

Action Research and Transdisciplinarity – Implementation as the Knowledge Creation Process

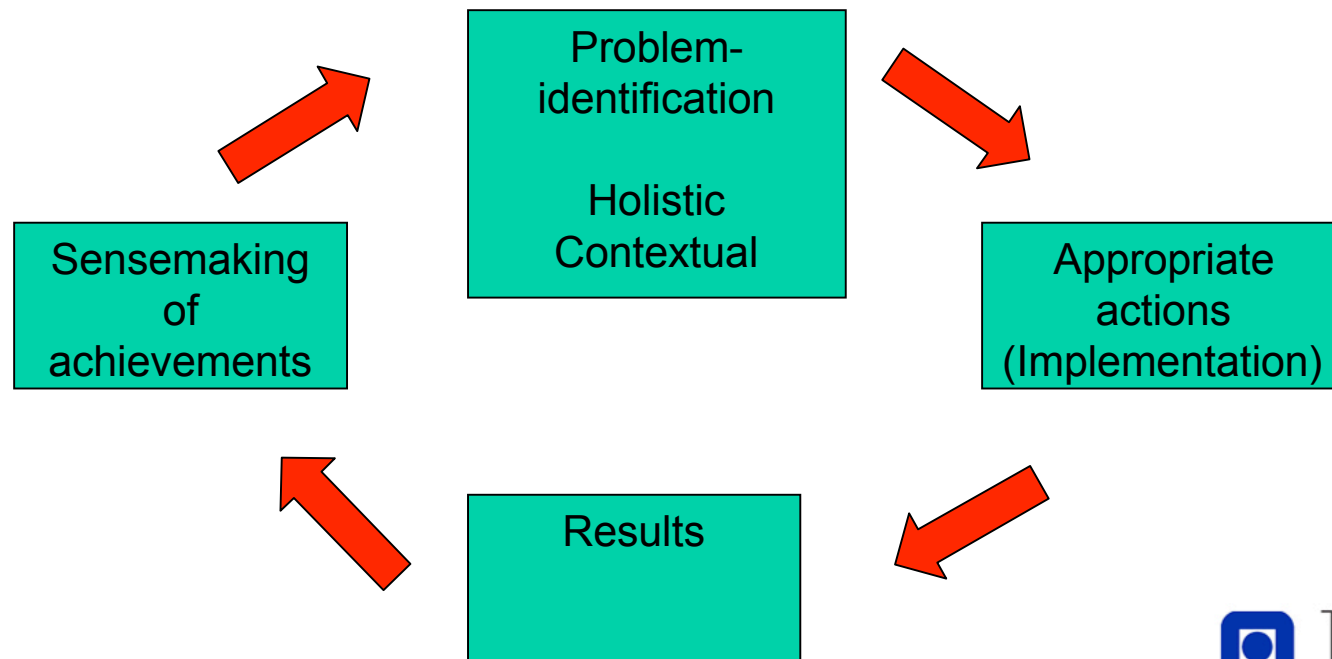
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Thesis – my main argument

In action research (AR) transdisciplinarity is a precondition for implementation (appropriate actions) in the ongoing research process



Action Research

- Knowledge generated through solving pertinent problems (**Context dependency**)
- Knowledge for problemowners and researchers (**Democracy in action**)
- Outcome: Practical solutions and research based knowledge (**Transdisciplinarity and Implementation**)
- Workability – a working solution as the quality stamp (**Validity – trustworthiness of solutions and findings**)
- Generalizability (**Assess contextual conditions**)

Some core concepts

- **Social science technique**
 - What is data and how to analyze data
- **Workform**
 - How to construct arenas for problem solving and learning
- **Action Research strategy**
 - The purposeful design of work forms and techniques need to solve the pertinent question

Transdisciplinarity - the main controversy

- Real life problems (issues) are multifaceted, contextual and holistic
- Science is particular, specialized and compartmentalized in professions
- AR faces real life problems and must accordingly give priority to relevance of knowledge, confronting rigor as the next challenge

Transdisciplinarity in AR

- We usually see transdisciplinarity as a scientific challenge – but it is also challenged by practice
- The extended focus on transdisciplinarity:
 - Professional (scientific) knowledge
 - Problem owners everyday knowledge (local theories)
- It is in implementation that everyday knowledge meets transdisciplinary knowledge
 - Local theories are at best mad sense by the implementers
 - In AR implementation is integrated in the research process

The dimensions of transdisciplinarity

- Professions in professional knowledge creation
 - Profession's power disciplines professionals
- Transdisciplinarity is to integrate new external knowledge to improve understanding
 - The conflict between in depth and broad understanding is simply wrong
- Implementation is the crucial factor – potentially making it a process of creating transdisciplinary knowledge

Transdisciplinarity and AR

- Reconfiguring disciplines
 - Question the validity of reductionism
 - Why would validity increase as a consequence of stripping the problem of its holistic character
- The AR alternative
 - Expanding the professional platform to include enable holistic perspectives
 - Research team with diverse backgrounds
 - Researchers with broad multi dimensional perspectives

The road to build – while walking it

- Change structure and practice of higher education away from knowledge silos
- Change funding structure for research
- Reduce professional associations control over knowledge silos
- Integrate praxis and theory in knowledge generation – implementation as the knowledge generation process

The road to be made.....

- Reduce the power of the disciplinary silos
 - In higher education
 - In society
- Connect research and teaching to real life holistic problems
- AR as a possible way