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Educational Research: Boundaries, Breaches and Bridges

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NETWORK 1

ADULT LEARNING - at work, in education and everyday life
Higher VET in Sweden - A policy of market driven education and employability

Köpsén, Johanna
Linköping University

Higher VET in Sweden
- A policy of market driven education and employability

The labour markets around the world are changing and political leaders of many countries find themselves facing high unemployment rates. In many cases their answer is “Give the workers new skills!” In Sweden, the Higher Vocational Education (the HVE) allow adult students to further or change their careers. The HVE-programmes can only be given if there is an explicit demand from employers pledging their needs and involvement.

The HVE has an increasing political importance and growing share in the Swedish educational system. It is getting bigger, and is used extensively as a good example. Politicians and social commentators are using the good results regarding employment rate of students who graduated (ca 90 %) as a justification for designing other forms of education and labour market interventions after the HVE-model. Studies done, examining the HVE, are less than a handful and all commissioned work from the responsible national agency. There is a gap in the research field and a need to study this new form of education operating on different logics than the rest of the Swedish educational system.

Within the HVE there is a wide range of programmes in many different fields of study, all at non-academic tertiary level. What programmes are offered in the HVE varies over time since it is there to meet the needs of a changing labour market. Students can graduate with skills appropriate for working as for instance train drivers, technicians, health administrators, veterinary assistants, pharmacy technicians or managers in hotels and restaurants.

This paper presents early results from a doctoral study contributing to the exploration of VET and higher VET through examining the phenomenon of relations between policy and it’s realisation in the HVE. As a first part of a two-part study, policy documents are analysed using curriculum theory and the concepts developed in the work of Basil Bernstein, e.g. classification, framing, code as well as horizontal and vertical discourses. The analysed material consists of documents created in policy processes, the law; ‘the act of Higher Vocational Education’ and documents of regulation regarding the HVE. This material is complemented by instructional material presented by the responsible national agency aimed at the education providers running HVE-programmes.

The results display the governing of a new type of education, essentially different to what constitutes the traditional emancipatory Swedish ideal of adult education.

**Keywords**: Higher VET, policy, discourse, curriculum, employability
Narratives of a folk high school year

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Introduction
The folk high school movement has its roots in the 19th century people movements of Scandinavia. The Danish philosopher and theologian N.F.S. Grundtvig had the vision of a people’s high school where the pedagogy would not be "book learning" (Grundtvig, 2011:188) but where the students would attain a "fitness for life" (65). For Grundtvig true learning encompasses all of life and in contrast to the 19th century Latin based educational system of Denmark he paints the vision of a "school for life". These exam free pedagogical institutions should focus on the formation of the whole person and serve as basis for self-understanding. He states (Korsgaard, 2011:21):

"Truly to understand oneself is the great goal of human reason, the apex of human education."

The folk high school movements in the Nordic countries vary both when it comes to historical development and ideological influences. This is evident in the present role of the folk high schools in the national educational systems (Gustavsson, 2013). Common for the Nordic movement is the school’s history as an alternative pedagogical institution with a design for learning that goes beyond that of the public-school system (Dahlstedt & Nordvall, 2011:245).

The Norwegian folk high school movement
The inheritance as an alternative pedagogical institution can be seen in the present day folk high school movement. In Norway, the internet-site, folkehogskole.no, is a predominant information source for future students interested in the national folk high schools. Here the schools describe themselves as ‘a supplement to the regular education system, with the aim of nurturing "the whole person".’ The system of a school free from formal exams and degrees are presented as giving an opportunity to focus on "a subject you will make use of every day for the rest of your life: yourself."

The empirical study of this article builds on a material consisting of 60 reflective texts written by students in the end of their year as folk high school students. The texts are analysed using a strand of narrative theory with a focus on identity formation. By using narrative theory, the presented study seeks to relate how, and to what degree the students describe their own identity formation through their year as folk high school students.

