

Art, academe and the language of knowledge

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Speaking recently with my nine-year-old son's class teacher, an issue of concern that was raised was his persistent habit of drawing – in his literacy book. For the teacher this was not acceptable. She reminded him that he should only produce pictures where they are appropriate, or asked for; although recognising the pleasure he found in this activity, she issued him with a separate book, of unlined paper, to draw in. Like many children of his age, the neat distinction between text and image, apparently frustrates his need to articulate his thoughts.

(Smith: 2007)

In this chapter I pursue the effects for knowledge, pedagogy and learning of practice-led research in art and design education. I examine how postgraduate students of art, design and museology at the Institute of Education, University of London, explore and critically engage with the implications of art as a situated research practice. In particular, I foreground the complexities and antinomies surrounding methodology when students negotiate the practice of making in a studio context that encourages them to analyse their subject identities as teachers/lecturers, students, artists, academics and researchers. The expectation of academe and the position which language (written, spoken and visual) occupies is central to the formation of these identities, negotiations and dialogues. I will demonstrate, through discussion of work produced by students, that the traditional division between engagements with art making as a 'sensory experience' and with reading, writing and research as 'rational activities', presents a false dichotomy that needs to be reappraised in the debates surrounding practice-led research and its potential for pedagogy.

Over the last two decades there have been heated discussions and a plethora of publications about art practice and its relationship to the dominant research culture in mainstream higher education (Candlin 2001; Macleod and Holdridge 2006; Elkins 2008; Mason 2008; Sullivan 2008). In the United Kingdom practice-based doctorates were introduced into art universities (formerly art schools and colleges) in the 1990s; however, the desirability and viability of art as an *assessable* research practice remains a topic for debate. Some deliberations echo those from the 1960s and 1970s when the Coldstream Report paved the way for diplomas in Art and Design (1960) and Bachelor of Arts (1974). These standardised qualifications brought requirements

for written/theoretical components, which were seen, by some, to be pressing art too deeply into an academic mould. Other discussions have focused on the integrity of art practice and art education in a knowledge-based economy, which has shifted expectations of how research and knowledge will be used (Pierce 2009; Rogoff 2010). The Bologna Process (1999) (see <http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna.pdf>) has also loomed large in many debates (Roelstraete 2010). Twenty-nine European countries signed up to the Bologna Declaration (1999) with an intention to make European higher education more compatible and comparable. However, its mechanisms for regulating and standardising academic qualifications and its homogenising tendencies can be seen to have little regard for the creative importance of art's ostensibly aberrant *modus operandi*. In contradistinction, promises of legitimacy, recognition and parity for a discipline which has resided in the margins of the higher education framework have been welcomed by many commentators (Frayling 1999; Sullivan 2005) who also hold that an acknowledgment of art's contribution to the field of knowledge is long overdue.

Simultaneously, in older established universities, cautious interest in alternative research paradigms has been quietly burgeoning. Typically, these institutions have held art at a distance; as a subject for historical and theoretical study. Whilst as a practice it has been viewed as a pleasing but unsystematic 'other' to the ostensibly rigorous research concerns of (even the newer) academic disciplines. More specifically, the field of educational research, which for many years has been dominated by social science methodologies (Cohen *et al.* 2011), has witnessed a broadening of approach, not only to acknowledge the influence of multimodality and e-learning on the nature of research but also to reflect a diminution of the certainty implied by dominant modernist meta-narratives. Unsettling the old assurances of knowledge has increasingly led to greater scrutiny of accepted scientific method within and across disciplines (a three-century legacy, of the dual influences of Cartesian logic, and Baconian empiricism) and thereby questioning of its reliance solely on empirical or measurable evidence. When phenomena such as reflexivity and transdisciplinarity and heterogeneity emerge and are theorised into the field of epistemology so too the structure and concept of knowledge changes (Gibbons *et al.* 1994; Holert 2009).

