



Kate le Roux

**Thinking within the geopolitical South
towards revaluing languages and literacies
towards an in-common for/in STEM education**

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Amphitheater, Department of Architecture,
School of Engineering,

Pedion Areos

Volos GR

ABSTRACT: Thinkers of a decolonial orientation highlight a (longstanding) inadequacy of dominant traditions of intellectual inquiry for 'knowing' and acting in a world that is increasingly experienced materially, inequitably, through related extreme weather events, resource depletion, health emergencies, poverty, policing of voice, war, (forced) movement, and a becoming of the digital 'human'. Yet our thinking world is governed by principles of hierarchical separation, given life in the economic, political, social, linguistic, and technological processes of coloniality and its neocolonial and neoliberal afterlives. These principles are felt deeply and solidly - conceptually, physically and materially - in South Africa, and particularly in Cape Town, a city in which I live and practise as a teacher and researcher at an historically elite, public university. Pervading our work in this context are questions of how education might be a site of thinking and acting, anew, relationships towards liveability, with dignity and equality, for all living beings. I approach this problem from the perspective of 'language', prompted by thinkers of a decolonial orientation such as Gautam Bhan, Eduard Glissant, Ursula le Guin, Catherine Kell, Achille Mbembe, and Francis Nyamnjoh. I am reminded that it is precisely the 'power' of language that positions it centrally as the monolingual 'root' of coloniality, and that repairing the world requires voices of all the archives of the world. Thus, I am interested in the possibility of thinking and practising languages and literacies, in plural, as assemblage and intervention within the (dis)connections, (im)mobilities, (im)permanencies, and (un)certainities that characterise relations in an in-common. In this presentation I offer, humbly, my current thinking in this direction, and how I am working in research and education development in collaborations in STEM education.

Bio

Kate le Roux is an Associate Professor in the Language Development Group, Academic Development Program, at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Her research, teaching, education development, and leadership are located in the interplay of languages, literacies, and mathematics in the sciences and engineering. She draws theoretically and methodologically on critical thought in mathematics education within the socio-political and socio-ecological, languages and literacies; and decoloniality. With a deep commitment to democratising knowledge and knowledge production, she is curious about issues of equity, justice, power, access, design, relations, and place in multilingual contexts. And she welcomes the opportunity to pursue this commitment in various journal editing roles, including as an Associate Editor

of the African Journal of Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education. Kate was awarded a PhD in Mathematics Education by the University of the Witwatersrand in 2011. She was a Mandela Mellon Fellow at the Hutchins Center for African & American Research at Harvard University in 2014. Currently, she is co-chairing the International Commission on Mathematics Instruction (ICMI) Study 27, 'Mathematics Education and the Socio-Ecological', and holds a Senior Fellowship on the UCT-Bristol Collaboration Program.

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