

A New Lens for Understanding Knowledge Translation: Implications for Interprofessional Education

Laura C. Ball

Knowledge Translation and Implementation Coordinator
Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care

Knowledge Translation (KT)

“A **dynamic** and **iterative** process that includes the **synthesis**, **dissemination**, **exchange** and **ethically sound application** of knowledge to improve the health of Canadians, provide more effective health services and products and strengthen the healthcare system.”

CIHR, 2009

Knowledge-to-Action Framework

- Knowledge-to-Action (KTA)
 - Proposed by Ian Graham (VP of Knowledge Translation, CIHR)
 - Umbrella term
 - Conceptual clarity
 - “Action” is used as it is broader than “practice”
 - Planned action theory
 - Change theory



Theory for Practice

- Approaches to KT strategies and interventions
 - Cognitive psychological theories
 - E.g., theory of planned behavior, social cognitive theory, transtheoretical model of change
 - Educational theories
 - E.g., theory of transformative learning, adult learning theory, social learning theory
 - Organizational theory
- Theory for non-traditional practice?
 - Inter-professional mental health care environment

Overview

- The KTA Cycle
- Moving beyond “planned action”
- Integrating cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT)
- CHAT in practice



Knowledge-to-Action Cycle

Planned Action Theory

“Planned-action theories or models are intended to help planners or change agents control variables that increase or decrease the likelihood of the occurrence of change.”

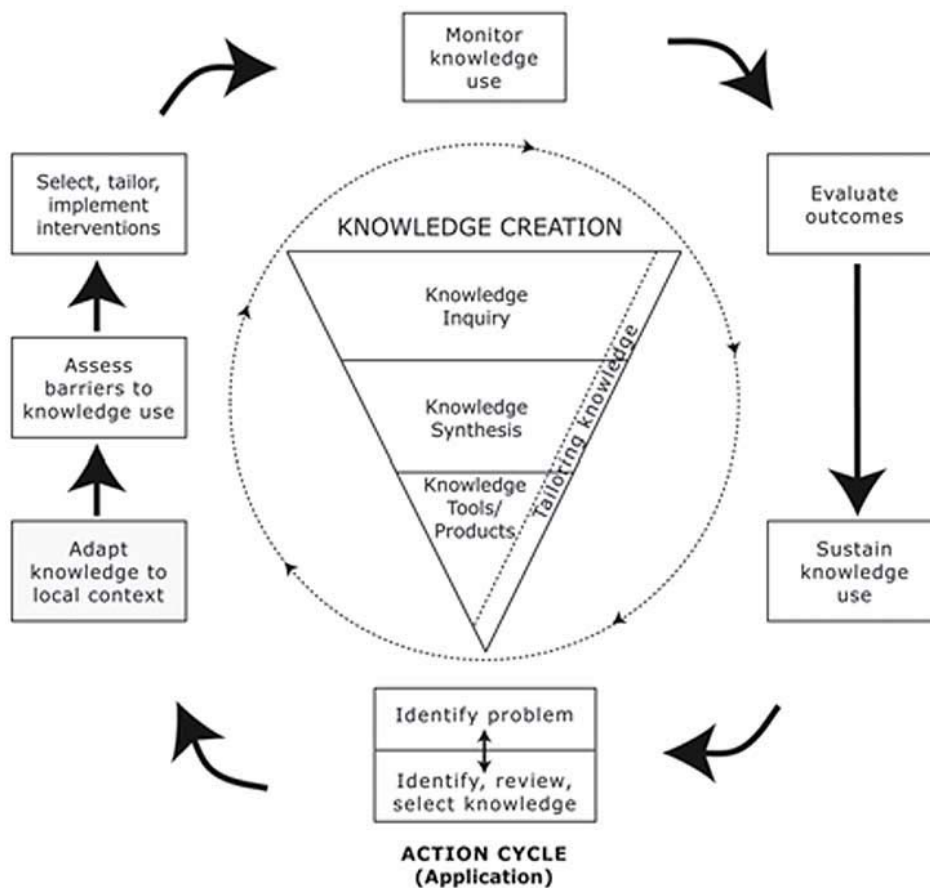
Graham, et al., 2006, p. 20

Planned Action Theory

“The framework falls within the social constructivist paradigm and privileges social interaction and adaptation research evidence that takes local context and culture into account as key mechanisms necessary for turning knowledge into action.”

