

8. October 2007: Maria Luiza Cestari (University of Agder)

*The constitution of mathematics teacher identity from a socio cultural perspective.*

Identity is a central topic in discussions related to teaching-learning theories. However, for a long time, it has been a hidden dimension in this field of studies. The focus of our work is on the constitution of the *socially-situated identity* analysed from the perspective of discourses and activities of a mathematics teacher. The aim is to present a sequence of situations where a teacher is participating, when elements related to the constitution of identity “in situ” emerge. We focus on aspects related to identity emerging in the fine grain of everyday life of a mathematics teacher.

The theoretical framework used is related to the contributions of Wenger (1998) particularly to the concept of identity located in the intersection between the social and the individual. The contributions of Gee (1999, p. 86) related to the “socioculturally-situated identity and relationship building”, have also been illuminating in respect to how situated meanings about a teacher referring to didactical activities in the school and the classroom, can be explored and are displayed through discourses.

Based on the idea that identity emerges in talk (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998) and is part of the routines of everyday life, we have taken an ethnographic approach to the field, collecting data which includes classroom observation, workshops, and collective interview with the teacher (video-analysis from the mathematics lesson). To analyse data a dialogical approach to communication has been used, taking in account the sequentiality of the discourse to capture ways how identity is constituted in situations of communicative social interaction.

The empirical material is based on the three years developmental research project Learning Communities in Mathematics (LCM), taking place at Agder University College (AUC). In the analysis we have focused on the teacher and on her ways of working with mathematical tasks in her sixth-grade classroom. We analyse how she is reifying her position and is identified as a teacher.

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