



Occasioning Emergence: from Epistemology to Changing Praxis in SLA and Translator Education

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Abstract

This oral presentation will focus on the importance of establishing connections between pedagogical practice and educational philosophy in the interest of moving towards new vistas for learning in the 21st century.

The talk will be accompanied by a Prezi presentation comprising a concise overview of the evolution of pedagogical epistemologies over the past 2,500 years and the implications of four epistemological families: *empiricism*, *rationalism*, *constructivism* and *emergentism* for educational research and practice in general. Foreign language education and translator training, my own areas of pedagogical practice and research, will provide examples of the application of this perspective to justifying, expanding and grounding new approaches to the facilitation of learning in institutional settings.

First, an attempt will be made to show how conventional talk-and-chalk, teacher-centered instruction is linked to *empirico-rationalist* epistemologies, while the adoption of *constructivist* epistemologies can be seen to be a key justification for collaborative teaching approaches and techniques. The presentation will go further to elaborate on a post-constructivist *emergentist* epistemology that in my view is a logical successor to social and radical constructivisms.

This fourth – *emergentist* – family of epistemologies has its roots not only in the earlier empiricist, rationalist and constructivist traditions, but is also based on an interdisciplinary dialogue involving second-generation cognitive science, complexity thinking, and an ecologically dynamic and post-positivist cosmology. *Emergentism* as a philosophical and theoretical perspective has already been introduced to the field of education by forward-looking educationalists [Doll 2008; Davis 2004; Davis & Sumara 2000, 2008] and has started to be explored in the context of translation studies [Risku 2010; Kiraly 2005] and second language acquisition studies [Larsen-Freeman 1997; Ellis 2007]. Some of my own attempts to understand learning processes and also to implement pedagogical change on the basis of this *emergent* epistemology will be introduced in this talk. It is hoped that participants will become more aware of the importance of investigating, identifying and explaining their own pedagogical epistemologies in the interest of promoting learning in our increasingly post-modern world.

References

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