Research and knowledge has to be useful for communities, individuals and situations. Particular circumstance will necessitate different approaches to research and definitions of what counts as knowledge. Wilkins (2011) points to the importance of local knowledge which gives agency to educators and enables practitioner researchers to desist from adopting unquestioningly something that someone else has labelled 'best practice'. This is something that has been argued for some time and, as Eraut (1994) has outlined, also necessitates that universities rethink their role in enabling the research processes of professionals.

The barriers to practice-centred knowledge creation and development ... are most likely to be overcome if higher education is prepared to extend its role from that of creator and transmitter of generalizable knowledge to that of the enhancing and the knowledge creation capacities of individuals and professional communities.

This would involve acknowledging that much knowledge creation takes place outside the higher education system, but is nevertheless limited by the absence of appropriate support structures and the prevailing action orientation of practical contexts.

(Eraut 1994: 57)

According to Kress (2010), not only is educational research faced with ‘the unsettling and negation of canonical forms – of genres, for instance – but also of the means of representation: image is displacing word. Process(es) and practic(es) are the focus of attention’. Practices that embrace visuality and embodiment are becoming ever more germane and potent for bringing into focus and enabling new understandings of particular educational phenomena. The research potential of art practice in education has been predicated on an understanding that such interdisciplinary approaches and mixed methodologies can be creative models for producing new insights (Eisner 1998, 2004; Prentice 2000; Hickman 2007; Holert 2009). Eisner, in particular, opines what he sees as an ironic situation in which ‘qualities as fundamental and powerful as those that constitute art have been so neglected in research methodology’ (1998: 154). It may be that an intransigent interpretation of both art and methodology are amongst the root causes for this neglect in certain sectors of academe. This is particularly relevant in the more general field of education where art is often interpreted as a practice that bears little resemblance to its contemporary manifestations and concerns (Downing and Watson 2004; Leitch 2006).

In reality, contemporary artists are well placed, as Sullivan (2005) notes, to adopt many patterns ‘that dislodge discipline boundaries, media conventions, and political interests, yet still manage to operate within a realm of cultural discourse as creator, critic, theorist, teacher, activist and archivist’ (p. 225). Sullivan’s observations are increasingly manifest in the profiles of artist educators who choose to engage in Masters and Doctoral level research in art education. Operating from these positions appears seamless and unproblematic in Sullivan’s depiction, but in fact many artist educators experience tensions and do not find universal recognition of the benefit of supporting a mix of subject identities. Moreover, the specifics of institutional expectation and authority can lead individuals to feel as if they are being pulled in different directions. Students embarking on research propositions in art education that draw on practice-led approaches often find themselves negotiating a ‘dual dialogue’, as Biggs (2006a: 191) points out, they must answer to ‘two sets of regulatory authority’, conforming to the regulatory expectations of methodologies that still dominate academe and to the expectations of the ‘art world’ (see Danto 1964) where amongst other qualities the poetic, ambiguous, creative, and imaginative are revered.

Accredited continuing professional development (CPD), in the form of Masters and Doctoral programmes that acknowledge and encourage practice-led research, offers a creative and intellectual space where the institutional disjunction between multiple modes of making and meaning making is recognised as a subject for enquiry. In this chapter, I draw in particular on the work of students following the ‘Learning and Teaching’ module of the Institute of Education’s MA in Art and Design Education.

This module, which I lead, invites students to develop innovative approaches to academic research. It is guided by a belief in the importance of subject-specific professional development for investigating issues in art and design pedagogy. Such an approach provides an alternative to the temporal linearity of devising research questions, collecting data and subsequent report writing that might commonly be expected in academe. By situating creative practice as a key component for research it acknowledges the relevance of students' prior knowledge and experience and allows for continuity. One MA student, Marina Castelo-Branco reflects as follows:

In all subjects across education, there are orders and classifications, which led me to reflect on the way that information is ordered and displayed to convey and transfer knowledge. ... I had to break away from a linear way of thinking; shake things up and then allow the pieces to be re-arranged revealing a new path, structure and way of understanding. ... I had to order, then disorder to see anew and then re-order again.

