TEACHERS’ NARRATIVE UNDERSTANDINGS OF PARENTS: LIVING AND RELIVING “POSSIBLE LIVES” AS PROFESSIONALS

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I explore aspects of a narrative inquiry with former teacher candidates to understand how living out a curriculum of parents (Pushor, 2011; Pushor, 2013) in their university coursework deepened their knowledge and prompted questions about discourses and representations of parents and families. I focus on two former teacher candidates, Cat and Carly, who tell stories of their experiences within a curriculum of parents and then subsequently as teachers. I explore the “possible lives” (Bruner, 1987/2004) they imagine for themselves as teachers and what teacher “life narratives” (Bruner, 1987/2004) they construct and reconstruct in their practice. What is made visible is that when preservice teachers are supported to unpack and examine, with deliberation, ways of living and telling stories of parents, and the philosophical, pedagogical and practical conceptualizations that underpin such living and telling, a curriculum of parents offers preservice teachers possibilities for interrupting habitual teacher life narratives and for guiding the construction and reconstruction of new teacher life narratives (Bruner, 1987/2004).

KEYWORDS

Curriculum of parents, teacher education, teacher life narratives

FULL TEXT:

Instead of living in local neighborhoods as I did in Bahrain and Malaysia, the school housed us in an expensive and elite living community. The school was well funded, paid teachers well, and had every resource imaginable. While working there, I studied Chinese and spent time exploring the less easily accessible parts of the country and the city. I also consider her description of Buddhism in her family life as a narrative in my research. Although it may not fit the narrow definition of a sequence of events, with clearly identified beginning and end points, Kate uses narrative to explain her belief system. Oftentimes, the stories the teachers tell are larger than a particular section I share of the interview.