University of South Australia

Researching While Teaching Series
Workshop #1
Introductions

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Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Kaurna, Boandik and Barngarla First Nations Peoples and their Elders past and present, who are the First Nations' traditional owners of the land that are now home to the University of South Australia's campuses in Adelaide, Mount Gambier and Whyalla.

University of South Australia

Plan for workshop

Welcome & Introductions

The RWT Model
Activities: What is your context? What are your teaching challenges?

Morning tea break

Higher Education Pedagogies & Example of Action Research in Higher Education

Ethics applications

Q & A, next steps and close

Introductions…..30 seconds

Who you are?

Why you joined the series?

Presentation: The RWT Model

Our role

Facilitate sessions
Support collective discussions
Discuss pedagogical strategies that are proven to achieve improve student outcomes and experiences in HE
Mentor research processes (how to develop research Q, literature searches, ethics application, how to analyse data and present your findings)

You are the expert of your own teaching, students, context

Why do critical participatory action research?

Becoming reflexive educator – what is reflexivity?

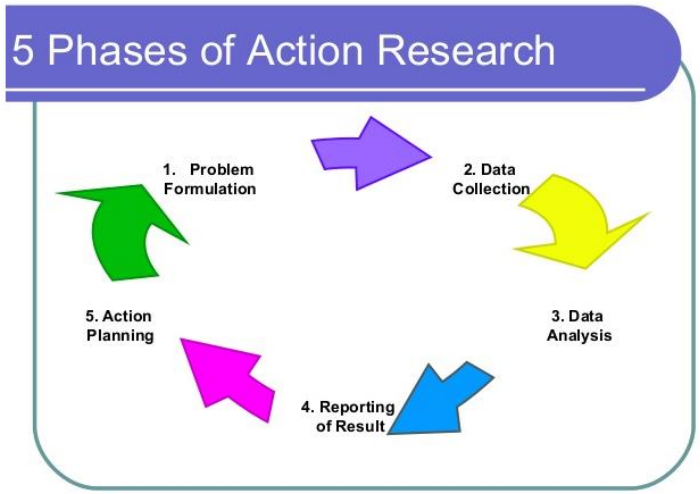
Introduction: What is Action Research?

Teachers are constantly, perhaps *unconsciously*, making decisions about their teaching practice. Refining what they do about individual students, assessment, worthwhile learning activities and a whole range of other issues. This process of reflection usually occurs on the run so to speak, usually while engaged with the teaching/learning process. Usually, *reflection occurs as a solitary event*.

Action research is much more than this. Action research is a collaborative approach to working in schools by teachers committed to improving their teaching for the benefit of all students. For our purpose action research has three key elements: *operational* or *technical*, *collaboration* and *critical reflection*.

Operational or technical element:

Most action research approaches describe some form of research spiral, such as: (i) plan, act, observe, reflect, or (ii) describe, inform, confront, reconstruct. The spiral provides a set of stages or a process to work with. In reality the process is a bit messier but the spiral is a useful format to guide planning.



Teacher Research as Stance

Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan L. Lytle

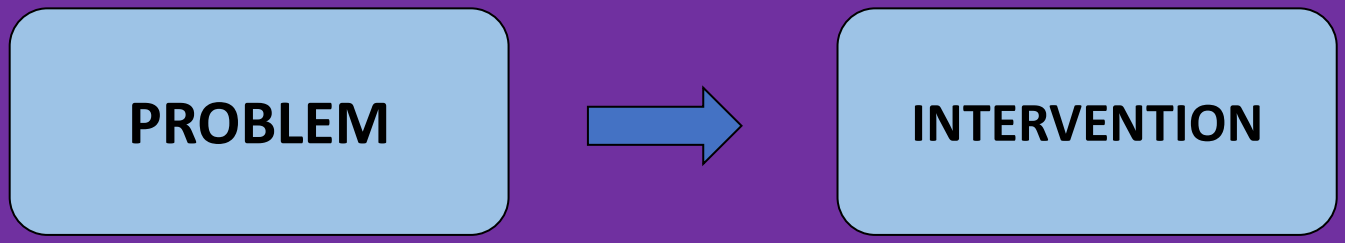
Cochran-Smith & Lytle discuss one type of practitioner inquiry – teacher research – by exploring its theoretical and epistemological architecture and illustrating its grounding in a fundamentally dialectical relationship or stance.

Practitioner inquiry – versions and variations: teacher researcher, self-study, narrative inquiry, autobiographical inquiry, scholarship of teaching.

Practitioner takes on the role of researcher,

'*The common assumption here is that those who work inside particular educational contexts and/or who live inside particular social situations are among those who have significant knowledge and perspectives about the situation. This challenges the idea that knowledge can be generated only by those outside a given social or educational setting and then applied inside classrooms*' (p. 41)

Something's not working for some students learning



What's going on here? (description)
How do we know there's a problem/issue? (evidence)
How do we understand the situation? (theory)

What happened?
What's being accomplished? (evidence)
How do we know things are improving?

It’s a curriculum and pedagogy problem

Unless we solve the pedagogy problem, all other efforts at reconstruction … will be in vain. The curriculum is, in the final analysis, what teachers enact in classrooms. (Boomer, 1999, p. 136)

It is through pedagogies that education gets done. (Lingard, 2007, p. 247)

Key word: Pedagogy

Sometimes used to simply describe a ‘method’, the performance or repertoires of the teacher but is a highly contested term in the education space. It has been described as a term that ‘brings together theory and practice, and also acknowledges the philosophical, political and historical nature of the educative endeavour’ (Hattam 2004).