(Castelo-Branco 2009)

Forsaking a literal, linear form for a series of interdependent, embodied actions, Castelo-Branco follows 'a circular form akin to a hermeneutic process where the issues to be explored and transformed are not necessarily determined prior to the research design but rather emerge from the dialogue between artistic and pedagogic practice' (Prentice 2000: 528). Or it could be imagined as a more organic or rhizomatic trajectory. Deleuze and Guattari (1988) use the term 'rhizome' in contradistinction to 'aborescent' to define different approaches to research and knowledge. The aborescent model as its name suggests follows a vertical linear, tree-like form with binaries and bifurcations. The rhizome, on the other hand, is like the root of an iris; without a clear point of origin, or predictable direction it spreads along a plane mingling with the roots of others that intersect it in an organic way. These particular ways of working allow Castelo-Branco to reflect on the processes of play and the role that pleasure occupies in learning in art and design. She credits the place of practice as essential to her understanding. At the start of the module she categorised and photographed hundreds of marbles from a personal collection (a typically anthropological project), but by the end she had produced a mesmeric film of marbles colliding randomly, shot at a low angle and accompanied by a soundtrack of the collisions played out of sync with the visuals.

I began recording the sounds that the marbles produce whilst moving across wooden floorboards and their movements. Instead of separating the different kinds and groups of marbles I played with them, colliding them and allowing interaction with each other and different environments.

(Castelo-Branco 2009)

Sound became a compelling element of the study, alongside a desire to bring in the sensation of a viewpoint, achieved by lying on the floor. This was a distinct remove from the distanced overview involved in her initial orderings and documentation of

the small glass entities. Knowing and understanding through embodied experience is central to what Castelo-Branco describes. 'My research into learning and teaching in art and design was opened up through engagement with art and design practice. Without having undergone practice based research I would not have arrived at my current line of thinking' (Castelo-Branco 2009).

Learning through practice in art and design can be intense and absorbing when there is little separating cognition from bodily experience. Crowther (1993) elaborates such an interconnectedness of mind and body as a process that allows meaning to be felt. He references Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (2002 [1945]) to argue that meaning in symbolic formations becomes stabilised through embodiment. Crowther's point is that even prior to language there is being in the world, feeling, seeing, moving, etc., through which the vectors of difference (as articulated by Derrida whereby 'whether in the order of spoken or written discourse no element can function as a sign without referring to another element which is not simply present' cited in Crowther 1993: 28) are experienced prior to their articulation in language. The body and embodied experiences are, for Merleau-Ponty, what make consciousness possible. Bourdieu's reflexive sociology also draws selectively on Merleau-Ponty, particularly in its refusal to separate out from the discursive what Bourdieu (in Bourdieu and Darbel 1997) terms 'bodily hexis'. The latter 'is political mythology realised, embodied, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking' (p. 70). As Waquant describes, 'Bourdieu treats the socialised body as the repository of generative, creative capacity to understand, as the bearer of a form of kinetic knowledge' (Bourdieu and Waquant 1992: 20). Encounters leave their trace not so much in the form of mental pictures or memory images but as what Merleau-Ponty refers to as 'carnal formulae', structuring devices encompassing all the sensations and experiences of the subject. How we act, move, speak, and make, draws this sediment of past to present. Merleau-Ponty extends his theory of embodiment to include language, which also acts to sediment 'carnal formulae', allowing them to be projected when the things that gave rise to them are no longer present. And, as Danvers elucidates 'the visual/spatial arts constitute other particularly effective ways of projecting carnal formulae' (Danvers 2006: 148–149).

When given the opportunity to demonstrate how understanding about learning and teaching in art and design can develop through a critical engagement with art practice, it is noteworthy how many students choose to explore both the authority that is given to the word in education and the sometimes problematic place of language in relation to practice-led research.

