EDITORIAL

Introducing a new Routledge Open Research collection: Digital Pedagogy [version 1; peer review: not peer reviewed]

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Abstract
Sharing research represents an essential part of the research process. The act of making one's research public (or publication as we commonly refer to it) is so important, it can be argued, that research ceases to be research if it is not shared or published. A key reason for the sharing (or publication) of research is, and always has been, the betterment of society. This obtains particularly in education, which has as its central focus the advancement of the public good. Since it first started to see widespread use in education in the 1990s, the Internet has affected a transformative impact on research publication and sharing. Web technologies have made research available on levels never previously conceivable. Platforms such as Routledge Open Research can enable researchers to share their work at different stages in its development, and in innovative and imaginative, new ways. It can serve as an important stepping stone towards the appreciation and valorisation of a wider range of research outputs and resources, beyond the mono-media academic manuscript. It is our pleasure, as inaugural international academic advisors, to introduce this exciting new hub for research in education and educational technology, Routledge Open Research's new collection, Digital Pedagogy. As a flagship collection, we hope it affords a new space for educators and researchers around the world to communicate, collaborate and share their concepts and ideas, methodologies, data, outputs and resources in dialogic ways, where the educational community at large can participate meaningfully and creatively in the constructive conversation that is the hallmark of all engaged research in education and digital pedagogy.

Keywords
Editorial; Open Research; Digital Pedagogy; Education

This article is included in the Digital Pedagogy collection.
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Sharing research represents an essential part of the research process. The act of making one’s research public (or publication as we commonly refer to it) is so important, it can be argued, that research ceases to be research if it is not shared or published. A key reason for the sharing (or publication) of research is, and always has been, the betterment of society. This obtains particularly in education, which has as its central focus the advancement of the public good.

Since it first started to see widespread use in education in the 1990s, the Internet has affected a transformative impact on research publication and sharing. Web technologies have made research available on levels never previously conceivable. Nonetheless, the Open Access 2020 (OA2020) global initiative noted: “Even though Open Access is now a shared vision of the world’s academic communities, research councils, and funding bodies, nearly 85% of the world’s scholarly outputs are still locked behind paywalls, inhibiting the full impact of research and putting enormous strain on institutional budgets.” It highlights the growing importance of new, more open, affordable and accessible models and technologies for disseminating and sharing research globally. It also highlights a cultural shift in academic responsibility to their main stakeholders, that is, instead of re-paying institutions for research output there is a responsibility to re-pay our participants with easy access to research theories and ideas with which they are part of. These ideals respond to what Wenaas & Gulbrandsen (2022) describe as challenging our academic heartland but are becoming more evident in institutional policies.

In today’s highly mediated and networked world, and with the emergence of diverse, innovative multimedia, it is important also that avenues and fora for research publication and sharing keep apace with developments in information and communications technologies. Novel ways of representing intellectual property and academic ideas with digital technologies create new spaces for researchers and educationists to visualise, virtualise, communicate and share the findings of their research in clear, informative and engaging ways.

Furthermore, while still an important academic artefact, the concept of the finished, published article as the sole valuable output of educational research is currently being challenged. Indeed, research shows us that we need to be critical with respect to the application of traditional bibliometrics and scientometrics in educational research contexts; and how it is important that we seek to valorise a broader, more inclusive array of research outputs in education, those that truly reflect the creativity and diversity of the discipline (Holland et al., 2016).

Platforms such as Routledge Open Research can enable researchers to share their work at different stages in its development, and in innovative and imaginative, new ways. It can serve as an important stepping stone towards the appreciation and valorisation of a wider range of research outputs and resources, beyond the mono-media academic manuscript.

This can all potentially support a more expansive and inclusive approach to research sharing, fostering dialogue and discussion, and bringing closer together, and enhancing the academic and public discourse on educational research. As a researcher, these new publishing opportunities respond to institutional core values of collegiality, autonomy, academic freedom and achievement, with the addition of research responsibility. Dudley (2021) highlights researchers’ responsibility in providing scholarly findings as part of the knowledge generation process, simply acknowledging the importance of having access to discovered knowledge upon which further research is built. Without open access and new publishing portals, access to knowledge can be inaccessible to many. Furthermore, new platforms like Routledge Open Research can potentially help to make the peer-review process itself more transparent, more efficient and more robust. Abdin et al. (2021) suggest public peer review as an emerging process with both benefits and challenges but a proactive response to both the lack of quality and timely circumstances of the current publication process.

It is our pleasure, as inaugural international academic advisors, to introduce this exciting new hub for research in education and educational technology, Routledge Open Research’s new collection, Digital Pedagogy. As a flagship collection, we hope it affords a new space for educators and researchers around the world to communicate, collaborate and share their concepts and ideas, methodologies, data, outputs and resources in dialogic ways, where the educational community at large can participate meaningfully and creatively in the constructive conversation that is the hallmark of all engaged research in education and digital pedagogy.

The global pandemic has exerted an unprecedented impact on education, teaching, and schooling, with the UN estimating that almost 1.6bn learners globally have been disrupted, in terms of their access to, and continuity of education. The pandemic has also drawn renewed attention to inherent problems with well-established, examination-based assessment models and approaches. If there are positive effects to be construed, the disruption of COVID-19 and the rapid shift to remote teaching has provided classroom teachers and students the opportunities afforded to learning in the online space. What can happen online is different to what can happen in a classroom. Emergent, new understandings have demonstrated the potential of technology-enhanced learning, suggesting alternative and innovative models of teaching and new models of schooling.

This collection on Digital Pedagogies is informed both by looking back on the effects of the pandemic on school and education, while looking forward to new educational futures, with reimaged approaches to learning, teaching, and assessment for a post-pandemic world.

This collection invites and publishes diverse studies that explore digital pedagogies which provide opportunities for shifting notions of schooling, be that classroom-based practices;
blended, hyflex or hybrid and/or the use of virtual worlds. Importantly here, the critical exploration of new models of digital pedagogies and the relationship or impact on teacher or student learning and capabilities are explored.

We also welcome reviews of previous published works written for industry, policy makers and public dissemination. The purpose here is to enrich the lines of communication between researchers and practitioners by re-working and re-articulating known works. This could be a synthesis/accretion of research over time written in a style that is suitable for an audience outside of academia. It could explore ideas that inform new models of teaching and schooling.

We look forward to the new, constructive, inclusive and rich conversations that can be mediated and made possible by Digital Pedagogy.

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