

Research Seminar Series

A challenge to the legitimization of professional practice within initial teacher education in England

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16:00 – 17:30 18th May 2022

Online

Conceptions of professional knowledge for teaching often involve dilemmas associated with the extent of ‘theory’ or ‘practice’ that should be evident during a period of professional formation. These concerns are realised in both the official regulation of the profession and within the field of initial teacher education itself. In England, since 2010, teaching has been framed as a craft dependent on the pedagogies of observation and modelling within school contexts. The predominance of school-based initial teacher education programmes has brought to the fore debates in relation to the nature of practice knowledge. The practicum element of professional programmes are dependent on the insights offered by mentors, or teacher educators. Therefore the knowledge literacy of such practitioners in relation to how the profession is conceived is essential in the formation of beginning teachers.

This presentation will report a doctoral study with a particular focus on analysing how knowledge-structuring is legitimated in the professional practice of initial teacher education. Drawing upon Bernstein’s rich and sometimes complex conceptual framework, together with Maton’s Legitimation Code Theory (LCT), alongside Barad’s posthumanist philosophy of diffraction, connections are made between the micro-sites of knowledge structuring (weekly meetings held between beginning teachers and their teacher-educators) and that evident in national policy frameworks. An analysis is undertaken to investigate the extent to which official articulations of professional knowledge restrict or enable the forms of pedagogic communication realised by teacher educators and beginning teachers. Empirically this is realised through the creation of diffractive semantic profiles. These are subsequently drawn upon to develop a material-discursive investigation of the significance of the relationship between the principled and procedural dimensions of professional practice.

To take part in this seminar, please sign up at:

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