In an early description of her thoughts, Jo Evans writes: '[t]he module begins with reading and talking and ends with writing. In between all these words is the making' (Evans 2006). In this initial description making appears to be sandwiched between aural and written communication, but, in fact, Evans's making practice only momentarily ceased from interactions and manipulations of word-based texts (Figure 11.1). Like many others, Evans initially makes a distinction, not just between reading/writing and the study/production of objects and images, but between different approaches to working with words. Her reflections are not uncommon, the sensuousness of the word



Figure 11.1 Jo Evans, MA student (Photographer: Peter Thomas).

and the rationality of making are often passed over by students who have become inured of the attributions that typically accompany modes of acting and explaining.

Starting from an investigation on using her own artwork as a learning resource, Evans began to investigate the influence this work had on the primary school pupils she was teaching. Her concerns were centred on the contextual dynamic of power within the classroom. She was looking for a way to find a balance where students were able to move from applicative modes (repeating her schemata) of use, towards interpretive modes (moving beyond exemplars) (Eraut 1994: 48). In her studio work she began to make reference to models of symbiotic relationships, derived from science and specifically animal and plant biology, in order to find useful metaphors, images and descriptions. In plotting scientific terms and diagrams as a continuum from 'mutualism' to 'parasitism' she began to imaginatively 'draw' out the implications of her own role as a teacher. She writes:

As I folded and turned this object many connections were drawn in my mind, between my process of making artwork and my process of teaching. Through this activity I began to explore through making: aspects of the teacher/student relationship; of collaboration or influence; and of the role of making in art and design teaching.

(Evans 2006: 4)

The direction that Evan's work took reflects a process taking place between making, reading, talking, teaching, learning and writing and re-making. The language she used as part of her 'making' was similarly embedded in the creative process. It was used in

the development of ideas, as much for the pleasure of its 'otherness', its potential for suggestion, poetic association and ambiguity, as for its relation to the immediate rational construction of an educational argument. Towards the end of the module she writes:

At the start I assumed that I would represent ideas about art and design education through visual means. By the close I have come to understand that it is not simply a case of translating language into image or object, but that in the process of making art, meaning is made that can go beyond what can be constructed and articulated through written or spoken language.

(Evans 2006: 10)

Eisner too suggests that 'not everything knowable can be articulated in propositional form. The limits of our cognition are not defined by the limits of language' (Eisner 2004: 7). He advocates 'lessons' in which education might learn from distinctive forms of thinking that the arts embody. One of these is the inextricable connection between form and content; as Eisner puts it, between 'how something is said and what is said' (p. 6). For example, if you 'Change the cadence in a line of poetry [...] you change the poem's meaning' (p. 7). Speaking about his encounter with W.H. Auden's, *Five Songs no V*, Dana Gioia (2007) remarks, as if to confirm Eisner's point, 'we experience the joys of words so intricately arranged that their secret harmonies become tangible. ... Auden's work employs pleasure as the most reliable means to enlightenment. Intelligence not detached from emotions'. Gioia expresses his enjoyment of the multi-textuality of poetry, its fun, its musicality, its contradictions and complexity as enabling the meaning to be felt, in ways more intense than mere ideas could generate. 'Sometimes the fun is in the subject itself, more often the pleasure is stitched into the very verbal fabric of the line' (Gioia 2007).

Thea Stallwood, an articulate artist/film-maker and educator, recognises the importance of writing (for example, scripts, statements, blogs, evaluations) but characterises her experiences of the expectations of writing in academe as stultifying – 'my brain floods with conventions of essay writing; the structure, the referencing system, it seems stilted and so too, my arguments'. She goes on to say: 'On the occasions I have 'played' with these conventions I have been recommended to seek help with my written work' (Stallwood 2010).

I should confess at this point that one such recommendation came from me. I am personally implicated in the tensions and mix of subject identities I referred to earlier. Often the work of students that I find most inspiring and illuminating is also the work that must be honed and sometimes contorted to meet the expectations of academe. How to do this without losing the crucial qualities of the work both written and practice-led presents a considerable challenge. Those who work in universities are undoubtedly bound and accountable to the legislative power of their institutions. As Biggs (2006b) remarks: 'we may seek to reform the university system from within but by taking employment within it we must accept ... certain conventional limits' (p. 192).

