

TRANSFORMATIONS IN TEACHERS' DISCOURSE ABOUT THEIR STUDENTS DURING A SCHOOL- LED PEDAGOGIC INTERVENTION

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Abstract

Many pedagogic interventions aim to counteract the problem of students' disengagement in learning but often fail to take into account the perceptions and practices of educational practitioners. In this article we analyse teachers' collaborative talk as an important part of developing school practices. We examine how teachers construct students' engagement as a goal of their work and how they, in the course of a research-based, school-led pedagogic intervention, begin to re-define this problem and their perceptions of their students. Using a discourse analytic framework, we analyse nine video-recorded group discussions with 30 teachers in a socially disadvantaged urban secondary school participating in a 2-year intervention study. The analysis focuses on teachers' talk of their students as the teachers constructed obstacles, preconditions and possibilities for the development of their work. We categorize the teachers' talk about their students' engagement as emphasising (1) Students as autonomous choice-makers; (2) Students as active doers and participants in school; and (3) Students as whole, embodied beings. During the intervention, teachers' talk shifted not only from negative to more positive talk of their students but also to seeing their students as more complex and embodied beings whose problems in school are not inevitable obstacles for classroom work but as something that the teachers can start to do something at. In this paper we call this change in teachers' talk as "envisioned ideology". In pedagogic interventions there need to be what we call "latent supporting factors" that can enable the development of this kind of "envisioned ideology".

Keywords: Student engagement, teacher talk, pedagogic intervention, classroom learning, discourse analysis

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doi: 10.15405/ejsbs.163



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1. Introduction

“Now I have to tell you this one thing that we decided to share with you. We’re all here from this school and we all know our students: So, there was this extraordinary event. After we had told to the students that we will continue our project-day on Friday, there was this girl, Anni, who is not interested in school-going normally, well, she came on to me after our information session and asked me very quietly: “how is it, am I also coming? My classes normally begin at nine, but I’ll also come at eight on Friday, won’t I?” Well you all know what this means. I mean Anni would never do anything like this normally. So we were very surprised indeed.” (Session 7, turn of talk 290).

This excerpt is from teachers' discussion in the end of a pedagogic intervention in a Finnish urban lower secondary school. It shows a teacher’s surprise over the behaviour of her students during the project. This talk can be seen as part of a lived ideology (Billig et al., 1988) that the teacher shares with the other teachers in this school. The example also shows a change in this ideology towards what we in this paper call envisioned ideology, a possibility for seeing students and their problems in a new light.

In this paper we focus on the central topic of student engagement through examining an intensive school-led research intervention project in one school. The intervention followed the principles of Developmental Work Research (Engeström, 2005). The aim of the intervention was together with the teachers to develop pedagogical practices and classroom culture towards engaging and problem-oriented knowledge work where students work together in groups and with a shared goal (Rainio, 2003). Here we focus on a specific aspect which we argue is central in improving student engagement in school: the ways in which teachers, in reflecting on their practice, conceptualise their students, their capabilities and engagement (ibid.; Hennessy, Haßler, & Hofmann, under review). Literature on school change argues that enabling teachers a central place in the developing and letting their voices be heard are keys towards a more thorough change (Clark & Florio-Ruane, 2001; Pyhältö, Pietarinen & Soini, 2013). Moreover, we argue that conceptualisations of students and their engagement and learning in teachers’ talk are part of the institutional practices in a school. Transforming these ways of talking about students is about re- forming those institutional practices (Daniels, 2006; Virkkunen & al., 2012).

2. Problem Statement: Teacher conceptions of student engagement

“Engagement” is commonly used to refer to things such as commitment and being strongly dedicated, attracted or absorbed (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Ketonen & Lonka, 2012). In discussions about enhancing student engagement in policy, practitioner

literature and educational research, various discourses can be discerned (see Hofmann, 2008a). In this study we will discuss three which are also reflected in our data. One dominant discourse emphasises students' autonomy and choice. Research suggests that students of all ages ask for more autonomy (e.g., Pollard & Triggs, 2000; Rudduck, & McIntyre, 2007). This emphasis is commonly reflected in policy discourse and practitioner literature. However, this notion of engaging students is not unproblematic. Not all students see themselves as equally able to make choices acceptable in the context of school. 'Student autonomy' may be appropriated by existing evaluative practice of school so that it becomes a tool for enhancing performance rather than one for the inclusion of student voice (Hofmann, 2008a; Noyes, 2005.)

