



# LUNCHTIME RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES

by

**Professor Steve Walsh**

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## Seminar 1:

### **Dialogic reflection and feedback**

**February 13, 2020 (Thursday) • 12.45 - 2.00pm • Room 205, Runme Shaw Building, HKU**

#### **Abstract:**

This talk offers a social view of learning and professional development, taking the position that learning is a dialogic process in which meanings are mediated by language. Dialogue allows meanings to be co-constructed, new understandings to emerge and professional learning to develop. Dialogic reflection (Mann and Walsh 2017) considers the ways in which practitioners make sense of their professional worlds, develop new understandings and improve their professional practice. We will focus particularly on the use data and evidence in reflection, arguing that finer grained, 'up-close' understandings of classroom practice can be best achieved through the use of recordings, transcripts, 'snapshot' lesson extracts and so on, supported by dialogue with a colleague or critical friend. Talking to and collaborating with others are often key elements of any reflective process, allowing new understandings to emerge, current practices to be questioned and alternatives to be explored. The very act of 'talking through' a recent experience, such as a segment of teaching, facilitates reflection and may ultimately result in changes to practice.

## Seminar 2:

### **Current issues in teaching speaking**

**April 16, 2020 (Thursday) • 12.45 - 2.00pm • Room 205, Runme Shaw Building, HKU**

#### **Abstract:**

Most students spend an enormous amount of time learning to speak English, while teachers devote hours and hours to creating materials which will engage students in oral practice. In this session, we consider how recent developments impact on the ways in which speaking is taught. Specifically, we will look at the influence of spoken corpora, review debates concerning NS and NNS models and evaluate the role of authenticity in spoken materials. In addition, we will look at the ways in which recent research on fluency, listenership and interactional competence might affect the ways in which we teach, learn and test English. Advances in technology, together with new thinking in relation to what models we should be teaching, have led to a radical re-thinking of appropriate approaches to the teaching of speaking. Finally, we'll review some of the practical issues around the teaching of specific spoken genres and consider probable future directions.

## Seminar 3:

### **Scaffolding as 'shaping'**

**May 14, 2020 (Thursday) • 12.45 - 2.00pm • Room 205, Runme Shaw Building, HKU**

#### **Abstract:**

Much attention has been devoted in recent years to the importance of scaffolded instruction. Scaffolding refers to the linguistic support provided by teachers as and when it is needed by learners in open class interaction. When done well, scaffolding clearly provides learners with the kind of support they need to help them clarify intended meaning or express an idea or argument more clearly. In this talk, I argue that the process of scaffolding is a complex, interactional skill which requires considerable mental agility and sensitivity on the part of the teacher. Rather than simply providing linguistic 'props', I suggest that a more important aspect of scaffolding is the extent to which teachers are able to 'shape' learner contributions. Shaping considers the ways in which teachers help learners articulate their intended meaning by, for example, paraphrasing, reformulating, extending, clarifying or simplifying learner language. Using video-recordings of second language classrooms, this talk will look at what teachers 'do' with student contributions in open-class interaction and consider how a teacher's ability to shape learner contributions may assist the learning process. A detailed analysis of shaping reveals that teachers may create or hinder opportunities for learning; such an analysis may also help improve approaches to feedback – regarded by many teachers and researchers as the most important element in any learning environment.

~ ALL ARE WELCOME ~

For enquiries, please contact the Office of Research, Faculty of Education at 3917 8254.