

Ecology and Education: Engagement, Marriage or Divorce?



Tamara Savelyeva

Chair: Ora Kwo

Discussant: David Woo

Ecology is one of the few 'pure sciences' that offer fresh perspectives and promising methodological avenues to educational researchers. Ecology displays a broad array of evaluative and normative variations, including 'leadership ecology', 'school ecology', and 'organizational ecology'.

However, some educational researchers have shallow approaches that rely on 'static' ecosystem views developed 60 years ago. These views assume that systems are homeostatic, equilibrating and self-sustaining. Based on these assumptions, educationists often instrumentalize ecology as an analogical tool, which consists of descriptive metaphors, rhetorical clichés and mottoes.

Ecological science has itself moved away from the concept of a static ecosystem. The seminar will provide an overview of 'dynamic' ecology, and will discuss its potential to enrich educational methods with new perspectives. Three specific foci are: temporal and spatial variability, uncertainty, and complex dynamics.

Tamara Savelyeva joined the HKU Faculty of Education in 2010 after earning her doctorate and teaching educational modelling and sustainability at Virginia Tech University, USA. She also holds a degree of Master in natural resources (Cornell). Her research focuses on the development of ecological models in education, and on international comparative studies of campus sustainability.



12: 45 - 2:00pm
Tuesday, 17 January 2012
203 Runme Shaw Building, HKU

All welcome!



Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC)
Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong

Enquiries: Tel: 2857 8541 E-mail: cerc@hku.hk