Researching school development programs through classroom culture

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Two rather similar ongoing large-scale projects are in this poster combined aiming to research possible tensions between them.Methodology for research are suggested.

Keywords: Social norms, Socio-mathematical norms, Assessment for learning.

BACKGROUND

Assessment for learning (Sv: Bedömning för lärande)

Since 2013 there has been a large-scale project initiated in Lunds kommun¹ encouraged Dylan Wiliams approach assessment for learning (Wiliam, 2011). All teachers are through regular group discussions supposed to (1) gain professional development, (2) develop daily teaching practice and (3) through this contribute to higher student achievements. The process involves systematic reflection in groups, based on a clear structure, supported by discussion leaders.

The Mathematics Boost (Sv: Matematiklyftet)

Between 2013-2016 the Swedish National Agency for Education is launching a 649M Skr curriculum-based professional development project. The Mathematics Boost aims to improve mathematical classroom teaching at scale in all of Sweden. This project is also based on a clear structure supported by discussion leaders and a digital platform. In cycles teachers have (1) collective planning with colleagues, (2) individual classroom teaching and (3) collective reflects with colleagues upon the classroom instruction. In Lunds kommun almost 180 of the teachers in mathematics have participated.

POSTER

Both projects are rather similar in approach even if they originated from different policymakers. They need to be explicitly connected even though they both aims to develop teaching practice at schools. In this poster I want to show one way how they might be connected using Cobb and Yackels (1996) classrooms-norms. I am aiming for investigation of norms from a student perspective. What kind of tensions will there be between these two projects, from a student perspective, expressed through Cobb and Yackels classrooms-norms? When teachers are implementing new teaching inventions, there will be potential tensions between students' view of norms and teacher's intention of new supporting norms (Wester, 2015). To be aware of these potential tension will

¹ Lunds kommun is a municipality in southern Sweden with a population of 120 000.

makes it possible to explicit encourage developments of new suitable social and sociomathematical norms.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To be successful in school mathematics, it is not enough to know the mathematics. It is also necessary that students master the rules and values governing practice inside the mathematical classroom. If students do not share understanding of these, they likely not to be able to participate in the activities as intended. This will affects students' opportunity for learning. Cobb and Yackel (1996) express these rules and values through classroom norms, divided into social- and socio-mathematical norms. Existing classroom norms are possible to be investigated through observations and interviews.

I will mainly connect social norms to assessments for learning and socio-mathematical norms to the Mathematics boost. From there, they certainly have an influence on each other and also support each other in developing teaching practice. But there will probably also be tensions between them which will become hinders to successful development.

METHODOLOGY

Data are collected through videotaping 3 different cycles in Mathematics boost according to one participating teacher. Each cycle including recording teachers collective planning with colleagues, planned activity in classroom environment, and collective reflection of the outcome. Before and after each teaching activity, teacher will be shortly interviewed. Close to the teaching activity, some of the students are also interviewed in a focus group.

This research will take its starting point from student interviews. Analyzing interviews through Cobb and Yackels framework, what kind of classroom norms do students express? How will these norms relate to their teacher's intentions of supporting norms, expressed in interviews, observations, and teachers collective planning and reflections? From there, what kind of tensions will there be between these two kinds of development projects?

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