

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders Position Paper on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Written by: Jennifer Friberg, Colleen F. Visconti, Nicole Corbin, and Derek Daniels

Defining the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Audiologist Ernest Boyer (1990) defined four types of scholarship engaged in by college and university faculty. Three of these represent traditional scholarship conducted historically in higher education: the scholarship of discovery (original research which advances the knowledge base of a discipline), the scholarship of integration (research which makes connections across disciplines, researchers, and eras), and the scholarship of application (research which applies findings from research for practical application). Boyer's fourth type of scholarship was termed the scholarship of teaching (later expanded to become the scholarship of teaching and learning) and focused on the effectiveness of teaching as the "highest form of understanding" (Boyer, 1990, p. 23).

The scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) is defined as the combination of three components: rigorous study of teaching and/or learning, peer review of these studies, and public dissemination of findings to advance pedagogical practice (Shulman, 2004). To this end, SoTL places the focus of education on the learner, investigating the effectiveness of pedagogical approaches to support the transfer of discipline-specific knowledge and subsequent learner success. McKinney (2007) cautioned that SoTL should not be mistaken for high quality teaching (teaching which promotes student learning) or scholarly teaching (teaching using a scholarly approach). Rather, SoTL should be defined as work encompassing a systematic study of questions important to both teaching and learning that is shared within and beyond the academy (see also Chick, 2018; Chick & Friberg, 2022). To these characteristics, Felten (2013) noted other principles of good practice in SoTL, including that SoTL work be grounded in a specific teaching/learning context, that SoTL be methodologically sound, and that SoTL be considered as a potential partnership with students.

SoTL in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Within CSD, academic and clinical training programs promote evidence-based practice (EBP) as the gold standard of clinical practice ([American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.](#)). Just as EBP enhances clinical work, evidence-based education (EBE) should enhance teaching in the college and university classroom across all levels of preservice education, from undergraduate through graduate preparation (Friberg et al., 2021; Ginsberg et al., 2012; [Ginsberg et al, 2024](#); [Houle et al., 2016](#)). SoTL is the vehicle for the formation of EBE, allowing effective, evidence-based educational practices to be shared with a wide audience of academic and clinical course instructors who then engage in scholarly teaching to enhance their students' learning. Thus, the value of SoTL for CSD programs is that discoveries from SoTL-based inquiries produce what [Shulman \(1987\)](#) termed *pedagogical content knowledge*, enhancing the preparation of future speech-language pathologists and audiologists with practices found successful in our disciplines, allowing optimal professional preparation in both academic and clinical settings. Opportunities

exist for SoTL to inform how our field embraces and optimizes pedagogical advancements to improve the knowledge, skills, and confidence of anyone with connections to teaching and learning in CSD in a multitude of professional roles and spaces (e.g., [Alanazi & Nicholson, 2023](#); [Morgan et al., 2022](#)). Furthermore, SoTL research can be harnessed to address known gaps and variability in academic and clinical curricula in CSD ([DeRuiter & Ginsberg, 2020](#); [Henry et al., 2021](#); [Meibos et al., 2019](#); [Muñoz, 2018](#)).

Ways of Knowing in SoTL

SoTL is not tied to a particular methodological approach. By definition, SoTL is conducted as a systematic form of study with a well-developed design and process; SoTL does not, however, need to be experimental to have value or rigor ([Chick, 2014](#); Poole, 2013). Huber and Hutchings (2005, p. 30) describe SoTL as a “big tent” where varied, interdisciplinary ways of knowing should be invited, included, and valued ([Miller-Young & Yeo, 2015](#)). Thus, assuming that SoTL in CSD should only use the methods that are most common in its traditional, disciplinary (e.g., lab-based) research constitutes a form of epistemological bias. That bias threatens to minimize SoTL work that embraces varied methodological approaches and ways of knowing. The ways in which teaching and learning are studied should mirror the purpose of the SoTL research being conducted, with data collected and analyzed in a manner that most effectively aligns with research questions, participant perspectives, and the teaching/learning context being studied ([Friberg, 2018](#)). Because SoTL is not meant to be inherently generalizable, what is “known” about teaching and learning in CSD – and across disciplines, more broadly – grows over time.

Representation in SoTL

Ideally, SoTL research should be representative of all the disciplines in CSD: speech-language pathology, audiology, and speech, language, and/or hearing science. In addition, the research should include or be conducted by students, clinicians, academic and clinical educators, preceptors, researchers, administrators, program directors, directors of clinical education, or anyone with connections to teaching and learning in CSD. The vast majority of SoTL research in CSD, however, has been conducted by academic or research faculty in speech-language pathology. Furthermore, much of this research tends to be conducted at predominately White institutions of higher learning by White female faculty members and the participants tend to be White, neurotypical middle-class female students in their early to mid-twenties. More needs to be done to engage an increasingly diverse body of both investigators and participants in SoTL research.

Currently, SoTL research in CSD is lacking in many areas including the following: in the field of audiology; in clinical education or supervision; inclusion of diverse, underrepresented and/or marginalized students and their voices regarding the learning process; at various types of institutions including historically black colleges and universities; in pedagogical approaches such as online and hybrid programs; at various Carnegie classifications of institutions of higher education (research 1, doctoral, masters, baccalaureate, or associate colleges and universities); and geographical representation (United States vs. international programs). If we are serious about

improving evidence-based teaching and learning in CSD, then it is essential that SoTL research represents everyone in the discipline.

The Future of SoTL in CSD: Advocacy

Advocacy to gain support and make recommendations regarding the value and use of SoTL within our disciplines is still needed. As SoTL grows in CSD, advocacy becomes critical to support individual SoTL scholars, their work, and the expanding field of SoTL in speech-language pathology and audiology. The International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning's Advocacy and Outreach Committee identified four potential advocacy issues: SoTL as an activity of value, pedagogical matters, curricular matters, and factors in student success ([Huber & Robinson, 2016](#)). These issues overlapped with specific recommendations for integrating SoTL into CSD, which included the broad categories of increasing awareness of SoTL and its value in CSD, support for those engaging in SoTL across the academic lifespan, application of SoTL to support students as learners, student engagement as SoTL scholars, and advocacy for SoTL in CSD ([Friberg et al., 2023](#)).

Any approach to SoTL advocacy should be multifaceted, working across specific levels of impact to address issues and needs at the individual class and scholar level (micro), department or program level (meso), institutional level (macro), or cross-institutional/disciplinary level (mega; [Simmons, 2009](#)). Within these levels, advocacy for SoTL involves:

- listening to the individuals or groups involved in SoTL
- fostering explicit mention of SoTL in programmatic and disciplinary conversations about teaching, learning, and student/faculty success
- building connections within and across SoTL scholars and findings
- creating partnerships that can be utilized to advocate for the issue(s) being addressed.

As advocacy advances, the approach to communicating information about SoTL should expand beyond individual conversations with colleagues. It can and should include the use of written publications (i.e., books, journals, websites, blogs, etc.), social media, mass media (i.e., newspapers, op-eds, national media outlets), conferences, and other venues where the intellectual work of teaching and learning can be recognized and shared for public conversation in and beyond CSD.

CAPCSD supports and encourages moving policies and practices related to SoTL forward to provide our current and future students with evidence-based educational experiences that lead to strong academic and clinical educational experiences and outcomes, while at the same time supporting and valuing the CSD professionals who are pursuing this area of scholarship.

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