‘*What pedagogy addresses is the process of the production and exchange and transformation of consciousness that takes place in the interaction of three agencies – the teacher, the learner and the knowledge they together produce’* (Lusted 1986, p. 2).

Table 7.1 Theories of university teaching

	Theory 1 *Teaching as telling*	*Theory 2* *Teaching as organising*	*Theory 3* *Teaching as making learning possible*
Focus	Teacher and content	Teaching techniques that will result in learning	Relation between students and subject matter
Strategy	Transmit information	Manage teaching process; transmit concepts	Engage; challenge; imagine oneself as the student
Actions	Chiefly presentation	'Active learning'; organising activity	Systematically adapted to suit student understanding
Reflection	Unreflective; taken for granted	Apply skills to improve teaching	Teaching as a research-like, scholarly process

(Paul Ramsden 2003)

Hattam's Model of CPAR

PROVOCATION & PROBLEM FORMULATION PHASE	PEDAGOGY REDESIGN PHASE	ACTION RESEARCH PHASE	REFLECTION PHASE
WORKSHOP Introduction to the series and the sequence. Provocations: what are your pedagogical challenges?	WORKSHOP Redesigning your pedagogy Further work on what you could do differently Introduction to Action Research What's your research question?	WORKSHOP Doing your action research Reporting back on how your action research is going	WORKSHOP What did you learn? Working on a presentation or a paper of what happened and what you learned?
WORKSHOP Refining your project	WORKSHOP Designing your action research	WORKSHOP Analysing your action research Starting your analysis	**SHOWCASE EVENT** Presenting learnings from your Action Research project

Provocation stage

- Thinking out aloud about the challenges of your classrooms
- Foregrounding the school strategic plans (retention, engagement, student satisfaction, build rigor, authentic assessment)
- Working on a hopeful idea that could improve things
- Identifying a unit of work to be taught in the SP5 term for redesigning
- Introduction to action research

Critical Element

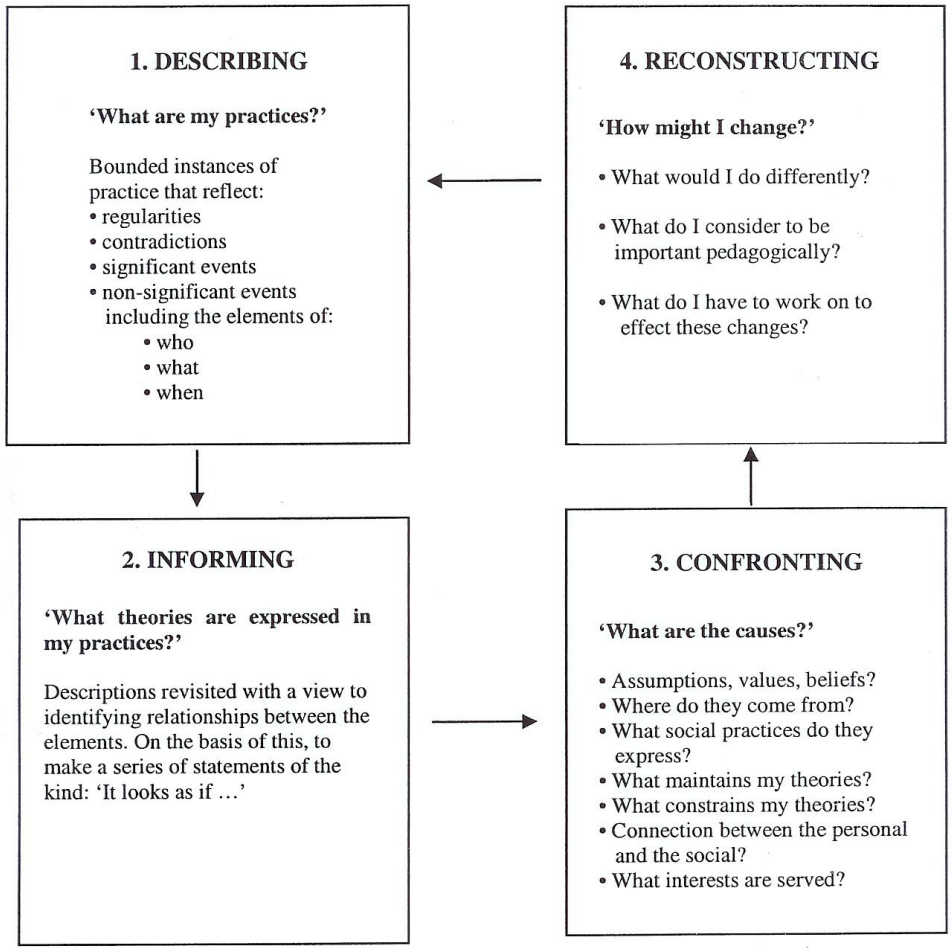
Teacher Research as Stance

Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan L. Lytle

Inquiry as stance: 'Taking an inquiry stance means teachers and student teachers working within communities to generate local knowledge, envision and theorize their practice, and interpret and interrogate the theory and research of others' (p. 44)

Implicit in this process are questions that guide practice, broadly construed:

Who am I as a teacher?
What am I assuming about this child (learner), this group, this community?
What sense are my students making of what's going on in the classroom?
What are the implicit assumptions of the texts, tests, curriculum standards, and reporting mechanisms in place at my school?
How do my efforts as an individual teacher connect to the efforts of the community and to larger agendas for school and social change (p. 45).


