

Extending Practices... Building Networks



An Institute on
**Research in
Practice** in Adult
Literacy

St. John's
Newfoundland and Labrador
June 17-21, 2003

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Brother T. I. Murphy Learning Resource Centre
Community-Based Literacy Network
Literacy Development Council of Newfoundland and
Labrador
Memorial University of Newfoundland
National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources
Development Canada
RiPAL Network



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APPENDICES



Appendix 1 . Newsletters



**Research in
Practice** in Adult
Literacy
June 17 - June 21, 2003, St. John's, NL

Midnight Express

Issue 1

June 19, 2003

Some Hopes

- Finding out about alternate ways of reporting knowledge
- Confidence that I can do research outside an academic setting
- Making research user-friendly
- How to make policy people listen practically
- Find ways to validate practice as a source of research
- Meeting people
- Connecting of ideas from different perspectives
- People from many starting points, have space to be heard and voice what they need to say
- As a practitioner, how to have more of a conversation with the academics
- Naming the agenda of research priorities in "literacies"
- Continue to move the conversation forward to communicate about research and practice as a new way to talk together.

We felt we were...pushing each other to think further and differently. (Dancing in the dark, p. 78)

Looking Ahead

The Institute includes opportunities for all participants to gather and talk about learnings, reflections, insights and questions about research and / in practice. On Tuesday evening, we gathered in "Affinity" groups and outlined hopes, fears and questions. These outlines will be revisited on Saturday as one base for evaluation.

Following is a plan for gatherings in the days ahead (in Education 5004).

Thursday (3:30-4:30): Meet with your Affinity group to talk about:

- Since the start of the Institute, what have you been noticing? What stands out for you?
- What questions or issues about research in practice (or about research or practice) are coming up for you?

Friday (3:30-4:30): Meet with a group to explore one of the issues identified on Thursday.

Saturday (10:30-12:20): This will be a time for groups and individuals to share learnings, insights, challenges, hopes, questions and / or ... about research in practice. Possibilities for sharing include (but are not limited to):

- Sharing from courses
- Sharing about issues (e.g., issues discussed on Friday)
- Reflections on the Institute

Sharing may be done in one or more or "ways of knowing" [words, numbers, images, gestures, sound (McLeod, 1987) – as discussed in the Arts-Based Research course].

Do you have something you want to share? Please sign up in the Display Room or talk to Elsa.

Announcements

The bus for Portugal Cove leaves from Gushue Hall at 6:00 p.m. Thursday. Be there, or be square (not to mention left behind!).

Wednesday's hot topic: "What's for supper on Thursday night?"

Planning group meeting: Friday at lunch time (look for Elsa). All welcome.

Access to the computer lab (5th Floor, Education). Ask the lab monitor for a guest password. (Allow some time for password processing).

A limited number of free copies of the Alberta RiPAL Network publications are available for Institute participants to take home. Request forms are in the Display room.

Staying Connected

Twenty or more Institute participants attended Wednesday evening's session about Staying Connected after the Institute. Following an exchange of descriptions of research in practice endeavours in England, the US and across Canada, participants brainstormed possibilities for staying connected. As a first step, Marg Rose will initiate a NALD listserv (ripal@nald.ca). The initial list will include all Institute participants. If you do not want to be included on the listserv, please delete your name from the list in the Display room (posted beside the RiPAL Network display / computer).

Getting Started on Research in Practice

In light of our first morning session, Marina challenged us to consider in what ways the following activities are occurring during the Institute:

- Reading and responding to research?
- Reflecting on practice in light of research?
- Applying research to practice?
- Research being done?

Marina also suggested we consider:

- Who is a researcher?
- What constitutes research?

- Sally Crawford

Rapporteurs are Looking out for Your Interests

A number of Institute participants answered the invitation to serve as rapporteurs. Each rapporteur has committed time and energy to observing, listening and documenting the institute proceedings.

As well, the rapporteurs provide feedback to the planning committee about what's working and what needs adjustment.

Being a 'rapporteur' sounded exotic and fun. That's why I'm here [at the rapporteur's table].

Following are some of the adjustments that have been made in response to suggestions:

- Vegetarians will have more options for lunch.
- People who want more physical activity can attend a yoga session during the afternoon break. Check the Display room for details.
- Water will be available in the Display room.

A reminder: Participants have more or less familiarity with the vocabulary of research in practice. What seems common for some can sound like jargon to others.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, photos are not available for this issue. Watch for photos in the Friday edition. We welcome stories and announcements! See Mary M. and/or Judy M.



**Research in
Practice**

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Midnight Express

Issue 2

June 20, 2003

More Hopes

- To learn what people think about research
- Learning more about researchers themselves
- The "so-what" piece – how can I take this and translate it into my practice?
- Strong relationships with people who are like-minded
- Meeting movers and shakers
- Research tips
- Feeling "dialed-in"
- Start talking about future collaborations
- Build a national research in practice network
- Hear about real successes
- Bring together community with academia to understand each other
- Finding seeds of interest in the tension and diversity of us
- Help to focus and get direct, right questions
- Frankness and honesty regarding challenges and problems – get strategies
- Soak up collective wisdom
- Inspired
- Have a heck of a good time!



