Publications

Impact of Classroom Computer Availability on Preschoolers' Social Interactions

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Despite increases in computer availability in the classroom, very little data exists on computer availability and its use in Head Start classrooms. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the impact of availability of computers on urban preschoolers' naturally occurring social interactions in Head Start classrooms across one school year. The sample consisted of 66, predominantly African American, children in four urban, Head Start classrooms. A quasi-experimental design was employed in which three classrooms had computers, while one classroom served as the control. Naturally occurring social interactions were observed during free-play sessions over an 8-month period. Hierarchical linear modeling was used to analyze differences in social interactions across classrooms and school year. Results suggest that classroom computer availability may increase the interactive behavior of preschoolers. Results suggest that investing resources into a computer center in the Head Start classroom can have a positive effect on social development.

Dialog, 17(3), 16-34.

The Structure-Agency Dialectic in Contested Science Spaces: "Do Earthworms Eat Apples?"

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Focusing on a group of African American third-graders who attend a high-poverty urban school, this paper explores the structure-agency dialectic within contested spaces situated in a dialogically oriented science classroom. Contested spaces entail the moments in which the students challenge each other's and their teacher's science ideas and, in the process, construct agentic science selves. Drawing on sociocultural frameworks, the paper demonstrates the complexities of agency within contested spaces and the ways in which contested spaces shape and are shaped by agentic moves. Using an interpretive qualitative analysis, the study found that contested spaces bubble up, are maintained by dialogue, and simmer down over time. In this study, children exercised both individual and collective agency in negotiating science ideas with their teacher to shape the science classroom space in favor of their own meaning making. Using dialogicality as a resource and building on their own cultural resources, the children acted as a community of learners to challenge their teacher's science ideas and, in doing so, transformed the dialogic space within the classroom. This study highlights the tensions teachers face in choosing authentic meaning making within the limits of the school day and their own

science knowledge. In addition, it demonstrates the importance of providing equitable learning spaces for African American children that offer them opportunities to agentically use their own ways of being as resources for learning and becoming in science.

Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 52(4), 461-473.

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Abuelita Epistemologies: Counteracting Subtractive Schools in American Education

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This autoethnographic inquiry examines the intersection of elder epistemology and subtractive education, exploring how one abuelita countered her granddaughter's divestment of Mexican-ness. I demonstrate how the grandmother used abuelita epistemologies to navigate this tension and resist the assimilative pressures felt by her granddaughter from school by consistently modeling, at home, a love for Mexican language and culture. I argue that grandmothers play a vital role in rooting young people to their linguistic and cultural assets, a sacred function that many Mexican elders have preserved and brought forward from the precontact era in the Americas to the contemporary era.

Journal of Latinos and Education, DOI:10.1080/15348431.2014.944703.

Person-Organization Fit and Research on Instruction

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Research from industrial and organizational (I-O) psychology indicates that outside of K-12 education, employees' sense of fit with their organization is often associated with job satisfaction, performance, commitment, and retention. Person-organization (P-O) fit has been conceptualized as the degree of congruence between an individual's values, goals, and/or cognitive skills and abilities and the characteristics or requirements of their workplace. This essay reviews research from I-O psychology on how P-O fit predicts key outcomes for workers outside of K-12 education and discusses recent studies of P-O fit and teacher commitment and retention. We then theorize ways in which P-O fit can be used in research on teachers' instruction, using research on teachers' enactment of ambitious mathematics instruction as an example. Finally, the essay concludes by identifying directions for future research.

Educational Researcher, 44(1), 37-45.

