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Special Issue 2 to be published July 2016

Current issues on parental involvement in schools: A multicultural perspective

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ISSN 2204-0552 (Print from 2015), 1833-4105 (Online)
Caught between policies and practices: Sudanese migrants’ experiences of AMEP in Australia

Anikó Hatoss
University of New South Wales

Abstract: This paper discusses the relationship between policy and its actual implementation and effect as seen by language learners. The context for the discussion is the English language programs designed to support newly arrived immigrants in Australia, the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). The paper will firstly give an overview of this program and its underlying policy, which clearly sets out some pedagogical aims and the broader goals of assisting migrants integrate into Australian society. Then, the paper will introduce the aims of the ethnographic study, which explored the experiences of those English learners who participated in this program. By drawing on the participants’ views as expressed in their discourses, I intend to highlight the contrasting characteristics of policy aims and its effects. I will provide quantitative data to give background information about participants demographics, their AMEP participation rates and their self-reported linguistic abilities, then I will move on to the qualitative analysis of discursive data collected through survey-interviews and some follow up in-depth interviews. The results demonstrate and highlight the need for policies to be continually informed from bottom-up learner experiences. Without such feedback into the policy cycle, pedagogies and language learning and teaching practices cannot fulfil their aims.

Keywords: Language policy; immigrants; African refugees; English as a second language in Australia
Quality teaching; ‘Classroom Pedagogical Alignment’ and why teachers teach as they do

Ken Edge\textsuperscript{a}, Ruth Reynolds\textsuperscript{b}, and Mitch O'Toole\textsuperscript{c}

\textsuperscript{a} New South Wales Department of Education and Training; \textsuperscript{b} University of Newcastle; \textsuperscript{c} University of Newcastle

Abstract: This article presents the results of an observational study of eight experienced teacher classroom practices and of those teachers’ comments on why they teach as they do. Sixty-one observations and coded analyses, using the New South Wales Quality Teaching model, were made of pedagogical strategies as they taught in social studies classrooms in Australia. Collaborative interviews were held following communication of observation results. Interpretations were made of what influenced classroom practice. ‘Classroom Pedagogical Alignment’ was found to be a key explanatory factor with standardised tests and teacher accountability measures limiting the freedom teachers believe they have to teach for excellence.

Keywords: pedagogy; quality teaching; curriculum alignment; secondary education
Evaluating the effectiveness of a fraction definition model to promote abilities of pre-service elementary teachers to solve fraction verbal problems

Sandy Alon
William Paterson University

Abstract: Despite its rising significance in mathematics curriculums and in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) guidelines, fractions continue to be an area of difficulty for both teachers and students. This paper, consistent with other research within the Mathematic Knowledge for Teaching (MKT) framework, finds that much of this weakness may be due to teachers’ weak content knowledge. This weak content knowledge is shown to stem from the fraction curriculum’s emphasis on mastering rote solution algorithms, rather than conceptual understanding. I show here that presenting the fraction curriculum using an approach grounded in a referent—a precise mathematical definition of a fraction—can significantly improve pre service teachers’ conceptual knowledge in working with fractions. The strength of the referent-based approach is statistically verified in a year over two semesters undergraduate-level classroom based case study. The results also suggest a particularly strong link between conceptual fluency and the ability to solve verbal word problems, a traditional area of difficulty.

Keywords: mathematics; curriculum; content knowledge; referent-based approach
Current issues on parental involvement in schools: A multicultural perspective

To enquiry about submission of special issue manuscripts contact the guest editor at: <beycioglu@gmail.com>

Timelines:
- February 15, 2015: CFP released
- December 15, 2015: Deadline for submission of papers
- April 15, 2016: Final articles to the guest editor
- May 15, 2016: Final articles to publisher

Research in related literature has yielded the importance of family involvement and working effectively with parents and families in schools. Increased involvement of parents and families often is cited as one of the most important ways to improve student success. The traditional sense of parents’ role in education has been limited with what they do at home and what schools formally tell them to do in regular meetings in schools. With the impact of changes in society, this traditional role of the family has changed over the years. Schools do not consider families as a part of the external community like in the past. On the contrary, they create a collaborative working environment with families.

Research has also revealed the impact of parental involvement in students’ success and effectiveness of schools. As the quality of the relationship between the school and the family improves so does the student achievement and families feel pleased to see that they actually make a contribution to the education of their children. That’s why revealing the many facets of school-family interaction has become a significant issue for educational researchers. This special issue aims to focus on current issues on family involvement in schools, and aims to illuminate studies by educational researchers working in different cultures. The core objective of this issue is to provide the latest research based on first-hand experience, observation and knowledge of scholars and educators in the field in order to form a cross-cultural discussion for all those working with schools and families.

