

Definitions and Knowledge in Successive Educational Media



**A presentation at The Second International Conference on
Pedagogies and Learning: Meanings under the microscope
on 18 September 2005**

**at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia
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Deconstructing Definitions

Definitions up to now have generally been

- ◆ circular, so dictionary definitions are often useless
- ◆ 2-dimensional, incomplete, lacking in full dimensionality
- ◆ decontextualized, not specifying related phenomena
- ◆ culture-bound or monocultural:
 - not even bilingual dictionaries explain the cultural context
- ◆ cross-sectional, changing over time but not longitudinal
- ◆ different depending on the discipline or perspective
- ◆ not agreed upon in new fields, definitions are in contention
- ◆ influenced by the position and power of definers
- ◆ changing with technological advances or new media

Defining Understanding

- Contextualizing concepts dynamically, not absolutely
 - Cultural, temporal and disciplinary contexts
- Defining concepts in practice vs. abstractly
- Grasping the full dimensionality of concepts
- Recognizing other disciplines and viewpoints
- Seeing relations, cumulative interdependence
- Global outlook as the default context
- Sorting out content, media and perception
- Tracing changes through successive media

Understanding Knowledge

- Knowledge is (living potential) to know now
- Professional knowledge is expertise
- It is not a thing or commodity that can be stolen
- It cannot be transmitted to others (cf. Socrates)
- It is most often confused with information
- Steve McCarty confuses it with wisdom 😊
- Nevertheless professors ought to profess
 - to uphold academic ways of distinguishing truth
 - because learners construct their own knowledge

Successive Educational Media

- “All life’s a stage” - e.g., now “f2f”, “offline”
- With new media all previous are redefined
- Innumerable virtual learning environments
- Accelerating development of new media
- Accelerating educational applications
- Accelerating uptake by
 - educators, and for professional development
 - learners, in school or work, formal or informal
- Effects on definitions and knowledge

Podcasting as an Example

- ◆ iPod .mp3 “music player” and iTunes
- ◆ Criteria for popularization of technologies
- ◆ Community, Web services form around it
- ◆ Effects on previous media
- ◆ Effects on definitions and knowledge
 - ◆ E.g., “offline” gains a more positive meaning
- ◆ Educational uses suitable to the media
 - ◆ Benefits of portable sound files and recording
 - ◆ Listening to foreign languages or accents
 - ◆ Spoken Libraries
 - ◆ Podcasting blog example: Japancasting

Japancasting

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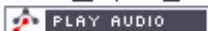


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Thursday, 01 September 2005

Similar Proverbs in Chinese, Japanese and English?

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This may be one of the first multilingual podcasts. At a women's college in Western Japan teaching an intensive course on translation, there were two Chinese and two Japanese students, so I had them each explain in English as well as in their native language. Five proverbs were selected, and the question was if there was a similar way of thinking in the three cultures. Intercultural researchers usually focus on cultural differences, but the existence of similar proverbs arising independently in the East and the West would point to universally human wisdom. The five proverbs are: 1) Actions speak louder than words, 2) Advice when most needed is least heeded, 3) Look before you leap, 4) Penny wise, pound foolish, and 5) Ignorance is bliss.

Tags:

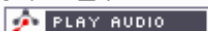
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- Japanese
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Wednesday, 24 August 2005

Questions about Japan from Developing Countries

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An earlier podcast recorded a presentation on "Japanese People and

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About this Podcast

Podcast Name:
Japancasting

Podcaster:
Steve McCarty

Description:
Japancasting! for studying Japan or English as a Foreign Language. Free educational broadcasts on Japanese culture, history, society, educational system and comparative religions. Ancient legends are analyzed with discussion questions to discover East Asian values. There are interviews with professors and broadcasts by students at women's colleges. There are also links to scripts with some photos and illustrations for reading while listening, and links to online sources for further research. Your host in English and Japanese is Steve McCarty, Professor at Osaka Jogakuin College and President of the World Association for Online Education (WAOE).

