

Mixed-Methods Approaches and their Application in Studies of Teaching Quality- an illustration

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Abstract

The aim of the presentation is to shed light on the potential of MM approaches in studies of teaching quality understood as the interactions between teachers and students in the classroom (Pianta, 2017; Pianta, Hamre & Allen, 2012). The flexibility allowed by Mixed Methods (MM) designs is particularly suited to the study of such complex education topics as teachers' classroom practices (Sammons & Davis, 2017). The purposive combination of quantitative and qualitative research approaches and data can complement and extend one another and thus lead to better descriptions, clearer explanations and an enhanced understanding of classroom interaction as a phenomena, research aims and questions (Ertesvåg, Sammons & Blossing, submitted). Firstly, mixing and integration are briefly discussed, including how to overcome the barriers of integration. Secondly, this introduction set the stage for the discussion on the integration processes in a specific MM study on classroom interaction, illustrating the possibilities and challenges of integration to produce new knowledge and a deeper understanding of findings in classroom studies. Findings from the *Classroom Interaction for Enhanced Student Learning* (CIESL) study, a large-scale MM study on enhancing student learning through improved teacher classroom interaction skills provide illustrations of the potential of MM design in classroom research. Illustrated by teacher reports (quan), observations (quant and qual), and interviews (qual) the focus is on "how" quan and qual findings are integrated (integration strategy) in ways that may enhance our understanding of classroom interaction. For the purpose of illustrating integration, we draw on a sub-study aiming to describe, analyse and explain the variation in lower secondary teachers' classroom interaction skills throughout the intervention period of the national initiative "Ungdomstrinn i Utvikling" (Developing Lower Secondary Schools).

References

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