1. DESCRIBING
'What are my practices?'
Bounded instances of practice that reflect:
• regularities
• contradictions
• significant events
• non-significant events including the elements of:
• who
• what
• when
2. INFORMING
'What theories are expressed in my practices?'
Descriptions revisited with a view to identifying relationships between the elements. On the basis of this, to make a series of statements of the kind: 'It looks as if …'
3. CONFRONTING
'What are the causes?'
• Assumptions, values, beliefs?
• Where do they come from?
• What social practices do they express?
• What maintains my theories?
• What constrains my theories?
• Connection between the personal and the social?
• What interests are served?
4. RECONSTRUCTING
'How might I change?'
• What would I do differently?
• What do I consider to be important pedagogically?
• What do I have to work on to effect these changes?

Break out room activity

What is your teaching context?

Who are your students?

Breakout room activity:

What is the teaching challenge that keeps you awake at night?

We will allocate into groups – access the link to a padlet in the chat to write your responses.

https://padlet.com/sarah_hattam/what-is-your-teaching-challenge-48qqqupy3b4s6kzt

Re-designing curriculum/pedagogy

- Work on re-designing a unit of curriculum that will be taught in SP5

Designing action research

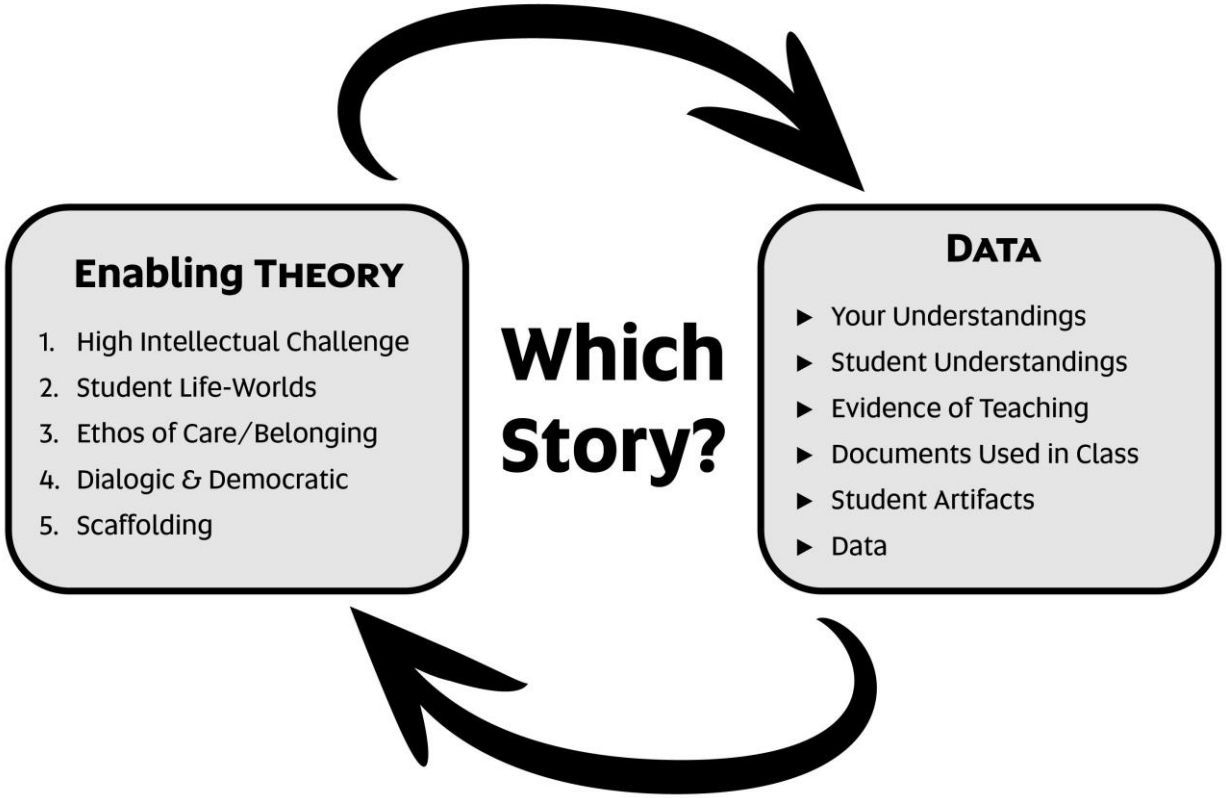
- Refine a good research aim/question
- Work out what data you will collect
- Negotiate resources required

Doing it phase

- Refining the designs
- Teaching the new unit and enact the action research plan
- Reporting back on what is happening and begin to share aspects of your 'data’.
- Begin thinking about your presentation of your findings using template to scaffold.

What did we learn?

- Refine (powerpoint) presentations
- share your findings with a view to developing some insights across the various projects
- Evaluate your hunches about what might improve things
- Workshop what's next, for curriculum development, and further action research



- What did I do differently?
- What happened to my pedagogy?
- How did that affect how I understand my students?
- What did I learn about AR?
- Did my AR improve things?
- What's next?

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Researching While Teaching (RWT) Planning Template

1. SELECTING AN ASPECT OF YOUR TEACHING TO FOCUS ON

[You need to select an aspect of your teaching and consider how this could be adapted through enacting specific pedagogical approaches, such as 'transition pedagogy'; 'critical pedagogy'; enabling pedagogy; culturally responsive pedagogy]

2. WORKING ON A REDESIGN THAT TAKES UP THE PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGE

Key idea. [State the pedagogical challenge that you are working with in your teaching and have a go at stating an idea that has the potential to improve things.]