Topics to be discussed in this special issue include (but are not limited to) the following:
- The theoretical and organisational foundations of school family partnerships.
- Leadership/management issues on parental involvement.
- How schools are addressing the issue.
- Knowledge, skills and relationships for school managers to be effective educational leaders in parental/family issues.
- Policy analysis and critical analysis of school-family interactions in the field.
- Concepts and theoretical formulations to understand, analyze, and evaluate parental involvement issues in educational organisations.
- Equipping school leaders with practical and theoretical knowledge of parental involvement that might be used to foster leadership and enhance the issues in schools.
- How to support and advance issues of parental involvement and help create schools ability to respond to families.
- School policies and procedures.
Using videography to promote pedagogical content knowledge in a geography method’s course

Paul Reitano\(^{b}\) and Wendy Harte\(^{b}\)

\(^{a}\) Griffith University; \(^{b}\) Griffith University

Abstract: This paper reports on a case study of six preservice teachers who studied a 9-week course of senior secondary Geography for their education studies. Participants were videotaped teaching a geographical skill to their peers, and were then interviewed using video stimulated recall. The interviews were transcribed and categorised according to Shulman’s (1987) knowledge base of teaching. The research sought to identify participants’ understanding of pedagogical content knowledge, while at the same time the video stimulated recall interviews gave participants the opportunity to reflect on their own teaching and observe their peers commenting on their teaching. This research suggests that the use of video stimulated recall helps promote an understanding of pedagogical content knowledge and therefore reduce the mismatch of geography pedagogical skills between university methods course and the pedagogies that place in geography classrooms.

Keywords: geography teaching; preservice teachers; video stimulated recall; pedagogical content knowledge; Australian Curriculum

Transforming pedagogy through philosophical inquiry

Rosie Scholl\textsuperscript{a}, Kim Nichols\textsuperscript{b}, and Gilbert Burgh\textsuperscript{c}
\textsuperscript{a} University of Queensland; \textsuperscript{b} University of Queensland; \textsuperscript{c} University of Queensland

Abstract: This study explored the impact of implementing Philosophy, in the tradition of 'Philosophy for Children', on pedagogy. It employed an experimental design that included 59 primary teachers. The experimental group received an intervention of training in Philosophy and the comparison group received training in Thinking Tools (graphic organisers), a subset of the Philosophy training. Lessons were coded on variables of pedagogy, across the two groups, at three time-points. Teacher interviews were conducted to gather participants' perspectives. Between group analysis of variance on several measures of pedagogy revealed that Philosophy significantly broadened teachers' pedagogical repertoire.

Keywords: community of philosophical inquiry; philosophy; transformative practice; pedagogy
Educating for sustainability with design-based Learning

Jules Bruck\textsuperscript{a} and Anthony Middlebrooks\textsuperscript{b}
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Abstract: Design-based learning (DBL), a pedagogy rooted in design-thinking and experiential education, offers educators a new approach to addressing the complex and ambiguous problems of sustainability. This paper examines the application of DBL to the development of a three-acre interactive sustainable outdoor learning centre suitable for young children, adults and handicapped individuals. In keeping with DBL, the project served as the education context for university students to learn aspects of sustainability utilising iteration, multi-disciplinary collaboration, user-centeredness, and divergent thinking. Process description illustrates students adopting a design process mindset, likely leading to greater innovation and persistence when addressing sustainability problems and understanding the notion of life cycle thinking. The DBL model provides a unique approach to education, integrating experiential, problem-based elements with insights from design thinking.

Keywords: design-thinking; Design-based Learning (DBL); multi-disciplinary; innovation; experiential; problem-based
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Disposition or dislocation? Why do foreign and local students’ learning styles differ?

Jinghe Han\textsuperscript{a} and James Schurmanns-Stekhoven\textsuperscript{b}
\textsuperscript{a} University of Western Sydney; \textsuperscript{b} Charles Sturt University

Abstract: This paper explores the relationship between culture and learning style by investigating three groups: Chinese students enrolled in universities in China and Australia, and Australian students attending Australian universities. Semi-structured interviews were emailed to all participants in their native language. Specifically, the data is examined in relation to commonly held cultural stereotypes about Eastern and Western learning styles. Comparisons of Chinese and Australian preferred learning styles were indistinguishable for students enrolled in home/local institutions (though reasons for holding these preferences differed between cultures). However, the learning styles of Chinese students enrolled in Australian universities did differ from the other two groups. These results suggest that dislocation and language context factors, and not culture per se, might better explain the previously observed differences in the learning styles between Western and Asian students at Western universities.

