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Building a tolerance for complexity in elementary literacy instruction

This presentation reports on a school-based, practice-oriented literacy education course. The course was designed to engage preservice teachers (PSTs) in developing beliefs, skills, and knowledge around ambitious instruction through deep understanding of instructional routine. They were engaged in approximations of instruction, enacting routines with students, and reflecting upon student learning in a reiterative cycle. During a rehearsal, PSTs enacted a lesson with the teacher educator supporting thinking around various lines of instruction that might be improvised as they enacted teaching with primary students.

Data sources include: a) video recordings of instructional rehearsals and instructional enactments, b) PST-made artifacts c) interviews at mid-point and at the end of the semester

A first stage of analysis is complete, establishing an understanding of PSTs' conceptualisation of complexity. The second phase of analysis is underway, shifting from description and reliability to explanation and validity, and triangulating the typologies generated in phase one to develop a conceptual model that explains the mechanisms that support PSTs' tolerance for complexity while teaching.

Keywords: literacy education, teacher education