Abstracts Special Issue Intercultural Education

Complex Instruction

Celine Buchs

Multilingual cooperative activities for sustaining classroom social climate in heterogeneous context

The study (N = 92) piloted an inclusive program taking advantage of linguistic diversity in regular primary classrooms in Geneva (Switzerland) to reinforce classroom social climate. The same three-stages program (activities for opening to others, activities for opening to linguistic diversity, and multilingual cooperative activities) was introduced in three classes, while adapting the content of the activities to different grades (grades 3 to 5). Results indicate that this program protected against the decrease in the feeling of belonging to the class, and in the perception of social relatedness which appeared without the program in three control classes.

***

George C. Bunch

Language matters: Realizing the promise of Complex Instruction for multilingual

Access to core subject-area curriculum for students from immigrant backgrounds who are learning the dominant language of instruction has long been a barrier to equitable education around the world, especially in secondary schools. This article explores the promise of Complex Instruction (CI) to address barriers to access for such multilingual learners, demonstrating what they were able to do with language, literacy, and academic content in CI classrooms in one middle school in California. The article illustrates how the curricular and pedagogical structures of CI classrooms facilitated multilingual learners' academic engagement and opportunities for language development. It also warns that in order to recognize multilingual learners' successes, teachers' conceptions of language and literacy may have to change.

***

Emese K. Nagy

Complex Instruction in Hungary

The primary aim of this study is to show how Complex Instruction (CI) has become a prominent educational approach in Hungary. This paper outlines its brief history, its dissemination facilitated by the University of Miskolc to other parts of the country, and the steps and challenges encountered. It also touches upon the opinions and practices of teachers and students during implementation of CI. The success of the method is undeniable, given that over 200 schools (almost 6% of all schools in Hungary) now integrate CI into their curriculum, due to its beneficial effects such as improving communication, creating a democratic classroom climate, and promoting motivation and academic achievement. The paper concludes with a discussion of challenges and successes in the widespread implementation of CI in Hungary

***

Tatiana Hochgreb-Hägele, Guilherme Luis Desiderio, Agnaldo Arroio, and Andrea Boccia Schmitz

Complex Instruction: developing teachers' professional knowledge and practice in Brazil
'Programa de Especialização Docente Brasil' (PED Brasil) is a learning and professional development program in mathematics or science education for primary or secondary in-service schoolteachers. Designed to be a teacher education program that addresses issues related to educational quality and equity in racially, socially, and academically diverse Brazilian schools, PED Brasil intended to craft a program with a signature pedagogy that could be capable of shaping the ways of thinking and acting in the teaching profession. PED Brasil does it by integrating different dimensions of knowledge and demonstrating various aspects of professional practice, considering the democratic society we aim to build. In this paper, we analyze how PED Brasil has adopted Complex Instruction as its signature pedagogy, by describing the program through the three-dimensional structures described by Shulman (2005).

***

Isabella Pescarmona

Questioning educational contexts, promoting equal actions:

Reflections on some paths of practice and research with Complex Instruction in Italy

Within the framework of comparative education studies, this article discusses the process of borrowing and implementing Complex Instruction (CI) in Europe, focusing on three different multicultural and heterogeneous educational contexts in Italy: five primary schools, a Master academic teaching course, and a first literacy course for migrant adults. The paper explores the potential of CI for intercultural education and active citizenship. It aims to highlight how this cooperative approach can be an opportunity to question the usual school norms and habits and challenge what is taken for granted in the relationship with diversity, by transforming teaching into a creative and emancipatory experience in dialogue with diverse students.

***

Lisa M. Jilk, Jennifer L. Ruef, and Ana Torres

Inclusive Classrooms and Assigning Competence

This article captures a convergence of its authors' life experiences and existent data, made possible by Complex Instruction (CI). There is a pressing need to study and support the foundational practice of assigning competence, which requires that a teacher first recognize students' strengths and publicly name their academic contributions. However, a teacher cannot name what they have not noticed. Collectively, we wondered what we could learn from one teacher's fluid ability to effectively assign competence. We embraced CI principles to co-author our article.

***

Christine Schmalenbach, W.-K. Giera , D. Niesta Kayser and S. Plöger

Implementing CI in Germany – Relevant Principles, Contextual Considerations, and First Steps

The present contribution illuminates the initial developments in the adoption of Complex Instruction in Germany, where the implementation of the approach has just begun. It gives insights into a teacher education project, a theater project, and a planned project at secondary schools.

***

Anthony Muro Villa III and Quentin C. Sedlacek

A Systematic Review of Complex Instruction in the United States

Complex Instruction (CI) is a set of principles and practices for designing and facilitating equitable groupwork. Originally developed to advance racial equity in United States primary schools, the CI pedagogical approach is now used to support students of many ages across many disciplines. We report on a systematic review of CI-focused research in the U.S. up to the year 2021, with a focus on which major components of the CI pedagogical approach (i.e., groupworthy tasks, multiple ability treatments, assignments of competence, group roles, group norms) remain widely recognized and which may have been adapted, attenuated, or abandoned during its implementation. Out of 117 peer-reviewed articles from the U.S., our findings show few research articles attend to all five major components of CI. The one component most prevalent was a groupworthy/complex task (n = 91), the least mentioned was multiple abilities treatment (n = 36), and only 12 articles discussed every major component of CI. The least discussed components of CI were those that attended to status interventions–the issue that initially motivated the development of CI. While the literature indicates the effective implementation of several aspects of CI, the review also suggests implications for future research and teacher education that attend to CI's theoretical foundations.