



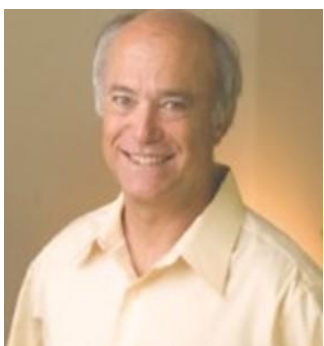
School of Psychology Seminar Series

Stephen Reder

Practice engagement theory (PET): Skills, practice and reciprocity – Learnings from New Zealand

Practice engagement theory (PET) sees individuals' literacy and numeracy proficiencies develop as a by-product of their engagement in everyday reading, writing and maths practices. Reciprocally, individuals' proficiencies affect their levels of engagement in everyday literacy and numeracy practices. PET holds – and a growing body of longitudinal research confirms -- that literacy and numeracy interventions that increase engagement in meaningful everyday practices generate proficiency growth over time.

Beyond supporting adult literacy and numeracy development, engagement in everyday reading, writing and maths practices fosters social and economic wellbeing throughout society. Education and literacy have long been associated with positive economic and social outcomes in numerous societies. Using nationally representative survey data from New Zealand, the presentation considers the effects of practice engagement on earnings, health, social trust, political efficacy and civic participation. Practice engagement has statistically significant and substantial positive effects on each of these outcomes after controlling for the effects of proficiency, education and other important variables. The results have important implications for policy and practice in adult education as well as for future research about the role of practice engagement in overall wellbeing. Some of these will be discussed.



Dr. Stephen Reder is Professor Emeritus of Applied Linguistics at Portland State University. He has an A.B. from Stanford University and a Ph.D. from the Rockefeller University in New York City. His career has involved research, teaching and service activities in education, workplace and community settings. Professor Reder's research focuses on adults' literacy, numeracy, digital literacy and second language development. He has developed Practice Engagement Theory that helps us understand how adults' use of skills in everyday life affects their lifelong and life-wide learning, their social and economic outcomes, and their overall wellbeing. He serves on the advisory boards of numerous organizations and journals and works with adult education researchers, practitioners and policymakers at the local, national and international levels. He has been an active team member of the multi-year project being conducted by Auckland University of Technology and Waikato University, *The expression, experience and transcendence of low-skill in Aotearoa New Zealand*.

When: Friday, 10 March 2023 from 12pm to 1pm

Where: S.1.03 or <https://waikato.zoom.us/j/634605835>

For any enquiries about this seminar, please contact Renae Dixon at renae.dixon@waikato.ac.nz

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