How does this translate into my teaching [State how this idea can be translated pedagogy]

What's the learning task(s) [How does this translate into setting your students challenging relevant learning tasks?]

How will students demonstrate their learning? (Multimodal literacy?)

c. collecting data on student understandings of what is happening
[student journals, interviews, focus groups, class meetings, surveys]

d. evidence of student learning
[attendance data, student work, test results]

e. assessment plans, assignments, learning contracts, rubrics

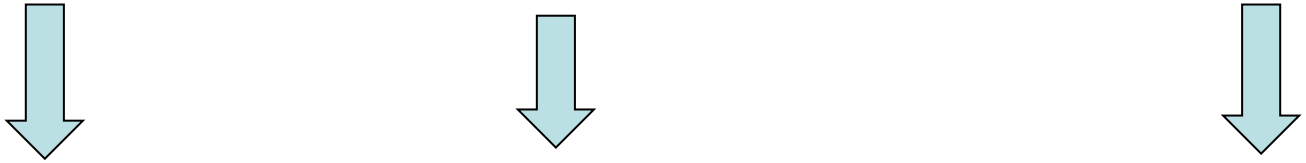
3. Action research

What aspect of your pedagogy are you focusing on? [Action research is by definition focused on improving your practice]

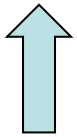
What is your research question? [Does this question lead to an inquiry? Is it explicitly linked to improving practice? Does it lead to a richer description of what's going on? Or does it focus on what makes a difference?]

Developing your research question/hypothesis

verb **Pedagogy/Theory/Approach** **Intervention**



Applying turn-around and dialogic pedagogies to develop a supportive framework with students in courses EDUC 5250 & EDUC 5272 will increase student engagement across the course and overall assessment quality and submission rates



Student/school outcomes

Other examples

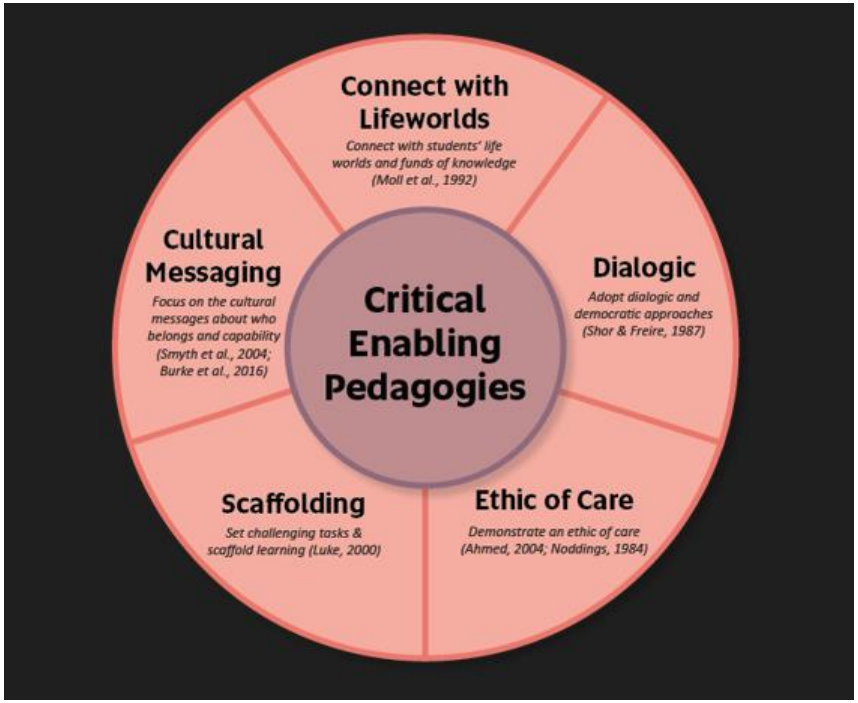
How can implementing scaffolding and explicit instruction of weekly curriculum and assessment guidelines through the development of digital learning tool improve student outcomes and engagement?

How does utilising dialogic pedagogy and pedagogies of care in asynchronous delivery of courses WELF 3024 & WELF 3025 build students' weekly engagement and completion of non-compulsory, formative tasks.

How does utilising transition pedagogy help foster a sense of community in a social work honours program to support student success and mitigate the feelings of being an impostor in Higher Education?

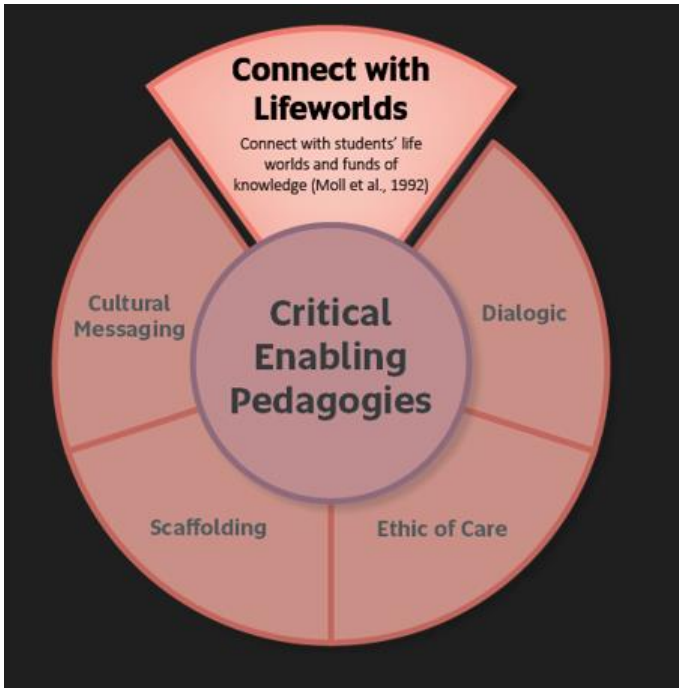
Presentation: Higher Education Pedagogies

