Time to think about leading sustainable educational change
Based on the research project:
‘Leading and Learning: Developing ecologies of educational practices’ (Kemmis, Hardy, Wilkinson, Edwards-Groves)

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Overview

• Introduction

• What do we know about leading change?

• Identifying an aspect of change in your site

• Study on which leading sustainable change is based

• Identifying changes to practices and necessary conditions to sustain change

• Theoretical framework: Practice architectures and ecologies of practice

• Implications for your practice in leading sustainable change
Introduction

• Jane autobiography: teacher, consultant, DP

• Research: leading for social justice; leadership practice and theory – ‘Leading and learning: Developing ecologies of educational change’

• Pedagogy, Education and Praxis (PEP): Studies of what makes good professional practice (praxis) in the Netherlands, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Australia and what are the conditions that need to be in place to bring about these kinds of practice?

• This is not just a question about schooling but about the overall (academic, social and moral purpose) of education as a practice

• Find someone you don’t know, or don’t know well and introduce yourselves – your role in your school? and what brings you to this workshop (couple of minutes – report back)
What do we know about leading change?

1. Teachers and teaching quality make the greatest (in school difference) to students’ learning (Hattie, 2009)

2. Leadership has a small but indirect influence on students’ learning (through maximising the conditions in which quality teaching can be enhanced, e.g., promoting and participating in teacher learning and development; planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum; establishing goals and expectations; strategic resourcing; ensuring an orderly and supportive environment) (Robinson, 2007)

3. 3-5 years to bring about change in schools
How do we sustain changes to enhanced learning and teaching practices in schools?

1. Need to move from the ‘great leader’ focus that still dominates popular mythology and much of educational research and practice (not sustainable over the medium to long term)

2. Need to focus on the educational practices and relationships between educational practices that bring about and embed enhancements to learning and teaching in schools (rather than the relationships between individuals in those practices)

3. What are the broader conditions that are maintaining particular ways of thinking (sayings), acting (doings) and relating when it comes to learning and teaching practice in schools?

4. How might these conditions and the resultant practices be challenged? (studies of ‘exemplary’ schools and districts)
How do we sustain changes to enhanced learning and teaching practices in schools?

- **Australian Research Council Discovery Project: 2010-2013:** (Stephen Kemmis, Ian Hardy, Jane Wilkinson, Christine Edwards-Groves, Laurette Bristol and Peter Grootenboer)

- Exemplary educational leadership & professional development practices in five Catholic primary schools and two districts in NSW and Queensland

- *Transformation* of practices, i.e., how *leadership* practices (principals and dispersed leadership practices in a school) transform teachers’ learning through *professional development and learning* practices, which in turn transform students’ *academic and social practices* (horizontal as well as vertical – bottom-up and top-down)

- In each of these connections, these practices reciprocally shape one another
Identifying a change in your site

Reflect on a change in practice that you/your team want to bring about in your local site. Reflect on the following:

• What is the change in practice that you want to accomplish?

• How would you know if you/the team have accomplished this change in practice? To answer this question, think about:

  i. What kinds of changes in the language/talk/thinking amongst people would you hear? (e.g., teachers, leaders, students and parents)

  ii. What kinds of changes to people’s actions would you see?

  iii. What kinds of changes to people’s relationships would you see?
Changing the conditions for practice in your site

To bring about and sustain this change, what kinds of changes to the conditions of practice would you/the team need to put in place in order to bring about changed:

i. *Language/talk/thinking*

ii. *Actions*

iii. *Relationships?*

*E.g., Providing* papers on junior secondary transition; collegial coaching conversations drawn from research and professional journals; policy documents; planning documents; AITSL teacher standards

(ii) Changes to material/economic resources: timetabling; changes to material arrangements in classrooms – open plan, open doors; changes to staff rooms – how you group teachers, where they sit; changes to timetabling; visits to each other’s classrooms; sharing units of work

(iii) Elucidating school principles about relationships – emphasising collaboration, professional responsibility, ‘we’ not ‘I’, building of trust through teachers being given responsibility to lead certain aspects of change; team approach to leadership rather than the great leader/top-down, transmission approach
Practices are composed of sayings, doings and relatings

According to the ancients, philosophy aimed to teach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to speak and think well</th>
<th>Logic</th>
<th>Sayings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How to act well in the material world</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Doings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to relate well to others</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Relatings</td>
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</tbody>
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The sayings, doings and relatings that compose practices do not exist in a vacuum; they exist...

