A Practice-Based Enquiry into the Academic Disciplines

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Abstract The present study sets out to investigate the meanings associated with the term *practice* across specialised domains and, particularly, the patterns of language use and aspects of semantic variation that distinguish the academic disciplines. A corpus of English research articles in various domains was investigated qualitatively and quantitatively, paying attention to lexical patterns and collocates of *practice*, with a focus on adjectives and verbal processes. The analysis of the collocational patterns with a prominently linking nature has highlighted the relational and highly context-bound meaning of *practice,* also reinforced by the adjectives modifying *practice* (e. g. *cultural*, *social*, etc.) that contribute to the semantic opacity of this word because of their shifting framework-related meanings. Moreover, a tension between a mainly concrete meaning and a conceptual one has been identified within the disciplines as each practice is characterised by the combination and overlapping of mechanical procedures and cognitive aspects. The main findings suggest that in academic discourse *practice*, far from being removed from theory, actually integrates it, pointing to a constant interplay between action and discipline-based knowledge. In line with the foundations of scientific enquiry, the main focus of all kinds of academic practice appears to be placed on the epistemological dimension, i. e., on the research, theory, method, interpretation and evaluation coming into play in any scientific study. The pedagogical implications are considered and it is suggested that a context-based lexical analysis of high-frequency words can yield significant insights into the epistemological frameworks of the disciplines.

Keywords academic writing, research articles, specialised domains, epistemology, lexical networks, corpus-assisted discourse analysis

1 General framework

Practice is one of those widely used, common currency words that can be found in daily conversation and in specialised contexts of use, in most cases referring to a general concept nuanced across domains. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of English* (2003: 1382), its core meaning of action as opposed to *theory* includes the exercise of a profession (e. g., *medical practice*), customary procedures (e. g., *child-rearing practices*), and repeated activities (e. g., *language practice*). Additionally, the online lexical database WordNet identifies two more meanings that highlight an interesting dialectics between action and knowledge, the operational and the cognitive plane: translating an idea into action (e. g., *a hard theory to put into practice)*; knowledge of how something is usually done (e. g., *it is not the local practice to wear shorts to dinner)*.

With regard to specialised knowledge, *practice* performs an ideational function that provides details of the scholarly processes, such as analysis, interpretation and assessment, constitutive of academic research (Hirsch 2010: 47). Despite its singular form, *practice* represents then a plurality of conventional and well-consolidated activities within the academy. Even more significantly, *practice* defines different activities across the academic disciplines insofar as different epistemological frameworks and procedures are associated with each discipline; as pointed out by Kreber: "Disciplines provide particular lenses or frameworks through which to

explore, understand and act upon the world. They can be conceived as 'tools of learning' […], each characterized by certain ways of thinking, procedures and practices that are characteristic of its community." (Kreber 2009: 15, see also Hyland 2002: 389).

The concept of community is at the very heart of disciplinary differences because of the social construction of any kind of knowledge (Hyland 2009: 12), as academic literacies, rather than existing in a purely abstract epistemic realm, are "closely bound to the social activities, cognitive styles and epistemological beliefs of particular disciplinary communities" (Hyland 2009: 13). The "common rhetorical space" shared by the community members is, however, fraught with open disagreement given the individual nature of research, the pluralities of practice and the increasing fragmentation of the new knowledges (Hyland 2006: 19–20). As disciplines tend to be increasingly regarded as "fluid and permeable entities impossible to pin down with precision" (Hyland 2009: 60), it may be more convenient to refer to "knowledge domains" as they represent "broad categorizations of knowledge which remain relatively untroubled by the vertical struggles over recognition and the horizontal struggles over resources which we find among disciplines and specialisms" (Hyland 2009: 64).

Drawing on recent developments in corpus-assisted discourse analysis (Baker 2006, Hoey et al. 2007, Partington et al. 2004), this study examines the use of *practice* in research articles across a wide range of disciplinary domains and seeks to identify the lexical patterns that may distinguish the branches of knowledge, with a view to exploring its discipline-specific or transdisciplinary meanings. In a broader pragmatic perspective focused on the textualisation of social values (Giannoni 2010: 46), the analysis of *practice* and of its lexical networks in research articles can serve to shed light on the academic value attributed to 'doing' across disciplines.

"Practice" in academic English

According to the Academic Word List (Coxhead 2000, 2002, 2011), which until very recently was regarded as the most accredited database of core academic vocabulary (Hyland/Tse 2007: 238), the frequency of *practice* and of its derived words appears to be one of the lowest, while theory is recorded as one of the most frequent word families. However, according to the online Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2012) based on a more extensive corpus of academic disciplines and genres, *practice* ranks among the top 50 words in general academic English (Davies/Gardner 2012, Gardner/Davies 2013). The discrepancy between the frequencies of *practice* in these two corpora may be explained by the different criteria used to build them up[1], bearing in mind that "whatever discoveries are made about the behaviour of linguistic items in a corpus hold true only for the portion of language contained in that corpus" (Partington 1998: 146).

Furthermore, the very idea of general academic English may be misleading considering the fact that attempts to describe a core academic vocabulary clash with the way each discipline shapes words for its own uses (Hyland/Tse 2007: 240), and scholars operating in increasingly outreaching and interdisciplinary areas of study have to negotiate word meanings in order to explore issues and advance knowledge in their own areas of expertise (Engberg et al. 2007, Rex et al. 1998). Even as the scientific paradigm holds true for the whole of the academic commu-

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[1]   See Gardner/Davies (2013) for a detailed overview of the various attempts at building a corpus of academic English and, more specifically, for a critical review of the rationale behind the Academic Word List database.

nity (Bennett 2009: 52, Martin 1993: 220), and the quest for novelty is increasingly likening the academic arena to a marketing business (Harwood 2005, Widdowson 2011), different epistemological values and rhetorical conventions have been associated with different domains: for example, objectivity and impersonality in the hard sciences vs. readers' engagement in the soft-knowledge domains (Bazerman 2000, Hyland 2004).

General or discipline-specific values are subtly encoded in the rhetorical organisation and stylistics of academic texts, and can be retrieved through a semantically-related lexical analysis, as exemplified by Giannoni (2009, 2010). Following the principle that discourse analysis provides textual evidence of the values endorsed by a given community, Giannoni (2010) examines leading scholarly journals in ten disciplinary areas and, on the basis of a joint quantitative and qualitative analysis of lexical occurrences, defines the potential value-marking words and identifies four values largely shared across the disciplines: goodness, size, novelty and relevance. Although in his study *practice* is not regarded as a candidate value-marking item, it is nevertheless a highly loaded term whose occurrence can be interpreted as a textual marker of empiricism and related to the scientific paradigm endorsed by the disciplines.

