

Inclusive Education Teacher Professional Learning

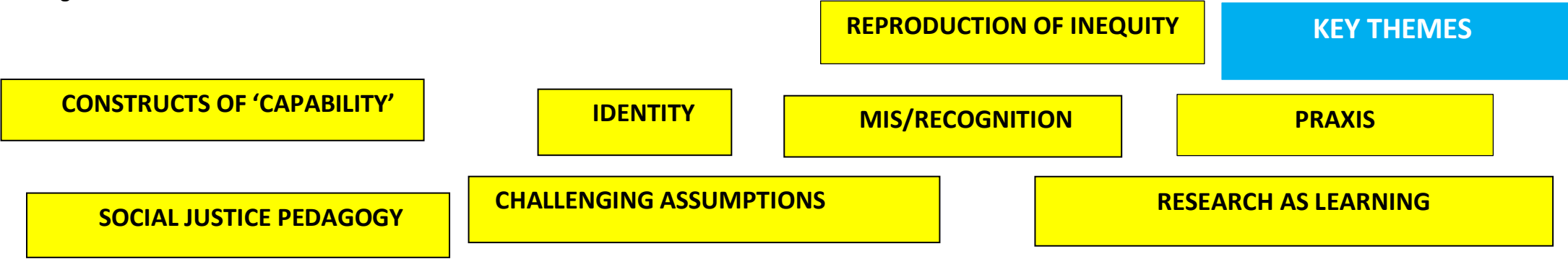
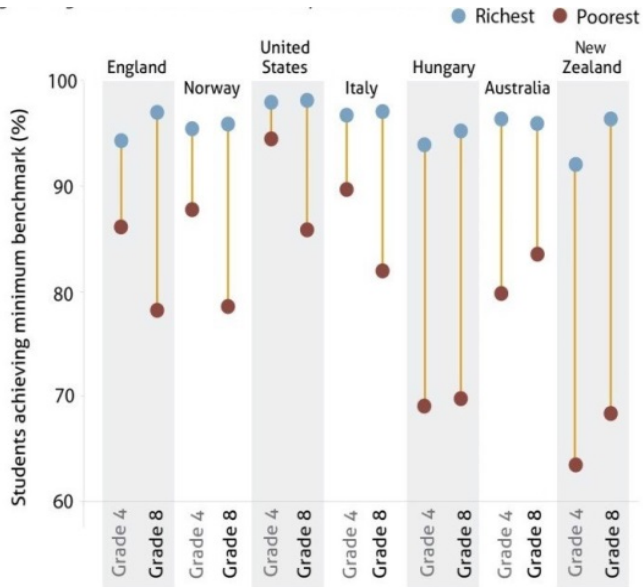
Why?

The lower a student's socio-economic background, the more likely they are of under-achieving at school and consequently restricting the choices they have later in life. In Australia the gap in education by the age of 15 between the highest and lowest economic quartiles is 3 years of schooling. Research shows that socio-economic factors, social class, teachers and school environments make a big difference to student achievement.

Developing Inclusive Education Professional Learning

Teachers work hard, often in difficult and pressured environments, to maximise educational outcomes for their students. Research has shown that inclusive education pedagogies can contribute to achieving equity of access to education for all students. However, studies have also shown that there is often an unintentional gap between teachers’ support of inclusive education in theory and application in practice, with many school students from working class (LSES) backgrounds continuing to experience an inequity in learning opportunities and under-achieving academically in part due to a mis/recognition of their ‘capability’. The literature indicates that professional learning for teachers is necessary for pedagogical changes in teaching and learning to occur.

The divide between working class and middle class students grows as they progress through school



Gaps in standardised testing achievement are consistent throughout primary and high school

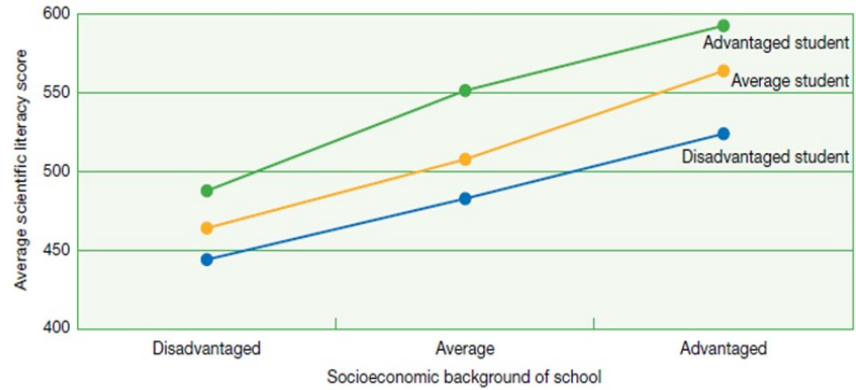
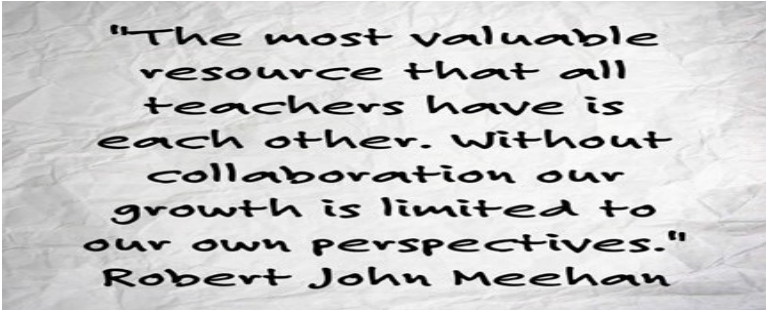


FIGURE 6.7 Scientific literacy achievement of students and schools by socioeconomic background



References: Burke, P.J & Crozier, G. (2013) Teaching Inclusively: Changing Pedagogical Spaces; Burke, P.J., Bennet, A., Burgess, C., Grey, L., and Southgate, E. (2016) Capabilities, Belonging, and Equity in Higher Education. Curtin: National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education; PISA 2009; Santoro, N., & Allard, A. (2006). Creating spaces for pedagogy: Research as learning. The Australian Educational Researcher, 33(1), 41-54.

PROJECT PURPOSE

To explore a transformative professional learning approach that could contribute to more equitable conceptions of knowledge, personhood and potential or ‘capability’ within the school classroom (Burke & Crozier, 2013). Recently, a number of authors have pointed to the lack of a developed and critical consciousness of social class that might provide a starting point from which teachers could challenge the dominant paradigm in education (Santoro & Allard, 2006).

METHODOLOGY

The project was designed using ‘pedagogical methodology’ to create space and time for teachers to come together to think reflexively and reflectively about pedagogy and identity in relation to educational equity in daily classroom practices (Burke & Crozier, 2013) .

Four school teachers (primary and high school) met 3 times over 3 months. A participatory approach to co-construct knowledge through discussions was used. Pre-session reading stimulus was given and each teacher contributed to reflections afterwards.

TEACHER REFLECTIONS

Teachers’ reflections emphasized that the process itself was important to their learning:

REFLEXIVITY

CREATION OF SPACE AND TIME

PRACTITIONER KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE BEING VALUED

LISTENING TO OTHERS AND BEING LISTENED TO

CONSTRUCTION OF OWN LEARNING