

## **On being a teacher: How to respond to the global construction of teachers and their teaching?**

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In this presentation I explore how a particular discourse about teachers and their teaching seems to have become globally hegemonic. I take the recently announced Australian review of teacher education as my example, not because it is exceptional in how it depicts the problems with education, teachers and their teaching, but rather because it all sounds so very familiar. It is, in other words, a repetition of a mantra that has been raging around the world, almost, one could say, as a virus. In my paper I analyse how teachers and their teaching are being constructed, highlighting the key words of quality, standards and effectiveness. Although the conclusion out of this is not new – namely that teaching is being constructed as a technician endeavour – the fact that this phantasy about teaching keeps coming back is a worrying sign. Calling it a phantasy does highlight that it doesn't bear resemblance to what is really going on in teaching. But calling it a phantasy also highlights the desires that are invested in such a depiction – particularly the desire that with sufficient research and the 'right' policies teaching can become a pure technique which teachers only need to deliver. Pushing back against such a construction of teachers and their teaching requires interventions at many levels. In the second half of my presentation I focus on the role of language and what kind of language around teaching might contribute to reclaiming ownership over teaching, away from claims that policy makers and the global education measurement industry seem to enact. I offer reflections of the artistry of teaching as a way to intervene in this state of affairs, highlighting the need to move questions of teaching away from ownership towards the question what education actually asks from all those who share a concern about it. And I characterise the gesture in this latter question as a thoroughly and truly public one.