

‘Minority language pupils and the curriculum: closing the achievement gap’

TUESDAY APRIL 25th 2017 (8:45 - 4pm) at Marino Institute of Education, Dublin

This seminar will provide relevant practical strategies and theory to support minority language pupils in school.

Speakers include:

Piet Van Avermaet is Head of the Centre for Diversity and Learning, at the Linguistics Department of Ghent University. He teaches ‘multicultural studies’, ‘multilingualism in education’ and ‘language policy’. His expertise and research interests cover topics related to multilingualism in education, social inequality in education, language policy and practice in education, language policy and practice in contexts of (social) inclusion, language assessment, diversity and inclusion, integration and participation, discrimination in education, migration.

Andrew Hancock is from Edinburgh University and has a background in teaching in multilingual primary schools in London, working in a secondary school in Zimbabwe, as a peripatetic support teacher to bilingual and Traveller pupils in primary and secondary schools across Scotland. Prior to becoming a Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Edinburgh he worked as Manager of the Bilingual Support Service in North Lanarkshire. Andy’s research interests include English as an additional language (EAL), multilingual literacy practices, Chinese children’s experiences of biliteracy learning, bilingualism and social justice and student teachers’ understandings of linguistically diverse primary school classrooms.

Déirdre Kirwan is the former principal of Scoil Bhríde in Blanchardstown in Dublin, where 80% of the school’s enrolment consists of pupils from more than 50 cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In 2008 Déirdre received the European Ambassador for Languages award for promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity in the school. Déirdre has presented papers on the topic of multilingual education at national and international conferences, and she has delivered courses to teachers at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Déirdre is strongly committed to promoting plurilingualism in schools. She is currently working with the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) on a think tank exploring issues with regard to early language learning.

Jean Conteh, a Senior Lecturer in Primary Education, has worked in multilingual contexts her whole career, first as a primary teacher and teacher educator in different countries and then as an academic at the University of York and Leeds University. Through this she has gained considerable experience in the growing field of English as an Additional Language (EAL). This experience continues to fuel her interest in the roles of language and culture in the processes of learning, particularly in multilingual settings. She has carried out research with successful bilingual learners at KS2 in Bradford and since 2003, has worked with a group of qualified primary teachers who run bilingual complementary classes where they support children’s bilingual learning in order to enhance their achievements in mainstream school. She has also developed an MA in EAL and Education, designed for teachers and other professionals working in multilingual contexts.

This seminar is part of a SCoTENS-funded project being carried out in association with Barbara O’Toole at Marino Institute of Education in Dublin and Barbara Skinner at Ulster University.

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