

“How do I teach something I myself don’t fully grasp?”: The development of pedagogical content knowledge in learning-to-teach

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3:30- 4:30 p.m. (reception to follow)

0306 Benjamin Building



An important dimension of language teacher professionalism is the development of a specialized kind of knowledge that teachers use to use to make the content of their instruction relevant, usable, and accessible to their students. Coined *pedagogical content knowledge* (PCK), because it combines knowledge of content, pedagogy, curriculum, learners, and educational context, PCK is neither fixed nor stable, but instead emergent, dynamic, and contingent on teachers’ knowledge of particular students, in particular contexts, who are learning particular content, for particular purposes. To trace the development of PCK, data were collected from an extended team teaching project in which novice ESL teachers a) conceptualize and materialize subject matter content to be taught, b) enact an initial lesson with peer teachers and the teacher educator, c) teach a revised lesson in an actual ESL class, and d) develop conscious awareness of the theoretical and pedagogical reasoning for their instructional practices. The findings illustrate how the development of PCK is supported by the dialogic interactions that emerged during this project; focusing specifically on how what teachers bring to these learning-to-teach experiences and how they are experiencing what they are learning, shape the emergent, contingent, and responsive nature of teacher educator mediation. Focusing on these dialogic interactions captures the means through which novice teachers can begin to develop pedagogical content knowledge as they are learning to teach.

Karen E. Johnson is Kirby Professor of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics at The Pennsylvania State University. Her research focuses on a sociocultural theoretical perspective on second language teacher education, the dynamics of communication in second language classrooms, and narrative inquiry as professional development. Her research has appeared most recently in *The Modern Language Journal*, *TESOL Quarterly*, *Language Teaching Research*, and *Language and Sociocultural Theory*. She is the author of *Second Language Teacher Education* (Routledge, 2009), co-editor of *Research on Second Language Teacher Education* (Routledge, 2011) and co-author of *Mindful L2 Teacher Education* (Routledge, 2016). She teaches courses in Applied Linguistics, Teaching English as a Second Language, Communication in Second Language Classrooms, and Theory and Research in Language Teacher Education.

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