



Entering the field as an engaged scholar/researcher

Dr Jimmy Harmon

Abstract

Drawing from the literature on research paradigm (Gemignani, 2011; Foss & Moldanaes, 2007; Levin and Ravn, 2007 and, Øyum, 2006), the 'engaged scholar' or 'engaged researcher' is described as one who convinces the research participants that the world is socially constructed and can be changed by themselves. An important contribution of the researcher is 'to make the participants aware of and confident in their role of constructing and reconstructing the world' (Foss and Molanaes, 2007: 26). In 2010, when I enrolled for my doctoral studies my motivation was twofold, namely to inform my public advocacy of Kreol Morisien (KM) and create an awareness of the significance of KM amongst heads of schools, teachers and parents in the schools where I conducted my fieldwork.

(Excerpt from Harmon's PhD Thesis, Chp.1, 2014).

In March 2015, the University of the Western Cape awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to Jimmy Desiré Harmon for his research work on heritage language and identity construction, following his critical ethnographic study on Kreol Morisien. For this public seminar, he will discuss the epistemology and ontology of the 'engaged scholar' or 'engaged researcher', while also sharing how he prepared himself to enter the field as an engaged scholar/researcher.

Biodata

Dr Jimmy Harmon is currently Director of the Nelson Mandela Centre for African & Kreol Culture. He was previously a secondary school teacher (1987-1997), Deputy Rector (1997-2004), Project Manager of Prevocational Education at the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research (2004-2006) and Head of the Department of Applied Pedagogy at the Institut Cardinal Jean Margéot (2009-2013). In 2012, he was finalist of the Commonwealth Good Education Practice Award for 'PrevokBek', a mother tongue-based literacy and numeracy programme alongside multilingual education. From 2005 onwards, he has been involved in public advocacy of Kreol Morisien leading to its official introduction as an optional language in 2012. Since then, he has contributed several papers (viz. conference, press articles) on the Kreol language and culture issues. He was editor of Studies in Applied Pedagogy, a publication of the Institut Cardinal Jean Margéot.

Research Seminar

Friday 22 May 2015

16 hrs

Frank Richard Lecture Theatre