The Critical Enabling Pedagogy aims to do these 5 things:



Hattam, S., Hattam, R., Weiler, T. & King, S. (eds). (2023) *Enabling pedagogy and action research in Higher Education*, DOI Publishing (forthcoming)

Funds of knowledges & connecting to lifeworlds



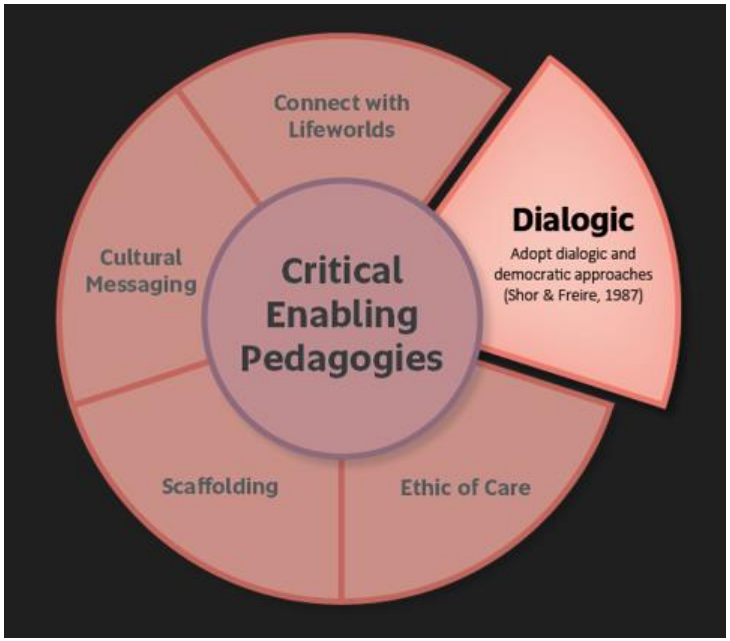
Funds of knowledge are 'historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being' (Moll et al., 1992, p.133).

A useful funds of knowledges guiding question is: *What might exist within the learners' experiences, thought processes, reflections or assumptions which has worth as an exploratory 'bridge' to this topic?* (Tazewell 2022, p. 260).

TABLE 12.2. Connecting with Students' Lifeworlds & Drawing on Funds of Knowledge

Examples	*Chapters*
Students can choose a topic of interest from their lives as a basis for assessment	*Chapters 2, 3, & 9*
Connecting topics used in lecture and curriculum content to students' life worlds	*Chapters 2 & 9*
Utilizing technology tools and platforms students are familiar with, such as Learning Catalytics/Mentimeter	*Chapters 3 & 11*
Using translanguaging pedagogy to enable students who speak English as an additional language to make use of their cultural capital and linguistic repertoire in order to access texts and knowledge	*Chapter 8*
Use of popular culture in course themes to engage students in critical dialogue	*Chapters 2 & 9*
Demonstrations and experiments presented using familiar/commonplace items of everyday life and accessible language	*Chapter 4*
Use of students' familiarity with online affinity spaces to show how groupwork works in their lived experience	*Chapter 3*
"Crowdsourcing" (using learning analytics) supports personalized learning and formation of teams with shared interests	*Chapter 3*
Use of creative allegories (with an accessible concept) to demonstrate the purpose of an assessment task	*Chapter 7*

Dialogic & Democratic approaches



Our book embraces the perspective that education is a political project whereby educators need to challenge the ‘banking’ model of education that privileges some and marginalises others. The basis of Freire’s thesis is that increasing dialogue in educational settings will increase educational opportunities and thus more equal social or political opportunities outside the classroom (Jackson, 2008).

TABLE 12.3. Dialogic & Democratic Approaches

Examples	*Chapters*
Using Learning Catalytics/Quantext to find out what topics interest students for teamwork assessment	*Chapter 3*
Listening to students' concerns and queries about completing assessment tasks and responding with supportive resources and guidelines	*Chapter 6*
Using Mentimeter to enhance engagement, time to think, and dialogue in the learning space	*Chapter 11*
Using student forums and posting open-ended discussion questions for sharing feedback, knowledge, and experiences in an online course	*Chapter 9*
Establishing live online sessions to enhance connection and communication between students and staff on discussion points, content, and assessment	*Chapter 10*
Using translanguaging pedagogy to enhance engagement of and dialogue with students who speak English as an additional language	*Chapter 6*
Integrating students' subjective perspectives of their "life world" with academic course themes and assessments	*Chapter 9*
Collaborative learning: integrating students' accounts of life experiences with course themes	*Chapter 9*
Democratizing course structure and delivery, focusing on affective elements of teaching to respond to diverse, sometimes conflicting, political attitudes of students	*Chapter 11*
Students and lecturers co-creating key "need-to-know" content in guided revision interventions	*Chapter 4*
Sketched revision lectures: participatory "mapping" process that engages with students in real time	*Chapter 4*
Democratic and participatory approach to course redesign ("teamwork") (using learning analytics) resulted in students' involvement in "problem posing" and then "problem solving"	*Chapter 3*
Reorientation of tutorial sessions from "observation" to "action" to increase student participation and voice on diverse topics	*Chapter 7*

An ethic of care

Adopting the role of the ‘emotional cheerleader’ (O’Shea, 2019) can build confidence and motivation of the learner. Shor (1992, p. 25) argues that “how a student feels in the classroom is as important as what is being learnt/taught”.

