

Paper session 6C | The role of subject specific aspects of teaching quality

Room: Kullager

Chair: Anna Kristin Sigurðardóttir, University of Iceland

Analyzing teaching quality: Capturing subject-generic, subject-specific, format-specific, and learning-goal specific features simultaneously

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Research on teaching effectiveness typically identifies aspects of teaching assumed to be critical for student learning, and then measure the relationship between those aspects and students' progress on narrowly defined subsets of skills, usually reading comprehension or mathematics. However, since theoretical frameworks developed in this way are seldom unanimously efficacious across school subjects, some researchers argue that subject-generic and subject-specific approaches need to be combined in order to explore teaching quality more thoroughly. While this may be fruitful, evidence also suggest that presumed subject-specific aspects may not be equally efficient even in the different content-areas of single subjects, for instance, in literature instruction vs. writing instruction, or equally efficient for different subject-specific learning goals.

For this reason, drawing on previous research using hybrid frameworks, the present study proposes a slightly modified form of observation system for exploring teaching quality, one that combines subject-generic, subject-specific,

format-specific, and learning goal-specific features. The model proposed acknowledges the fact that teaching in most subjects normally afford qualities of knowledge that are both subject-generic and highly specific within a single subject. The example used is taken from language arts, more precisely teacher-led whole-class discussions about complex short narratives. In order to identify and explore the specific qualities of this form of teaching, both generic and specific aspects must be considered. The protocol Rating Inquiry Dialogue about Literature (RIDL) was developed on these premises for observation of live or video-recorded classroom discussions. In the presentation, RIDL is demonstrated and explained with emphasis on its multilevel scope. Reports from ongoing use of the instrument support the utility, discrimination, and perceived relevance of included variables. Suggestions for extended validation of the framework, and implications for practice, are discussed.