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Author

SILEN, Charlotte

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The tutor's approach in base groups (PBL)

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Abstract

In this article, the concept of approach related to tutor functioning in problem-based learning (PBL) is explored and the significance of a phenomenological perspective of the body in relation to learning and tutoring is investigated. The aim has been to understand the concept of approach in a context where the individual, thoughts, emotions and body are regarded as a whole in a learning process ? a non-dualistic entity. The analysis is primarily based on Merleau-Ponty (Phenomenologie de la Perception. Editions Gallimard, Kroppens fenomenologi. Oslo: Pax) and Leder (1990). The outcome of the analysis is related to the pedagogical view that characterises PBL and tutoring in base groups. An earlier study (Silén Licentiate thesis n 3/1996. Linköping University) about tutor functioning in PBL was the starting-point for the exploration. On the basis of the phenomenological analysis, I assign approach the following meaning: - the total message expressed by ?the lived body? in interaction with its life world. The analysis indicates that the tutor?s approach influences group work in different ways. One of phenomenology?s most important messages implies that the tutor?s approach should be characterised by ?presence?, attention on the students and what is happening in

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the group, and not on the tutor's own actions and thoughts. The ability to be 'present' is possible when the knowing is rooted in the lived body. This conclusion brings to the fore the necessity of the tutor's own understanding of the ideas of PBL and the underlying theories, and also highlights the importance of regarding tutor training as an ongoing learning process. The focus of the exploration has been on the tutor in PBL. In principle, I would argue that a corresponding line of reasoning is applicable to tutoring and learning in general. (HRK / Abstract übernommen), Silén, Charlotte,

E-Mail: chasi@imv.liu.se