Corpus-based epistemological enquiry is also carried out by Groom (2010) who demonstrates that, contrary to the mainstream trend for analysing lexical keywords, also closed-class keywords offer interesting insights into the semantic properties of specialised discourses. In his analysis of history articles he focuses on a grammar word, the preposition *of,* and shows how recurrent phrasal patterns in which processes or phenomena are either defined or described (e. g. *a rejection of democratic values*; *the spread of 'Western civilization'*) are typically associated with history writing and knowledge-making. Although *practice* is a polysemous content word, its recurrent collocational patterns can also be considered 'semantic sequences' illustrative of the values upheld by academic discourse communities.

2 The corpus of Jstor research articles

This research is based on a corpus of 311 research articles published from January 2001 to October 2010 in a wide range of specialised English-medium journals and totalling 2,231,328 words. The articles were collected through Jstor (www.jstor.org), an international digital research archive including a vast number of leading academic journals across all disciplines. The selection criterion adopted for building the corpus of research articles was the occurrence of the term *practice* in the title of the article. This explicit reference to *practice* in the titles was considered to point to a leading research theme in the articles, as confirmed by the subsequent reading. Other search queries based on keywords or the occurrence of *practice* in the abstract could not apply to Jstor's entire digital archive, given the highly variable format of the journals, some of which (especially in the Arts and Humanities) dispense with the abstract and keyword list. The focus of the analysis was placed on the noun because of its wider range of structural combinations; the relatively few occurrences of the verb *practice* (according to the American spelling adopted in most journals) were not taken into account, except in the article titles as in those cases they were considered indicators of the main theme of the article. Also the word form *practices* was excluded from the present research because of the semantic connotations of the plural, which conveys a sense of overwhelming multiplicity in contrast to a particular specificity (Hodge/Kress 1993: 89): for example, *educational practice* may refer to the procedural knowledge associated with teaching, while *educational practices* would include the various, often divergent methods and techniques used in the classroom.

The quantitative corpus was checked against a more recent selection of Jstor research articles published in September/October 2013 across the disciplines featuring the term *practice* in their full text. Given the limited number of these research articles[2], the varying prominence of *practice* in the text and especially my attempt at applying a more fine-grained method of analysis in order to explore the wider issues tackled in the articles, this material was only analysed from a qualitative point of view.

Jstor journals are grouped into broad geographical-cultural areas (African American Studies, Jewish Studies, Middle East Studies), areas of research not yet fully institutionalised (Feminist & Women's Studies, Film Studies), besides traditional disciplinary domains (Economics, Philosophy, Religion). It was necessary to group the articles according to tighter categories that could be used as indicators of their discipline and subject matter. This reclassifying proved rather demanding for two main reasons: the strong inter- or transdisciplinary approach characterising most contemporary research, and the development of new areas of specialisation often advocating autonomous status, for example, philanthropic studies or ecology. Disciplines are in fact as much the outcome of the 'natural' organisation of human knowledge as an ideological construction affected by issues of power and prestige within the academic community (Giannoni 2010: 21, Hyland 2000: 159, Massey 1999, Mauranen 2006: 275).

I have as much as possible followed the original Jstor classification and only reclassified the journals assigned to broad categories such as Asian Studies or African American Studies on the basis of the insights gained from my corpus, distributing them across the disciplines (e. g., politics, sociology, etc). As shown in table 1, the number of Jstor journals varies across the disciplines between the well-supplied 'soft sciences' and the under-represented 'hard sciences'[3], consisting of four broad categories: Mathematics, Medicine, Natural Sciences, Science/Technology, for a total of 64 journals versus the remaining two hundred approximately. This uneven coverage may seem to affect the representativeness of the subcorpora, but only apparently. When comparing the number of journals per category (table 1) with the number of articles containing reference to *practice* in their titles per each discipline (table 2), it can be noticed that an underrepresented discipline such as Psychology (7 journals) has a higher *practice* frequency than better-supplied ones, for example History (43 journals) and Language/ Literature (60 journals), where the only two articles displaying *practice* in their titles were considered too few for statistics and were consequently excluded from the present study.[4] The mismatch between the number of journals per discipline and the size of the subcorpora seems to suggest that the frequency of *practice* may be reflective of the disciplines' epistemological

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[2]   As my access to Jstor journal archives has undergone severe restrictions after October 2010, I could only access thirty research articles out of one hundred approximately.

[3]   Although the hard/soft sciences divide may appear disappointingly generic as it fails to address disciplinary specificities, it proves a more manageable distinction than others, as argued by Mauranen (2006: 275): "We tend to get few hybrid disciplines across the main dividing lines into the 'hard' and 'soft' sciences. It may thus be a good point of departure for exploring disciplinary variation along the traditional dividing line for centuries in the history of science and scholarship: natural sciences and technology vs. arts and social sciences". See also Hyland (2009: 62–63) on "disciplinary domains" and the continuum of academic knowledge.

[4]   In addition to Language/Literature, also Geography and Science/Technology were excluded from this analysis, considering that less than five research articles (around 15,000 words) could hardly be considered representative samples of a discipline.

frameworks either foregrounding or disregarding practice as a scholarly process. However, this finding would need to be validated across a wider corpus of research articles, and, possibly, an ethnographic survey of the academic practitioners' insights into their own fields of research, following Kreber (2009) and Berkenkotter/Huckin (2009).[5]

Table 1: Distribution of Jstor journals across the disciplines from 2001 to 2010

Discipline	No. of journals	Percentage
Anthropology/Archaeology[5]	31	5.32
Arts	49	8.41
Economics	45	7.73
Education	46	7.90
Geography	8	1.37
History	43	7.38
Language/Literature	60	10.30
Law	35	6.01
Management	18	3.09
Mathematics	37	6.35
Medicine	15	2.57
Music	27	4.63
Natural Sciences	6	1.03
Philosophy	19	3.26
Politics	69	11.85
Psychology	7	1.18
Religion	20	3.43
Science/Technology	6	1.03
Sociology	41	7.04

Table 2: The Jstor RAs corpus

Discipline	No. of articles	No. of words	Practice %
Anthropology/Archaeology	16	135,902	0.14
Arts	15	101,749	0.26
Economics	10	45,674	0.10
Education	62	510,980	0.30
History	10	102,132	0.09
Law	16	136,515	0.22
Management	38	274,677	0.45
Mathematics	6	27,659	0,18
Medicine	27	133,862	0.41
Music	16	84,820	0.88
Natural Sciences	5	24,349	0.09
Philosophy	14	98,075	0.26

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5   These two disciplines were united because of the dual classification of many journals and of the highly interdisciplinary character of their research articles.