Another common discourse of student engagement revolves around students as active participants in school that is embedded in the society. This discourse resonates with 'progressivist' notions of the active naturally exploring child (cf. Edwards & Mercer, 1987), a Deweyan understanding of schooling as part of society and 'learning by doing' as well as a sociocultural notion of student engagement as participation in authentic activities (Rogoff et al., 2003). A discussion of the various ideological and theoretical problems with regard to this kind of approach to student engagement is beyond the scope of this study (for discussion see Hofmann, 2008a) but it is worth noting a real challenge with their translation into everyday classroom practice. In their classic study Edwards and Mercer (1987) illustrated how even in officially progressivist, child-centred classrooms, out-of-school knowledge rarely played any significant role in the classroom.

In our work we have drawn on a perspective of children and young people as not only cognitive but also affective, embodied subjects, emphasising opportunities for students for 'lived' experiences of school learning (see e.g., John-Steiner, 2000; Ferholt, 2009). It is suggested in these discourses that while out-of-school learning is often lived and embodied, school learning is often not.

In previous research we have found that teachers' conceptualisations of their students are often closed and deterministic: due to the characteristics of 'their students', things 'could not be differently' in school and classroom practice (Rainio, 2003; Hennessy, Haßler & Hofmann, under review). We frame this as the teachers "lived ideology" (Billig & al., 1988) which refers to a 'common sense' that groups of people share in their local historical settings (such as a workplace). This does not mean that the teachers necessarily share a permanent set of beliefs but rather that they recognise and use the same ways of conceptualising and understanding their professional practice and the contradictions it involves. We want to emphasise that these ways of understanding are based on the reality of teachers' work and

have important functions for practitioners. But they may also constrain teachers' work and its development. (See also Engeström, Engeström, & Suntio, 2002; Sannino, 2008, Zeller Mayer, 2001). Virkkunen et al. (2012) illustrate how fixed and deterministic categorisations of students can become 'social facts' in a given setting, functioning to override alternative understandings and even marginalise certain students.

These studies also illustrate how such deterministic categorisations begin to crack during pedagogic interventions involving teacher discussions and pedagogic development work. However, moving beyond observation and acknowledgement of problems to more enduring transformation is challenging. We are interested in examining the possibility of sustaining such problematisation of teachers' own practice over a period of time (one school year) so that new shared ways of conceptualising students, and the object of their work, can emerge.

3. Research Setting, Research Questions and Methods

3.1. Knowledge Laboratory Intervention

In the school years 2000-2002, a longitudinal intervention study was conducted at an urban lower secondary school (with 13 to 15 years old students) in Southern Finland located in a socio- economically disadvantaged area, with some 30% of the students coming from recent immigrant and refugee families. All its 30 full-time teachers participated in the intervention. The intervention, grounded in the wishes and practices of the participating teachers and institutional setting and called Knowledge Work Laboratory (KWL), follows principles of Developmental Work Research tradition (see Engeström, 2005) and was a continuation and an extension of a Change Laboratory intervention conducted in the school in 1998-1999 (see Engeström et al, 2002).¹

The teachers had a wish to integrate information technology into their instruction as a step towards new pedagogical practices. "Knowledge work" refers to seeing both teachers' and students' activities at school as their work, especially as work with knowledge and information. In the KWL this work was problematised along two dimensions: (1) a cognitive dimension, ranging from procedure-oriented drills to problem- and principle-oriented knowledge production, and (2) a socio-motivational dimension, ranging from "encapsulated" classroom work to networked learning in partnerships with other organizations. This simple two-dimensional framework was used as a shared conceptual tool in the laboratory sessions.

