SP - (16301) - TEACHER LEARNING AS BOUNDARY CROSSING DURING INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

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Short Abstract
Interdisciplinary learning among K-12 teachers is rarely featured in research on teacher professional development. While interdisciplinary curriculum is frequently recommended in terms of its benefits for student learning, the learning potential of planning such curriculum for teacher professional learning is largely overlooked. In an effort to address this gap, this study examines teacher learning in an interdisciplinary context from the perspective of boundary crossing theory. A qualitative case study approach was used to investigate the boundaries encountered by English teachers and science teachers during their discussion about the critical reading of science news articles. As the teachers negotiated the discontinuities they experienced during these boundary encounters, their attempts at sense-making could give rise to learning opportunities. A dialogical lens of learning mechanisms was used to analyze the teacher conversation transcripts and reflection logs. Preliminary findings revealed that out of the four learning mechanisms of identification, reflection, coordination and transformation, the first two mechanisms were evident during the teachers' interdisciplinary discussions. The identification and reflection mechanisms revealed teacher learning opportunities in the areas of pedagogy and content knowledge. The understanding of these processes of teacher learning could inform the structuring and design of collaborative professional development for teachers.