

Preface - In Search of Interdisciplinarity

This is the second volume in a series of publication of essays taken from the Comprehensive Examinations of students enrolled in the PhD program in Human Studies at Laurentian University¹. It is comprised of the minor component of the examination.

The purposes of this component of the Comprehensive Examination is to review the studies dealing with interdisciplinarity, to distinguish between disciplinary research and inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary research, and to show how the PhD research projects are interdisciplinary in nature.

This collection of essays can be divided into five parts: early childhood education, language contact and the issue of grammatical gender, regional and organizational studies, University studies, and historical studies.

For starters, Leanne Génier-Bédard based her research on various disciplines combining economy, cognitive neuroscience, cognitive psychology and psychosociolinguistics to analyze the impact of educational child care services on the overall development of children.

Then, Shuaa Mutawally focuses on the problem of children with physical and mental impairments who are at risk of developing deficiencies in social skills. The author aims at conceiving an intervention program that can be implemented in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. To do this, she uses the exogenous interdisciplinarity theory to compare three play-based intervention programs in order to identify the best features suitable for the Saudi culture and context.

¹Cf. Reguigui, Ali (dir.), *Perspectives on Interdisciplinarity / Perspectives sur l'interdisciplinarité*, Sudbury, Human Sciences Monograph Series 13/Série monographiques en sciences humaines 13, 2013.

Working on the assumption that reading would support the resilience of adults who practiced reading in childhood, Bettina Brockerhoff-Macdonald follows by presenting the narrative inquiry as a method for interdisciplinary research.

With respect to language contacts and the issue of grammatical gender, Valérie Raymond shows how an interdisciplinary approach is needed to understand the attribution of grammatical gender to words of foreign origin used in French. She makes an assessment of the contribution of several disciplines playing a key role in this subject, ranging from linguistics, statistics, geolinguistics and sociopsychology.

With regard to regional and organizational studies, Elisabeth Labrie frames the theoretical foundations of the concept of region, establishes the main disciplines dealing with the subject and shows how these different disciplines contribute to an interdisciplinary knowledge that allows the development of a project on the francophone region of Northern Ontario.

For her part, Lianne Pelletier shows the interdisciplinary nature of communication using cultural marketing as its scope. She concludes that the success of cultural marketing depends on interdisciplinarity.

Aysylu Valitova continues with the problem of conflicts in workplaces, which also implies culture and communication, and concludes that the solution to these conflicts finds its roots in an interdisciplinary approach combining personal dynamics, psychosocial phenomena, organizational and social systems.

In the University component, Yasseer Ghoreishi examines the benefits for the student to learn about fields of specific knowledge to develop skills that allow him to provide solutions during interdisciplinary experiments.

Denis Mayer's interest lies in the evolution of disciplines, and of disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs in post-secondary institutions. He shows how a research on first generation students in a post-secondary institution would benefit from an interdisciplinary approach.

Sharla Peltier looks at the issue of indigenous knowledge within the academic institution. She presents a critical review of the Western constructions of knowledge based on indigenous knowledge and argues that Aboriginal knowledge is based on a "deviant interdisciplinarity".

In the historical studies component, Emily Weiskopf-Ball studies traditional foods to understand how minority groups, through their linguistic, cultural and religious roots, eventually resist the forces of assimilation exerted by majority groups.

Finally, Sue Heffernan describes the interdisciplinary foundation in the impact of the Cold War on the town of Moosonee, Ontario.