¹ The intervention was conducted by the Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research at the University of Helsinki and financed by the Board of Education of the city of Helsinki. The principal investigator was Yrjö Engeström. The other members of the research group were Ritva Engeström, Arja Suntio and Anna Pauliina Rainio.

The model to illustrate this “new” problem- and principle-oriented knowledge work in classrooms where students work together in groups and with a shared goal was called a “model B of teaching” (contrasted to a more “traditional” model A).²

In the first three laboratory sessions (sessions 1 to 3), teachers and researchers watched selected excerpts (‘mirror data’) from their lessons and interviews with teachers and students videorecorded by the researchers. The problems observed and the need for changes in classroom teaching were discussed. Based on these discussions, teachers selected nine topics they felt were relevant to develop in their teaching and subsequently designed new “pilot” curriculum units to spearhead change. Plans for these curriculum units were presented in the winter 2001 (sessions 4 to 6) and implemented in the classrooms in the spring 2001. At the end of the school year, the new units and their implementation were evaluated through joint discussions (sessions 7 to 9). The project continued during year 2002 with planning and implementing new curriculum units, but in this article we restrict our analysis to the school year 2000-2001.

3.2. Data Analysis

Our data consists of the discussions in all these nine laboratory sessions where school’s approximately 30 teachers, the principal and two to three researchers were present. The sessions took place every two weeks, lasting approximately two hours.³ All sessions were videotaped (18 hours) and transcribed (approximately 500 pages) forming our data set.

In this study we follow a discourse analytic view of language as constructing situated social practices (see, e.g. Billig & al., 1988). We examine the KWL sessions as a social practice in which the participants conduct dialogue about the possibilities for development of their own work practices and community. This “lived ideology” of the participating teachers frames the talk in the discussion sessions which we analyse. Thus, our focus of analysis is talk-activity in the knowledge laboratory sessions and we treat a turn of talk as an analytical unit of analysis. We concentrate on sampling “talk-actions” (Austin, 1976) where the conceptualising of students is somehow at hand. This means talk about teaching and classroom practices that relate to the student’s role in the classroom learning activity. Our research questions are:

- 1) In what ways do teachers define their students when they talk about their work in the knowledge laboratory sessions?

² The model B is based on the theory of variation in education (see Marton & Trigwell 2001.) 1818

³ The structure of the sessions is based on the Change Laboratory method developed for the developmental work research interventions (see e.g. Engeström, 2005).

- 2) How does this talk about students change during the process (during the school year)?

The first stage of the analysis is based on an earlier study (Rainio, 2003) of teacher talk in the first phase of the project (sessions 1-3) which analysed the teachers' construction of obstacles, preconditions and possibilities for the development of their daily school work in their talk.

In the second, previously unreported stage of the analysis the focus is specifically on talk about student engagement in the data, its nature and change, in all 9 sessions. Drawing on common discourses of student engagement and agency, we constructed three categories for student engagement that the teachers in this data drew on in their talk. In multiple iterative rounds of coding between the two researchers and discussions to reach agreement, all talk of student engagement in the data set was categorised into these. The interpretation and categorising of the material were carried in a dialogue between research literature and our analysis of the data (cf. Paavola, 2014). We further distinguished between whether the different ways of engaging students described were discussed by the teachers as possible/desirable in their school or as unnecessary/impossible.

4. Findings

4.1. Findings I: Student as an obstacle for change

The first three sessions were dominated by a discussion about obstacles of classroom change, and legitimation of current ways of working. The development of school work towards "knowledge work" was perceived in many ways problematic, even unnecessary by the teachers in the light of situations they faced in their daily work. This is understandable considering the nature and purpose of these early sessions in which the recorded classroom situations were discussed critically.

It emerged that in this talk, students were constructed as the main category of explanation for the status quo of current practice. Students' lack of engagement, their abilities, personal characteristics or background were employed to either legitimate the current (but often unsatisfying) classroom practices or as an explanation to resist the suggested alternatives to develop the school work. Characteristic of this talk was that the teachers' own role in changing this situation was described as either very limited or unnecessary.

