

DINNER CHAT



Dr. Valerie Kinloch

PRESENTER'S BIO

Dr Valerie Kinloch is Professor of Literacy Studies in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Ohio State University

Dr. Kinloch's research focuses on the language, literacies, and community engagements of youth and adults inside and outside schools. She is author of articles and books on language, literacy, place, and race.



Dr. Kinloch with members of ATESOL NT

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Dr. Kinloch gave a presentation to ATESOL NT members on Tuesday 21st February, followed by an informal dinner discussion at the Darwin Sailing club.

Dr. Kinloch discussed the importance of engaging students in authentic and meaningful language and literacy experiences. The presentation *Language, Literacy & Identity: Lessons from African American Youth* focused on sharing research and experiences of American school students who do not speak Standard American English.

Dr. Kinloch spoke of some of the successes achieved and also challenges that they face in the United States creating awareness around cultural and linguistic diversity. Dr. Kinloch presented examples of strategies that teachers and education systems can implement that create real educational improvements for students who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, such as speakers of non-standard dialects or languages other than English. Dr. Kinloch shared compelling case study stories of one particular student to highlight the journeys linguistically diverse students are negotiating in their education.

During the question and answer session after the presentation, the audience commented on the similarities and differences between the American education context and the issues facing teachers in the Northern Territory. Several members' comments reflected that discussing another educational context enabled them to reflect on issues from a different perspective and that this 'distance' was very helpful.

The presentation highlighted the crucial role that teachers play in creating welcoming, engaging, inclusive learning environments. In particular, Dr. Kinloch challenged us as educators regarding the importance of working towards 'culturally and linguistically sustainable' classrooms, so that students feel 'free to learn and don't have to shed their identity at the classroom door'.



*Promoting excellence in teaching learners of English
as an Additional Language/Dialect*
