use of religious poetry in community languages serving to reinforce knowledge and support for said languages, i.e. reversing, or at least mitigating, language shift within the younger generation?
2. Within sociology of language and religion and in related fields of ethnicity and identity, to what extent, and in which manner, does this textual practice constitute a regular and dynamic experience of Islam among young people in the UK contrasting with so-called 'radicalised' pathways described by media and political commentators?
3. Within New Literacy Studies, to what extent, and in which manner, is this community of practice mirrored in the virtual space of online activity via web-based resources offering downloadable music files, lyrics, background information on composers and performers and interactive forums?

25th May 2010

Emeritus Professor Greg Brooks

Research on family literacy and numeracy in Britain and beyond

Greg Brooks has carried out several evaluations of family literacy and numeracy programmes in England, took part in a UNESCO international seminar series on family literacy in 2007, and (with Kate Pahl and other Sheffield colleagues) published a meta-study of family literacy and numeracy programmes around the world through CfBT in 2008. He has recently been involved in a European Commission study of family literacy programmes across Europe. He will summarise the state of current evidence and the findings, and their robustness.

29th June 2010

Emeritus Professor Wilfred Carr

Title: *What is Educational Research?

This paper offers a philosophical response to the question posed in its title which is neither constrained by existing assumptions nor foreclosed by conventional research practice. Hopefully this will lead to a more reflexive and informed understanding of why our current understanding of 'what educational research is' now take the form that it does and why this understanding is misguided and confused.