Successful Mentoring of Novice VET Teachers

Building a trellis of practices that support learning

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Overview

• The study
• The theory
• The stories
• Building a trellis of Practices that Support Learning
• What worked – favela and permanent/contract teachers
• What worked – fringe teachers
The study

- 2 year longitudinal research for PhD
- Multiple case studies
- Four campuses
- Nine novice teachers
- The theory of Practice Architectures
  - The theory of Ecologies of Practices
The Theory of Practice Architectures
Adapted from Kemmis et al (2014) p. 32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural-Discursive Arrangements</th>
<th>Make possible what is said in, and about, a practice</th>
<th>Takes place through language and thought</th>
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Employment arrangements

Employment arrangements impacted heavily on the practice architectures encountered by teachers

- Fringe teachers
  - 8 hours or less a week
- Favela teachers
  - More than 8 hours a week
- Permanent/contract teachers
Four Stories and a Cautionary Tale

- Trevor
- Sarah
- Sam
- Ewan

Fringe Teachers
- Tabitha & Michael
The theory of ecologies of practices

...practices do not exist in isolation from other practices. Rather, they are “like living entities” that can be ecologically related to each other; they sometimes “coexist” in complex ecologies or webs of practices that are “like living systems” (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 41)
Trevor

- Had a formal mentor
- No inter-relationship between mentoring and other practices that supported learning
- Many practice architectures that constrained learning
Sarah

- Mentoring inter-related with two other Practices that Support Learning (PSLs)
- A number of practice architectures that constrained learning
- After 12 months still a novice
Sam: A Trellis of Practices that Support Learning

- Mentoring inter-related with a number of PSLs
- Extensive practice architectures that enabled learning
- Well established as a teacher after 18 months
Ewan: A Strong Trellis of Practices that Support Learning

Extensive trellis of PSLs inter-related with mentoring
Tabitha & Michael: A cautionary tale

Fringe teachers

- High casualisation and high turnover
- No mentoring – reduced volunteerism
- Some co-teaching
- Office space separated from experienced teachers
- Quite lost
- Made mistakes
- Left after 12 months
Material-Economic Arrangements that Supported Teacher Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Contract &amp; Permanent</th>
<th>Favela teachers</th>
<th>Fringe teachers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communal table</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of staff room for inter-action</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular ‘smoko’</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well prepared artefacts: resources, lesson plans, tests …</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team teaching</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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Cultural-Discursive Arrangements that Supported Teacher Learning

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<tr>
<td>• Shared Industry language</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• VET language</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mentoring as expectation</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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### Social-Political Arrangements that Supported Teacher Learning

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<th>Support from colleagues and supervisors</th>
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<th>Fringe teachers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor relationship</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships through co-teaching</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team teaching relationships</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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Most influential

- Long term contract or permanent employment!
- Team teaching
- Mentor
- Support of colleagues and supervisor

- Communal table used daily
  - Shared morning tea
- Workstation beside experienced teacher in same teaching area
- Integrated learning practices
Fringe teachers: what works

- Well prepared existing resources
  - Lesson plans, assessment tasks, resources etc
- Mentor in same teaching area
- Co-teaching
- Regular morning tea
  - Communal table
- Workstation with experienced teachers

- Imp for all. Critical for this group
- This group value only those with same industry knowledge
Questions?
References