Keywords: learning styles; culture; Chinese (Asian) university students; Australian (Western) university students
Facilitating international education through overseas study programs: An Australian business school perspective

Jean Pierre Fenech\textsuperscript{a}, Sylvana Fenech\textsuperscript{b}, and Jacqueline Birt\textsuperscript{c}

\textsuperscript{a}Monash University; \textsuperscript{b}RMIT University; \textsuperscript{c}University of Queensland

Abstract: This paper explores how an overseas study program facilitates students’ international education exposure within an Australian business school context. We interviewed students after they had taken part in a three-week immersion program, involving visiting some of Europe and the UK’s principal financial and regulatory institutions. The report of their experiences provides critical insights into designing such programs with a view to achieving high levels of immersion. Participants in the overseas study program immersed themselves in the European way of living and became more tolerant and accepting of other cultures. We argue that as Australian universities remain strongly committed to providing an international education, short-term overseas programs are a key tool for achieving this strategic goal. There are a number of challenges universities are currently facing in implementing such programs. However, if Australian universities intend to maintain their position as high-ranking education providers within the Asia-Pacific region, they must continue to seek ways to deliver high-quality programs.

Keywords: study abroad; short-term programs; international education

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On the relationship between self-regulation strategies and mindfulness: A study of Iranian high school EFL students

Mohammad Aliakbari$^a$ and Marzieh Ghoreyshi$^b$

$^a$Ilam University; $^b$Ilam University

Abstract: Educational scholars have increasingly concentrated on the role of self-regulation strategies on students' academic achievement. Among various individual characteristics influencing students' self-regulation, mindfulness has received notable attention. Accordingly, this study sought to explore whether Iranian EFL students' mindfulness accounts for their self-regulation strategies. Approaching 204 English students, data were collected through "Five Facet Mindfulness" and "Motivated Strategy for Learning Questionnaire". The results confirmed that EFL students' mindfulness was a positive predictor of their self-regulation. It was also concluded that high mindfulness in EFL students could contribute to high self-regulation, which, in turn, affects students' learning and help them achieve their educational purposes. Furthermore, it was found that students' self-regulation and mindfulness strategies were not statistically correlated by their gender differences.

Keywords: mindfulness; self-regulation; academic achievement; learning strategies; awareness
An overview of Project Madagascar’s tri-lingual education project development: 2005-2014

Andreas Helwig\textsuperscript{a}, Masinavolana Lalaina Ravoniharimanana\textsuperscript{b}, and Manitra J B Andrianosoloniaina\textsuperscript{c}

\textsuperscript{a} University of Southern Queensland; \textsuperscript{b} Community & Learning Centre; \textsuperscript{c} Community & Learning Centre

\textbf{Abstract:} This a record of Project Madagascar’s first ten years implementation outcomes of its aid and development educational program in provision of a successful result with a new tri-lingual (i.e. Malagasy, English and French) teaching curriculum. For this curriculum implementation, there is no ‘second’ language per see. All three languages are used a teaching languages, and this process of multi-linguistic acquisition begins at pre-school, and is implemented in its basic form by Grade 3. Continuing development after this expands vocabulary, with direct and abstract expression in verbal expression, learning processes and written development.

\textbf{Keywords:} multi-lingual teaching, language learning, influence of language
Journal Issue Review

Alexander Lobok’s probabilistic dialogic pedagogy
Journal of Russian and East European Psychology, 50(6), 5-114.
November–December 2012.

Maria Antonietta Impedovo
Università degli Studi di Bari

Alexander Lobok’s work on probabilistic dialogic agency-based pedagogy offers a selection of five writings by the Russian dialogic pedagogy practitioner and theoretician, translated into English for the special issue of the Journal of Russian and East European Psychology.

In my view, the main thought in Alexander Lobok’s work is the promotion of the personal agency of students through social practices and their participation in critical dialogues. His pedagogical approach is based on his twenty years’ practical innovative activity with children, his deep reflection of it and original conceptualisation. In this lies the strength of his writing.

Soviet Union born American scholar of dialogic pedagogy, Eugene Matusov, as guest editor, wrote the introduction and accompanied the readings through comments in the notes, placed at the end of each chapter. The introduction helps the reader to understand this Russian author's background in order to understand his interpretation. The notes clarify some of the issues discussed, an also enrich the reading. The direct dialogue between the author and Matusov, written as an interview, gives the reader an opportunity to go beyond the text, simulating hypertext and a backstage of reflections. In this way, some concepts expressed in Lobok's writings are contextualised and updated, making the reading enjoyable and interactive.