Referred literature
Changing lifestyles: Exploring the pedagogies of popular culture

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Research topic/aim: Drawing upon discourses on lifelong learning, it could be argued that pedagogical interactions emerge across a wide range of everyday practices. Taking notice of people’s engagement with the media and popular culture, it has convincingly been claimed that it is probably naïve to ignore the influence such sites and images may have on adult learning (e.g. Brookfield, 1986; Jarvis, 2016; Maudlin & Sandlin, 2015; Savage, 2010; Wright, 2010). A quick look at contemporary television confirms how the media also enacts a pedagogical role, for instance, by making various lifestyle topics relevant, thus targeting adults as pedagogical subjects by addressing, assisting and promoting change. For adults to adopt, cultivate and sustain new ways of life is not done ‘blindly’, there are always social norms and cultural values at play defining what is considered to be adequate ways of knowing, doing and being.

In the present study, popular culture is located within educational research to further explore what happens within such sites that may be associated with pedagogy in a wide sense. A key issue within lifestyle television is to provide feedback, give instructional advice and claim skill adjustment, seemingly assumed to improve individual performances. Taking that as a point of departure, how is lifestyle change displayed and enacted? By highlighting the communicative details in a piece of popular culture, the aim is to address representations of teaching and learning beyond institutional contexts.

Theoretical framework: Discourse analytical approaches give primacy to social interaction and communication (e.g. Sarangi, 2003, 2010). Such stances accentuate the interactive work undertaken by interlocutors in and through talk as they engage in co-constructive and meaning-making activities (Goffman, 1974/1986, 1981).

Methodological design: To further explore how lifestyle change may unfold in popular culture, I have investigated lifestyle television with a particular interest in talk sequences seemingly designed to encourage and enrich learning experiences (e.g. Aarsand, 2011). In the present study, the Swedish television show entitled 'Faith, hope and love' has been selected. The empirical material consists of talk sequences taken from seven episodes, where the host of the show and each participant interact face to face. The sequences have been transcribed and analysed in detail to capture the dynamics in how the interlocutors negotiate and establish an understanding of what is going on.

Expected conclusions/findings: The analysis indicates some regularities where distinct modes of talk reoccur. On the one hand, the disclosure of feelings is made relevant, which creates a space for sharing, empathy and confirmation. On the other hand, the ambition to find a focal point to work upon for better performances is demonstrated, which rather creates a space for questioning and challenge.

Relevance to Nordic educational research: A growing research interest in the media and popular culture may be noted, and particularly how such sites may act pedagogically. To examine and analyse various settings as representations of teaching and learning, in their own right, is a main concern. Such approaches may contribute to our (re-)thinking of the pedagogies of popular culture and everyday life.
Several theorists has developed models to illustrate the processes of adult learning and professional development (e.g. Illeris, Argyris, Engeström; Wahlgren & Aarkorg, Kolb and Wenger). Models can sometimes be criticized for reducing reality and for lacking details, but they can also serve the purpose of defining a framework for analysis and understanding of practice and thus serve as useful tool in professional development.

Some of the existing models are developed in relation to specific contexts and display different emphasis on the adult employee, the organization, its surroundings as well as other contextual factors. Our concern is adult vocational teachers attending a pedagogical course and teaching at vocational colleges. The aim of the paper is to discuss different models and develop a model concerning teachers at vocational colleges based on empirical data in a specific context, vocational teacher-training course in Denmark. By offering a basis and concepts for analysis of practice such model is meant to support the development of vocational teachers’ professionalism at courses and in organizational contexts in general.

The theoretical frameworks is based on Bourdieu’s sociological theory and the term habitus (Bourdieu, 1996). This is supplemented with Bernstein’s sociological theory and his concepts of pedagogic devise and recontextualising (Bernstein, 2000) and approaches to professionalism including professional identity (Heggen, 2008). To connect the three factors - the vocational teacher, the course and the vocational college that the teachers are teaching at - the term transition is chosen (Heggen, Smeby, & Vägen, 2015).

The methodological design is based on analyses of data from an empirical study including 20 teachers employed on four vocational colleges. We have earlier made analyses of the data and published it but in this paper the theoretical framework is linked to create a generic model.

The expectation is that the model can be developed and can support the adult, adult teachers and vocational colleges to support the development of professionalism.

The gap between formal education and practice in a workplace is discussed in Nordic educational research and a model based on empirical data and combining sociological theories and approaches might contribute to the discussion.

