What goes unsaid? Critical discourse analysis of stakeholder communication in an integrated knowledge translation project

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1 Introduction

Integrated knowledge translation (iKT) is championed as an essential strategy to address the underutilization of research knowledge in healthcare.\(^1\)

iKT is defined as building relationships between academic researchers and practitioners and/or policymakers, to support collaboration throughout mutually beneficial research projects.

Background & Literature

Some areas are relatively under-explored in iKT:

- How does power operate within and affect iKT projects?\(^2\)
- How do “macro-level” factors affect iKT processes? Individual and organizational factors influencing iKT have garnered more attention, but research exploring macro-level (political, economic, cultural) factors is relatively sparse and mixed.\(^3\) Linking existing micro- and macro-level theorizing to macro-level theories might enhance understanding of complex iKT processes.\(^4\)

2 Research project

The empirical case: Action ADE is a CIHR-funded iKT project bringing together:

- Health care professionals,
- Academics,
- Patients,
- Government officials, and
- System administrators,

To research, design, and implement an electronic system to prevent “adverse drug events,” the unintended and harmful consequences of medications.

The proposed project: Explore how discourses are produced and used by Action ADE stakeholders by conducting a critical discourse analysis.

Discover:

- A set of common assumptions / a patterned way of thinking
- Identified in text, talk, and also in wider social structures
- Sometimes (indeed often) so taken-for-granted as to be invisible or assumed.\(^5\)

Tests analyzed will include: field notes from participatory workshops and participatory observation, interviews, and related public and project documents.

Looking inside the “black box” of iKT processes

These scattered, individual ideas can group together to represent cohesive discourses. (i.e. A “neoliberal discourse” might encompass: Knowledge is something you have + the value of research is to promote innovation + a benefit of iKT is return on research investment + a drawback is hard evaluate.)

3 Preliminary Exploration - iKT Discourse Mindmap

4 Questions

Current research questions are:

- How do different stakeholders understand knowledge creation processes in the Action ADE iKT project?
- What are the implications of these different understandings for developing and using the resultant research knowledge?
- How do knowledge-related discourses emerge and shape relationships between stakeholders?

But, as the project evolves, other questions could include:

- What happens when stakeholders’ actions do not match their words / discourses?
- What can exploring one case tell us about iKT in general?
- Can an iKT process be evaluated without knowing the outcome?

What do you think “goes unsaid” in iKT research partnerships?

What additional questions do you have?

What should be added to the mindmap?

What would you be most interested to learn about this iKT project?

References