In a similar manner, Stallwood repeats this cycle with her A-level students within a secondary school. Her comments are from a practice-led MA assignment in which

she translates her experiences to those of young people studying AS and A2 level Art and design. She suggests that the affinity that school students feel with a practical and creative subject can diminish if they are required to conform to an intransigent interpretation of producing 'material of a critical, analytical nature'. She states that her position is 'not against writing *per se*' but crucially that writing 'in a variety of formats alongside and in conjunction with audio and visual practice' (2011) should be legitimately recognised as able to make a contribution to knowledge. Stallwood's proposal was to trial film-making for producing examination work that demonstrates the critical, analytical nature of students' A-level study. Significantly, concerns at the school were not about the acceptability of the *form* but whether there might be a danger (if the A-level students used language, image and text in fluid, filmic manner) that their work would simply not meet the requirements of the examination.

In education, as mentioned earlier, certain ways of producing knowledge have become dominant; this concerns both method and representation. Subtlety, ambiguity and aesthetic criteria are not generally encouraged or understood in educational research. Therefore, proposals that suggest alternatives tend to be measured against the 'yardstick' of the dominant form. 'In the extreme case, nothing recognisable as knowledge can be produced outside of the socially dominant form' (Gibbons *et al.* 1994: 1–2). Butler (1999) also reminds us that 'learning the rules that govern intelligible speech is an inculcation into normalised language' (p. xix). It is precisely on the slippery ground of normalised language and intelligibility where the caveats for practice-led research take their hold. At worst, the price of not conforming can be 'the loss of intelligibility itself' (*ibid.*).

Acquiring language designates us, according to Luiz Camnitzer (2009), as consumers first and then producers; the suggestion is that our engagement with reading conditions our approach to writing. In contradistinction, Aranda *et al.* (2011) write that contemporary art education (and here we must assume that they mean undergraduate and postgraduate level, not school art) 'has deeply internalized this problem by taking the inverse for granted – that one writes first, and only later develops a language with which to read what was written'. This comment is certainly open to debate, perpetuating as it does a somewhat romantic notion of artistic production, whereas, in fact, the 'language of art' can be well rehearsed. However, there are some aspects of this claim that seem pertinent to the process of making where it is not uncommon for 'what is yet to be said' to be revealed in manifold form, unfurling within the stages of making and meaning making. In this sense art practice can identify itself as a form of thought. Borrowing from Badiou's (2005) discussions of poetry one could say that 'it is not just the effective existence of thought offered up in the flesh of language [object or image] it is the set of operations whereby this thought comes to think itself' (p. 20).

Cases for and against the possibility of art practice-led research contributing to the wider field of 'knowledge' have similarly been argued along lines of linguistic/non-linguistic possibilities. For research degrees, the case has been made that 'there is, as yet, no evidence that a designed artefact or artwork can be relied on to communicate the meaning of its existence and the rationale for its significance' (de Freitas 2007: 2). Seemingly irrefutable, if an artwork cannot speak it needs to be interpreted and so

begin the problems of intelligibility. But de Freitas's perspective on a mute work of art hinges on some presuppositions: first, that there will be an absence of words in art – no spoken or written language; second, that there is an assurance of coherent communication in words but not in any other form. And third, that interpretation and artworks must be mutually exclusive, in other words that a piece of art cannot in itself be a form of interpretation (Robins 2007). These points are all eminently contestable but perhaps more fundamentally, they miss a vital point, which is succinctly put by Gibbons *et al.*: 'cultural producers ... do not have to take a detour to delineate or express meaning. They see it as the essence of their activity. For them the distance between creation and contextualization is minimal' (1994: 108).

The question of how meaning is communicated through the work of art does not yield simple answers. It is for sure that attempts to answer will be as complex and as varied as works of art themselves. Addison writes:

It could be claimed that the work of art, in distinction from other forms of human communication, is specifically organised as a constellation of aesthetic and semantic invitations and provocations, the primary purpose of which is to affect us ... making and looking at works of art is potentially a transformative event through which an engagement with alterity (the other) motivates us to act differently, whether that difference is cognitive, affective or conative in its effects.