Politics	13	93,877	0.15
Psychology	6	30,050	0.17
Religion	17	105,846	0.40
Sociology	40	325,161	0.17

The highest frequencies of *practice* in the Jstor RA corpus refer to Music (0.88 %), Management (0.45 %), and Medicine (0.41 %). This can be explained by the practical orientation of these disciplines, in accordance with their declared aims and procedural principles emphasising action and concrete results, as shown by the high frequency of collocations such as *practice techniques/practice routines* in Music, *communities of practice* in Management and *general/medical/clinical practice* in Medicine. Also Religion scores high on *practice* (0.40 %), given its focus on the performative aspects of faith and spirituality.

By contrast, the almost null score for *practice* in the hard sciences in the Jstor research articles may appear surprising given their concern with 'objectification' (Wright 2008) and, more specifically, "the analysis of observable experience to establish empirical uniformities" (Hyland 1999: 114). Precisely this fundamental reliance on demonstration and evidence or, in other words, "the empirical basis of the scientific gameboard" (Bazerman 2000: 47), may contribute to conceal or marginalise practice as the 'given' information that is already part of the community's shared knowledge. Conversely, the low frequency of *practice* found in the humanities subcorpus may be explained by the emphasis on the aesthetic experience and its independence of empirical argumentation (Bazerman 2000: 44).

3 Linguistic analysis

3.1 Methodology

The research articles, stripped of tables, references and notes, were investigated with the aid of a software application, Wordsmith Tools 5.0 (Scott 2010), showing word frequency and key lexical patterns across texts. Besides a wordlist ranking each word according to its number of occurrences, this software application provides the contexts of occurrence for a given search word, and identifies its collocates, i. e. the words which most commonly co-occur with it. Collocates provide interesting structural and stylistic information about lexical patterns which can help novice researchers gain more confidence with the conventions of academic discourse and familiarise themselves with some of the most recurrent phrases, such as *address the issue* or *show that* (Durrant 2009). The collocates associated with the word *practice* have been analysed first in the small-scale sample represented by the titles of the Jstor research articles, then they were cross-checked against the whole corpus.

The quantitative analysis of the research articles was complemented by a qualitative approach, based on an inquisitive reading meant to identify the meanings attached to the word *practice* in the whole Jstor corpus, as well as to explore the conceptual frameworks underlying a few selected practices in the collection of articles dating back to 2013, as briefly discussed in the final section.

3.2 Collocational patterns

Language encoding does not simply provide content information, but also conveys a vision of the world: use of tense and modality, the choice of the active or passive voice, the distribution of adjectives and adverbs all contribute to shape the representation of situations and events as well as to subtly orientate the addressees' response; these apparently simple language choices are laden with subtle ideological implications (Hodge/Kress 1993), and also reflect the academic discourse conventions shaping complex information into smooth, persuasive arguments (Hyland 2009: 13).

3.2.1 "Practice" collocates in the research articles titles

As titles condense the main thrust of an essay, a closer look at the titles of the research articles in each subcorpus has highlighted interesting lexical patterns pointing to the practice-based aspects in academic research.

Table 3: "Practice" pairs in the Jstor RAs titles

Practice **Pairs**	**Occurrences**	**%**
theory/practice	38	12.14
research/practice	21	6.70
policy/practice	20	6.38
knowledge/practice	8	2.55
community/ies of practice	8	2.55

Table 3 outlines the recurrent *practice* patterns found in the article titles across the sub-corpora. The most frequent collocation/phraseological combination revolves around the theory/practice dichotomy, a crucial one in academic research, and presents the following variants: *theory and practice of; from theory to practice; practice in search of theory; of practice and in theory; theory into practice; the practice of theory; theories and practice; theory in practice.*

Two more pairs are also significantly recurrent across the RAs titles, *research/practice* and *policy/practice.* Especially the former presents interesting variants pointing to the ways in which research, practice and – occasionally – theory fruitfully integrate in any academic project: *theory and research into practice; research, practice and theory; practice-based research; practice and research; research practice; research and practice.* The variants *policies and practice; policy and practice; from policy to practice* indicate how any given practice in a university setting has to take into account well-established social or academic policies.

As regards the other phrases, centered on *knowledge* and *community/ies*, they point to aspects common to the disciplines and specific to academic enquiry, namely the tension between background knowledge and groundbreaking research, and the dominant role played by the scientific community in promoting the advancement of learning.

The adjectives modifying *practice* across the RAs titles in each subcorpus are largely related to the discipline (table 4): e. g. *artistic* in the Arts, *musical* in Music, *political* in Politics; some of them, apparently out of tune with the discipline, appear to point to the interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary connections characterising academic research: e. g. *economic* and *military* in History, *academic* and *medical* in Management, *somatic* in Philosophy. Quite in-

terestingly, adjectives such as *cultural, reflective, social*, recurrent across the disciplines, acquire slightly different meanings depending on the methodological approach and disciplinary procedure adopted for research (see section 3.3 below).

Table 4: Adjectives modifying "practice" in the Jstor RAs titles

Discipline	Adjectives
Anthropology/Archaeology	*cultural, daily, depositional, interpretive, local, social*
Arts	*appreciative, artistic, observational, reflective*
Economics	*best, financial, good*
Education	*collaborative, critical, democratic, educational, instructional, paced, pedagogical, professional, reflective, situated*
History	*economic, martial, military*
Law	*democratic, legal, legislative*
Management	*academic, medical, organisational, professional, social*
Mathematics	*empirical, statistical*
Medicine	*clinical, contemporary, contraceptive, general, homeopathic, private*
Music	*appropriate, authentic, musical*
Natural Sciences	No adjectives
Philosophy	*educational, intellectual, social, somatic*
Politics	*incremental, political*
Psychology	*innovative, psychological*
Religion	*Buddhist, Christian, contemporary, monastic, pastoral, religious*
Sociology	*activist, contraceptive, cultural, hegemonic, homophile, interpretive, methodological, missionary, reproductive, scientific, social*

3.2.2 "Practice" collocates in the research articles

The quantitative analysis of all the research articles has shown that *research, theory, community/ies, knowledge, policy* also rank highly as some of the most frequent lexical collocates for *practice* (table 5). These recurrent words reflect the dialectics between the theoretical foundation of academic research and the socially-bound process by which most academic knowledge is advanced and legitimated by the academic community.