The local community/culture as internalised attitudes and patterns of behavior

EILA⁴: The answer to everything in this village is always social benefits, they are used to getting everything, so what do they bother doing anything themselves. This [attitude] is seen in so many things.

TUULA: It guides it. (Session 3, turn of talk 279)

In the above the teachers explain their students' general lack of motivation and effort in this school through reference to the local context and its perceived characteristics which are seen as determining the students' attitudes and behaviours. The explanation for the difficulty of engaging their students in school work is located outside the school, and outside the reach of school. The references go even further to wider cultural patterns:

ULLA: [In pair work] in many of the [student] pairs it was always like one person did all the work and the other one just sat and watched and had no idea how it would be done. So they couldn't really work together. Apparently, they could have been guided a bit in that...

EILA: But that's the Finnish group work model.

ULLA: Yeah, one person does it, the other one watches. (Session 1, turn of talk 245)

The personality, characteristics or abilities of the students

The teachers' talk draws a landscape of some quiet, some bright, some unmotivated or disaffected students. These differences in character are often offered as explanations for particular ways of teaching and learning in the school. One teacher explains how "a good bright student who is used to handling information is of course able to work along [Model B]" even if other students continue to work along Model A. Another teacher describes different students as having different set characteristics which influence their learning and engagement in school: "The moral sense of their own responsibility for their own learning is so dependent of the individual student, that's a fact" (Session 1, turn of talk 181).

Here students' characteristics may be described as matters of individual personality which teachers should not even attempt to change. For example, in a lengthy exchange between the teachers in an early session, a particular student's case is discussed who is often

⁴ All the names of the teachers have been changed. The data has been translated from Finnish to English by the authors. 1820

seen to be sitting alone in the classroom. The teachers mention that they have attempted to invite the student to join in more but have given up, since they ‘feel that the student is quite happy and content alone, by himself’. They emphasise that the student should be left ‘to be as he is’, other teachers expressing agreement:

TAINA: Don’t you also think that we have to respect a person’s personality, the adults’ and children’s, and that we can see from a person if they are content and happy alone, they are not excluded. (Session 3, turn of talk 81)

Students’ backgrounds are also offered as an explanation why change is not possible, with reference to patchy past school attendance, students’ skills and prior experience in certain areas, such as ICT, differences in their primary schools, family language and culture or how well they know their secondary school peers. However, there is also talk in these first sessions in which the current situation is not constructed as fully determined. Difficulties are hereby not discussed as unchangeable ‘facts’ but as something that can be influenced or something that are dependent on the teaching methods and teachers’ expectations.

After these first three sessions, teachers started to plan and ultimately carry out the pilot curriculum units. In these units the active role of students was one of the objectives that the teachers considered important. In this article we are interested in what happened to teachers’ talk in the KWL sessions during the process in the whole school year.

4.2. Findings II: Transformations in teachers’ ways of talking about their students within the first year of the intervention

The teachers participating in the project had particularly hoped for outside help to develop their classroom practices so as to become more meaningful to both students and themselves. At the same time, the analysis of the first phase of the knowledge work laboratory shows that a discourse about the students was commonly used to legitimise existing, though unsatisfactory, classroom practices (thereby holding them as sensible or inevitable). We have described this as the teachers’ lived ideology (Billig & al., 1988). In the second stage of the analysis we mapped talk about student engagement across the data set constructing three categories presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Student engagement categories in the teachers’ discourse

