

LLED RESEARCH SEMINAR

Supporting BC's French language teachers: Why are we still talking about the native speaker?

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THURSDAY NOV 30 | 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Ponderosa Commons Multipurpose Room (2012)

Abstract

Despite decades of debate about the relevance of the native speaker in the field of second language education (e.g., Doerr, 2009; Rampton, 1990) the construct remains a salient benchmark for second language teachers' language competency (Kumaravadevelu, 2014). In British Columbia, two thirds of French language (FSL) teachers use French as an additional language, and many are graduates of the French immersion and core French programs in which they now teach. Continuing interest in FSL programming from parents and students across the province has led to increasing demand for professional development to support teachers' ongoing language development. This talk centers on a discussion of research findings from a study with FSL teachers that brought to light tensions around teachers' dual identities as both teachers and learners of French while on professional development in France. Participants' discursive representations (Potter & Hepburn, 2008) in navigating native speaker assumptions during multiple research interactions highlight how crucial it is for teacher educators to take into account teacher identity as an integral part of professional learning, and the implications for teachers and teacher candidates when this is not the case. The presentation concludes with a discussion of implications for future research as well as a brief look at current province-wide initiatives to support pre- and in-service teachers on their professional pathways.

Biostatement



Meike Wernicke is Lecturer in UBC's Department of Language and Literacy Education where she currently teaches and coordinates French as a second language

(FSL) programs for teacher candidates and practicing teachers at the post-graduate and graduate level. Her research in FSL teacher professional development, study abroad and teacher identity extends to research interests in bi-/multilingual language policy, plurilingual approaches in second language education, and discourse analytic research perspectives. She currently leads a ministry-funded study with FSL teachers to establish support for teacher professional development in the implementation of BC's new language curricula. She is also involved in a number of research initiatives associated with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), including an international project at the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe and a local pilot study on the use of an adapted language portfolio for language teachers in BC.