Table 5: Lexical collocates for "practice": rank and frequency

Lexical Collocates	Rank	%
research	15	0.017
theory	17	0.014
community	30	0.009
knowledge	48	0.006
communities	51	0.005
policy	55	0.005

However, the highest frequency collocates for *practice* in absolute terms are grammatical words (table 6). Although they can be found in a five-word span both to the left and to the right of *practice*, a sample of the *practice* collocational patterns in the appendix shows that they are commonly found to the immediate right of *practice*, which acts as the head of the noun phrase. The prominently linking nature of these collocates – *of, and, in* – shows *practice*'s strong tendency to occur in word combinations and acquire its meaning by its postmodifying phrase.

Table 6: Top collocates for "practice": rank and frequency

Top collocates	Rank	%
of	1	0.15
the	2	0.13
and	3	0.11
in	4	0.09

The sample of word combinations for *practice of*, *practice in* and *practice and* across the disciplines provides an overall picture of the kinds of practice referred to in specialised literature and of some of their distinguishing features, from ritual to educational, from organisational to somatic, including legal, clinical, scientific, social and religious aspects (see appendix). What clearly emerges from this sample is the huge variety of practices within and across the disciplines, each one characterised by different settings and procedures: excavation and assessment, housing and conservation, health care and liturgy, just to mention a few. However, multiplicity of meaning also entails semantic vagueness, as many forms of practice beg for a clarification which is either delayed, or denied. Remote practices such as Unani Tibb (i. e. South Asian system of medicine), reflexive archaeology (i. e. excavation grounded on historical knowledge), or metta (i. e. loving kindness in Buddhism) are extensively explained, whereas many others, apparently couched in more familiar terminology, remain hazy as if there were hardly any need to specify their long ingrained procedural patterns; for example, phrases like *practice of art, practice of science, practice of politics*, which may denote a myriad of wide-ranging dynamics, are neither defined or delimited in the articles.[6]

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[6]   See Rex et al. (1998: 407) on a similarly open-ended word, *context*, and its varying conceptual frames: "When we tried to examine what was meant by context, we found that the authors left the term undefined theoretically, electing to use modifiers as a means to defining this term (e. g., democratic context, textual context, or surrounding context)."

The combination *practice of* largely refers to content, i. e. the activities and routines, but occasionally also to actors or practitioners; *practice in* sets the spatial and temporal scene in addition to identifying the kind of action; *practice and* defines the network of relations among converging ideas or applications. As coordination connects closely related or symmetrical items and also establishes bonds of equivalence and cohesion (Fairclough 1989: 186–188, Halliday 1994: 221, Hodge/Kress 1988: 111), the prominence of abstract nouns or nominalisations besides *practice* – i. e., *disciplinary practice and communication, appreciative practice and ontology, professional practice and ethics, practice and social memory,* etc. – seems to some extent to downplay the practical element in favour of a more abstract or conceptual aspect.

3.3 Epithets and classifiers

Adjectives, carrying an experiential and attitudinal value, can be distinguished into two categories, *epithets*, indicating objective properties of or subjective attitudes towards the practice in focus, and *classifiers*, indicating a particular subclass (Halliday 1994: 184–185). This distinction is often ambiguous and needs to be checked against the wider co-text (Bloor/Bloor 1995: 138). For example, when *evidence-based* refers to a cross-disciplinary method that consists in collecting quantitative data, it qualifies an approach according to an experiential category; by contrast, within the field of medicine it refers to a specific subclass as opposed to research-based, and consequently functions as a classifier. Likewise, *critical* denotes a self-questioning mode and attitude that can be adopted across the disciplines; however, in educational practice it indicates a kind of 'empowering pedagogy' that should demystify relations of power and control. *Good* and *best* are two further examples of shifting categories: even though they are legitimately regarded as interpersonal epithets according to functional-systemic grammar and even as the quintessence of evaluational stance (Giannoni 2010), in combination with *practice*, they form frozen phrases with a predominantly classifying meaning, i. e., the good or optimum standard according to general principles and guidelines. For example, according to the *Oxford Dictionary Online*, *best practice* refers to "commercial or professional procedures that are accepted or prescribed as being correct or most effective". Its fundamentally evaluational core does no longer lie with the subjectivity of the researcher, but is entrusted to seemingly objective criteria. As the wider context is taken into account, the classification of the practice-related adjectives may oscillate allowing for some adjectives' shift between classifier and epithet (table 7).

Table 7: Adjectives referring to "practice" in the Jstor RAs corpus

Classifiers	*activist; aesthetic; appreciative; artistic; ascetic; best; biomedical; Buddhist; Christian; collaborative; Congressional; critical; Democratic; depositional; diplomatic; economic; educational; evidence-based; experimental; financial; general; good; instructional; interpretive; legislative; liturgical; managerial; martial; medical; mimetic; monastic; musical; observational; ornamental; physical; private; reflective; reflexive; religious; ritual; statistical*

Experiential epithets	*bureaucratic; common; colonial; comparative; contextual; contraceptive; cultural; current; daily; empirical; international; intellectual; legal; local; modern; operational; professional; public; repetitive; social; standard*
Interpersonal epithets	*acceptable; appropriate; consistent; cost-effective; creative; deliberate; desirable; discredited; effective; effortful; ideal; important; innovative; purposeful; repressive; resilience-oriented; skillful*

The large majority of the adjectives classify *practice* according to disciplinary categories: e. g., *agricultural; artistic; clinical; economic; legislative; managerial; musical; pedagogical; political; psychological; statistical,* etc. In addition to the discipline-related adjectives, adjectives carrying an epistemic function – e. g. *aesthetic, appreciative, critical, experimental, interpretive, liturgical, observational, reflective,* etc. – also function as classifiers in that they define specifically performed practices within each discipline. For example, *reflective practice* in Arts is seen as "the necessary interrelationship of (pre-existing) materiality and subjectivity as they interact in a dynamic and motivated context", i. e. the artists' "ability to construct a critical and creative (multimodal) account of their work for a general audience" (Doloughan 2002: 6), while in Education it refers to "the ability to examine subject knowledge, skills, interpersonal relationships, the research/teaching nexus and personality" (Kane et al. 2004: 301).

