

Motivation through activity in a community of learners for vocational orientation

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- Separation of learning and learners from cultural practices → motivational problems
- Pre-vocational secondary education (pvse):
 - 60% of all students aged 12-16 in the Netherlands
 - 4 types: Care & Welfare, Engineering & Technology, Business, Agriculture
 - in between general and vocational education: vocational orientation
 - innovative schools: simulated workplaces



- In a community of learners for vocational orientation the advantages of participating in vocational practices are combined with those of learning in school:
 - Direct contact with vocational practices
 - Opportunities for reflection
- Four parameters for the (re-)design of learning environments:
 - shared learning
 - meaningful learning
 - reflective learning
 - learning for transfer



- Two years of (re)design by teachers and researchers at 2 schools in which we designed, tried out, and evaluated learning environments that foster such a community
- ‘The MADD-lessons’:
 - subject Care & Welfare
 - 4 full days
 - 26 students, 2 teachers Care & Welfare, several employees of institutions for Care & Welfare



Teams of 4-6 students, who:

- chose a volunteer activity
- prepared for the activity, scaffolded by: consulting hours, assignments (essay, pre-visit, plan of action), workshops
- carried out the volunteer activity
- reported their experiences at an evening for parents, classmates and teachers



Research question:

Does, and if so, how and why does student motivation change through activity in a community of learners for vocational orientation?

Does it change?

- The MADD-lessons did foster a learning community for vocational orientation significantly more than a regular series of lessons
- Motivation was raised during the MADD-lessons
- Individual students responded differently to the MADD-days learning environment (Fien's →, and Laura's ↑)



Case study methodology:

- One team: Fien, Laura, Jeanet and Maja
- Video observations, stimulated recall interviews with the girls and their teachers
- Matrix display of:
 - motivation: effort, perspective, appreciation
 - Rogoff's three planes of analysis of sociocultural activity: personal, interpersonal, community



					Motivation scales			
Rogoff's 3 planes of socio- cultural activity		Effort: the effort made by students during the lessons	Perspective: the use of the lessons for students' school and professional career	Appreciation: appreciation of the way the lessons were organized				
	Personal plane: mechanisms that show how individuals change through their involvement in an activity, and become prepared for subsequent involvement in related activities	- choice of volunteer activity and effort made depends on ideas about future work (with/without elderly people)	- working independently towards a team-goal made a student realize the use of planning - working with real demented people and experienced 'colleagues' incites appropriation of things learned earlier on - the presentations led the students to reflect on what they learned and on their ideas for future work					
	Interpersonal plane: processes and systems of involvement between people as they communicate and coordinate efforts while participating in culturally valued activity	- the teacher passed the responsibility for doing well at the institution over to the students, leading to proactive behaviour - the students worked with more enthusiasm when the institution employees and elderly people showed trust in them - the students put a lot of effort in the presentations as they wanted to live up to the expectations of their class-mates and parents						- students showed relief and enthusiasm when they realized they had the liberty to prepare for their volunteer-activity in a way they enjoyed
	Community plane: patterns of active individuals participating with others in community activity with the purpose of the development of mature participation in the activity by less experienced people							- the working conditions restrained employees from giving the students their share in elaborating the autumn activities, resulting in protests against related assignments - students said they appreciated the afternoon as they got the opportunity to really participate

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There was no time for a pre-visit. The institution employees decided to prepare the activity afternoon without the students. So why make a plan of action?!

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The students felt they really got the opportunity to participate in working with the demented people.

Conclusions:

- Motivation can be raised through activities in a community of learners for vocational orientation.
 - Both girls: legitimate peripheral member of the vocational community
 - Fien: purpose and steps of the activity
 - Laura: legitimate member of the learning community
- Motivation may be seen as an outcome of the interplay between characteristics of a student and the learning environment



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Thank you!

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