Graham & Tetroe, 2010, p. 20

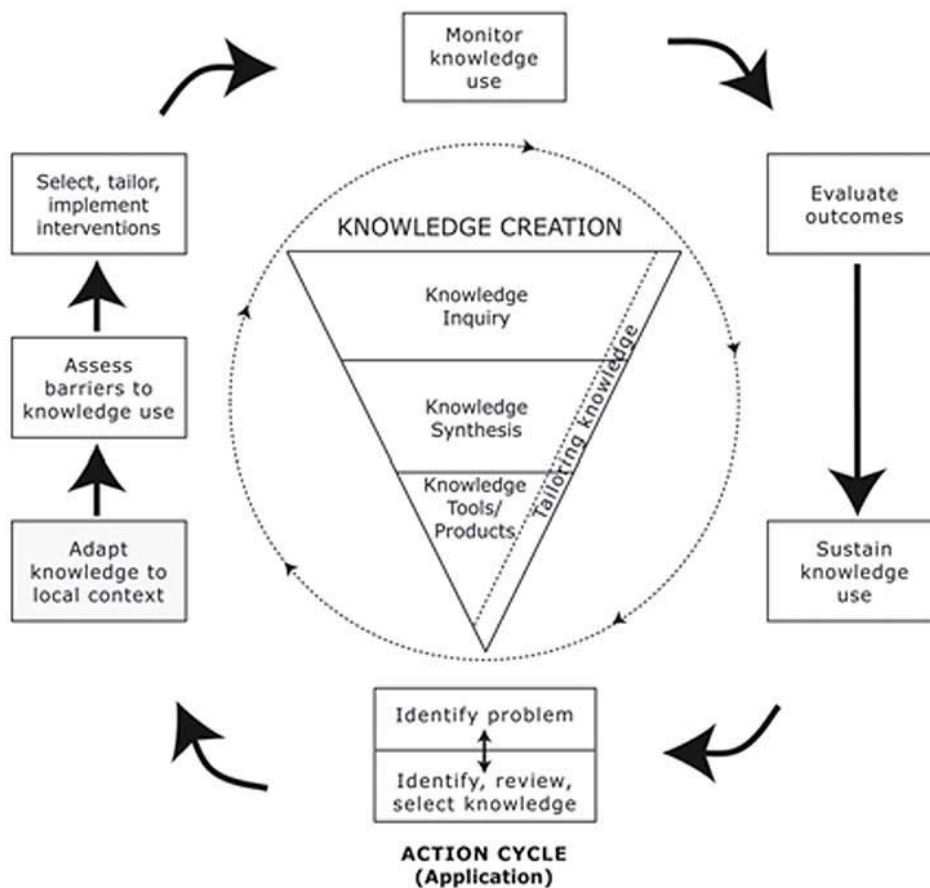
The KTA Cycle



Knowledge Translation

- Traditional KT
 - “End of project”, “end of grant”
 - Researchers create and disseminate knowledge
 - End users find and implement knowledge

The KTA Cycle



Knowledge Translation

- Traditional KT
 - “End of project”, “end of grant”
 - Researchers create and disseminate knowledge
 - End users find and implement knowledge
- Integrated KT
 - End users are involved in all stages

Moving Beyond “Planned Action”

Critique of KTA

- Too focused on applied research
 - Not enough attention to critical theory
- Reflexivity is required
 - Recognition of the active role played by KT specialists and knowledge brokers
- KT practitioners choose their strategies
 - May resort to tried and true methods
 - May not adjust to fit the context

Failure of Traditional KTA

“May contribute to the demonstrably mixed outcomes KT techniques have in isolation from other change techniques.”

Kitto, et al., 2011, p. 4

The background is a solid yellow color. Overlaid on this are several large, semi-transparent, light-orange geometric shapes. These shapes include vertical bars, horizontal bars, and L-shaped corner pieces, arranged in a pattern that suggests a staircase or a grid structure. The shapes are positioned behind the text.

Integrating Cultural-Historical Activity Theory

Cultural-Historical Activity Theory

- Third generation cultural-historical psychology theory
- Goals:
 - Focus on higher psychological functions
 - Cognitive skills (e.g., reading, writing), memory, etc.
 - Understand dialogue and language based interactions
 - Teaching cultural diversity
 - Understanding plurality of voices and perspectives
 - Understanding intersecting systems of activity
 - Community, school, home, etc.

Activity and Action

- Activity
 - Motivation-oriented goals to be accomplished
- Action
 - Individual operations that make up an activity
- Artifacts
 - Mediators
 - Tools
 - Act on the external world (objects)
 - Signs and symbols
 - Act on the internal world (concepts and ideas)

Learning Activity

“Extending these distinctions to the level of learning, we can see that learning to participate in activities requires particular actions and can even produce new actions through **collaborative reflection** on the meaning of different actions within the activity.”

Van Oers, 2008, p. 9

“The way people learn depends on the culture they live in.”

Van Oers, 2008, p. 8

“When the social situation of development changes, the course of development and learning will change as well.”

Van Oers, 2008, p. 8-9

“For professional persons, knowledge has become embodied in procedures and methods, similar to everyday knowledge, but with the difference that in work traditions, professionals can become conscious of and reflect upon procedures and methods if they do not fit the task.”

