

Horn, I.S. (2007). Fast kids, slow kids, lazy kids: Framing the mismatch problem in mathematics teachers' conversations. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 16(1), 37-79.

Abstract:

This article examines the social nature of teachers' conceptions by showing how teachers frame the "mismatch" of students' perceived abilities and the intended school curriculum through conversational category systems. This study compares the conversations of 2 groups of high school mathematics teachers addressing the Mismatch Problem when implementing equity-gearred reforms. Although East High teachers challenged conceptions that were not aligned with a reform, South High teachers reworked a reform mandate to align with their existing conceptions. This research found that the teachers' conversational category systems modeled problems of practice; communicated assumptions about students, subject, and teaching; and were ultimately reflected in the curriculum. Because East High teachers supported greater numbers of students' success in advanced mathematics, this study considers the relation between teachers' understandings of student learning and the success of equity-gearred math reforms. In addition, this study contributes to the understanding of how teacher conceptions of students are negotiated and reified in context, specifically through interactions with colleagues and experiences with school reform.