C124: INDIVIDUAL PAPERS: English language learning and teachers' personal networks of praxis

Chair: Maurizio Toscano, The University of Melbourne

Agli Zavros (1)

University of Southern Queensland (1)

Educators need to re-examine expectations, potentials and possible biases that affect students' educational attainments in diverse and multicultural classroom contexts (Ashman & Elkins, 2008) in order to fully attain inclusive educational praxis. Teacher personal networks provide teacher with cultural knowledges that shapes teacher professional expectations about what is possible and what is attainable for certain groups of students. In our current national context, understanding the phenomenological reality of a school based teacher networks is central in understanding factors that impact on students' educational attainments. Drawing on the work of Cheng-Ting, Kyle, & McIntyre, (2008) work is required to re-examine teachers work in multicultural classrooms, as complex diverse learning spaces, which put heavier demands on teachers' competencies than less diverse classrooms (Wubbels, 2005). This paper proposes that teacher's professional identity is constructed through specific support experiences that also shape praxis. These networks are explored with the focus on network morphology and interaction, that in highlight the phenomenological reality of school culture/s. A case study approach is utilised in this paper to illustrate three schools networked support landscapes. Through the application of social network theory, a descriptive analysis is provided defining the role of network members and the nature of network support. An understanding of teacher networks can enable pre-service, beginning, in-service and returning teachers to improve their access non-material resources.

References

Ashman, A., & Elkins, J. (2008). *Education for inclusion and diversity* (3rd ed.): Pearson Education Australia.

Cheng-Ting Chen, Kyle, D. W., & McIntyre, E. (2008). Helping teachers work effectively with English Language Learners and their families. *The School Community Journal, 18*(1), 7-20.

Wubbels, T (2005), Teacher interpersonal competence for Dutch secondary multicultural classrooms. *Teacher and teaching: theory and practice. 1-20*