Getting Underway



Thanks to Anneke and Cheryl for the loan of their cameras.

Announcements

Institute participants from Ontario are invited to meet to talk about possibilities for supporting research in practice in their province. *When:* Friday at lunch time (look for Tannis or Sheila).

Francis Ennis and Bill Coultas have kindly invited Institute participants to a post-conference gathering and chowder supper at their "Old School House" in Tor Bay. Come in the afternoon to walk the coast, view some icebergs or enjoy a quiet read. Participants will need to arrange transportation (e.g., rental car pooling). If you wish to attend, please sign up in the Display room and watch for further information. (Vegetable soup will also be on offer.)

Curious about the Canadian Learning Institute? Go to www.hrdc-dhrc.gc.ca



Researchers discover secret to reaching wider audiences!

Read all about it in the Saturday issue!

Possibilities arising

From *Student participation in the research process*. What about a project that invites literacy students / learners from across Canada to take up research on a common topic?

From *Sharing research and reflection. The Journal needs you!* How about having a writing day at the end of a research in practice conference / institute for any participants who want to stay and write up their learnings, reflections or research? This could be a way to "make time to write." Or, how about weaving a strand of writing workshops into a conference?

From *Feminist approaches*. Thursday morning's session included time to read! Looking through a selection of readings was a welcomed change of pace for participants who chose the option.

"There's less 'us' and 'them' here than there has been at the other research in practice events."

— Evelyn Battell



A toast to Literacies!

Have you purchased your subscription yet? Pick up a form in the Display room.

We welcome stories, and sidebars, insights, and inspirations, quotes and quips.... See Mary N. or Judy M. to contribute to the Saturday issue of *Midnight Express*.



Research in Practice

June 17 - June 21, 2003, St. John's, NL

Midnight Express

Issue 3

June 21, 2003

National Aboriginal Day

June 21st is a special day to celebrate the unique heritage, cultures and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples in Canada. The day was chosen because of the cultural significance of the summer solstice. For more information, go to: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/had/bgr_e.h.

Saturday Schedule

8:30 Courses
10:00 Break
10:30 Time for evaluation
Issues / Reflections
to Learnings
Regional networking
12:30 Closing
1:00 Lunch

Emerging Issues

- Practical ways to connect researchers and practitioners / universities and programs
 - Whose role? How? About what?
 - How do we get heard?
 - How can change happen?
- Change/Advocacy
- Funding/Funders
 - How to get support for alternative models
 - How to document/report alternative forms of research / practice
 - How to legitimate research that's not part of dominant paradigm
- Who is missing?
 - How do we encourage more inclusive representation?
 - Race, culture, gender, ESOL, deaf, aboriginal, francophiles, numeracy instructors
- What's next?
 - For this network
 - Future conferences/institutes
 - Connecting this work with local initiatives

Thanks to Ann McCann for helping with the photocopying of this last issue. Thanks to Tony Dawe, Multi Media Lab in the Education Building for trying to download photos from a borrowed camera (thanks again Cheryl!) without its link-up cord.

Researchers discover secret to reaching wider audiences!

Participants in Arts-Based Research interviewed each other about their research projects. Using a *National Inquirer* approach prompted a stretch in thinking and resulted in the following headlines.

**Mayor Discovery!!
Tapping the Fountain of
Knowing:
Whole Body Exposure**

Books are Useless! Researcher says.

**Researcher Discovers through
Standing on Head-
World is Upside Down**

**Men Watch Your Zippers.
Woman Looks for Meaning in
Odd Places.**



The new Ontario Literacy Research Portal will connect you to a data base of adult literacy research in Ontario. As well you will find information and links to related adult literacy research in Canada and around the world. The portal is in a pre-launch stage and feedback is welcome – send it to mmoriarity@alphaplus.ca. To access the portal go to: <http://research.alphaplus.ca>

The RiPAL website is being extended. Go to www.nald.ca/ripal

How do we integrate being literacy researchers with being literacy teachers in such a way that it leads to action?

- Elsa Auerbach

What People Have Been Saying

Literacy research can obscure power relations.

You must always come from the heart when talking about research.

This week I need more time for processing!

When we try to package our work as literacy, we get in trouble.

If literacy is everywhere, does it water down the meaning of literacy?

It's good to see that there is research that is humanizing.

There is a buzz today (Friday); things are happening.

I appreciate having the same group sessions every morning.

It is time to celebrate the many voices – a number of voices are silenced because of the "boxes" that can frame research.

By dwelling in the creation of art pieces, meanings slip out.

Research is an extension of what I know intuitively, so I can run with it, use it...It is for me because it is my exercise in learning how to articulate what I do.

I'm interested in how research in practice can become a vehicle for transforming situations / issues that are problematic.

Everyone loved last night!!



Due to circumstances still beyond our control, photos are not available for this issue.

Working on the Midnight Express has been a grand adventure. Judy says: "If we can do this against all odds, think what we could do when the wind is at our back!" Go Well, Mary NL and Judy M.

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