UEL Research & Knowledge Exchange Conference 2013

Call for Abstracts

Name & Title of Presenter:	Dr Paula Bosanquet
School:	Cass School of Education and Communities
Co investigators:	
Title of Abstract:	Developing the scaffolding practices of teaching assistants: A continuing professional development model
Key Theme/ Key words:	Classroom discourse; continuing professional development; teaching assistants; literacy; scaffolding

Abstract (No more than 400 words):

This presentation reports on the continuing professional development (CPD) implications of the findings of a research project which used applied conversation analysis to build theory and make recommendations for improving policy and practice in relation to pupils' literacy learning (Bosanquet, 2012). The purpose of the research was to explore the learning experiences of pupils during literacy intervention sessions in primary schools, by examining the moment-by-moment interactions between teaching assistants (TAs) and pupils. The numbers of TAs in mainstream schools in England has risen dramatically in the past 15 years, and is reflected in other countries in Europe and further afield (Giangreco and Doyle, 2007). TAs have taken increasing responsibility for teaching and learning, including the teaching of intervention sessions aimed at supporting those pupils not making expected progress. It is argued that the effectiveness of any intervention is reliant on the moment-by-moment interactions, as social-constructivist theory indicates that it is in these interactions that shared meaning is negotiated and scaffolding provided. However, there has been a lack of research into how this occurs in the interactions between TAs and pupils.

The research identified that interactions between TAs and pupils are strongly focused on task completion. TAs provide high levels of support, leading to potential pupil reliance on this support due to a lack of opportunities for the development of interactional and metacognitive skills for self

and reciprocal scaffolding. It is argued that there is an urgent need for training and support for TAs. Particularly, ongoing CPD using video data routinely collected by the TA is essential. Scaffolding as a concept is equally as applicable to the learning of TAs as it is to the learning of the pupils they work with (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988). CPD can therefore be conceived of as a four stage process, mirroring that outlined by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976), and this suggested model is outlined.

Bosanquet, P. (2012). Turn taking, repair and topic practices in teaching assistant led literacy intervention sessions. *Unpublished PhD thesis.*

Giangreco, M. F.& Doyle, M. B.(2007).Teacher assistants in inclusive schools. In L. Florian (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of special education* (pp. 429-439). London: Sage.

Tharp, R. and Gallimore, R. (1988). *Rousing minds to life: teaching, learning, and schooling in social context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wood, D., Bruner, J. S. and Ross, G. (1976). 'The role of tutoring in problem solving'. *Journal of Child Psychology and Child Psychiatry,* 17, 89-100.