Category	Description	Example
(1) Students as autonomous and independent choice-makers	Refers to an idea of student autonomy as freedom to choose and participate in deciding the contents of learning	‘I’m wondering if we design the project so that the pupils can choose their own topics which of course motivates them more’ (Choice) ‘It was an interesting trial in this project to try to let the pupils work really independently’ (Self-regulation)
(2) Students as active doers and participants in school	Includes all the talk that positions the student as active participant in school that is embedded in the society and community around	‘The project work has to be organised so that it becomes as meaningful and interesting an experience as possible for the students, that they get to do and learn things themselves.’ (Learning by doing) ‘We have to organize teaching so that it’s not just some formulas but that our society becomes visible to them’ (Society as a resource for learning and teaching)
(3) Students as whole and embodied beings	Involves seeing the students as whole embodied human beings with knowledge, experiences, emotions and lives outside school that are relevant to their being and learning in school as well.	‘The students had designed and made these really fancy pins [they were wearing] and they were walking down the corridor so proudly, they even came to tell me about it – “see I’m a graphic designer!”’ ‘I started looking how they work and noticed the impact of different skills in the peer group, of course they can’t start asking for help from the teacher when they know some of their peers can already do everything really well.’ (Students noticed as a real whole person with knowledge, experience and emotions)

In the analysis we distinguished between ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ use of these discourses as illustrated in Table 2 below. In teachers’ talk student autonomy was often formulated through the students’ possibility to choose interesting topics or contents of learning tasks. In the first example below the teacher Ulla describes choice as effective in

engaging ‘this lot’ who are otherwise described as challenging (positive). However, in the second example by Tuula, this same idea of choosing is not seen as desirable or feasible from the teacher’s perspective (negative).

Table 2. Examples of positive and negative engagement discourses on the data

Positive view of student engagement	Negative view of student engagement
<p>ULLA: And then we started the creation of these glossaries from deciding a topic, and it was quite a long process, to select a topic. Maybe not everybody but some of the students, they found a topic immediately, but the others changed their topic many times – and then finally a topic was found for everyone, a topic they found that really was interesting for them. And the process then started pretty well in that class. (Category 1: Student choice as a possible way of engaging students)</p>	<p>TUULA: The topics [they chose] we completely random. So next time when we start doing something like this I definitely want to limit it to the topic given in the textbook or somehow clearly. Because it otherwise goes all over the place with this lot. Though they really enjoyed doing it, that was really peculiar. They even ran after me in the corridor asking when we’ll do it again. (Category 1: Student choice as an undesirable way of engaging students)</p>

Next we will illustrate the changing pattern in teachers’ discourse about students’ engagement during the year. While the talk of students as autonomous and independent choice-makers (category 1) remains fairly constant throughout the year, there is a marked increase in positive talk about students as active doers and participants in school (category 2). There is also a clear decrease in the talk that discussed category 2 as an undesirable or unworkable strategy. A similar but even stronger pattern of change is observable in the data with regard to teachers’ talk about students as whole embodied human beings (category 3). Positive talk about this kind of discourse about students (marked with (+)) as relevant to teaching and learning in their school increases fourfold during the year while negative talk (marked with (-)) about this kind of way of thinking about engaging students decreases substantially. In the following section we will focus on this last kind of talk (category 3) and examine how it was used by the teachers, and what was being done in this talk as it increased and see what changes in the way teachers define and position their students. Table 3 presents the comparison of the occurrence of each category in the three phases of the project.⁵

⁵ The table does not propose a comparison between the volumes of different types of discourses but rather a comparison within each category of talk, the changes in the volume of a particular type of talk across the school year.

Table 3. Transformation of the student engagement talk in the KWL sessions, school year 2000- 2001

Talk of student engagement	Talk of student engagement	Talk of student engagement	Talk of student engagement	Talk of student engagement
1. Students as autonomous choice-makers	23 (+)	21(+)	16 (+)	60 (+)
	10 (-)	2 (-)	11 (-)	23(-)
				Total: 83
2. Students as active doers and participants in school	9 (+)	27 (+)	26 (+)	62 (+)
	33 (-)	2 (-)	8 (-)	43 (-)
				Total: 105
3. Students as whole, embodied beings	18 (+)	46 (+)	74 (+)	138 (+)
	43 (-)	5 (-)	9 (-)	57 (-)
				Total: 195
TOTAL	50 (+)	94 (+)	116 (+)	260 (+)
	86 (-)	9 (-)	28 (-)	123 (-)

