

Student experiences of generic competency learning: a case of practitioner research

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The world of work has been significantly transformed as a result of economic globalisation and technological change. In order to meet the demands for a more flexible and adaptable workforce, sets of generic competencies have been developed across the industrialised world. Australia's generic competencies, the Mayer Key Competencies, have been incorporated into courses and curricula. A five-year Ph.D. research study by a teacher researcher has investigated student experiences of generic competency learning within a TAFE curriculum. As well as highlighting the complex interactionist and interpretive processes involved in student appropriation of generic competencies, it has also identified critical issues within practitioner research.

This paper addresses critical issues in practitioner research through a discussion of the importance of theorisation in framing, conducting and reporting practitioner research and the methodological implications of research theorisation. The paper also investigates the significance of practitioner 'connoisseurship' in understanding the subjective experiences of research participants. Also explored is the usefulness of practitioner research to research participants and other practitioners as well as to the research community.