

Analyzing a co-teaching session in a French primary school: Focus on didactic accessibility

Presenters: David Gomes, Frédéric Dupré and Minna Puustinen (INSEI, France)

Rationale

Following the international movement toward inclusive education initiated by the Salamanca Statement (Unesco, 1994), co-teaching has been increasingly presented in the literature as a pedagogical approach that may support inclusive practices in schools (Tremblay, 2012). In France, legislation has progressively evolved in support of inclusive education, and the notion of “inclusive school” was introduced in the law in 2013 (law n° 2013-595 of July 8, 2013). Since then, official guidelines from the French Ministry of Education have encouraged collaborative and inclusive teaching practices, even though the term “co-teaching” itself rarely appears in these documents. Nevertheless, academic resources have been developed to provide tools that support teachers in implementing this pedagogical approach, which is considered to promote more inclusive teaching practices, such as enhancing learning accessibility for students (Toullec-Théry, 2019).

This presentation focuses on the analysis of a co-teaching session led by a general primary school teacher and a special education teacher from a network of specialized support for students with learning difficulties (known in French as Rased). The aim of this study was to explore how this co-teaching setting impacts didactic accessibility, defined as the set of conditions (resources, support, etc.) that enable students to engage within the knowledge being taught (Assude et al., 2014). More specifically, the research question guiding this study was: In this co-teaching session, what are the factors that support or hinder didactic accessibility? The analyzed session is part of a broader doctoral research project investigating two complementary dimensions: first, the co-teaching approaches (Friend & Cook, 2017) reported by general and special education teachers across one French school district, along with their stated reasons for choosing these approaches (via a questionnaire and interviews); and second, a didactic analysis of co-teaching sessions, one of which is the focus of this presentation.

Method

The co-teaching session was recorded using a multi-source video recording system that captured teacher–student interactions from different perspectives, similar to methods used in previous didactic research (Dupré, 2020; Suau & Assude, 2016). The study also involved pre- and post-session interviews, as well as self- and cross-analyzed interviews with both teachers. The analysis is grounded in the Anthropological Theory of Didactics (Chevallard, 1991), drawing in particular on the concept of praxeology, which enables an examination of how techniques and accompanying discourses may (or may not) support students’ engagement with the learning tasks required to access knowledge. Data analysis is ongoing. The results are expected to provide insights into the challenges of a pedagogical approach that remains largely unexplored in French primary schools, particularly within Rased settings. This presentation therefore seeks to contribute to ongoing reflections on inclusive teaching dynamics, with a particular focus on teacher collaboration and its impact on student outcomes.