(Addison 2011: 366)

The notion that both making and engaging with art works has transformative potential and affects us in a number of ways could also be extended to forms of language, such as poetry. When Ricoeur (1978) writes about the poet's use of metaphor to call old age 'a withered stalk', he makes the case that the poet conveys for readers, 'a new idea, literally he [sic] has produced knowledge' (p. 26). The distinctions between word and image, art and poetry seem less important here than what these forms can do to us, how they affect us and shape our understanding. As Biggs remarks the 'advancement of knowledge' in relation to the arts 'is not subject to objective measurement, it is subject to understanding' (Biggs 2006b). On a more pragmatic note, Kress draws our attention to the way that in contemporary everyday reality, modes of representing and communicating are in fact becoming less and less dominated by writing:

If two modes – say, image and writing – are available and are being used for representing and communicating, it is most likely that they will be used for distinct purposes: each will be used for that which it does best and is therefore best used for. Two consequences arise: one, each mode carries only a part of the informational load; no mode fully carries all the meaning. Two, each of the modes will be used for specialised tasks, the tasks which are best done with that mode. As a consequence writing is no longer the full carrier of all the meaning or types of meaning.

(Kress 2003: 20–21)

For artists, art historians and cultural theorists Kress's point might appear transparently axiomatic, whereas in certain sectors of educational research such a proposition verges on radical; an example, perhaps where 'turns' towards interdisciplinarity serve to highlight some of the benefits gained from interrogating ingrained differences in different academic fields. How knowledge is gained and disseminated through a range of methodological and presentational forms will continue to be debated.

The decision to use image or word according to their suitability for the task at-hand can also be complicated by an individual's history. Annie-May Roberts, another MA student, had a particular investment in how she was herself constructed through language. As someone with dyslexia she reflected on her own education and the impact of her teachers' inability to see beyond language in appraising her academic potential. By using her school reports she explored the authority and weight that words had accrued and the signifying power that mastering them would promise. The reports she selected praised 'practical' abilities but detached these from intellectual aptitude: 'I think we all accept that Annie-May is never going to be a high flyer in the academic world, but she can be pleased with her many talents, such as cookery and art' (from Annie May's final school report 1997). By projecting the report texts onto large-scale drawing paper, Roberts was able to magnify and transcribe the words that had once made a profound impact on her understanding of who she was and might become.

The reports, which chart a struggle with language, are used to question the position of words in art and academe. The tedious act of making large-scale drawings of the words rendered them in Roberts's words a 'half way house' – still legible as text yet also carrying the marks of shading and texture pencil. She remarked on the tedious act of copying that it was 'reminiscent both of activities for dyslexics to improve their handwriting and the use of writing as a punishment in school detention' (Roberts 2008). The linking of the two events through re-enactment did not escape her attention. In this process through a series of performative and embodied actions she was able to critique the categories of identity that are engendered by language: 'The iterability of performativity is a theory of agency, one that can disavow power as the condition of its own possibility' (Butler 1999: xxv). Roberts writes of the 'performative interaction' with these oversized reports as a 'deconstruction rather than a destruction, an unpacking of the power of relationships between subjects' (2008). The scale, context and physicality of the work give it a poignancy that comes from blending absurdity with emotional resonance. Roberts makes a self-conscious parody, a refusal to be defined within such binaries. By using art as the form through which the disavowal is played out, her refusal has creative potential. She cites Raney's views that opportunities to disfigure an official document can be a pleasure and 'an act which enables repossession of control of constitution' (Raney 2002: 7). Scrumpled and discarded around the corridors of the Institute of Education the secrecy and shame that these official documents once induced was made public and traduced (Figure 11.2).

