

Towards a Collaborative Vision for Redesigning Education for Harmonious and Thriving Educational Futures in Asia and Beyond: Will Seamless IDC Theory lead us there?

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Abstract: A framework of future education has been articulated by Asian researchers in the form of the Interest-Driven Creator (IDC) Theory. Recent collaborative efforts have attempted to broaden the framework towards visions for future education with the IDC theory still as the basis but now embracing consideration of the ultimate educational goals of education. Such extensions can serve the purpose of further informing the development of the theory, as well as motivating and driving us towards realization of educational futures. The advent of the digital world and its fusion with the real world has also necessitated the bridging of seamless learning and working spaces in the daily lives of the learners. In this panel, we invite scholars to respond to, critique and build on building such visions of educational futures and argue for the role of IDC theory and what it can contribute.

Keywords: Interest-Driven Creator Theory, Seamless Learning, Educational Futures

1. Introduction

In 2018, a group of 23 (mostly) Asian researchers collaborated to develop the Interest-Driven Creator Theory (IDC Theory), which focuses on learning activity designs that foster interest-building, knowledge creation and forming such practices habitual (Chan et al., 2018; Chan et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020; Wong, et al., 2020). It was developed to mitigate the drawbacks of examination-driven education and guide the design of future learning. Concomitantly, the rapidly-accelerating digital transformation of the real world which includes education has necessitated the seamless interleaving of work and learning across different learning spaces supported by various forms of technologies (Chan et al., 2006): the physical world, the cyber-world, AR and VR-based environments, and digital environments in which learning companions thrive and support learning. We postulate the fusion of IDC Theory with seamless learning to form an integrated theory about the continuity of IDC-based learning in future seamless learning spaces - called Seamless IDC Theory (SIDC Theory).

There have also been international efforts to define international education goals, such as the reports by UNESCO. The report on “Reimagining Our Futures Together: a New Social Contract for Education” identifies key issues that all countries should center their educational systems around, and other efforts around the world to imagine educational futures (UNESCO, 2019). The recent July 2023 UNESCO GEM report provides some provocative policy advice such as a worldwide ban on smartphones in the classroom (UNESCO, 2023). In envisaging harmonious and thriving Educational Futures in Asia and beyond, we need informed visions, strategies and frameworks for re-imagining education. We postulate

that SIDC is one such vision, and it calls for collective efforts by interested researchers to work towards some consensus of educational goals for global educational futures, and think about the means to achieve these goals. This panel will discuss the role of the SIDC Theory in contributing towards these global educational futures.

2. Abstracts of Individual Panelists' Presentations

There are questions that need to be answered in order to fully realize the potential of the SIDC theory. For example, how can we ensure that the theory is adaptable and flexible enough to account for the rapidly changing landscape of education and technology? How can we ensure that SIDC-based learning is accessible to all learners, regardless of their background or circumstances? Additionally, how can we measure the effectiveness of SIDC-based learning and ensure that it is aligned with global educational goals and futures? Another important question to consider is how SIDC Theory will impact daily life in the digital future. With the shift towards SIDC-based work, family life, and entertainment, or will daily life itself become SIDC-based, what challenges and opportunities will arise as a result of this shift, and how can we ensure that we are prepared to meet them? How can we ensure that SIDC-based learning and daily life are balanced and integrated in a way that supports learners' overall well-being and success? These are just a few of the questions that will need to be explored and answered in this panel.

1.1 Revisiting the value of IDC Theory (Ronghuai Huang)

The IDC Theory, comprising three phases (Imitating, Combining, and Staging), serves as a powerful framework for designing effective learning activities. Its aim is to actively engage students, foster curiosity, and provide continuous support throughout their learning journey. Sustaining engagement over time is essential for empowering students to overcome challenges and develop lifelong learning habits. Authentic learning is a main focal point of the IDC Theory. It involves real-life experiences where students create tangible products to share with their communities. Cultivating and sustaining students' interest and curiosity is crucial to enhance the effectiveness of authentic learning. Learning engagement is another crucial aspect addressed by the theory, encompassing the time, energy, positive emotions, and learning strategies that students invest in educational activities. Considering this issue is important to ensure effective learning for all students. Active learning is the third core issue addressed by the IDC Theory. It actively engages students in meaningful activities that encourage critical thinking. Self-regulated learning, including self-planning, self-monitoring, and self-assessment, is recognized as a prominent feature of active learning. The IDC Theory provides a comprehensive framework for creating effective learning activities by actively engaging students, fostering curiosity, and providing continuous support. It addresses the key issues of authentic learning, learning engagement, and active learning. Implementing the recommended strategies will contribute to enhancing future learning experiences.

