

Teachers' design decisions and the role of instructional resources

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This talk offers an approach to conceptualizing and examining the relationship between curriculum resources and the performance of teaching. The approach builds on several underlying assumptions: First, teaching is a design activity; second, curriculum resources are tools that convey complex instructional ideas; and third, in using these tools, teachers interact with them and selectively leverage available resources to design and enact instruction. The focus of this presentation is classroom enactment; I propose a way to represent the enacted curriculum for the purpose of analyzing teachers' design work. Using data from 3rd-5th grade mathematics classrooms in the U.S., I introduce the concepts of *instructional design arc* to model instructional episodes in a lesson that require the teacher to make design decisions in the moment. The arcs serve as units of analysis in our effort to examine teachers' design work during the enacted curriculum and its relationship to the written or planned curriculum. When compiled into a *lesson map*, these design arcs model the episodic and emerging contours of the enacted lesson, representing teachers' planned and in-the-moment decisions.

The lesson maps, together with the constructs used to make them, provide the field with a language and method for characterizing the texture of enacted lessons. Findings from comparative analysis of different teachers' lesson maps reveal patterns in design decisions that have implications for teacher and curriculum development. The analysis presented in this lecture is part of the ICUBiT project, a multi-year study of elementary teachers' interactions with curriculum resources and the capacity required to use these resources productively.