Hedegaard, 2008, p. 301

Integrated KT and CHAT

- Education
 - Learning conditions are co-created between the instructor and pupils
- Research
 - Experimenter-participant relationship is part of the study itself

Experimenter-Participant Relationship

“In experimental situations, participants try to figure out what is wanted of them; they construct hypotheses... if they believe they are being exploited, coerced, disrespected, or manipulated, they respond apathetically, oppositionally, or hostilely.”

Bandura, 2001, p. 5

Integrated KT

- Integrated KT more likely to be successful than traditional KT
- Can work towards:
 - Effective results
 - Sustainable results
- End users are integral to:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
 - Evaluation



CHAT in Practice

CHAT in Practice

- Start with the assumption of an integrated KT approach
 - End users:
 - Single discipline (e.g., nursing, social work, psychology)
 - Multi-disciplinary team
 - Decision- and policy-makers (e.g., senior management, community services, advocacy groups, government)
 - Patients, clients, or persons with lived experience
 - Connection to recovery philosophy
- Understanding of culture
 - Acquire end user opinions
 - Observation and research

CHAT in Practice

- Reflexivity
- Things to consider:
 - Which individuals are respected by the group?
 - What voices represent the group?
 - What voices do the group respond well to?
 - What cultural artifacts have meaning for this group?
 - In which spaces can they produce meaningful dialogue and practice for themselves?

CHAT in Practice

- Identification of resources
 - People
 - Change agents
 - Champions
 - Cultural artifacts
 - Tools (material; objects)
 - Signs/symbols (immaterial; concepts and ideas)
 - Settings

CHAT in Practice

- Identification of:
 - Boundary Objects
 - “An object that lives in multiple social worlds and which has different identities in each” (Star & Griesemer, 1989, p. 409)
 - Allows for the formation of a shared language
 - E.g., manuals, terms of reference, transdisciplinary concepts
 - Transaction Spaces
 - A place in which different professional groups working together with a common goal can come together for the purposes of mutually beneficial exchange
 - E.g., wikis, dialogue forums, support groups

Conclusion

Conclusion

- KTA cycle can be augmented by CHAT
 - Pushes an integrated KT approach
- KT intervention strategies deriving from CHAT:
 - Require reflexivity on the part of the KT specialist
 - Require a deeper appreciation for diversity
 - Require a deeper understanding of culture
 - Require a deeper understanding of intersecting network of cultures, systems and roles
 - Require a greater focus on language and practice(s)

Thank you!

Laura C. Ball

lball@waypointcentre.ca

Selected References

- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 1-26. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.1
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research. (2009). *About knowledge translation*. Retrieved from <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/29418.html>
- Cole, M. (1996). *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gibbons, M. (2008). Why is knowledge translation important? Grounding the conversation. *Focus Technical Brief: A Publication of the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research* (Rep #21). Austin, TX: SEDL.
- Graham, I. D., Logan, J. Harrison, M. B., Straus, S. E., Tetroe, J., Caswell, W., & Robinson, N. (2006). Lost in knowledge translation: Time for a map? *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, 26(1), 13-24. doi:10.1002/chp

Selected References

- Hedegaard, M. (2008). Children's learning through participation in institutional practice. In B. van Oers, W. Wardekker, E. Elbers & R. van der Veer (Eds.), *The transformation of learning: Advances in cultural-historical activity theory* (pp. 294-318). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Kimble, C., Grenier, C., & Goglio-Primard, K. (2010). Innovation and knowledge sharing across professional boundaries: Political interplay between boundary objects and brokers. *International Journal of Information Management*, 30(5), 437-444. doi:10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2010.02.002
- Kitto, S. C., Sargeant, J., Reeves, S., & Silver, I. (2011). Towards a sociology of knowledge translation: The importance of being dis-interested in knowledge translation. *Advances in Health Science Education, Theory and Practice*. doi:10.1007/s10459-011-9303-6
- Mitchell, G. (2012). Revisiting truth or triviality: The external validity of research in the psychological laboratory. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 7(2), 109-117. doi:10.1177/1745691611432343

Selected References

- Star, S. L., & Griesmer, J. R. (1989). institutional ecology, 'translations' and boundary objects: amateurs and professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907–1939. *Social Studies of Science*, 19(3), 387–420. doi:10.1177/030631289019003001
- Straus, S. E., Tetroe, J., & Graham, I. D. (Eds.) (2009b). *Knowledge translation in health care: Moving from evidence to practice*. Oxford, UK: Wiley.
- van Oers, B. (2008). Learning and learning theory from a cultural-historical point of view. In B. van Oers, W. Wardekker, E. Elbers & R. van der Veer (Eds.), *The transformation of learning: Advances in cultural-historical activity theory* (pp. 3-12). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.