Resources or Barriers?: Discourses of Language, Occupational Mobility and Identity for Internationally Educated Professionals in Canada

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Many internationally trained professionals come to Canada believing that they will readily find work in their profession, only to find that this is not the case. Discourses of language and language ideologies that represent and reinforce the position of the powerful in society (Kroskrity, 2010; Silverstein, 1979) affect access to language acquisition resources and access to the workplace. Through access to resources and the workplace, these discourses affect notions of identity, especially for professionals. Using case study methodology (Yin, 2009) within the framework of investment (Norton, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2011), I will show some social problems, emerging from discourses in Alberta, Canada around internationally trained professionals that are preventing many highly qualified professionals from entering the workforce, and the effect this has on their identity. In this presentation I will focus on one individual who experienced challenges accessing language courses and training programs because of discourses that regulate the workplace. I will show how her sense of identity has changed over time as her perception of discourses of language has changed.

References


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