4.3. Findings III: Teachers talk of the students as whole embodied beings

Talk in category three is particularly interesting as it seems to be almost opposite to the way of talking about students as an obstacle of change in the first phase of the intervention. In sessions 4-9 the teachers themselves appear to be suggesting a new perspective. There is talk of ‘noticing’:

ENNI: I thought using the Internet would be their favourite but actually what they liked most was getting library cards, most of them had burned theirs because they had so many fines and so now that they actually got to borrow some books they walked around with it like a credit card. (Session 5, turn of talk 180)

In these examples the teachers notice something new about their students and want to share their surprise with other teachers. We interpret this kind of talk about students as more open: the picture drawn of the students is not closed or inevitable but allows different interpretations. Also the importance of positive experiences of learning and engagement is repeatedly taken up in these later sessions, particularly as observed in the pilot curriculum units:

MAIJA: And actually more important than whether they can use the digital camera later, is that they remember that they were able to do it together, and that it was a good thing. That they get that positive experience that ‘we were able to do it’.

(Session 7, turns of talk 341-343)

There is also talk in the third category in which the possible reasons for their students’ problems are explored from the students’ perspective. In the example below the teachers are discussing a debating activity in which some students had struggled to justify their allocated perspective.

However, this is now seen as a development task, not an obstacle. Furthermore, Ulla relates the students learning problems to her own experiences as a learner:

TUULA: I think this debating task was a really good idea and it probably wasn’t that much of a failure after all, it just has scope for further developing.

ULLA: I thought exactly the same, it wasn’t actually at all a failure, because it is an extremely difficult thing to do, for adults too I would claim. When I’ve had to take part in activities like that in professional development, it’s really difficult. Especially if you have to present a view that you don’t hold in reality, so that you manage to actually genuinely represent it. So, they weren’t actually bad, quite the opposite. (Session 8, Turns of talk 33 and 35)

Teachers’ ‘noticing’ things and seeing them from the students’ perspective relates very interestingly also to students’ themselves seeing their own learning and opportunities differently, such as when Tuula describes “noticing” how a group of students, identified as having special educational needs who initially struggled with the activities, coming to realise that “learning is not necessarily difficult for me because I’m dumb but that there may be disturbing conditions around me that just don’t suit me. And that I can actually do something about those things so that I can learn better.” (Session 7, turns of talk 38-43).

Perhaps the most interesting phenomenon in the talk in category three is the observation that students’ challenging characteristics are raised as something the teachers need to take into account, and do something about, in their planning rather than as insurmountable ‘facts’ that stop them from doing things, as discussed above for the early sessions:

ENNI (when planning to use the studying style test with students): These are, at least at the moment, students who have a pretty poor motivation and a view of themselves that they aren't capable and won't be able to learn. We have noticed that this is a pretty insurmountable situation at the moment that we need to start doing something about. Especially as none of our efforts so far of using entertaining methods and whatever and trying this and that have helped at all to make the students notice how they could improve their own learning or study techniques. (Session 5, turn of talk 166)

While still recognising their students' various problems as real and challenging, these are now discussed as something that they collectively can start to pay attention to and work with:

TOM: If we agree on a topic that turns out not to interest everyone or if the group composition is such that some students are interested and some aren't, what will happen is what has happened before that one or two students do all the work and the rest just take a freeride. So, in the future, we need to definitely [pay attention] to this in the planning stage -- together with the group -- that all teachers who are part of the team have to be part of it, guiding the groups. (Session 9, turn of talk 156)

5. Conclusion

In this article we examined teachers' changing discourse about their students as they participated in a school-led pedagogic intervention. We analysed how the teachers conceptualised their students when they talked about their work in the K LW sessions (research question 1). The results show that in the first phase of the project the teachers saw the development of classroom teaching and learning as very difficult, even impossible, and defined students as the main obstacle for it. We talked about this as a "lived ideology", a shared way of talking and understanding in this school grounded in the work and conditions in the particular setting. We then wanted to see what kind of student (dis)engagement talk was dominant in the data and discerned three different modes: first, engagement was seen as based on students' autonomy: e.g., giving students possibilities to choose topics of learning (category 1), and secondly, engagement was related to "learning by doing" through participating in school tasks involving societal, real life topics (category 2), and finally, talk about student engagement from students' own perspective, in this way seeing students as whole, embodied beings in the classroom (category 3).