The dominance of classifiers and experiential epithets is a clue to the academic nature of the practices mentioned; one of the characteristics of academic discourse is precisely its descriptive or classifying function, as it seeks to order a mass of raw material into neat categories. However, adjectives may cover complex or still fuzzy areas of academic research and thus contribute to semantic opacity because of their shifting framework-related meanings negotiated by each academic community. For example, depending on the focus, and methodological approach of the study, *social practice* may refer, among others, to a) learning mediated by classroom organisation in education, b) action carried out by members of a community in management, c) the funding policies and initiatives affecting a cultural project:

a) *We then present two case study examples of biliteracy, [...] as a* **social practice***, that is, as a practice mediated by the social organization of classrooms, including broader social and ideological factors* (Moll et al. 2001: 436; bold added here and in the following examples).

b) *The unit of analysis in these considerations was* **social practice***, defined as recurrent, materially bounded, and situated social action engaged in by members of a community* (Orlikowski 2002: 256).

c) *To understand the relationship between science and archaeology, we should first separate the aim of archaeology from its* **social practice***. As a standard definition, most archaeologists would probably agree that our over-arching aim is something like the following: to expand and improve our knowledge of the human past left in material culture residues. Practice, on the other hand, includes all the social aspects affecting the discipline, for example, a government's willingness to fund some topics of research and not others, the public presentation of archaeology, the political views of individual archaeologists and their willingness to confront funding agencies or otherwise engage in social action* (Huffman 2004: 66).

Interpersonal epithets occur more sparsely in the whole corpus and tend to concentrate in the humanities where the interpretive paradigm and the persuasive aim are more deeply rooted (Bazerman 2000: 44 f.); they qualify *practice* according to the assessment categories most favoured by the Academy, creativity and effectiveness, among others.

3.4 Verbal processes

The noun *practice* is a nominalisation by which agency is blurred (who is actually practising?): the grammatical shift from a clause either in the active voice (*somebody is practising something*) or in the passive (*something is practised*) into a noun involves a range of meanings, namely a) a process is turned into a state; b) an activity is turned into an object; c) the specific is diluted in the general and d) the concrete is blurred into the abstract (Hodge/Kress 1993: 26). For instance, whatever the exact meaning attached to the phrase *social practice*, the agents responsible for the action are not specified and neither are the ways in which that practice is actually carried out. Complex relationships are then collapsed into single lexical entities resulting in implicitness and multiple interpretive meanings (Biber/Gray 2010).

The large majority of predicates referring to *practice* are of a relational nature and/or specify the qualifying features of practices across the disciplines in an assertive or tentative fashion:

  • *practice is an instrumental means of achieving something we don't think we have […];*
  • *practice creates epistemic barriers among the different communities […];*
  • *democratic practice has implications in almost every area of pedagogy […];*
  • *practice is considered to be an essential factor in many areas of human performance […];*
  • *racist ideology and practice can exist side by side with cultural borrowing […];*
  • *practice can serve to inform future science […];*
  • *efficient practice may be a function of musicians' cognitive understanding.*

While the simple tense presents a situation as a matter of fact, modals, frequent in academic discourse, convey some degree of cautiousness; in both cases, however, the relational processes assert existence, identity, attribution and serve to define the nature of the practice (Hodge/Kress 1993: 130). By contrast, the paucity of material processes linked to *practice* as subject downplays the dynamic and volitional aspects characterising *practice* according to the very definitions provided at the start of the article.

Because of the prominence of relational processes, *practice* is consistently presented as a "carrier" or "identified" (Halliday 1994: 120–122) rather than as a doer or agent. The attempt at assessing each practice in turn is clear throughout the articles, and in full accordance with the goal of academic enquiry. What may be worth pointing out, however, beside the manifest variety of meanings associated with each practice and conveyed by the variety of attributes and predicates, is the parallel opacity of the many discipline-specific practices for which no definition is provided.

4 Text insights

Throughout the articles, a synthesis of theory and practice is strongly advocated in accordance with an epistemological paradigm founded on constructionism (Raelin 2007). A close reading of the Jstor research articles shows that the connection between theory and practice – also evidenced by the collocational patterns examined above – is systematically foregrounded:

> *Knowledgeability or knowing-in-practice is continually enacted through people's everyday activity; it does not exist 'out there' (incorporated in external objects, routines, or systems) or 'in here' (inscribed in human brains, bodies, or communities). Rather, knowing is an ongoing social accomplishment, constituted and reconstituted in everyday practice.* (Orlikowski 2002: 252)

> *The relation between principle and practice ceases to be sequential and becomes mutually informing: principles shape practice but at the same time only become alive through everyday practice where they are interpreted and reshaped.* (Hilhorst/Schmiemann 2002: 493)

Moreover, a tension between a mainly concrete meaning and a conceptual one can be identified within each practice: from the rituals studied by anthropologists to the creation of works of art, from the financial manoeuvres to the routines of medical practitioners, from the legal interpretive procedures to liturgical services, each and every practice within the disciplines is characterised by the combination and overlapping of concrete and abstract aspects, the mechanical procedures and the cognitive aspects; the divide between practical experience and scientific knowledge is in fact reconciled in academic investigation and research. What is said of Field Archaeology is, *mutatis mutandis,* also true of the other disciplines:

> *The divide between practical and academic skill may be bridged in archaeological fieldwork. Increased experience of the practical work leads to increased skill and understanding of how to use previously acquired knowledge in the process of interpretation. This way our frame of reference is created and constantly added to. This process involves a silent component, an embodied knowledge that stems from practical experience.* (Berggren/Hodder 2003: 426)

Two case studies

In order to carry out in-depth analysis of the *practice* network of meanings across the disciplines, two sample articles representative of the hard sciences and the social sciences have been analysed with regard to the pivotal role played by *practice*: "Realizing Potential in Translational Medicine: The Uncanny Emergence of Care as Science" (Friese 2013) and "The Organizational Implementation of Corporate Citizenship: An Assessment Tool and Its Application at UN Global Compact Participants" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013). The methodological framework of the research articles and the extended cotext of *practice* were closely examined with a view to exploring the situational context and epistemological framework embedded in that practice: i. e. the actors, time, place, procedural sequence, methodological assumptions and general or specific purpose identifying that particular practice.

4.1 Care as a potentialising practice

The article by Friese (2013) reports on an experimental system that connects care for the animal models used for laboratory research to medical care for humans and argues that better and more nurturing husbandry is not just a procedural matter resting with the technician's emotionality and manual ability, but is part and parcel of the whole scientific experimentation. The survey of various experiments where the animal models were differently treated (either

relieving or ignoring their pain) shows that better animal care also results in far more reliable scientific findings. Consequently, against the standardised handling of animals as if they were "frozen chicken breasts", the author advocates the constitutive role of care within scientific research as a practice that develops the potential of all living beings.

