

Teachers' leadership in parents-teacher development dialogues in Primary school

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Research topic/aim

The focus of this paper is to consider teachers' complex work of leading parent-teacher development dialogues with the aim to make visible what importance teachers' leadership is given and explore how teachers' leadership appears in the dialogues. The paper represents the final findings of a PhD study.

Theoretical framework

I draw from an understanding that the world is a social, intersubjective, and historical world where people experience, act and intertwine in a private and a shared world. The study is phenomenological and inspired by a lifeworld approach and the data was analyzed to consider people's context, their experiences and the complexity involved in leading parent-teacher development dialogues.

Methodology/research design

This article is the result of a project with the aim of making visible the importance given to teachers' leadership and exploring how teachers' leadership appears in the dialogues. The empirical work is based on observations of parent-teacher development dialogues and interviews with teachers and students. Observations and interviews took place in a primary school, grades five and six. The analyzes are made with the support of the life-world phenomenological concepts of *attitude*, *seeing-as* and *pedagogical tact*. These concepts include verbal and bodily communicative expressions and sensitive and intuitive actions, their meanings will be highlighted and explained.

Findings

The results show that teachers' leadership in parent-teacher development dialogues includes both preparatory and subsequent work and forms part of the teaching. Leadership both shapes the development conversation and is shaped in the same and given importance when teachers show consideration for the student, the relationship between teacher and student and the situation, balance challenges with time and sensitive topics, choose to take notes in the parent-teacher development dialogues in favor of presence in the conversation itself and document afterwards. Teachers' leadership in parent-teacher development dialogues shape the conversation through teachers' willingness to involve the students, flexibility, and ability to structure. Teachers' leadership in parent-teacher development dialogues are shaped by teachers' responsiveness, compliance, presence, attention, ability to improvise and playfulness. Important in teachers' leadership is the pedagogical sense of tact and that the teacher expresses it with his whole body. The sense of tact means seeing each student and understanding their needs, openness to the student's experiences, experiences, and feelings, creating positive feelings, trusting relationships and security. The sense of tact is also about being forward-looking, guiding, considering the student's influence and participation, as well as taking the student's wishes into account in subsequent work, giving feedback and fulfilling agreements.

Relevance to Nordic educational research

Leadership emerges and takes shape in a variation depending on individuals, relationships, and situations. The result, supported by life-world phenomenological concepts, contributes to increased knowledge and in-depth understanding of teachers' leadership in parent-teacher development dialogues and constitutes an asset for teachers to communicate and to lead parent-teacher development dialogues. Research on parent-teacher development dialogues that primarily study teachers' leadership is scarce and assessment research demands studies from both teacher and student perspectives, which means that the study can contribute to Nordic educational research.