Cultural-discursive arrangements

Material-economic arrangements

Social-political arrangements
Some of the *sayings* and *cultural-discursive arrangements* found in a class project on ‘forces changing the Earth’
Some *doings* and *material-economic arrangements* found in a class where students are building garden ornaments that they will test under ‘rain’ (water from a sprinkler) in an investigation of the properties of materials.
Some *relatings* and *social-political arrangements* in a classroom: three “Leading and Learning’ research team members sit at the back observing teachers and students working intensely in a classroom.
How to bring about sustainable changes to learning and teaching practices?

- Practices are made possible in practice architectures
- An example from one of our school sites of professional learning: how to teach spelling using an inquiry approach
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On the side of the individual: the person/practitioner</th>
<th>Practices are interactionally secured in</th>
<th>Dimension/ intersubjective space/medium</th>
<th>Practice architectures (arrangements and ‘set-ups’) enable and constrain interaction via</th>
<th>On the side of the social: the world we share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.g., ‘spelling’, ‘inquiry approach’.</td>
<td>Practitioners’ characteristic ‘sayings’ - and thinking (the ‘cognitive’)</td>
<td>The cultural-discursive dimension (in semantic space) realised in the medium of language</td>
<td>Cultural-discursive arrangements found in or brought to a site (e.g., language, ideas)</td>
<td>Theories of spelling and literacy learning; theories of inquiry pedagogy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E.g., teachers speak, listen, participate in discussion, reflect on shared experiences.</td>
<td>Practitioners’ characteristic ‘doings’ (the ‘psychomotor’)</td>
<td>The material-economic dimension (in physical space-time) realised in the medium of activity and work</td>
<td>Material-economic arrangements found in or brought to a site (e.g., objects, spatial arrangements)</td>
<td>The school and classroom in which the discussion occurs. Set-ups of furniture, resources, time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.g., collaboration, general courtesy, recognition and respect of others.</td>
<td>Practitioners’ characteristic ‘relations’ (the ‘affective’)</td>
<td>The social-political dimension (in social space) realised in the medium of power and solidarity</td>
<td>Social-political arrangements found in or brought to a site (e.g., relationships between people)</td>
<td>School and district principles about relationships (e.g., self-responsibility collaboration, relational trust)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Project:** Discovering how to teach spelling using an inquiry approach.  
**Habitus:** Being a highly professional teacher and professional.  

which are bundled together in the **projects** (teleo-affective structures) of practices, and the **dispositions** (habitus) of practitioners.  

which are bundled together in characteristic ways in **practice landscapes** (in time and space) and **practice traditions** (through history).  

**Landscape:** Classrooms as sites for professional learning (rotating rooms).  
**Tradition:** An inquiry approach to professional learning.
Practices relate to other practices in ecologies of practices
Leading and Learning: Ecologies of practice

- Educational leadership and administration
- Professional development and professional learning
- Educational practice in classrooms
- Students’ social and academic practices
- Ecologies of practice in school sites
Ecologies of practices –
**The Education Complex of practices**

One School District adopted *Six principles of highly effective learning communities*: (1) meaningful learning, (2) inquiry, (3) collaboration, (4) communication, (5) self-responsibility and (6) human development. In some schools, they suffuse all of the practices in the Education Complex.
Education always happens in a local site.

- The practice of education, as it unfolds in some place, always happens amid practice architectures that exist in that particular location: *cultural-discursive, material-economic* and *social-political arrangements* to be found in the site.
- Developing (practices of) education requires forming and/or transforming the practice architectures at the site. In the absence of the practice architectures that support them, new educational practices cannot survive.
Conclusion

- To create and secure new educational practices, it is not sufficient to secure the *practice knowledge* that allows practitioners to practice in the setting, it is *also* necessary to create and secure:
  1. in the local *site*, the *practice architectures* – cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political arrangements – that support the practice;
  2. the *ecological relationships* – in an *ecology of practices* – that secure and sustain the practice in relation to any other practices on which it is dependent; and
  3. *site-based education development* where local educational practices recognise, respect and respond to diverse local conditions: students, teachers, leaders & communities

- Only then will the new practices be sustainable.
Implications for changes to practices in your site?

- Reflections
- Share
- Questions?