References
Developing practical assessment methods for Entrepreneurship Education

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The importance of entrepreneurship education (EE) has been acknowledged as a relevant part of modern education. A sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (entrepreneurship competence) is seen as a competence necessary for a knowledge-based society. Assessment in EE is a challenging area of work, involving skills and real world connections that are not easily evaluated. Traditional assessment of student learning has focused on hard, measurable and comparable outcomes, leaving out contextualized learning that suits entrepreneurial education. Therefore teachers need support with their practice in EE assessment.

PEAT-EU (Practical Entrepreneurial Assessment Tool for Europe) is a project built on partnership of six partners in four countries, about developing practical assessment methods for Entrepreneurship Education (EE). Within each partner group are leading experts in EE and creativity in education. This paper describes the process and the outcomes of the project.

The purpose of the PEAT-EU project is to develop a model of progression for assessment in Entrepreneurship Education across school levels. The goal is to produce practical assessment methods help to enhance students’ learning in EE and support the quality of education and outcomes in European contexts.

Entrepreneurial skills and competences are important not only to employment, but also to active citizenship and life in a fast-changing world. Enhancing this area of learning is crucial for modern education and is a priority in European policy. Entrepreneurship refers to when you are competent to act upon opportunities and ideas and transform them into value for others and the value created can be financial, cultural, or social.

EE prepares students to obtain democratic skills and educates people for life promoting initiative, to take responsibility and analyze situations, developing skills and competences like creativity, initiative, tenacity, and teamwork that are important for citizens of Europe and of the world. The basic training and emphasis in EE promotes creativity and action (entrepreneurship). Through evaluation methods that are focused on competences, learners can be supported to understand their own potential for creative thought and action, and those teaching and facilitating can maximize their own effectiveness in aiding learner progress and thus provide a picture of impact.

This paper builds on data gathered from the research project: project application, online communication between partners, e-mail communication, minutes from project meetings and developing ideas and work sent between partners and hosted online. The analysis of the data produced a description of the process and the emerging outcomes.

The findings show a participatory process where all partners contributed to the gathering of relevant knowledge and the development of assessment methods. The outcomes show practical and theoretical tools for understanding the complexities of assessing various entrepreneurship competences. The tools for practice include methods, tools and examples of their use in practice. Furthermore an accumulation model is emerging, for understanding the potentials and progression of different assessment approaches on different levels of sophistication of use.

Quality assessment methods can inform not just learners and teachers but also administrators, policy makers and society including parents and work-life in Nordic and other European countries.
Vitalizing and visualizing a together-becoming between bodies and wool

Jamouchi, Samira
Oslo and Akershus University College

The exploration of students’ self-awareness and subjective development are topics the Ministry of education in Norway (2017: 19) urges us to study through more empirical research and experimental studies in the field of teacher education. As visual artist, teacher educator and researcher I wish to explore the possibilities of agency (teachers, students and objects/materials as participative transformable subjects) that teaching acts, inspired by performance art, would allow to emerge.

With this paper, I articulate this exploration by using transformative approaches to plastic (flexible and malleable) objects and martials. I focus on the physical, visual, tactile, sonore and olfactive approach to the natural material wool during its metamorphosis under a felting process. The strictly technical aspect, to be understood as mechanical, is relegated to the background of the teaching and learning acts. While the ongoing process, the experience, is placed on the foreground. For Malcolm Ross (1978) student’s experience of and with the material provide an impulse, essential for a creative process. For John Dewey (1987) the experience is a central notion when working with the subject of arts and craft in schools. Education that affects student’s lives and which puts the aesthetic and emotional development in the front, for students to develop and find themselves, is possible when supervised by an educator who not only disseminates knowledge with facts (Eyries, 2012 and Angelo 2013).

In French, as well as in English, the word experience means both 'experience' and 'experiment'. Experimenting is to try out new approaches, methods, techniques and combinations, 'Without goal or end' (Deleuze & Guattari 1983: 371, here in Parr, 2010). Experience and experimentation are linked to open processes and are inseparable from discovery. A research design that emphasis an explorative approach to materials and allow creative experimentation is needed to address this project.

