

WERA International Research Network
Didactics – Learning and Teaching
Annual Report of Activities in 2015-16

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Introduction

This report details activities in 2015 and 2016 which were the second and third years of the initial plan for the network activities. Year 1 had involved a Research Workshop on “Developing a WERA International Research Network on Didactics - Learning and Teaching” during the EERA 2014 conference at the University of Porto in September 2014 and was followed by a similar workshop as part of the SERA 2014/WERA Focal Meeting in November 2014 at the University of Edinburgh. The initial composition of the network involved 20 members and at this time the number of registered members has increased to 73 as detailed at:

<http://www.weraonline.org/?DidacticsIRN>. However, finding ways to involve all these members remains a significant challenge.

Network Activities

The network has been actively involved in both WERA Focal Meetings firstly at ECER 2015 at the Corvinus University Budapest in September 2015 and also at AERA 2016 in Washington in April 2016. A symposium was held at each conference and also an open meeting of the IRN was held in Budapest, though it was not possible to arrange this in Washington.

The following symposium was held at ECER 2016, details of which are included in Appendix A:

Transnational Research Perspectives on Didactics - Learning and Teaching, Symposium at WERA Focal Meeting 2015/European Conference on Educational Research, Corvinus University Budapest, 8-11th September 2015

In turn, the following symposium was held as part of the WERA Focal Meeting at AERA 2016, details of which are included in Appendix B:

Beyond Fragmentation: Global Perspectives on Didactics, Learning and Teaching, Symposium at WERA Focal Meeting 2016, Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Washington D.C., 8-12 April 2016.

Related activities

The following invited contribution was made to the WERA Symposium at ECER 2016:

Hudson, B. (2016) On the relation between epistemic quality and equitable learning in the mathematics classroom. Invited paper to the WERA Symposium *Global challenges for international research in didactics – learning and teaching: epistemological, pedagogical and methodological issues and questions*, European Conference on Educational Research (ECER 2016), University College Dublin, 23-26 August 2016.

Impact of the WERA IRN

The Symposium in Washington involved participation from the UK, France, Germany, Ghana, Mexico and South Africa. In particular, it is notable that there were three contributors from Ghana. This reflects significant engagement in the activities on the part of colleagues in Ghana and in particular strong contributions from a leading member of the Department of Mathematics and Science Education at the University of Cape Coast since the outset. Discussions are currently underway in relation to a planned proposal for a symposium involving a number of members of this group at the WERA 2017 Focal Meeting in Hong Kong.

This dimension of activity has also overlapped and created synergies with the ICERDA initiative (International Conference on Education Research for Development in Africa). The second ICERDA conference (ICERDA 2016) was held in Accra in October 2016 on the theme: [Towards a Vision of Education for Sustainable Development in Africa](#). It was attended by over 200 local and international delegates from over 10 countries and included scholars, researchers, development partners, practitioners and academics. The conference arose from the academic partnership between the University of Ghana and the University of Sussex and in particular from collaboration between the recently established College of Education at UoG with the Department of Education at Sussex. The partnership [has been praised by former UN Secretary General and University of Ghana Chancellor Kofi Annan](#) as a model for building regional centres of excellence that improve both the quality of research and education. Drawing inspiration from Nelson Mandela, Annan stressed that education was the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world. WERA General Secretary, Liesel Ebersöhn was an invited keynote speaker at ICERDA 2016.

The conference also marked the launch of the [Ghana Education Research Association \(GhERA\)](#) and initiated the process for GhERA to become a member association of the WERA. The stated aim of GhERA is to bring together the education research community to promote quality education research to advance the field of education research and knowledge for policy and practice in education. In addition, the [Journal of Education and Development \(JEDA\)](#) was

launched at the conference as a new journal of ICERDA and full paper submissions for review were invited by its international editorial board for publication in 2017/18.

A second dimension of the impact of the WERA IRN has been on the activities of the EERA Network on Didactics – Learning and Teaching. The EERA network formed the basis from which the WERA IRN developed and in turn this has led to a creative and constructive feedback loop into the activities of the JADE group in particular (Joint Action in Didactics in Europe). The activities of the group have been influenced significantly by the involvement of its members in the WERA IRN and our most recent work is framed by the challenge of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal Number 4 (United Nations, 2015) to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This is founded on the recognition that inequality is a core challenge that needs to be at the foreground of our thinking about didactics – learning and teaching (UNICEF/UNESCO, 2013) not only at the global level but also at the national level for all contemporary societies and educational systems in an age of mass migration and increasing austerity in many countries of the world.

Recent and forthcoming activities of the JADE group are listed as follows:

Hudson, B., Loquet, M., Meyer, M., Wegner, A. and Benberghout, F. (2016) *Transnational cross-disciplinary perspectives in didactics: understanding equitable learning in relation to epistemic quality through studying a dance lesson in France*, Round Table, European Conference of Educational Research, University, University College Dublin, 23-26th August 2016.

Hudson, B., Loquet, M., Meyer, M., Wegner, A. and Gerin, M. (2017) *High Epistemic Quality for Equitable Access to High Quality Learning and Education in School*, Round Table, European Conference on Educational Research (ECER 2017), University College UCC, Copenhagen, 22-25 August 2017.

Also, a proposal has been submitted for a symposium at WERA 2017 Focal Meeting in Hong Kong.

Finally work on a landscape review of the field of research on Didactics – Learning and Teaching worldwide by Hudson and Meyer is ongoing with the aim to produce this by the end of 2017.

APPENDIX 1

Transnational Research Perspectives on Didactics - Learning and Teaching

ECER 2015/WERA 2915 Focal Meeting, Budapest

Chair: Brian Hudson, University of Sussex, UK

Can the description, analysis and evaluation of lesson planning be a means for the identification of didactical research beyond fragmentation?

Meinert Meyer, University of Hamburg, Germany

Comparative Didactics: A Reconstructive Move from Subject Didactics, Florence Ligozat, University of Geneva.

Epistemic game and cooperative engineering in the Joint Action Theory in Didactics

Gérard Sensevy, Centre de Recherche sur l'Éducation les Apprentissages et la Didactique (CREAD) - University of Western Brittany, France

Comparing Different Research Traditions of Curriculum, Learning and Teaching, Brian Hudson, University of Sussex, UK.

APPENDIX 2

Beyond Fragmentation: Global Perspectives on Didactics, Learning and Teaching

WERA 2016 Focal Meeting Washington

April 2016

Chair – Brian Hudson, University of Sussex, UK

Beyond Fragmentation: Mapping the International Landscape on Didactics Learning and Teaching

Brian Hudson, University of Sussex, UK and Meinert Meyer, University of Hamburg, Germany

The Epistemic Kinship: a way to Bridge the affirmed Gap between Student's and Expert's Knowledge, the case of Dance Lessons

Monique Loquet, University of Rennes 2, France

Agency, citizenship and human development: the didactics to promote the idea of global justice based on the psychology of moral reasoning

Abel Rubén Hernández-Ulloa, Universidad de Guanajuato, Mexico

Teaching Mathematics in Context to Promote Pupils' Understanding of Primary School Mathematics

Ernest Kofi Davis & Joseph Ghartey Ampiah, College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

Studying Mathematics Teachers' Assessment Practices: Implications for Teacher Education Policy and Practice in Ghana

Evelyn Owusa Oduro, Teacher Education Division, Ghana Education Services & Brian Hudson, University of Sussex, UK

Learning to teach in Ghana: local lessons for teacher education reform in the African context

Kwame Akyeampong, University of Sussex and University of Ghana

Discussant Liesel Ebersöhn, University of Pretoria