The lexical occurrences of *practice* refer to various interrelated concepts:

a)   scientific practice, i. e. the combination of the "experimental system" and "translating resulting findings into a clinical context" (Friese 2013: S129); in turn, "'experimental systems' denote not only the thing being studied [...] but also the methods, instruments, and other practices involved in characterising the model organism" (Friese 2013: S131);

b)   clinical practice, i. e. "clinical care for humans" (Friese 2013: S129); used in the plural, it relates to "treatments" as "a way to increase the potential of improving human bodies" (Friese 2013: S130);

c)   laboratory practice, i. e. "caring or uncaring interactions that are embodied by technical apparatuses and experimental set-ups" (Friese 2013: S134);

d)   the practices of care/care practices, which "shape the biology of animals within scientific experiments" (Friese 2013: S132) allowing "animals to live better lives within the scientific experiment";

e)   husbandry practices, i. e. "standardized practices in caring for research animals, which is largely considered to be the working concern of animal technicians and veterinarians", (Friese 2013: S132) and "is routinely ignored in science as these practices are not generally included in scientific and medical journal articles" (Friese 2013: S135);

f)   handling practices, i. e. "picking the mouse up by the tail, cupping the mouse in one's hand, and picking the mouse up using a plastic tunnel" (Friese 2013: S134).

Regardless of the variety of practices, the focus of the article lies with a practice in particular, care, which is further qualified throughout the article as "a potentializing practice", i. e. a way of "enhancing animal bodies and improving human bodies" (Friese 2013: S130) when laboratory practice and clinical practice agree on a common protocol safeguarding animals models, or else as "uncanny" if they fail to find a common experimental ground and actually end up "dividing animal welfare from research and ethics from science" (Friese 2013: S134).

Throughout the article the controversial positioning of the practice of care is made manifest as the interface between pain-relieving laboratory techniques performed on animals and research-based scientific findings bearing on future human patients. Furthermore, the tension between the cognitive and the operational, the concrete and the abstract is highlighted and reinforced in the very conclusions: "Care is a neglected and yet highly constitutive world-making practice in terms of both the material world and the ways we come to know it." (Friese 2013: S137).

4.2 Corporate Citizenship as 'Good Practice'

The article by Baumann-Pauly and Scherer (2013) surveys the corporate citizenship concept stemming from the corporate social responsibility ethos developed in recent literature and puts forward an empirical assessment tool based on the policies and agendas of five multinational corporations participating in the UN Global Compact, which asks companies to embrace universal principles and to engage with 'enlightened' global business. Quite interestingly, Corporate Citizenship is first and foremost identified as a concept whose "definitions in academia and practice vary" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013: 1–2). More specifically, given the

absence both of "empirical studies on the implementation of CC […] and a systematic review of 'good practice' examples" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013: 4), the authors set out to "build a concept that is operational" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013: 4), and assess "CC 'embeddedness' in organizational structures and procedures […] to advance CC in theory and practice" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013: 5). On the basis of the sampled companies' mission statements, policies and procedures, and interviews with the CEOs and other executives, an assessment tool was sketched out developing around five stages: from the defensive stage of denying any responsibility to "the final civil stage, [when] the corporation then starts collaborating with stakeholders (e. g., NGOs and peers) and shares good practices" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013: 7). By the end of the article, considering "both theoretical and practical implications", Corporate Citizenship is defined "as an organizational learning process along several stages" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013: 11) by which a company aligns their business procedures with key requirements in human rights, labour, and environment.

The word *practice* is used much more sparingly in this article than in the previous one and mostly refers to two concepts:
a)   management practice, i. e. "organizational structures and procedures" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013: 2);
b)   good practice, i. e. engagement in "collective rule-making processes on a global level […] contributing to the provision of global public goods, such as health care, human rights and the protection of the environment" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013: 7).

Both management practice and good practice entail a variety of actors within and outside an organisation; moreover, as the body of the argumentation makes clear, the actual procedural sequence, methodological assumptions and purpose widely vary across organisation executives, stakeholders and management experts. However, regardless of the numerous variables underlying management practice and its particular 'good practice' subcategory, they both rely on close interaction between principle and practice, 'commitment' and 'implementation', as shown by the case study on the five corporations where their varying endorsement of the corporate citizenship ethos translates into different procedures and outcomes: "While all companies made a formal commitment to CC, its implementation on a structural and procedural level varies extensively among the companies" (Baumann-Pauly/Scherer 2013: 11).

Both articles, despite their different disciplinary domains, conceptualise *practice* as the combination of the cognitive and the operational, the concrete and the abstract. In line with the scientific paradigm of evidence and argumentation (Phelan/Reynolds 1996, Swales 1990: 175), the main focus of these forms of academic practice is placed on the epistemological dimension, i. e., on the method, reflection, and evaluation that come into play in any scientific study.

5 Overview of the findings

As the survey of the Jstor multidisciplinary corpus has shown, *practice* denotes a different set of procedures across the disciplines and even within the same discipline. The collocational patterns with a prominently linking nature highlight the relational and highly context-bound meaning of *practice*: depending on the post-modifier, the whole phrase can dramatically change meaning: e. g. the repressive *practice of segregation* vs. the empowering *practice of critical pedagogy*. In either case, the complex grammatical structure of nominalisation obscures

the nature of the practice, that is the agents involved, the setting and mode of the practice: who is practising, where, how, and for what purpose.

Also the adjectives modifying *practice* (e. g. *social, cultural, reflective*) contribute to the semantic opacity of this word because of their shifting framework-related meanings. Although they perform a descriptive function, they both reflect and convey an interpretive and evaluative view of the practice in question. The predicates associated with *practice* are largely relational, clearly encapsulating the classifying or descriptive function of academic discourse: *practice is/has/can be considered* etc.