Central to this approach is a strengths-based position which recognises students’ knowledges and capabilities and counters misrecognitions (Fraser, 2003).

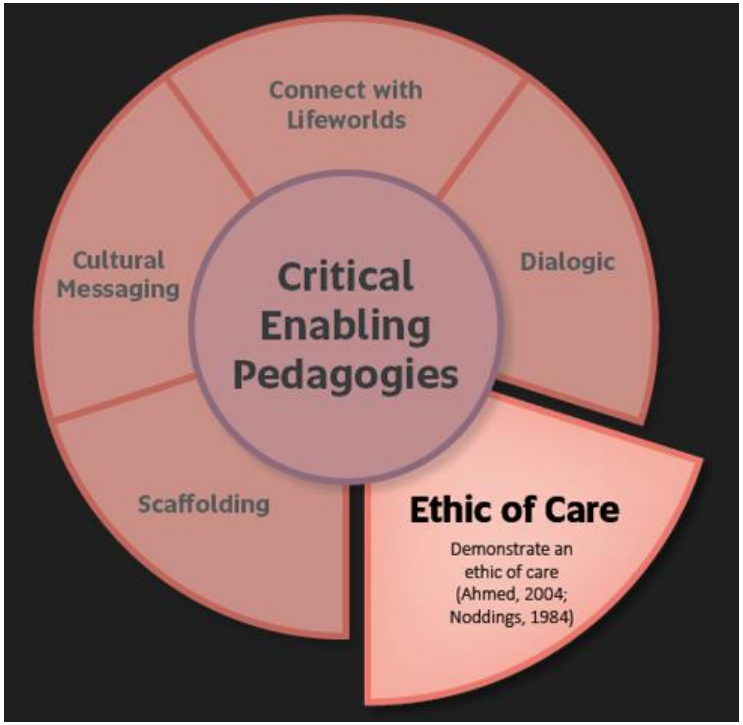


TABLE 12.4. An Ethic of Care

Examples	*Chapters*
Listening carefully, being responsive to concerns that are emailed	*Chapters 6 & 10*
Setting up an environment that is "safe" for students to participate via multiple methods of communication (e.g., via an app instead of talking to bigger group)	*Chapter 11*
Building trust with students to engage in difficult conversations about real-world challenges	*Chapters 2, 3 & 11*
Regular checking in with the students as a group and one-on-one	*Chapter 10*
Checking in directly after feedback/grade given for assessment	*Chapter 11*
Establishing a supportive course community via a visible and interactive online presence (in an online course)	*Chapter 10*
Deploying a pedagogy that enables students to recognize and Demonstrate their capability	*Chapter 8*
Establishing staff connection/relationships with students both online and in person including learning names, personal support for learning, and listening to, and remembering, key contributions of all students	*Chapter 11*
Countering deficit perceptions/labels	*Chapters 8 & 11*

Challenging tasks & Scaffolding

Learners' educational levels and histories are characteristically diverse in enabling programs. We understand part of our pedagogical challenge within HE is to contest the ‘culture of poverty’ (Payne 2005) thesis that sets out students' differences are innate, whereby students from low socio-economic backgrounds are to blame for their position and are not capable of meeting the same learning standards as students from more privileged backgrounds (Dudley-Marling 2015).

As argued by Dudley-Marling (2015, p. 7), ‘the most serious consequence of deficit thinking....is it leads to instructional practices that diminish student learning by limiting students access to the rich learning opportunities routinely afforded to students in affluent, high-achieving schools and classrooms’.

