

# Conditions for academic learning for students receiving special education

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**SUBJECT:** Special education/inclusive education

**RESEARCH QUESTION:** *What are the conditions for academic learning for students receiving special education in years 5-10?*

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Learning is perceived as construction of knowledge both individually and in interaction with others. Learning situations in the classroom can be described and analysed by using the model of the didactic pyramide, a new model (based on the didactic triangle) (Zierer & Seel 2012)

## METHOD

The data material is transcripts of videoobservations from 24 special education and 26 regular education lessons for eight individual students receiving special education. A total of 7028 15-second intervals have been qualitatively coded. The analysis has been hermeneutic, abductive and iterative. These coded intervals have then been analysed quantitatively.

## RESULTS

Conditions for learning for these students seem to be better in special education than in regular education.

Central features in both types of education for these students have been identified. The special education is not so special – with few exeptions, the signature pedagogy (Schulman, 2005) of special and regular education seems almost identical for the same students.

## RELEVANCE

Students receiving special education do not have so positive learning outcomes in school (Knudsmoen, Løken, Nordahl & Overland 2011) and there has therefore been considerable focus on the shortcomings of special education (Nordahl 2018, Barneombudet 2017). Most students with special needs spend time in both regular and special education (Rotatori, Bakken, Burkhardt, Obiakor & Sharma 2014). There has been little focus on what constitutes quality in the *overall* education of these students (Haug 2011).

Our findings suggest that special education have better conditions for academic learning for these students than regular education, a conclusion also drawn by others (Cook & Schirmer 2003). We question whether the negative focus on special education itself is justified. there ought perhaps to be greater focus on the conditions that special education is given, what conditions students receiving special education meet in regular education, and whether the overall education provides the necessary quality.

## LITERATURE

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