Barad (2007) introduced the concept of intra-action, describing the phenomenon as a relationship that emerges between two entities from within relationship (not prior or outside it). Lenz Taguchi (2010) brings this concept of intra-action, and affect, further to the realm of education, especially when working with pedagogical documentation and how different materials can be understood as active and performative agent.

I use arts-based research to approach this entangled phenomenon of non-woven textile undergoing a transformation in our hand. I find the new-materialism theoretical framework relevant to address, resonate and diffract on this investigation. My assumption is that an intra-active experience with materials can lead our students to self-awareness and subjective development.

References
An arts-based research approach to transcending boundaries

Omholt, Knut
Norwegian University of Life Sciences

The topic of this paper is how to develop and apply an arts-based research approach to transcend established notions within educational research. I take as my point of departure the fairy tale of Briar Rose. We look at its main event, the king’s rigid clinging to his twelve golden plates and subsequent failure to include the thirteenth fairy in his party, as an image of a community where one holds on to well-known beliefs and leaves others out. The grounds for an arts-based research approach are the possibilities it offers in accessing and expressing assumptions that are outside the reach of prosaic verbal language. The aim is to come up with a structure for use in workshops that makes it possible to probe into challenges of redefining boundaries.

The theoretical framework starts with the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung’s view of fairy tales as renderings in symbolic language of processes going on in the psyche. Taking into account the contexts of groups, organizations and cultures, I bring in Dialogical Self Theory created by the Dutch psychologist Hubert Herman. According to this theory the self is made up of a multiplicity of positions that the I can move in and out of according to the social circumstances. Through an elaboration of a tale one can get to know different positions by identifying in turn with each figure and then transferring the experiences to real life situations.

My methodological design in turning the fairy tale into a research method consisted of a self study. I kept a reflective journal where I recorded both artistic and conceptual expressions as I proceeded. To deepen the meaning of the fairy tale in connection to my work as a teacher educator and researcher I drew on interpretations of the tale, studies of relevant art works and psychology literature. Eventually, I engaged myself in possible ways of carrying through the individual steps in the structure inspired by principles from drama education and storytelling. I presented the structure as a workshop at the 14th European Arts Therapies Conference – ‘Traditions in Transition’ – in Krakow September 2017. After that I have revised it in order to make it suitable for the exploration of transitions in similar fields.

At the conference I will present the line of action I have arrived at with its overall design, steps and exercises. This will include the making of potent symbols, the bridge into imagination and the bridge out towards reflection, and the choice of exercises in each step. I will also convey general principles connected to deducing a research method from a fairy tale.

The relevance of the paper for Nordic educational research is that it spells out an approach within the theme of the conference. This is a research method as well as a stimulation of the participants’ awareness. The structure enables not only data collection, but also creation of data, and it provides the beginning of an analysis and provides forms of presentation for the findings.
Visuality as Scientific Knowledge – Transformative Learning in Visual Arts Education

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University of Gothenburg

Research topic/aim: One of the topics of the conference is the question how boundaries are transcended and (re)defined in the educational sciences? In the school subject visual arts the scientific field consists of a wide range constituting the knowledge field visual culture. The social development globally is characterized by a visual context within an increasing information and media flow. Thus, school has a great responsibility to integrate different ways of shaping knowledge in education as children and young people need to learn how to analyze and reflect on the societal changes and to develop an understanding of the contemporary in relation to the historical. In the Swedish curricula the ability to understand and interpret images (visual literacy), communicate with and produce images are highlighted (Lgr11). In today’s society with a digital domination a wider range of methods and media are needed for visual expression, which also places new challenges on the subject visual art in schools (Marner & Örtegren 2014).

Theoretical framework: Visual arts as a subject of knowledge includes learning (pedagogy and didactics) as well as visual art in the context of the expanded concept of visual culture (Mirzoeff, 2003). Visual social analysis and the use of visual research methods have gained an increasing importance in various fields of science as a cross-disciplinary field of knowledge (Rose, 2012). Visual literacy or visual competence include meaning-making from visual information (Lindgren 2008). Images can also form a starting point in other areas of knowledge but also be used to create meaning in their own power. The field is also influenced by intersectional and post-modern and post-human perspectives (Sturken & Cartwright 2013; Barad 2014).

