SESSION ABSTRACT

Knowledge-Transfer between Theory and Practice in Educational Anthropology

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Abstract: "Academic anthropologists" often provide a 'critical perspective' in discourse and practitioners are expected to provide a clear solution. Academics tend to do the work independently as individuals, practitioners often work in multidisciplinary teams, the work is judged by what they can do and not just by what they know. A contradiction is emerging between the increasing interest in practical anthropology and the lack of recognition of the competencies of practical anthropology.

In our panel we will discuss how theoretical approaches in Educational Anthropology influence and shape the work of anthropologists in the field of Education – and vice versa. Many anthropologists structure their workshops, lectures, projects, and daily work on the basis of anthropological theories that offer specific approaches to the field of Education. We want to reflect on how experiences in applied anthropology respectively in the field of Education flow back into theoretical discussions in anthropology.

Therefore, we invite anthropologists who are engaged in applied Educational Anthropology to give insight to their practice as well as the underlying theoretical concepts. Likewise, we welcome contributions on theories in this specific field that are informed by practice. We suggest that the contributors open the field for discussion, i.e., through bringing up (open) questions, unsolved problems or controversial considerations. There will be space for discussion to discover new ways of theorizing as well as to learn more about theoretical basics for applied work in the field of educational anthropology.

SESSION SCHEDULE

Tuesday, September 27, 2022 | Slot 1 | Room 1
Moritz Hentrich: Experiences of a newcomer researcher in upper Bavaria

Martina Sturm: As a cultural and social anthropologist among teachers: A change of perspective

Zinaida Vasilyeva & Nika Dubrovsky: How to teach diversity and political imagination? Insights from the project "Anthropology for Kids"

Tuesday, September 27, 2022 | Slot 2 | Room 1

Maria Steindl: From the longing for cultural guarantees

Katrin Prankl (evtl. mit Katharina Richter-Kovarik): Activist mediation practice in Volkskundemuseum Wien

Tuesday, September 27, 2022 | Slot 3 | Room 1

Kim Chi Tran: Socio-ecological Learning in Mongolian Herder Community of Practice - Youth's Perspective.

Magdalena Steger: Scaling down and empowering Theory - Anthropology of (Digital) Education in Practice

SESSION PAPERS

Experiences of a newcomer researcher in upper Bavaria
Moritz Hentrich, Bruno Konrad

Since summer 2021 I carried out two researches in a middle school in upper Bavaria. My first visit was in the context of a seminar by Susanne Binder and Doris Englisch-Stölner. Here I saw the opportunity to lay the fundament of my bachelor's thesis, which I planned to base on another empirical research in the same school. In my short contribution, I want to provide a student's perspective on anthropology in education. Being a newcomer to the field and empirical research in general, I want to convey my experiences made in the field and give a point of view of possible challenges and chances of practical anthropology. With that I want to address how methods applied in the field can be challenged when exposed to children and juveniles, how the communication and networking with as well teachers and pupils may be used advantageous and how language and expression can shift the juvenile's perception of the researcher in the field. For that I want to address how pupils perceived my role as researcher, what technique helped to build up closeness and trust and how I think those techniques can be used by other researchers for their research.

As well, I will tell some insights of my two researches, from which the first one was about the topic of migration in the educational field and the second about memory culture and cultural heritage.

As a cultural and social anthropologist among teachers: A change of perspective
Martina Sturm

As a cultural and social anthropologist among teachers: A change of perspective

Educational anthropology addresses anthropological questions in various educational contexts and deals with questions of cultural diversity and capturing different perspectives. This includes understanding other life worlds beyond the pure documentation of 'foreign' contexts, which can also relate to aspects of one's own society. The author experienced this change of perspective, which is essential for the discipline, due to her dual role as an anthropologist working in teacher training, and examines it in more detail in the present article. It bases its theoretical grounds on Thomas Hylland Eriksen's concept of *homeblindedness*, whilst it borrows the methodology from the phenomenological vignette and anecdotal research.

Individual aspects of the different perspectives on teachers and social and cultural anthropologists are illustrated using the author's vignettes about her own experiences with this dual role. Unlike social scientists, teachers are under general suspicion among broad sections of the population for many reasons and are often prejudged as lazy and not to be taken seriously. On the other side of the discourse, the fixation of many teachers on the victim role and often the lack of self-reflection skills should be mentioned. Interestingly, the latter is regarded as an essential requirement for successful teaching during the training despite being only taught superficially in the studies. Here, educational anthropology and its approaches to reflexivity and a change of perspective could make a valuable contribution. Likewise, anthropological approaches to privilege and discrimination, translated into the field of education, could help unmask schools as places where social inequalities are reproduced and, thus, contribute to a fairer education system.

How to teach diversity and political imagination? : Insights from the project "Anthropology for Kids"
Nika Dubrovsky, Zinaida Vasilyeva

Anthropology has a long tradition of studying foreign societies. "Other" ways of life provided researchers with a kind of mirror to critically rethink their own societies and question norms, practices, and values that usually remained invisible and taken for granted in their home countries. Thus, anthropology developed a powerful and efficient methodological toolkit to learn reflexivity and communication, which, however, often remains unavailable for the broad audience. Yet, it is impossible to imagine the contemporary world without international and intercultural communication; and the so-called "soft skills" helping building and maintaining dialogue among different people around the world are crucial for fostering peaceful and sustainable life. In our paper, we will present the project "Anthropology for kids" (A4kids), which aims at "helping us to discover both the points of diversity and unity in how people have lived around the globe and throughout the times." (https://a4kids.org/about/) The project was launched by the artist Nika Dubrovsky in 2008 as an attempt to engage children and adults in critical thinking about what is school, the state, the city, the gender, the family, and as a way to promote the idea that all these social institutes and categories are, in fact, human creations and therefore can be collectively changed. The project entails developing books and

pedagogical materials, which will enable parents, teachers, and facilitators to discuss complex societal topics in a playful way and develop active political imagination among kids and teens.

