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Vygotsky from ZPD to ZCD in moral education: reshaping Western theory and practices in local context

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Abstract

This article explores Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in the Malaysian context to support local reform of the Moral Education (ME) classroom. Small groups of students in three different types of school were involved in a participant action research (PAR) project. Such classrooms in Malaysia bring together students from various ethnicities aligned with Hindu, Confucian and Christian beliefs and understandings. Using the Malaysian multicultural ME classroom as a case study, we offer some examples of group conversations around moral dilemmas that illustrate ways that collaborative processes beyond the individual might expand an individual student's ZPD and the consensual as well as divergent views of each group as a whole. This suggests possibilities for an extension of the ZPD into a zone of collaborative development (ZCD).