Roberts employs a methodology common to many artists where the development of ideas and material forms is interconnected and organic. The artist develops personal working methods and threads these through at various points with new connections and aspects of experience. The process of 'threading through' gives form to

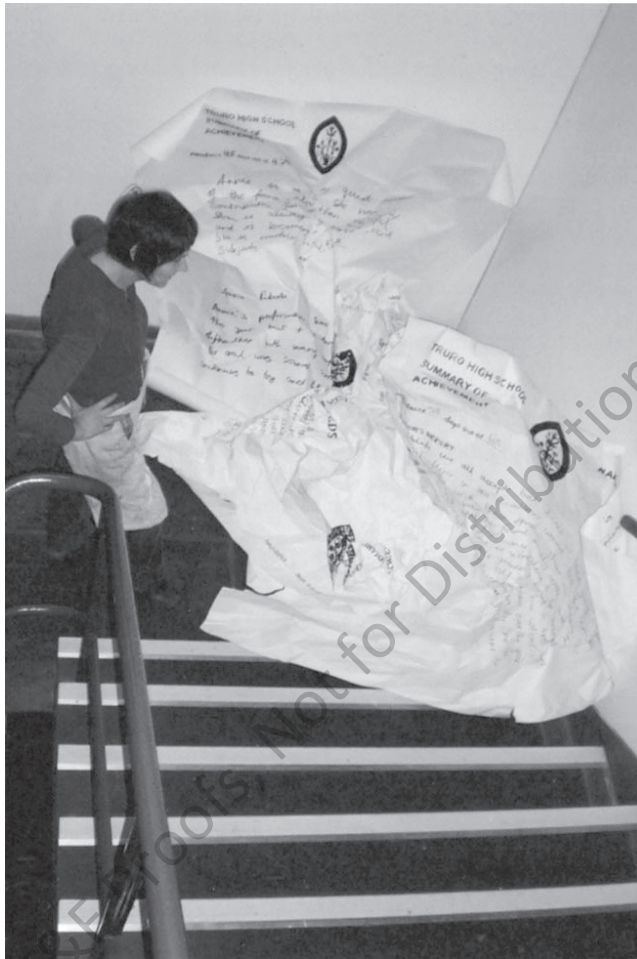


Figure 11.2 Annie-May Roberts, MA student (Photographer: Peter Thomas).

ideas and concepts and there is an enmeshing or weaving of approaches and methods. Form and content are interconnected as parts of a whole and in this way the practice is essential to conceptual realisations.

Roberts's approach resonates with aspects of Bourdieu's reflexive sociology in which he stresses what is beyond the subjectivised process of self-discovery, by always positioning the individual within the social; the inside within the outside. In the cases that I am discussing, students are similarly concerned with translating and utilising their embodied experiences of making to better understand pedagogic contexts. Their engagement with practice-led research is not undertaken as an end in itself, but rather, between, in relation to, and in conversation with, the practices of

learning and teaching. Such dialogic exchange can act to open up, question and destabilise a dominant discourse. It can propose alternative readings by dislodging fixed meaning and meta-narrative. Bourdieu sees it as a prerequisite of a reflexive sociology to acknowledge its limits: 'Theoretical knowledge owes a number of its most essential properties to the fact that the conditions under which it is produced are not that of practice' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 70). This is why, as Wacquant states, reflexive sociology is a science of society that 'must construct theories which contain within themselves a theory of the gap between theory and practice' (ibid). In relation to such an assertion it is significant that Bourdieu has directly championed the work of two contemporary artists (whose artwork takes a form of research into the practices of cultural institutions): Hans Haacke, with whom he collaborated for the conversational publication *Free Exchange* (1995) and Andrea Fraser for whose publication, *Museum Highlights* (2005), he wrote an introductory chapter. Both Haacke and Fraser have had a significant influence on the contemporary and current interconnectedness between art and museological practices. Both examine the ways in which museums 'naturalise' particular cultural phenomena and their interrelationship with political and economic networks. Their art practices often take the form of research that bears a striking resemblance (albeit sometimes parodic) to that conducted by a social scientist, but their modes of dissemination are substantively different, although not always in appearance. The written reports, statistics and findings expected of the social scientist are sometimes still there, but they are couched in another language, the language of avant-garde art practice which makes use of parodic and ironic strategies to disrupt dominant meaning. Augmented through the extended vocabularies of avant-garde approaches to art making, those outcomes of research about the cultural sector cited above are made manifest through the agency of artworks.

