

Public elementary school teachers' positioning in teaching physical education to Japanese language learners

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this study was to describe and explain Japanese elementary teachers' experiences of teaching physical education (PE) to Japanese Language Learner (JLL) children at public schools in Japan.

2. Methods

This study used case study method and an exploratory-descriptive case study research design. Framed in positioning theory, this study focused on Japanese elementary teachers' views about teaching JLL children in PE, as positioned and articulated in their own interpretations. Participants were seven Japanese public elementary teachers who have the experience in teaching PE to JLL children. Data sources were demographic questionnaire online semi-structured interviews, and e-mail follow-up interview. Data were analysed through constant comparative analysis.

3. Findings and Discussion

Four major interrelated and complex themes emerged: (a) *positive influence*, (b) *influence factors of evaluation and assessment in PE*, (c) *transformation of the prejudice in teaching experiences with JLL children*, and (d) *responsibility as an educator for addressing social justice*. The findings indicate that all teachers were reflective practitioners and ascribed their own reflective positions to their sense of advocacy. Furthermore, they were

concerned that they had pedagogical and managerial challenges, uncertainties, and anxieties that exacerbate the difficulties in adjusting to the academic, social, and cultural backgrounds of JLL children. Although Japanese public elementary teachers expressed the view that there were challenges in teaching JLL children, they believed that they should implement effective pedagogical practices (inclusive PE), address social justice and diversity issues of JLL children, and develop a positive learning atmosphere for students.

4. Conclusion

This study suggested that PE has the potential to enrich teachers' and children's cultural awareness and mutual understanding for addressing social justice and diversity. We need to consider how Japanese elementary teacher education programs should be delivered, and offer professional development opportunities that can help teachers overcome challenging instructional situations by observing teaching practices and experiences in teaching PE including JLL children.

5. References

- 1) MEXT. (2011). 外国人児童生徒教育の充実方策について (報告)
- 2) Sato, T., Walton-Fisette, J., & Kim, I. (2019). Elementary physical educators' positioning in teaching English language learners. *European Physical*