The recurrent lexical patterns, i. e., the frequent combination of *practice* with *theory*, *research*, *knowledge*, as well as with other abstract nouns, i. e., *ontology, belief* etc. point to a constant interplay between action and discipline-based procedural knowledge. In line with the conventions and discursive constructions of academic research, in fact, each discipline is founded on practical skills as well as theoretical/interpretive understanding. The intertwining of these aspects, the operational and the cognitive, the concrete and the abstract, are to a greater or lesser extent explicitly acknowledged throughout the corpus of research. More specifically, the extensive reading of the research articles has shown that *practice* in academic discourse, far from being removed from theory, actually integrates it:

> Theory gives the practitioner's ship a plethora of navigational courses, frameworks in which new methodology can be applied and tested. Practice is theory-in-place. Theory is practice-to-be, waiting to be enacted. (Englehart 2001: 372)

As in general language use, also in specialised domains, *practice* is an 'open' concept modified by the related adjective, phrase or clause; however, in the research articles, the collocates and extended co-text of this polysemous word point to the interaction between practice and cognition as a value shared by the scientific community across the disciplines. Throughout the corpus, and whatever the discipline involved, the overarching idea linking academic research, knowledge and practice is that: "In principle, theory and practice are different. But, in practice, they never are." (Pringle 2001: 373)

Conclusions

Many studies have emphasised the relevance of corpus-assisted discourse analysis in language learning, as a "rich experience of the language with insights into collocations and contextualized grammatical structures linked to opportunities to develop students' analytical abilities" (Thurstun/Candlin 1998: 277). Not only do corpora provide examples of language items in context, but also they yield insights into the signifying process itself and the way meanings attached to words are nuanced across discourses (Kaist-Aigner 2009). Besides phraseology, which so far seems to be a privileged area for corpus analysis within an EAP context (Bowles 2012: 45, Simpson-Vlach/Ellis 2010), epistemology may also prove to benefit from corpus-assisted discourse analysis.

An understanding of the conceptual frames through which the disciplines constitute themselves as a network of distinct domains is the key to academic expertise and success, and it can only be mediated by the close investigation of research language and terminology (Resche 2013). As high-frequency words may be revealing of the epistemological frameworks of the disciplines (Giannoni 2010, Groom 2010), a context-based lexical analysis can prove a

valuable tool for novice researchers to familiarise themselves with the underlying principles and cognitive frameworks of their target discipline.

Acknowledgement

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APPENDIX. A sample of the *practice of/in/and* collocational patterns across the disciplines.

ARCHEOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY

- *The **practice of** reflexivity can take many forms […] One definition of reflexive archeology is that it is an approach that tries to provide systematic opportunities for field archaeologists to engage in narrative construction and to provide critique of those narratives in relation to data and social context.*
- *[…] the **practice of** excavation is seen as low skilled, capable of being carried out by low-paid workers, volunteers, prison inmates, or the unemployed.*
- *[…] it is likely that more than a single motivating factor accounts for the **practice in** antiquity.*
- *The subject of this paper is the archaeology of cult **practice in** Roviana Lagoon, in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands. The archaeology of Roviana is dominated by shrines and other monumental structures that are associated with an abundance and diversity of ritual artefactual assemblages.*
- *While it might be suggested that daily **practice and** social memory are distinct topics, we would argue that in this context they are inseparable in that regulation is not simply imposed at Catalhoyuk but is constructed through the habituation of practices.*
- *The anthropology of youth is characterized by its attention to the agency of young people, its concern to document not just highly visible youth cultures but the entirety of youth cultural **practice and** its interest in how identities emerge in new cultural formations.*

ARTS

- *The **practice of** conservation of installation art is an emerging field with many unanswered questions.*
- *The technical **practice of** building the artefact becomes one of exploring which architectures and techniques best serve as an inscription device within which the authors can express their message.*
- *The twentieth century **practice of** design grew out of an applied art tradition that encompassed architecture, furniture and interiors to fine book production and poster designs by commercial artists.*
- *Observations in nature create a common and familiar presence in the actual art or design work, features that seem culturally recognizable, honest, and correct […]. The basis of any mimetic **practice in** observational drawing and making will be to work through different visual processes and thoughts, often in a simultaneous and arduous manner.*
- *This article describes the preservation challenges inherent to this medium, summarizes the current state of conservation **practice in** the field, and suggests broad guidelines and standards.*
- *What I am offering in conclusion about Baroque **practice and** theory is that not only are originality and repetition intimately bound in the **practice and** theory of a certain type of artwork, but also that repetition was a necessary condition for the aesthetic quality that would later come to be understood as "originality".*

ECONOMICS

– *However, through reductions in trade barriers, and the increased **practice of** parallel import and export**,** the opportunities for price discrimination between, for example, high and low income countries, have diminished.*
– *We define five distinct stages in the evolution of thinking and **practice of** food security, over the past thirty years.*
– *Other principles for **best practice in** housing, such as those promoted by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), especially those relating to social integration, bear comparison with the overriding concern for financial sustainability and accountability of the programme listed below […].*

EDUCATION

– *Educational researchers might find the **practice of** noticing through note-taking to connect common frameworks to common perspectives on traditional educational themes.*
– *Popper's epistemology has had a significant influence on **practice in** the natural sciences, but precious little in the social sciences and education.*
– *This mutually informed link could help contribute to overcoming any real or perceived obstacles to **practice in** the classroom, and theory and dialogue within the university.*
– *In particular, educators might be better equipped to foster discipline-specific literacies by "enculturating" students into disciplinary **practice and** communication.*
– *Pushing students to reflect more explicitly on the relations of **practice and** theory should probably become an implicit if not explicit element of completing a particular Program Expectation.*
– *In educational research and practice we are working with human beings in all their ever-changing complexity. Incorporating the craft, **practice, and** possibility of poetry in our research enhances our ability to understand classroom life and support students' potential to add their voices to a more just and democratic society.*

HISTORY

– *The foundations for the theological tradition were laid by Augustine who sought to reconcile the fundamental conflict between the pacifism of the New Testament and **the practice of** warfare of the Christian Emperor.*
– *It is also assumed that there was no intention to adopt discredited **practice of** using air force as an alibi for lack of success on ground.*
– *Zheng alludes to the **practice of** martial arts in several other Buddhist centers, including the monastic complexes on Mount Wutai Shanxi, and Mount Funiu (Henan).*
– *[…] it is possible to open our conceptions of economic **practice in** post-socialist societies to all kinds of variant forms.*
– *This shared set of rules and rituals should explain a number of striking features in both the **practice and** representation – why battles were normally fought in remarkably regularized forms […].*

LAW

– *At the same time, however, the provision affords judges an appropriate amount of discretion, thus addressing the concerns that the implementation of article 7(I) may needlessly entrench the* **practice of** *taking into account foreign interests.*
– *The simple truth is that there is no coherent bridge between legal education and the* **practice of** *law.*
– *Should the Supreme Court presume that Congress acts constitutionally? The role of the canon of avoidance and reliance on early legislative* **practice in** *constitutional interpretation.*

