

Public Abstract

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Title:PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND CURRICULAR CONSTRUCTION: A STUDY OF TEACHER INTERACTION WITH MATHEMATICS CURRICULA OF TWO TYPES

In some school settings, teachers are asked to teach courses utilizing textbooks with different instructional designs and different expectations for teaching. For example, for one class, teachers may be expected to teach from a subject-specific textbook with a procedural orientation that lends itself to teacher lecture followed by student individual practice. For another class, they may be asked to use an integrated textbook with a conceptual orientation that lends itself to teacher facilitation of student investigation of mathematics in small groups. In this dual role, teachers are influenced by the norms and expectations in their textbooks. The results from this study provide insight into how these teachers identify as participants within these dual-oriented communities.

Results from an analysis of data from interviews, classroom observations, and teacher surveys suggest that teacher orientations to teaching, learning, and the textbooks they use vary across the 10 study teachers and were not consistently reflected in practice, as teachers tended to use more conceptually oriented practices in their Integrated I classes and more procedurally oriented practices in their Algebra I classes. Additionally, these teachers generally liked both district-adopted textbooks. However, conceptually oriented (CO) teachers tended to favor their Integrated I textbooks over their Algebra I textbooks and procedurally oriented (PO) teachers tended to favor their Algebra I textbooks over their Integrated I textbooks, with the teachers who favored a given textbook typically teaching that textbook more faithfully than the other.

Understanding who a teacher is helps explain why they act the way they do in light of expectations placed upon them. The research presented here adds to previous research examining teacher instruction and use of textbook materials by shedding light on the discord that can occur when teachers are asked to teach from two differentially oriented textbooks.