Recent and early immigrants’ achievements in mathematics

Abstract for presentation at NoFa5, Helsinki University May 27-29, 2015

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Abstract
Achievement in mathematics, science and language is often used as national indicators and a personal bridge for future opportunities to work and education. One Swedish school law defines a ‘recent immigrant’ as the first four semesters during school years 6-9 of immigrated students. In an ongoing research project, the distribution of students’ different solving strategies in a multilingual classroom is studied through a test. Preliminary results are that students who immigrated in school years 8-9 in many cases show higher mathematical quality than those who immigrated during school years 1-7. This can be interpreted as a partial exclusion from taking a productive part in the mathematics classroom due to being second language learner. This raises questions of extending the definition of recent immigrants to all newly immigrated students disregarding their age and thus allow all newcomers extra support needed to include them in the mathematics classroom.

Keywords: mathematics, recent immigrants, language support, inclusion

Reference