

Jennifer Luoto

Abstract

This study combines teacher perspectives with observed practices to gain understanding of what shapes student opportunities to participate in classroom discourse in four Finnish lower secondary mathematics classrooms. Opportunities to participate in discourse are analyzed with three different lenses; teachers' instructional moves, meta-discursive rules, and teacher perspectives. The data consists of video-recordings from a week of instruction in four 9th grade math classroom and teacher interviews. The analyses show how meta-discursive rules of discussion together with instructional moves shape what kind of opportunities students have. Some teacher moves and meta-rules enable participation while other constrain opportunities to participate. The teachers however mostly see student attributes as constraints for participation. Another key finding is that the teachers vary in what they perceive as 'participation', and how they engage students in discourse align with their views of participation and student needs. The present study thus problematizes the relationship between teachers' enacted practice and their perspectives, which previous research often has found to disagree. The study intends to raise awareness among teachers and teacher educators of how instructional practices, meta-discursive rules and teacher perspectives of student talk relate to student opportunities to engage in content related discourse, which may limit or enable learning opportunities.