

Questioning techniques and dialogue: Three cases of facilitating student-centered whole-class conversations with varying patterns of questioning

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Due to the complex problems following globalization and the current climate crisis, there is a constantly growing need and awareness of enhancing students' communicative, collaborative, and critical thinking skills. Research has shown that one way to move towards this goal is to increase the level of dialogic education in schools. In the Nordic countries we have a strong tradition of engaging in student-centered conversations in primary and secondary schools, and in this presentation, I investigate the questioning techniques and level of coherence in videos of whole-class conversations in three Nordic lower secondary schools, with a high degree of student engagement and open-ended questions.

In the presentation I present a thematic analysis of the questioning technique, level of dialogue and coherence in three whole-class conversations, where three different teachers facilitate the conversations in different ways. The analyses build on research in dialogic teaching, specifically

on Robin Alexander's six principles of dialogic teaching.

The preliminary findings show that the teachers' different questioning techniques affect the level of dialogue and coherence in the conversations, and how asking open-ended questions is not in itself enough to create an open-ended conversation because the tone and timing is crucial to the function of the questions asked in the conversations.

Investigating how student-centered conversations are facilitated in practice in a Nordic context, is important to the ambition of improving the quality of whole-class conversations. We need to know what characterizes the way teachers ask questions in their everyday practice if we want to be able to target this specific practice in professional development of teachers and in courses and teaching aids for teacher education.