Students' Mathematical Conjectures When Interacting With a Mobile Device

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The effective use of multiple external mathematical representations that are dynamically linked has been posited as a primary feature of mathematical mobile technologies that enables a procedural-to-conceptual shift in student thinking. This book chapter reports a two-year study of seventh and eighth grade pre-algebra or algebra students in a suburban public school near a large midwestern city. The study used clinical interviews to better understand students' learning processes when a state-of-the-art graphing calculator is used to conduct an activity concerning quadratic functions. The researchers sought to learn what things help or hinder students' ability to bring mathematical concepts to their consciousness when using dynamically linked multiple representations. Analysis of the interview data allowed the researchers to characterize student conjectures as viable (focused on mathematical aspects and recognized the relationship between the algebraic and graphical representations), semi-viable (focused on relationships between representations but not attending to the mathematical nature of the representations), or naïve (based on superficial visual features, limited by misleading feedback from the technology, or obstructed by the presence of multiple dynamically linked representations). Analysis of the study results suggests that aspects of the task and the technology both help and hinder students' ability to bring mathematical concepts to their consciousness. This analysis also found that providing students with appropriate scaffolding was an enabling factor, while students' lack of a command of relevant mathematical vocabulary was a hindering factor.

Job-embedded Professional Development Policy in Michigan: Can it be Successful?

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This paper evaluates Michigan's recently implemented job-embedded professional development policy using criteria of relevance, focus, goal orientation and social scope. The authors assert that while Michigan's policy does address all four criteria detailing effective professional development, there are limitations in the policy that may impact the extent to which the policy improves practice at the local level. The authors provide suggested recommendations to improve the policy's success: ongoing discussions among state, higher education, intermediate school district and local school district partners; training in assessment and data use; specialized training/workshops; and creation of a state-wide job-embedded professional development committee.

The Impact of Administrative Context on Novice-Mentor Interactions

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Mentoring can improve novice teacher effectiveness and reduce teacher attrition, yet the depth and breadth of mentoring can vary greatly within and between schools. The purpose of this paper is to identify the extent to which a school's administrative context is associated with the focus and frequency of novice teacher-mentor interactions. This study builds upon previous research by drawing attention to the association between broad measures of school-level administrative context related to the quality of working conditions and teacher mentoring. By estimating logistic regression models, the author identified the association between novices' perceptions of their working conditions and the content and frequency of interactions with their formally assigned mentors. When novice teachers perceived positive administrator-teacher relations in their schools and reported that administrative duties did not interfere with their core work as teachers, they were more likely to frequently interact with their mentors around issues of curriculum. Studies of new teacher induction need to more fully account for elements of school-level organizational context which influence novice teacher-mentor interactions, specifically related to administrative decision making and climate. Future research should seek to identify the extent to which formal policy related to new teacher induction is supported by broader elements of the organizational context. In addition to implementing sound formal policies related to teacher mentoring, school administrators should seek to foster a school climate that promotes administrator-teacher and teacher-teacher collaboration to promote improved teacher mentoring.

Belonging in the Academy: Building a "Casa Away From Casa" for Latino/a Undergraduate Students

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This action research study, supported by a quantitative data analysis, presents a counternarrative to the deficit discourse regarding Latino/a First Time in Any College (FTIAC) departure during the first year of college. It argues that an intentional learning community model, that is culturally and linguistically responsive to Latino/a student needs, can produce significant gains in first- to second-year retention rates and better predicts retention than either high school grade point average or standardized test scores.

Exploring Young Children's Patterns of Image Use in a Picturebook

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Using analysis of oral reading and eye movements, this study examined how third grade children used visual information as they orally read either the original or the adapted version of a picturebook. Eye tracking was examined to identify when and why students focused on images as well as what they looked at in the images. Results document children's deliberate use of images and point to the important role of images in text processing. The content of images, availability and placement of text and images on a page, and children's personal strategies affected the use of images.

Language And Literacy, 16(4), 1-21.

Disability and Teaching

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Disability and Teaching highlights issues of disability in K-12 schooling faced by teachers, who are increasingly accountable for the achievement of all students regardless of the labels assigned to them. It is designed to engage prospective and practicing teachers in examining their personal theories and beliefs about disability and education. Part I offers four case studies dealing with issues such as inclusion, over-representation in special education, teacher assumptions and biases, and the struggles of novice teachers. These cases illustrate the need to understand disability and teaching within the contexts of school, community, and the broader society and in relation to other contemporary issues facing teachers. Each is followed by space for readers to write their own reactions and reflections, educators' dialogue about the case, space for readers' reactions to the educators' dialogue, a summary, and additional questions. Part II presents public arguments representing different views about the topic: conservative, liberal-progressive, and disability centered. Part III situates the authors' personal views within the growing field of Disability Studies in education and provides exercises for further reflection and a list of resources.

