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Cultural Historical Activity Theory and my world of work

Discovery of the Finnish school of CHAT halfway through my Doctoral thesis fundamentally changed the conception of my research - into the implementation of skills development in the informal construction sector. My research interest derives from a corporate human resource management career mainly focused upon industrial relations during the pre and post-apartheid decades, followed by a generalist human resource consultancy specialising in the implementation of the transformation statutes of Skills Development and Employment Equity. An initial background in Sociology underpins my further studies in South African Employment and Labour law, Constitutional, and Administrative Law. Currently, I manage a social network focused upon skills development and learning in the world of work.

I am now interested in researching how the dual legacies of colonialism and apartheid continue to influence both education and training. Despite an internationally acclaimed Constitution, and a framework of supporting statutes, implementation remains problematic. CHAT provides an eminently suited approach: the Marxist influence upon Vygotsky, providing concepts, amongst others: of historicism, and contradictions; allied with Vygotsky's theory of learning and development including concepts of the Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding. Consequently, I aim to consider the object and outcomes in the context of the statutory frameworks for post-school education and training, and basic education.

References

Hammond, S. F. (2023). *A slip twixt cup and lip Adopting a cultural-historical activity theoretical approach to reviewing the disjuncture between skills development strategic intent and implementation outcomes*. [Conference Paper & Poster]. Wits Centre for Researching Education and Labour & Zurich University of Teacher Education. Unpublished – included in current projects below.

Hammond, S. F. (2022). *Cultural-historical investigations into the dialectics of skills development implementation and occupational identity in the informal construction Small and Micro Enterprise workplace* University of Cape Town]. OpenUCT. Doctoral Thesis.

https://open.uct.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11427/37180/thesis_ebe_2022_hammond%20sylvia%20frances.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y

Prior to my discovery of CHAT, the following are examples of previous publications, which adopted qualitative approaches to analyse skills development, labour law, and aspects of work and learning.

Hammond, S., & Cattell, K. S. (2017, 4-6 September 2017). Sizwe Banzi is dead. The aberrant case of construction sector identity. 33rd Annual ARCOM Conference, Cambridge, UK.

Hammond, S., Bowen, P. A., & Cattell, K. S. (2016). The roadside work-seeker phenomenon in the South African informal construction sector. 32nd Annual ARCOM Conference 5-7 September 2016, Manchester, UK.

Hammond, S. (2016). *Understanding the Skills Development Act* (Second Edition). JUTA. (2011)

Hammond, S. (2015a). Learnerships, Internships, In-Service Training, and Graduate Development. In P. Abbott (Ed.), *Ethical Competence in HR Management Practice* (Vol. 1, pp. 133-141). SA Board for People Practices.

Hammond, S. (2015b). South African Labour Law Amendments: Positive aspects and unintended consequences for skills development. *US-China Law Review*, 12(12), pp. 965-983.

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17265/1548-6605>

and a related book review

Hammond, S. (2014). The Architecture of Innovative Apprenticeship, edited by Ludger Deitmer, Ursel Hauschildt, Felix Rauner and Helmut Zelloth. A Review. *E-Journal of International and Comparative Labour Studies (EJICLS)*, 3(1 January 2014), 157-159. <https://bit.ly/34wEYRc>

Current Projects

1. Update handbook (3rd Edition) to *Understanding the Skills Development Act* - with new inclusion of Understanding the National Qualifications Framework Act.
2. Book Review Hopwood & Sannino (Eds.) (2024) *Agency and Transformation Motives, Mediation and Motion*.
3. Converting Doctoral Thesis into book publication
4. Review & update unpublished conference paper for Journal submission: *A slip twixt cup and lip Adopting a cultural-historical activity theoretical approach to reviewing the disjuncture between skills development strategic intent and implementation outcomes*.
5. Journal article. Continuities in South African historical socio-economic exclusion to contemporary education, skills, and the labour market: A cultural-historical activity approach.
6. Reading project. Update myself on work of Brett Bligh and Annalisa Sannino on Work Integrated Learning (WIL) (WILCHAT).