
Unpacking Competence as a Lens for Understanding Learning and Teaching in Classrooms

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Abstract: Sociocultural perspectives on learning and becoming illustrate varied conceptions of knowing and doing mathematics, and in turn what count as competent ways of participating. Viewed through this lens, competence is actively negotiated as students and teachers engage with one another in classroom activity (Gresalfi *et al.*, 2009). Unpacking competence—how it is constructed and contested in interaction—provides an approach to understand how opportunities to learn play out in classrooms and schools. This talk presents a multidimensional analysis of competence that links classroom teaching, student participation, and the details of content. Examples will highlight how attention to the details of children’s ideas in interaction opened opportunities for multiple ways of participating to be constructed as competent.