

A Case Study on Vocational Teachers' Perceptions on Their Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Teaching

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Abstract : In Finland the transformation from homogenous culture into multicultural one as a result of heavy immigration has been rapid in the recent decades. As multilingualism and multiculturalism are growing features in our society, teachers in all educational levels need to be competent for encounters with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Consequently, also the number of multicultural and multilingual vocational school students has increased which has not been taken into consideration in teacher education enough. To bridge this gap between teachers' competences and the requirements of the contemporary school world, Finnish Ministry of Culture and Education established the DivEd-project. The aim of the project is to prepare all teachers to work in the linguistically and culturally diverse world they live in, to develop and increase culturally sustaining and linguistically responsive pedagogy in Finland, increase awareness among Teacher Educators working with preservice teachers and to increase awareness and provide specific strategies to in-service teachers. The partners in the nationwide project are 6 universities and 2 universities of applied sciences. In this research, the linguistically and culturally sustainable teaching practices developed within the DivEd-project are tested in practice. This research aims to explore vocational teachers' perceptions of these multilingualism and multilingual educational practices. The participants of this study are vocational teachers in of different fields. The data were collected by individual, face-to-face interviews. The data analysis was conducted through content analysis. The findings indicate that the vocational teachers experience that they lack knowledge on linguistically and culturally responsive pedagogy. Moreover, they regard themselves in some extent incompetent in incorporating multilingually and multiculturally sustainable pedagogy in everyday teaching work. Therefore, they feel they need more training pertaining multicultural and multilingual knowledge, competences and suitable pedagogical methods for teaching students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Keywords : multicultural, multilingual, teacher competence, vocational school

Conference Title : ICEFEMS 2021 : International Conference on Educational Foundations and Education in a Multicultural Society

Conference Location : Paris, France

Conference Dates : January 25-26, 2021