1.2 We need more evidence! (Hiroaki Ogata)

People are all different and may prefer different ways of learning. IDC theory is just one of methods, and we need more evidence for IDC theory, for example, for whom, for what kind of domains, when and where, IDC theory will succeed or not. Although evidence is not always correct, we as a researcher need to do more research and find empirical evidence. Also we need to establish a social information infrastructure (platform) to extract and share evidence from daily learning log data.

1.3 Fusing Seamless Learning and IDC Practice: Does it Foster Lifelong Learning and Enhance Students' Well-Being? (Lung-Hsiang Wong)

At the nexus of educational innovation, the fusion of seamless learning and Interest-Driven Creator (IDC) Practice emerges as a compelling vision to reshape the landscape of learning. "Seamless IDC is envisioned to bring the IDC learning process (interest, creation, habit) into a

seamless learning experience where the practice shall be ongoing and across time and spaces." This encapsulates the cornerstone of our exploration – a seamless confluence of IDC principles and the fluidity of seamless learning. Empowered by this fusion, students embark on an engaging odyssey, where curiosity sparks creation, creation fuels habit, and habit nurtures sustained exploration. Furthermore, the fusion propels students toward a balanced well-being, enabling them to navigate challenges with perseverance and engage with the world purposefully. I envision that this approach will lay the foundation for a life where learning becomes a joyful and intrinsic part of existence. Lifelong learners, equipped with the disposition and skills honed through seamless IDC, approach each day with a desire for intellectual growth. They are more resilient in the face of challenges, more adaptable amid changes, and more capable of contributing meaningfully to the ever-evolving global community. As the boundaries between formal education and real-world application blur, the fusion of seamless learning and IDC practice becomes a beacon guiding individuals towards a life enriched by perpetual learning and personal fulfilment.

1.4 Engaging with and within the digital environment (Jon MASON)

As educators, we must engage in theorising our practice. This scholarship of teaching and learning helps bring into alignment our vision with the realities of our changing world. This is demanding for several reasons: the evolving digital environment is both an enabler and disruptor; the field of educational technology is profoundly multidisciplinary, requiring us to look beyond educational theory. Moreover, demands for global citizenship and intercultural understanding are increasingly adopted within school curricula. Enriching IDC Theory with 'seamless' perspectives in relation to transitioning between the virtual, artificial, and real worlds provides a timely example of the theorising that is necessary. At the same time, however, I have concerns whether such theorising is sufficient. While the Global Harwell vision is compelling, the question 'will Seamless IDC Theory lead us' there is one I'm not so sure about. It may contribute, but I sense we will need to navigate a lot more theorising as the impact of Generative AI and the Web 3.0 become clearer. My main argument is that (digital) technology is no longer 'just a tool'; it is a complex adaptive environment of systems that we are often immersed within. In my experience, both seamlessness and boundaries support learning. Conundrums and wicked problems demand we pause. Solving them is often not a seamless experience. Learning to navigate the 21st century is not necessarily going to be an easy ride. As 'smart' systems and frameworks for learning develop in response to advancements in technology we also need to pay attention to how we might develop our human 'smarts' (Mason, 2023).

1.5 Revisiting the Promises of Seamless Learning (Hyo-Jeong SO)

The SIDC theory envisions continuous interest-driven learning in an increasingly connected and intelligent world. By revisiting the original concept of seamless learning, we can gain a clearer understanding of why and how this idea was introduced. The original notion of seamless learning, put forth in 2006, underscores the importance of students being able to "learn whenever they are curious," particularly emphasizing the value of "out-of-school learning driven by the personal interests of students." This notion inherently encompasses two key elements: learner curiosity and personal interests. Within the Asian research community, it is essential for us to reflect on whether we have deep understandings of how to support learner curiosity and interests, both with and without the use of technological tools. Chan's recent perspective on "well-seamlessness" and "ill-seamlessness" (2022) sheds light on potential negative impacts that overly seamless experiences might have on our lives. Much of the public perception surrounding seamlessness also points to instances of "ill-seamlessness," including media/device addiction, mental distractions, diminished human interaction, excessive

dependence on technology, and more. During the panel, I will revisit some of the promises underlying seamless learning and discuss what are the fundamental barriers and challenges that require our attention as to reach the aspiration of harmony and well-being as the educational goal.

3. Discussion and Conclusion

We articulate the Seamless IDC Theory (SIDC Theory) as a promising direction for envisioning educational futures. This panel is the start of many discussions that seek to achieve consensus on the educational goals of such futures, and to operationalize how theories like SIDC can lead to a thriving sustainable eco-system to help achieve these educational goals. Panelists from different countries and regions provide diverse perspectives that help a collaborative vision of educational futures in the digital age.

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