Like the field of cultural studies, art has co-opted the methodologies of other disciplines often for precisely the same reasons: to examine relations of power within its own domain and within the extended cultural field. This critical turn has been particularly pronounced in the latter half of the twentieth century when a number of dominant discourses of art were questioned in, and through, artists' recourse to philosophy, anthropology, sociology and psychoanalysis. In each case, it is the 'trespass' of artists into other fields of knowledge that resulted in, arguably, a more judicious understanding of art and particularly of its framing technologies. As a corollary, claims have been made for the 'trespassed field' becoming the beneficiary of new perspectives and methodologies acquired from art. Peter Osborne (1999), for example, holds that philosophy played an important part for artists who were looking for a tactical strategy for weakening the formalist stranglehold. He suggests that 'Philosophy was *the means* of this usurpation of critical power by a new generation of artists; the means by which they could simultaneously address the crisis in the ontology of the artwork (through an art definitional conception of their practice) and achieve social control over the meaning of their work' (Osborne 1999: 50). From a different direction, Haacke's engagement with social systems led him to embark on quasi social science audience polls (see Haacke and Bourdieu (1995). Alternatively, Shelton (2001) and Schneider (1993) have deployed the tools of anthropology/ethnography, while Jana Graham (2003) those of cultural studies.

Sullivan (2008) aptly points out that an 'ongoing dilemma for practice-based researchers is the difficulty faced in positioning the methodology of studio-based traditions within the language and traditions of research communities in the academy'. Those who explore their own imbrication in cross-disciplinary dialogues do so, not only to attain a better understanding of their professional and personal construction, but also to use this information to move between authorities and instigate change.

Conclusion

The opening epigraph of this chapter illustrates a common enough scenario in which segregation of methodological approach is imposed against the will of a child whose persistent habit of drawing in his literacy book was deemed unacceptable. The instruction is reinforced for a parent to bear witness to the fact that her son was contravening convention. Pictures are best kept away from words, ordered into the separate domain of unlined paper and later confined to 'un-ruled' art rooms. Furthermore, pleasurable activities should not be confused with the serious business of learning. Mainstream education progressively iterates divisions to the extent that it becomes hard for most of us to recognise them as such, so inured do we become to the 'order of things'. From the eighteenth century onwards the separation of practice and knowledge, and the further division of knowledge and practice into the aborescent branches of autonomous disciplines, has progressively dominated Western epistemology. What started as small fissures, between education and entertainment, amusement and pleasure, and furthermore between the emotions and senses and cognitive rationality, widened and deepened, affecting both hierarchies of knowledge and the educational institutions that we have today. Current debates about the value and status of art in education, research and knowledge production are wrapped in these ordering processes. The Cartesian system of binary oppositions from which many of these 'distinctions' originate is obdurately persistent, still surfacing in arguments surrounding practice-led approaches to research. Christopher Frayling, for example, states that 'there is still an enormous cachet attached to people in higher education who interpret the world through scholarship and detachment, and not nearly enough attached to people who perform or make things to try and change the world' (Frayling 1999: 55). Whilst this is arguably the case, the reinforcement of dualist categories and binary choices (makers *or* scholars, hands *or* heads) no longer seems the most helpful way of characterising what is actually happening around us in twenty-first century art, epistemology and research activities.

Just as children desire embodied, multimodal ways of engaging with processes of discovery, creation and representation, artists, educators and academics recognise the potential to discern, invent, and articulate ideas and insights through image, text, sound, touch, performance, objects, etc.

In this discussion of the potential benefits in recognising artists' work as a viable form of research I neither propose that all art is a form of research nor set up an opposition between image and word. Rather, I suggest that the embodied practice of art gives rise to new meanings and insights that should not be discounted for their lack of 'fit' in relation

to accepted educational research methodologies. Where methodological approaches are combined to optimise knowledge germane to the field of enquiry then they can better serve their purpose for discovering, making and sharing meaning in the world.

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