

Does an inclusive arrangement involving two teachers working together enhance the didactic accessibility of teaching and learning situations?

Presenters: Frédéric Dupré, Marie Toullec and Julie Pascaud (Nantes University, France)

Introduction

A didactic relationship is defined by the fact that someone is learning something. It is “organically cooperative” (Sensevy, 2011), i.e., the relationship between the student, the teacher and knowledge is inseparable. However, when two teachers co-teach a group of students, is this ternary relationship reconfigured? Collaboration is challenging. It can support inclusive practices, but it is not enough. Indeed, in what ways does working in pairs involve a “quest for shared knowledge” (Laurent, 2018, p. 15)? Does co-teaching allow for “the unexpected and the new (creation) to emerge” (Ibid., p.10), so that, within an inclusive dynamic, each student finds their place in the classroom and engages with new knowledge? This final question positions our paper within the first theme of the conference: Student level.

Method

Our didactic approach models these joint work situations as a teaching system composed of a “main didactic system”, under the responsibility of one teacher, and an “auxiliary didactic system” (Chevallard, 1998), delegated to the other teacher. Studying the articulation between these didactic systems enables us to analyse what happens when two teachers work together, from the point of view of students’ access to knowledge.

A recent French inclusive program, the self-regulation program (DAR), legitimises coteaching. Introduced in 2021 to support inclusive education of pupils with autism in mainstream classes, a supernumerary teacher complements the teaching team. Over the past two years, we have been studying what this arrangement has produced in terms of the pupils’ schooling and co-teaching practices. In this paper, we analyse co-teaching in one of these arrangements. Our research question is as follows: does co-teaching foster inclusive practices, understood as practices that promote access to the study of knowledge (Assude, 2019) by all pupils, including those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)?

Our data collection is twofold: it is based on practice films (from a multisource setup) and is supplemented by interviews with the two teachers.

Conclusion

We present three emblematic examples that illustrate a range of possible configurations, depending on what the two teachers aim for their pupils to learn. These include: 1) a division of labour within the classroom; 2) a division of labour across different spaces; and 3) joint work in the classroom. In each of these configurations, we identify the conditions under which the “auxiliary didactic system” can effectively support the learning of the pupils. A joint didactic analysis of the teaching objectives appears essential for the collaboration between the two DAR teachers to foster inclusive practices.