Our second research question focused on the transformation of the teachers' talk about their students during the intervention and we found that first of all positive talk about student engagement (seeing engagement as something that could happen or already happens in their classrooms) increased substantially during the intervention. Further, there was a considerable increase in teachers' positive talk in category three. We examined this more closely and made following remarks: The teachers started to talk about 'noticing' things, either in their students or in the way things were done in their classrooms; the teachers started talking about possible reasons for their students' problems and considered those from the students' perspective. The teachers also emphasised the importance of positive learning experiences for the students and discussed their students' problems as something they need to take into account in planning rather than insurmountable 'facts' (as was done mainly in the "student as an obstacle" -talk).

An earlier study in this setting has described the crucial step of collectively reconceptualising the object of teachers' work so as to centrally include the students' lives and opportunities (Engeström et al., 2002). While at least initially, such talk of students may be negative and frustrated, this shift is described as significant. Virkkunen et al (2012) also described the use of categorical descriptions of students by teachers as a way of dealing with contradictions in their work. Their study focused on the initial stages in which these categorical definitions begin to crack in the context of an intervention. However, emerging novel ways of conceptualising students within existing real working conditions are fragile and their potential sustainability far from self-evident (ibid., also Sannino, 2008). The present study has focused on the development of teachers' talk over a whole year, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Central in this re-conceptualisation process is that the teachers start to see themselves as having agency over their work (Pyhältö & al., 2014). Similarly Zeller Mayer (2001, 59) notes in her case study that by being able to express their resistance and concerns, teachers started to give up the "deficiency" view of their students' learning and shift their focus to reflecting their own teaching practices. These particular ways of conceptualising represent what we call envisioned ideology - which at least on the level of discourse makes possible that the teachers become the agents of change in school transformation. Such envisioned ideology does not solve the challenges and contradictions of the teachers' daily work. Rather, we argue it is important that it remains grounded in the realities of their everyday practice and takes those as central, and explicit, evidence of change or the need for it. The teachers need to experience these collectively envisioned new ideas as possible and doable in their settings relative to the people, structures and resources in those settings. We argue that such

new ideology is significant in that it entails a forward-looking openness to new ways of thinking in planning and practice. As a new explicit shared ideology of one professional group, it may also have the potential of becoming a new common knowledge as conceptualised by Edwards (2011; 2012) which can, through communicating what is important and possible in these teachers' work, function as a new resource for working, and envisioning alternative futures, with other professionals and stake-holders in education - and most importantly, with the students.

It is relevant to give some consideration to what may make possible such changes. The processes of reflecting on the reasons behind the teachers' own classroom practice and experimenting with new ideas in that everyday practice are important aspects (cf. Vermunt & Endedijk, 2011). Opportunities for the mediation of these discussions offered by the researchers are seen as important. However, the new envisioned ideology was not offered to the participants by the researchers nor did it emerge directly from the intervention. Within the context of the intervention the teachers discussed their current practice with each other and viewed examples of their own and each others' practice. Our analysis suggests that subsequently they began to view their own ongoing practice and the concrete incidences it involved in new ways, and share these new observations, 'noticings', with their colleagues, leading to further opportunities for 'noticing' and developing new ideas. Opportunities for these supporting factors were mediated by the intervention programme in an emergent way. They emerged as support for a transformation in the teachers' talk- activity through the teachers' own collaborative and agentic engagement with the intervention. We suggest that intervention programmes also need to consider latent supporting factors that such programmes can offer. Engaging with such latent factors can have long-standing effects on the ways practitioners' lived and envisioned ideologies are shaped.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Yrjö Engeström, Ritva Engeström and Arja Suntio for the opportunity to be involved in this project and feedback on an earlier draft and to all the teachers and the principal involved in this project.

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