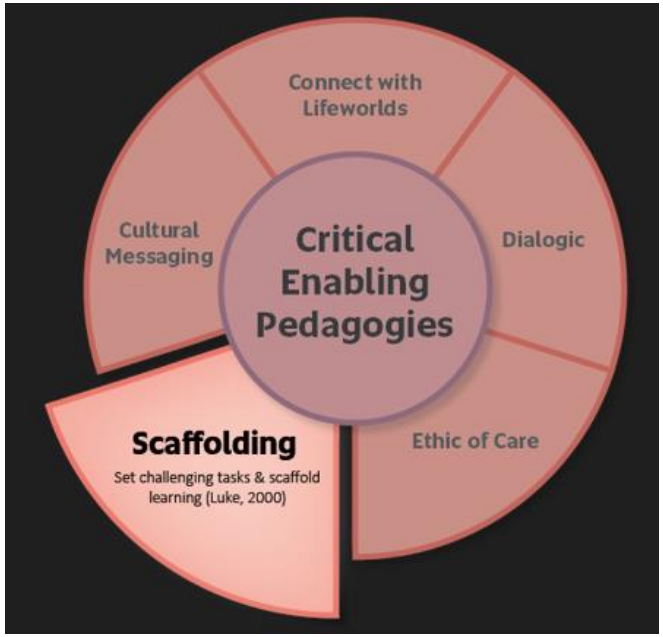


TABLE 12.5. SCAFFOLDING CHALLENGING TASKS

Examples	*Chapters*
Ensuring assessment topics build on each other across the course	*Chapter 3*
Challenging students who speak English as an additional language to fully deploy their linguistic repertoire in an English academic language proficiency course	*Chapter 8*
Setting an assignment two weeks into term	*Chapter 6*
Setting high expectations for final assessment and learning outcomes, introducing students to complex concepts, and asking students to apply them in assessment tasks	*Chapter 2*
Restructuring of course text (Annotated Bibliography) to directly reflect the structure and content of lectures and tutorials, making learning materials understandable, accessible, and/or easy to locate	*Chapter 7*
Modelling teamwork (between staff) to students and authentic teamwork vs individual experiences (e.g., group quiz vs individual quiz performance)	*Chapter 3*
Redesigning assessments taking a participatory and democratic approach involving staff and students to embed teamwork and student investment in learning	*Chapter 3*
"Sketched revision lectures": participatory "mapping" process that engages students in developing individual understanding of how lectures are ordered and structured and central concepts to develop personal revision approaches	*Chapter 4*
Applying "hard fun," accessible language, and familiar items (for demonstrations/ experiments) in active demonstrations to break down the barriers that challenging concepts and terminology present to students	*Chapter 4*
Structural scaffolding of course delivery (as distinct from content scaffolding) including blended learning-flipped classroom and Mentimeter to challenge students and optimize engagement	*Chapter 11*
Developing a multifaceted website and course content to enhance online students' access and engagement (explanatory videos, interactive presentations, extensive resources, and student community forums)	*Chapter 10*
Mind mapping techniques for developing students' self-regulation/efficacy in learning mathematics	*Chapter 5*
Building critical thinking skills across a range of texts, starting with texts that are familiar to the student and leading to academic texts	*Chapter 2*

Belonging & Capability

We have often inquired about the reasons why students do not take the traditional pathway to university. From anecdotal discussions with our students, we developed a picture that some high schools in South Australia engaged in a range of 'exclusionary' (Sibley, 1995) practices contributing to students making the decision to leave school early.

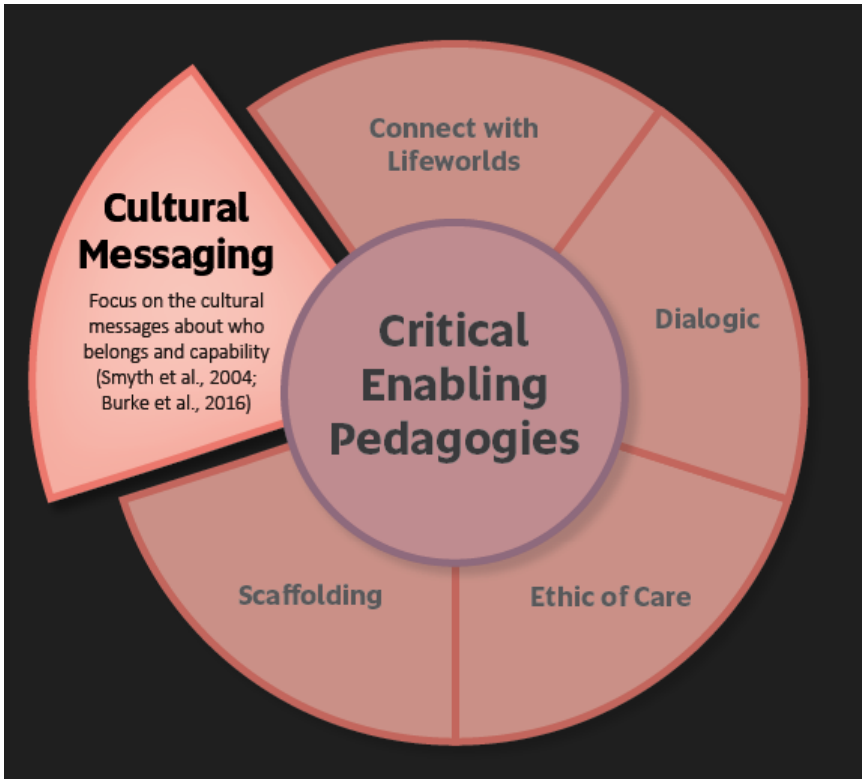
A cultural geography framework highlights the importance of the cultural messages of schools - Smyth & Hattam (2004).

TABLE 12.6. The Cultural Geographies of Schools

Dimension	*Aggressive*	*Passive*	*Active*
Inclusion/exclusion	Troublemakers removed	"Ease out" those who don't fit	Those who traditionally fit the least are most welcome
Students' lives/emotions	No space for dealing with emotions	Acknowledges them but deals with them immaturely	Students are listened to. Atmosphere of trust.
Pedagogy	Condescending way of treating students	Uninteresting classroom practice	Enlarges cultural map of students. Negotiation of content and assessment.

Source: Smyth et al. (2004)

Cultural Geography around schools



The enabling pedagogy at UniSA College operates to promote an active school culture, with a strong focus on fostering a sense of inclusion and belonging via the curriculum development that builds students capability (as per the challenging tasks element of our pedagogy) as well as ensuring our cultural messaging aligns.