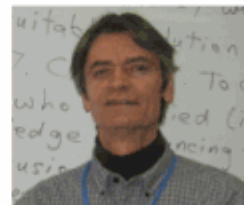
Language:
English

Contact Info:
mccarty@mail.goo.ne.jp
Osaka
Japan

Categories:
International — Japanese
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▶ Trying to Learn Spanish	Rich		Japancasting! Japancasting! for those studying Japan or English as a Foreign Language. Among the free educational broadcasts: comparative religions, Japanese culture and contemporary issues such as the educational system. Ancient legends are analyzed with discussion questions to discover East Asian values. Listen to interviews with professors and broadcasts by students at this women's college in Japan. There are links to scripts with some photos and illustrations for reading while listening, and links to online sources for further research. Your host in English and Japanese is Steve McCarty, Professor at Osaka Jogakuin College and President of the World Association for Online Education (WAOE). Read his online library of publications. <div style="text-align: right;">RSS</div>
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Theatre Arts Education	1		
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```
[Text ...] <a href="http://waoe.org/steve/epublist.html"> online library</a>
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For Further Research

- "Cultural, Disciplinary and Temporal Contexts of e-Learning and English as a Foreign Language" *eLearn Magazine: Research Papers*, April 2005:
<http://www.elearnmag.org/subpage.cfm?section=research&article=4-1>
- Spoken Internet To Go: Popularization through Podcasting.
The JALT CALL Journal, 1 (2), August 2005 [reprinted at]:
http://www.waoe.org/president/podcasting_article/
- ✓ World Association for Online Education (WAOE) Spoken Libraries project
http://www.waoe.org/president/spoken_libraries/
- ✓ Japancasting:
<http://stevemc.blogmatrix.com>
- All linked from the online library Bilingualism and Japanology Intersection, an Asian Studies WWW Virtual Library (based at ANU/Canberra) 4-star site:
<http://www.waoe.org/steve/epublist.html>
- E-mail: waoe@waoe.org

APPENDIX

KEYWORDS: contextualization, discipline, paradigm, expertise, profess

ABSTRACT

... to brainstorm with international colleagues the implications of the recent research paper: "Cultural, Disciplinary and Temporal Contexts of e-Learning and English as a Foreign Language." A framework for understanding concepts in new disciplines in their full dimensionality also sheds light on why definitions of concepts such as in e-learning have been so inadequate. Consider the supreme irony of Plato's Socrates: "would that knowledge [or wisdom] could be poured from the full cup into the empty one." It offers faint praise to interlocutors believing that someone can have "lots of knowledge" that can either be transmitted from teacher to student or stolen off the Web. Knowledge is more like expertise: when the actual author walks, for better or worse, his or her knowledge also walks, leaving only information that others need their own background knowledge or expertise to understand. ... Choosing educational content to profess involves turning specialist information into generalist communication, offering interaction opportunities through which students construct their own knowledge. Another metaphor is that, after plays became an established genre, Shakespeare could write that "all life's a stage." Each successive medium redefines the previous media and renders them identifiable in terms of paradigms. Concepts such as "offline," "f2f" and even "analog" used as a loanword in Japanese discourse arose from the newly established digital online media, rendering previously taken-for-granted assumptions about classroom education identifiable as a paradigm. A second meaning of "stage" could apply to successive educational media, where for example CAI, CALL and Network-based Language Learning are not defined in the abstract but in practice, contextualized in the historical development of a discipline. Constructivism arose *contemporaneously* with online education, but they may actually represent separable disciplines, since online education is liable to be adopted without constructivism in most educational cultures. ... will report on one test of the universality of constructivism with online education across cultures. There are cross-cultural dimensions also in the salience of distance and the importance of face in contrasting Australia with Japan, cultural contexts that affect the uptake of distance education even if "Webagogues" realize that space and time barriers are now largely surmountable.