2014, New York: Routledge.

Physical Activity Change Through Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs in Urban Elementary Schools

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This paper received the
2015 AERA SIG
Exemplary Paper Award.

The impact of Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs (CSPAPs) on urban children's, educators', and parents' physical activity (PA) is relatively unknown.

The purpose of this study was to explore overall changes in student, educator, and parent PA after an 8-month CSPAP-based program. This longitudinal, exploratory study implemented a CSPAP in 20 urban elementary schools, with six randomized for research. In-school PA was measured pre- and post-intervention for all fourth grade students using accelerometers. Parent and educator PA was self-reported using the IPAQ. RM-ANOVAs revealed significant pre- and post-intervention increases in minutes of student MVPA ($P < .001$). Parents significantly increased PA ($P < .01$) and although educators' reported change in PA, it was not statistically significant ($P = .50$). This study provides unique information about the potential influence of one CSPAP on students' overall PA, PA by individual context within the school, the differential PA patterns by race, and PA changes for educators and parents.

Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, 33, 573-591.

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The Role and Impact of StudentLeadership on Participants in a Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Programme

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In the USA there are rising rates of obesity among children, at least in part due to unhealthy eating and physical inactivity. Implementing school-based health interventions with elementary school children focused on youth empowerment could lead to improved health environments and behaviors. The purpose of the present study was to examine elementary students' perceptions of participating in a student-led school health improvement team. Empowerment theory guided the research, specifically the concept of including participants in programming to identify possible individual-level outcomes. In this qualitative study, one US elementary school formed a student-led school health improvement team, focusing on healthy eating and physical activity, comprising nine students and two adult co-advisers. Data collection included 19 individual interviews with students and advisers and four non-participant observations of team meetings and reform initiatives. To ensure the perceptions of the research participants' guided data analysis, analytic induction was undertaken using grounded theory. Students and advisers shared similar perceptions that the student-led health reform process had a significant impact on several areas of students' life skills and health behaviors. Specifically, they identified improved leadership skills (assuming responsibility, self-confidence in public speaking and pride in becoming healthy role models) and health behaviors (dietary intake and physical activity) as outcomes of their emerging identities as health reform leaders. This study documented previously identified psychological empowerment outcomes, such as perceived control and proactive health behaviors, and additional positive outcomes, such as peer modeling. The findings suggest that team membership may positively impact on young people, which could support the inclusion of students as leaders in future interventions.

Health Education Journal, 2014, 1-11.

Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs: Characteristics of Trained Teachers

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Discourse and the Containment of Disability in Higher Education: An Institutional Analysis

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As public health concerns about physical inactivity and childhood obesity continue to rise, researchers are calling for interventions that comprehensively lead to more opportunities to participate in physical activity (PA). The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics and attitudes of trained physical education teachers during the implementation of a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program at the elementary level. Using a collective case study design, interviews, observations, field notes, open-ended survey questions, and an online forum monitoring guided the interpretation of teacher perceptions and development of emergent themes. Qualitative data analysis was conducted for each individual teacher and then across the ten teachers which produced four major themes: (a) Leading the Charge: Ready, Set, Go!, (b) Adoption versus Adaptation: Implementation Varies, (c) Social Media's Place in the Professional Development (PD) Community, and (d) Keys to Successful Implementation. It can be concluded that, based on these findings, elementary physical education teachers are ready and willing to implement CSPAP. Key factors that may influence this implementation are also discussed.

Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, 33, 492-510.

More and more disabled people are attending university in the US and world wide. A social model of disability was used to examine disability discourse at a regional university in the mid-western United States. Exclusion can take the form of containment, which occurs when disabled people are silenced, ignored, forgotten, or defined using a deficit model. Using an institutional unit of analysis and several different information sources (e.g. interviews, federal regulations, syllabus texts, surveys), the ways in which disability-as-difference is governed by an architecture of containment at the university were illustrated.

Disability & Society, 29(7), 1145-1158.

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