Burke et al (2017) offer the concept of ‘misrecognition’ (Fraser 2003; Burke, Crozier and Misiaszek 2017) that speaks directly to the issue of belonging, as specific teachers enact their own doubts and assumptions about the student’s motivations and capabilities to complete year 12 and consider a pathway into higher education (Cuconato, du Bois-Reymond & Lunabba 2015) or succeed once in HE

Outcomes of Action Research Projects

TABLE 12.1. Outcomes of Our Action Research

Outcome Category	*Examples*	*Chapters*
Engagement	Increased engagement in the tutorials, with students responding to tutorial activities/questions	*Chapter 11*
	Increased engagement online as a result of educator intervention	*Chapter 10*
	Redesign of an assessment task template, modelling, and democratic participation in class which: • improved assignment submission rates, intersecting with a significant decrease in academic integrity issues • improved retention.	*Chapter 7*
Grade Distribution and Attainment/Pass Rates	Increased rigor in assessment, higher grades across the distribution table	*Chapters 2, 3, & 6*
	Increase in pass rates for course overall	*Chapter 6*
	Student-centered approach to teamwork (via learning analytics) evidenced by higher levels of: • interest and assessment submission rates • improved pass rates • higher quality of work • increased connection to peers.	*Chapter 3*

Quality of Assessment/ Conceptual Understanding	Increased sophistication of application of theories	*Chapter 2*
	Increased awareness of need for criticality when engaging with media and information sources	*Chapters 2, 3*
	The detailed "modelling approach" improved students' understanding of researching and writing essays	*Chapter 7*
Emotions	More positive student experiences of teamwork	*Chapter 3*
	Greater confidence with early assessment tasks	*Chapter 6*
	Translanguaging improved students' ability, confidence, and motivation to engage in the course, and to develop and apply critical literacy	*Chapter 8*
	Translanguaging pedagogy reduced stress for students who speak English as an additional language	*Chapter 8*
	Positive changes in self-perception from being "part of a problem" to being "part of the solution"	*Chapter 9*
Study Skills	Key positive outcomes of mind mapping strategy included: improved study skills, greater clarity of required skills and learning outcomes	*Chapter 5*
	"Hard fun" accessible demonstrations increased student interactions and shifted students' passive learning approaches to active learning	*Chapter 4*
	Sketching revision lectures were effective in building students' study habits	*Chapter 4*
	Active participation in social movements	*Chapter 9*
Students' Agency	Students' personal sense of transformation	*Chapters 2, 8, & 11*

Outcomes

It's been a space where it's really supportive and very non-judgmental. Everybody had a challenge in their teaching they wanted to work on to improve their teaching helps you see that no-one is judgmental of each other, I think **helped make us work better as a team**. (CC2)

Also (I got) a better sense of what each other was going through, it really helps you to admire them as a professional and recognise them as a human being in that you felt, you felt more **like a team** we had multidisciplines going at the same time. (CC3)

I've gotten more time to spend thinking about these things. So it's enriching and embracing philosophy. It is extending it by formalizing it and it gave me **a project where I was collecting data, and it was measuring it and emphasising being a researchers versus being a teacher**, its quite exciting because the balance is always off. (CC3)

Ethics

Project Details

5.1 Plain English title*

Investigating the impact of a teaching intervention through an action research approach in Higher Education.

5.2 What are the aims of your research?*

The central aims of the research are to investigate the impact of redesigning a teaching activity in the course (insert title of course) through a systematic action research process. Linked to the central aim, the project will:

- Evaluate the level of student engagement with (insert)
- Evaluate the rigor of students assessment submissions, specifically (insert)
- Evaluate the level of confidence of students use of concepts/theories (insert)
- Investigate students experience of teaching staff approaches to curriculum re-design, provision of feedback, scaffolding of curriculum and assessment tasks, support of their learning needs, design learning tasks in face-to-face tutorials or on-line for external delivery (insert)

The redesign of the teaching activity has been informed by (insert theory/element of higher education pedagogy applied). The scope of action research according to McTaggart (1991, p. 34) involves enquiry 'that transforms the ways that teachers see themselves' and 'must be oriented to transforming the situations which place obstacles in the way of achieving educational goals, perpetuate ideological distortions and impede rational and critical work in educational situations' (cited in Hooley 2005, p. 69).

Through the UniSA Researching While Teaching Series 2022, I have identified a teaching challenge that I aim to overcome through the redesign of (insert specific aspects of course being redesigned). My research question is (insert the question).

5.3 List your research questions or hypotheses. Your protocol should clearly identify the questions which you want your research to answer. *

Example:

How does utilising elements of enabling pedagogy - specifically connecting to student lifeworlds, scaffolding, setting challenging tasks and transformation- increase students engagement with and understanding of politics and provide the students with greater understanding of the way that language is utilised to promote a world view (such as progressive/conservative) in the media?

5.4 Explain the need for, and value of, your research. Place the aims in the context of existing research or practice AND what your study does to add to existing literature. (You must include a list of not more than 10 key references as an attachment to support your answer to this question. These are to be attached to the Attachments section of this application).*

Schratz, M. (1992) Researching while teaching: an action research approach in higher education, *Studies in Higher Education*, 17(1), 81-95.

Schratz article provides a technical/methodological/critical lens to consider action research process.

Instruments for action research:
1.Instant feedback – handing out 2 questions at the end of the lesson to students
2.Questionnaire – multiple choice questions
3.Sentence completion – phrases indicating the beginnings of evaluative statements (such as feelings, opinions, values etc)
4.Open Letter – writing a letter to the class to support overcoming a challenge
5.Journal book – Tracking personal thoughts and professional experiences – can be adopted by both educator and student
6.Classroom observation – invite a person you trust to offer supportive observation of teaching in action (teaching squares)
7.Audio-visual – offers potential for 'critical' lens of teaching performance
8.Interview triangle – with in-put from educator, student & 3rd person

Homework

- Start drafting the template (with ethics application in mind)
- Read – Schratz; Kemmis; first 3 chapters of: