

Wolff-Michael Roth is Lansdowne Professor of Applied Cognitive Science in the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria, Canada. He will be at the IFÉ, as “professeur invité”, from March 28 to April 30.

With my parents returning to their native Germany, I grew up and stayed there until after obtaining a Masters degree in physics. In Canada, I first taught middle school science and mathematics and then moved to the US to get a PhD in the School of Science and Technology at the University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS. My dissertation was on the development of proportional reasoning in adult learners exposed to a training delivered by means of a computer program. I also obtained a license for teaching statistics for the social sciences. I started to do a second PhD in physical chemistry, but then decided to pursue a career in studying cognition. At first, I returned to the high school level. I directed a department of science education and taught physics. It was during that time (1989–92) that I began conducting ethnographic studies of learning and began to acquire the competencies to conduct linguistic studies of learning. I then moved to Simon Fraser University (Burnaby, BC) where, apart from conducting research on knowing and learning of science and mathematics in elementary schools, I also taught statistics. Since 1997, I have held an endowed research chair at the University of Victoria. In 2012, I also held a research chair at the Griffith University (Mt. Gravatt, QLD).



Much of my research concerns investigations of knowing and learning science and mathematics across the life span. Thus, I have published on knowing and learning in children as early as 1 year of age to that observed in accomplished practitioners (e.g., fish culturists or research scientists). My research approach incorporates many different methods—whichever best suits the needs of the particular research problem. Thus, in my research laboratory, we draw on conversation analysis, discourse analysis, ethnography, statistics, phenomenological inquiry, ethnography, study of prosody, etc. A second interest of mine lies in bridging the gap between qualitative and quantitative research, which has led to such works as *Generalizing from Educational Research*, which I co-edited with Kadriye Ercikan, and “What good is polarizing research into qualitative and quantitative?”, which we published in *Educational Researcher*.

My work is very data oriented. In the course of my engagement with data, I have come to know and, eventually discard, many theoretical frameworks because they ultimately were unable to stand the critical tests. Thus, during my dissertation work I used a neo-Piagetian information-processing framework built on short-term memory capacity. Once I returned to the classroom, this work turned out to be irrelevant from my perspective as practitioner-researcher interested in improving instruction. Subsequently, I turned to or contributed to building new theoretical frameworks—e.g., my work on the social construction of knowledge contributed to establishing this form of research in science education. Thus, I have come to develop great familiarity with (radical, social) constructivism, discursive psychology, ethnomethodology, cognitive phenomenology, cultural-historical activity theory, and semiotics.

My interests transcend educational issues of knowing and learning across the life span. Thus, my research activity has included many different domains. Thus, in addition to mathematics and science education, I have published in fields such as psychology,

sociology, history and philosophy of science, linguistics, and semiotics. Most recently, for example, I have completed a study of the distinction between different kinds of reported speech and the surrounding reporting speech, a distinction that speakers implement by means of a variety of prosodic devices, gestures, and body orientation/body position.

At present, I am very much interested in a problem known to phenomenological philosophers as the origin of scientific thinking in pre- and non-scientific, everyday experiences; this problem, known in education as the “learning paradox,” remains unaddressed in the field both in praxis and research.

During my stay at IFÉ, I will actively contribute to the *Seminaire*, which will take place April 10–12. My contributions will be to the methodological aspects, the mediation between qualitative and quantitative research, and to the articulation of a connection between cognitive science and phenomenology. During my stay, I will also have the opportunity to work with colleagues from Norway, who will come to Lyon with data from a design experiment currently in progress. We will conduct an open interaction analysis session (probably April 23). Moreover, I will have the opportunity to travel to Lausanne for a day of discussions with the research groups of Natalie Müller Mirza and Michèle Grossen. Finally, collaborations and collaborative analyses are planned with Gérard Sensevy—testing some hypotheses about transaction (as distinct from interaction)—and with Luc Trouche.

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Questions de pédagogie dans l'enseignement supérieur

Le comité organisateur a planifié un événement à la hauteur d'un colloque scientifique de grande qualité pour cette première édition de QPES hors Europe. En effet, en ouverture, nous vous proposons un conférencier de renom, le professeur Pierre Lévy ; nous clôturerons le colloque par une « table ronde active » qui réunira des intervenants experts et expérimentés sur la thématique du colloque : professeurs, étudiants et conseillers pédagogiques. Entre ces deux événements, plusieurs communications orales et affiches composeront le menu scientifique de l'événement, en plus de proposer une séance « ateliers » où vous serez invités à réfléchir et agir sur l'un ou l'autre des sujets abordés. En amont du colloque, le pré-colloque proposera aux participants d'explorer l'Apprentissage par problèmes (APP) en vivant une telle expérience et en travaillant à l'élaboration du matériel d'accompagnement. Enfin, en aval, le post-colloque proposera aux personnes intéressées de mieux connaître l'Université de Sherbrooke et ses réalisations. Quatre facultés vous ouvriront leurs portes : faculté de génie, faculté des lettres et sciences humaines, faculté de médecine et des sciences de la santé et faculté des sciences.

Pour de plus amples informations sur les différents événements, vous êtes invités à visiter le [site du colloque](#). Les personnes qui s'inscrivent avant le 29 avril pourront profiter d'un tarif réduit pour les coûts d'inscription, alors faites vite !

Il est maintenant possible de [vous inscrire](#) au colloque QPES 2013.

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