



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

## Educational Research Review

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/EDUREV](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/EDUREV)

## Review

## Integrating learning experiences across tertiary education and practice settings: A socio-personal account



Stephen Billett

School of Education and Professional Studies, Mt Gravatt campus, Griffith University, 176 Messines Ridge Road, MT GRAVATT QLD 4122, Australia

## ARTICLE INFO

*Article history:*

Received 18 July 2011

Revised 21 January 2014

Accepted 23 January 2014

Available online 4 February 2014

*Keywords:*

Integrating learning experiences

Occupational preparation

Learning

Personal and social

Reconciliation of experiences

## ABSTRACT

There is growing interest by governments, industry, students and employers in providing tertiary education students with experiences in practice settings (i.e., workplaces) and then integrating those experiences into their educational programs. Yet, the bases for organising and securing such integrations remain unclear. There are quite diverse explanatory accounts about what constitutes such integrations and, therefore, how they might be best enacted and supported within tertiary education. These accounts often differ through their privileging of particular emphases in their conceptualisations. One emphasis is on the qualities and characteristics of each physical and social setting (i.e., workplace and tertiary educational institution) and their potential contributions to students' learning, and reconciling what arises from experiences in each of these settings. Another privileges individuals as meaning makers and their reconciliation of what they experiences in these settings. Advanced here is an account that acknowledges and reconciles these two emphases. This explanatory account comprising a duality that emphasises both what each setting affords students, on the one hand, and, on the other, how learners elect to engage, construe and construct from each setting and then reconcile those experiences as directed by their interests, capacities and cognitive experience. This socio-personal explanation is supported by literature emphasising the contributions between the mediations of social and physical world, and individuals' construing and construction of them, but also the relations amongst them. Having discussed this account as a means to understand the process of integrating those experiences, some considerations of curriculum, pedagogy and epistemological factors are advanced.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## Contents

1. Integrating experiences across education and practice settings . . . . .	2
2. Work-based imperatives . . . . .	3
3. Conceptualising the integration of learners' experiences . . . . .	4
4. A situational account of integration . . . . .	5
5. Personal bases of integration. . . . .	7
6. Integration as shaped by socio-personal factors: a reconciliation. . . . .	9
7. Pedagogical, curriculum and epistemological considerations of integration . . . . .	10
8. Integrating experiences across tertiary education and practice settings . . . . .	12
References . . . . .	12

E-mail address: [s.billett@griffith.edu.au](mailto:s.billett@griffith.edu.au)<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2014.01.002>

1747-938X/© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Integrating experiences across education and practice settings

The provision of students' learning experiences in both tertiary educational<sup>1</sup> and practice settings (i.e., workplaces) has long and seemingly effectively served societal and personal needs for developing occupational skills and capacities. These arrangements have likely been the most long standing in medical and legal education (Elias, 1995), and through 'modern' forms of apprenticeships implemented since industrialisation in many nation states (Deissinger, 2002). The provision of workplace-based experiences have also been extended more recently in a greater range of education programs with specific occupational focuses, such as in the cooperative education movement in North America (Ricks, 1996). There are also well-established provisions of these experiences in teacher and nurse education programs, and now for many other occupations, particularly in, but not restricted to, the health-care sector. Yet, whilst the provision of workplace experiences has now become widely adopted, the intentional integration of the two sets of experiences for specific educational purposes is not so commonly practiced. Indeed, many initiatives in contemporary times, whilst explicitly emphasising the provision of work experience, appear less concerned with the integration of those experiences. Deliberate efforts to integrate work experiences in contemporary tertiary education appear to be first attempted within the Northern American cooperative education movement through the use of specific pedagogic practices to achieve this outcome: the co-op seminar (Grubb & Badway, 1998). Yet, for the government driven reforms that are emphasising the inclusion of work experiences in tertiary education need to be realised through actions based on a comprehensive explanatory account of what constitutes such an integration and how it might be enacted. Offering such an account is the focus of this article.

Certainly, there are diverse sets of explanatory accounts of what constitutes such integrations, and how they might be best realised in educational programs (Eames & Coll, 2010; Tynjala, 2008). Given the diversity of these accounts and distinct emphases within them, it is difficult to identify and enact the kinds of curriculum and pedagogic practices required to secure their intended educational purposes (Grollman & Tutschner, 2006; Stenstrom et al., 2006). Consequently, this review seeks to identify and articulate accounts of what might constitute such an integration of experiences and learning across both settings. It does this from offering perspective from two polar perspectives and then attempts a reconciliation of them. This reconciliation is informed by conceptions and theories of learning that provide helpful insights into how the integration of experiences across educational and practice settings might be explained and used to assist tertiary students' learning. Well-traded terms such as 'transfer' and 'adaptability' provide bases to explain the integration process from a cognitive perspective, when these are seen as taking knowledge from one situation and applying it to another. Yet, this kind of transfer is often used to refer to quite novel experiences, held to be quite limited and occurring infrequently given its demanding nature (Stevenson, 1991). Indeed, this very lack of transfer of learning from experiences in educational institutions is one reason why there is a growing interest in providing practice-based learning experiences in educational programs (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2010; Raizen, 1989). However, the integration of experiences in two settings is probably not best conceptualised as a process of transfer, because of its implications of transferring something from one place to another, as Lave (1991) critiqued long ago. Instead, transfer itself is more closely associated with students' learning arising from them negotiating and reconciling what they have experienced across two distinct kinds of physical and social settings (Billett, 2013). These negotiations and reconciliations necessitate accounting for contributions to learning arising from engaging in distinct kinds of activities and interactions afforded in each of these settings, how students are able to participate in them, and bases through which these processes of reconciliation arise as learning for students.

As is elaborated and discussed below, one approach to explain such integrations or reconciliations is to identify the characteristics and potential contributions of both the educational and practice settings to students' learning, and then align them with what needs to be learnt for the occupational practice that is the target for the educational provision. That is, identifying how and what each setting can contribute to achieving the particular educational purposes and then construct the curriculum and pedagogic means to utilise and integrate those contributions effectively. From this perspective, these settings are viewed as being objective physical and social environments that have particular activities and interaction that will potentially afford and yield to students' specific forms of knowledge (i.e., the kinds of knowledge utilised and accessed in each setting). The assumption here is that what is accessible and suggested in each setting is unequivocal and unambiguous. What is required in this account is for students to appropriate and integrate what is accessible in each setting. At its simplest, it is popularly held that 'theory' arises in educational settings and 'practice capacities' in work settings. The purpose of providing workplace experiences is, therefore, to link these two forms of knowledge that have sources in distinct social environments. So, procedurally, it may be suggested that experiences in the two settings will furnish students with the knowledge required for effective occupational performance. However, such a view is simplistic and incomplete.

Then, conversely, there are accounts of these integrations that strongly privilege students as active constructors of their knowledge that is accessible in each setting and their role in integrating what has been experienced (and learnt) in both settings. This view is premised on individuals' processes of construing and constructing knowledge (i.e., learning) from what they experience. In this account, learners' process of 'experiencing' is emphasised and seen in terms of how they subjectively

<sup>1</sup> Tertiary education here refers to that which is beyond compulsory schooling and includes university and vocational education, as well as provisions of apprenticeship arrangements when they are post compulsory education.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/355109>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/355109>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)