

Experiential Teacher Training for Language Diverse Mathematics Classrooms

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ABSTRACT In the Eastern Cape, South Africa, the hegemony of the English language has led to teachers and pupils interacting in classrooms through using mainly English. The intervention described in this paper introduced in-service teachers to the practice of dialogic teaching using exploratory talk in the pupils' main language. The teachers' themselves engaged experientially with triggers consisting of Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices and mathematical reasoning cartoons; and grappled with the frustrations of achieving in assessments that were written in an unfamiliar language. They were tasked with translating their experiences into classroom practice. The results of the study, indicated through teacher reflections, show that using the pupils' main language as a resource in the mathematics classroom could lead to the development of rich mathematical cognition and understanding.