From the longing for cultural guarantees
Maria Steindl

One decade of working in the field of intercultural competence as a social- and cultural anthropologist leads me to focus on a "mode of culture" more than to explain culture as something static. One first experience was to disappoint expectations because many organizations, departments and their staff members just wanted to know „How Turkish, Serb, African, Arabian … people work" and therefore I asked myself how to best deal with that. Even participants in my workshops about cultural diversity, who were able to look behind the curtain, were convinced that there exists a way to exemplify how Turkish parents raise their children, for example. Based on this expectation, there was a need to deconstruct cultural guarantees based on ethnicity and nationality. One relatively successful way to do that, was to look at the own „culture" and its alleged guarantees. The experience, how complex and diverse the own culture is, opened a door to imagine that this could be similar within other cultures as well. The theoretical approach on in- and out-groups and the respective difference of perspectives helped to understand that culture is more a process than a fact. My experience of working in this field was mostly linked to so-called integration in the broadest sense. One of the strategies to go beyond prejudices against different ethnic groups was to have a deepened look at other identity-dimensions than national or ethnic belongings. That meant to have a look at personal traits, on political stances, on gender dimensions, on challenges because of age etc. The second strategy was to demonstrate and to experience how we construct cultural behaviour day by day. This allowed the workshops' participants to see that culture is a process, is the way how we deal with each other in everyday social practice.

Activist mediation practice in Volkskundemuseum Wien
Katrin Prankl, Katharina Richter-Kovarik,

How can we imagine a good life together in society? What does it mean and what would it take? In our mediation work we deal with changes in society and with the following questions: how can socio-political connections be recognized and how we can analyse them?

Our concepts involve reflecting critically and respectfully on both theory and practice as well as using our methods to break down and question stereotypes in our mediation programmes.

Our programmes deal with themes like migration, stereotypes and gender stories. Many of our special exhibitions explored topics such as protest, women's suffrage and equal treatment, always including historical perspectives.

How can action spaces be opened up and to what extent can mediation programmes be activist? The position of the mediator plays a role in the concepts and reveals one's own attitude as well as the integration and logic of the museum as an institution.

What would educational programmes look like if they were curated activistically and

what opportunities for action would they offer? Thinking of a museum as a public institution that is not neutral and is understood as a learning institution opens up a theoretical discourse that has been going on for a long time. It is central to start from there and to continue developing new programmes on the basis of concepts and projects that we have already realised in the Volkskundemuseum Wien as well as to reflect on the methods over and over again.

What challenges do art and cultural mediation face with regards to precarious working conditions and to the question of community and target group work, which continues to generate exclusion and stereotypes? How can a process be carried out over a longer period of time and how can we reach out to those who are interested in thinking about how programmes can be conceived? In other words, rather than trying to work together within a certain framework, we should attempt to rethink the framework.

Socio-ecological Learning in Mongolian Herder Community of Practice - Youth's Perspective.
Tran Kim Chi

Learning is always situated within a specific space constituted by the temporality, spatiality, and sociality in which learners live (Lave and Wenger 1991). Seeing education as a construct that goes beyond the schooling experience and includes other forms of situated learning, allows us to engage with education as the "cultural specific practices" by which diverse knowledges define the "educated persons" (Levinson and Holland 1996). Through this paper, I seek to add youth's experience of socio-ecological learning in the Mongolian herder community of practice to current conversations on how theories and practices in education anthropology can contribute to the decentring of adult-centric and institutional driven dominant conceptions of education. The "communities of practice" concept (Lave and Wenger 1991) is a useful theoretical tool for situating learning in a given social community where learning is framed as participation in sociocultural practices that inform membership in the community. I use this concept to unpack the structure and practices of the socio-ecological learning that underlines children of Mongolian herders' participation in the herder community of practice. In this paper, I demonstrate how *khot-ail*, a form of communal living among Mongolian herders, enables intragenerational and intergenerational knowledge co-construction through practices of playing (Katz 2004) and meeting obligations (Sneath 1993). The Mongolian youth's experience of socio-ecological learning highlights the importance of recognizing rural young learners as knowledge holders of the intimate relations between humans and our living environments. environments.

Scaling down and empowering Theory - Anthropology of (Digital) Education in Practice
Magdalena Steger, Jelena Tosic

The question how anthropological knowledge can be transferred, translated and made utilizable in different educational contexts (e.g. schools, teacher education) as well as how this form of practice impacts back on theoretical knowledge is at the core of Educational Anthropology. The paper will build on approaches and tools developed in the on-going Erasmus+ Project "Digital Inclusion" and attempts to offer an in-depth insight in the mutually constitutive processes of: scaling down theoretical knowledge to be accessible and relevant in the context of (digitalized) Teacher Education. Concepts

such as inclusion or integration, which are often used and redefined in theoretical work in the field of education, make little sense without considering the structures and conditions under which education happens in practice. By building on the experiences of teachers, the Digitclue project tries to avoid these and similar pitfalls by reflecting back on theory.