MANAGEMENT

– *The paper examines the contributions of two distinct areas of theory to the* **practice of** *facilitation in operational research […].*
– *Knowledge is less about truth and reason and more about the* **practice of** *intervening knowledgeably and purposefully in the world.*
– *The* **practice of** *supporting participation ensures that a multiplicity of voices and ideas is represented in discussions, deliberations, and decision processes.*
– *Incorporation by charter is a form of government regulation, which allows the chartered organization to take on substantial power in the control of* **practice in** *that professional field.*
– *The notion of collaborative* **practice in** *our discipline remains a vague concept, with many assuming that it refers simply to consultation with local communities.*
– *The first part of this paper introduces humanitarian principles and the recent discussions that have evolved around them, followed by some theoretical notes on the meaning of principles in organizational* **practice and** *culture.*
– *Surveys often reveal wide variations in the type and frequency of* **practice and** *policy interventions […].*

MATHEMATICS

– *The* **practice of** *basing scientific conclusions on single studies using arbitrary criteria, if widespread, could give NHST [Null Hypothesis Significance Testing] or any other method a bad name […].*
– *We conclude with some recommendations for improving the* **practice of** *NHST […].*
– *A common* **practice in** *school accountability research is to regress the outcome on X and W […].*

MEDICINE

– *The present* **practice of** *concentrating all efforts at increasing* **the practice of** *family planning on women during antenatal and post-natal clinics cannot move family planning forward in Nigeria.*
– *A written survey was used to investigate knowledge and* **practice of** *infection control and attitudes toward government regulation.*
– *Other committees include medical, nursing and allied health practitioners who map out current* **practice in** *the hospital.*
– *The intervention program fits the model of quality improvement most commonly used in*

*family **practice in** the Netherlands and Europe quite well.*
– *This study shows that there are still significant gaps in knowledge and **practice in** the management of patients with HIV/AIDS.*
– *The curriculum includes an overview of the law and the problem of unsafe abortion, professional **practice and** ethics, communication skills and counselling techniques […].*

MUSIC

– *Wagner (1975) documented that **practice of** music is such a basic fundamental element of study that it is not even mentioned in music dictionaries, music education method books, or in applied method books.*
– *[…] teacher and researcher likewise confront theory and **practice in** dialectical relation*
– *A combination of mental **practice and** physical practice was more beneficial than was either mental or physical practice alone […].*
– *[…] appreciative **practice and** ontology constrain one another. If practice has any priority, it consists only in the requirement that an ontology be grounded in some features of practice.*

PHILOSOPHY

– *The **practice of** model building is a creative act, and often independent of specific dictates of theory.*
– *Instead of an absolutely free discourse community, the best one can attain is a community in which one commands the requisite rules of procedure, as well as the 'ethics, the ethos, the **practice of** self' […],*
– *There have been few attempts to generalize about intellectual **practice in** everyday life, issues of 'knowledge' and its definition […].*
– *The theory-world relationship is a hierarchy, with theories as fixed entities, directing **practice in** a top-down fashion.*
– *What has been given above represents what seem to be two distinct approaches to somatic **practice and** suffering rooted in two different metaphysics.*
– *[…] a common epistemology seems to underpin both forms of knowledge **practice and** their respective conceptions of knowledge.*
– *[The article] discusses the baraza setting (daily meeting for male social peers) as a venue for intellectual **practice and** the appreciation of wisdom.*

POLITICS

– *Election Day – the communal culmination of the **practice of** politics – is the heart and soul of democratic self-government.*
– *They supported the American political system in the forties, fifties, sixties, and seventies despite its horrendous **practice of** segregation.*
– *It is the understanding of best **practice in** development that must underpin responses to the plight of war-torn countries.*
– *Clearly, with the ever increasing complexity of public administration practice and the desperate need to apply **practice in** a meaningful, innovative, progressive manner, it is time for theorists and practitioners to "kiss and make up".*

– *The transition architecture since the adoption of Resolution 1483 has undergone further elaboration, in the form of both Security Council **practice and** events in Iraq.*
– *[…] this process, impelled by its own perverse 'rationalities' both at the level of state **practice and** of individual behaviour, expanded to such dysfunctional proportions that the centre once more intervened.*

PSYCHOLOGY

– *The extent to which assumptions about gender underpin theory and **practice in** relation to eating disorders has potential implications for the ways in which women come to understand and experience themselves.*
– *Applied psychologists often have difficulty in identifying personal resources and positive attributes due to the clear biases in our training and **practice in** the assessment of problematic behavior.*
– *Attention to these issues may be essential before a more positive psychology can emerge from theory to influence professional **practice and** policy.*

RELIGION

– *Although Buddhism in China evolved into different schools with methodological and hermeneutic variations, the **practice of** this same liturgy has become a consistent monastic code.*
– *Through the **practice of** meditation and mindfulness, people perform a certain number of techniques on the body, thought and ways of being.*
– *The present study has explored the relationship between Bradbury's measure of psychological well-being and three indices of Christian belief and **practice in** a random sample of 997 Australian adults.*
– *We know very little about pastoral **practice in** the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with regard to sex and marriage, not only for Catholics but other religious traditions as well.*
– *More important, this form of training creates an organic link between communal **practice and** religious philosophy.*
– *Buddhist tradition, Roman Catholic and Orthodox contemplative tradition, and mainline Protestant tradition agree: we have everything we are ever going to have, and there is nothing to gain – absolutely nothing – through practice, because **practice and** attainment are nondual.*

SOCIOLOGY

– *Practices – like the **practice of** journalism – are the outcome of an encounter between one's professional habitus and a particular social field.*
– *We do this in order to highlight the way sociology can inform the terms and **practice of** research methodology.*
– *The **practice of** trying to locate cultural difference within individuals leads to commonplace but ludicrous statements such as referring to individuals as diverse.*
– *The number of scientists who consult on fictional media projects is steeply increasing as consulting becomes standard **practice in** the entertainment industry.*
– *[…] ethnic monitoring is a fairly standard **practice in** Britain, with people providing details of their ethnic group for the population census and employers monitoring their appointments and promotions procedures.*

- *The analysis of mission **practice and** discourse concerning marriage presents an opportunity to reflect on how formal organizational rules are contested and sometimes changed, on a continuous basis.*
- *A demonstration of the inseparability of **practice and** meaning is used to conduct a theoretical re-articulation of culture and economy.*

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