Methodological design: The presentation is based on observations, textual and visual field notes from research and field studies made at various compulsory schools in Sweden and the Nordic countries, Faeroe Islands, Finland, Greenland and Sweden in visual arts educational settings during years 2013-2016.

Expected conclusions/findings: A recurring challenge in visual art education is the challenge of the subject’s tacit dimensions, dominance of chirografic production and lack of image analysis. The national evaluations in Sweden have pointed at the importance of working with analysis, development of visual literacy and meaning-making (NU03, NÄU2013). The relation to materiality and the subject’s media-specific and media-neutral aspects are a current challenge that triggers a need for new ways of analysis in the field (Marner & Örtegren 2013).

Relevance to Nordic educational research: Visual arts education in the Nordic countries is part of the visual culture field, but the teaching practice is operationalized differently and focuses different aspects of the theoretical framework (Lindström 2009; Illeris, Göthlund & Thrane 2015). The presentation will include examples of transformative learning and ways of interpretations (Mezirow 1997: Karlsson Häikiö 2017) for meaning-making in visual arts in different educational settings as well as a problematization on challenges in teaching the subject.
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Sloyd Education er et fagområde som er repræsenteret i de nordiske lande. Forsknings- og udviklings samarbejdet SELAS, Sloyd Education Learning and Sustainability er et netværk under NordFo, der vil undersøge og beskrive, hvordan bæredygtighed i relation til Sloyd Education formidles i skole, uddannelse og iblandt udøvere udenfor en institutionel ramme i de nordiske lande. Gennem indsamling af kvalitative interview af fokusgrupper og enkeltpersoner vil forskere tilknyttet SELAS kortlægge og udvikle en fælles forståelse af bæredygtighed indenfor nordisk Sloyd Education både indenfor skole og uddannelser, samt udøvende i det uformelle rum.

Bæredygtighed er et relativt nyt begreb i uddannelsernes curriculum og dette projekt er knyttet til FN’s 17 verdensmål, specielt med tanke på blandt andet bæredygtig udvikling og en bæredygtig livsstil, menneskerettigheder, ligestilling mellem kønnene, globalt borgerskab og anerkendelse af kulturel mangfoldighed og af kulturens bidrag til en bæredygtig udvikling. Det første skridt i forskningsprojektet er at dokumentere, gennem curriculum og interviews af undervisere, studerende og andre udøvere, hvordan bæredygtighed forstås på forskellige uddannelsesniveauer i de forskellige nordiske lande. Sloyd Science og sociokulturel teori danner grundlaget for forskningen. Forskerne dokumentere, analyserer og deler, hvordan bæredygtighed er et element i undervisningen i Sloyd Education i de nordiske lande. Forskerne afsøger om der findes et fælles mål som kan videns- og erfaringsdeles. Forskerne forventer at forskning og udvikling indenfor Sloyd Education får tilført bæredygtighed som værdi gennem etisk, social, miljø, kulturelt og økonomisk ansvarlighed.

Forskningsprojektet skal danne et fælles nordisk grundlag igennem at synliggøre og formidle menneskers færdigheder og kundskaber i et globalt perspektiv.
Video Art as a source of learning, interaction and creativity in the classroom

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Our submission is based on a video art project, performed by teaching students at the Oslo and Akershus University College. The students have chosen Music, Arts and Crafts as a specialist subject, and were given the task of creating video art in groups, as a way to learn about learning, interaction and creativity in the classroom. We illustrates how the professional practitioner can trig good skills and creativity through an expanded fellowship communit; in this case music and arts and crafts, as well as the use of digital tools. It refers to Art based research, which is explained and exemplified through a research project conducted with students.

This abstract explore how boundaries between knowledge fields and actors are challenged through videoart as a source of learning. Our research on Videoart, is a resource and challenge the traditional organization of the educational sciences in the wake of interdisciplinary research and user involvemen. Much of the success of Norwegian schools in measured through tests and statistics. Video art engages the pupils and brings them together in groups, where they must use their own creative abilities. They can tell valuable stories by using digital tools, video techniques and music, which are important factor in the everyday lives of many youths.

The method is based on Arts Based Research (ABR), which stands in sharp contrast to the school system’s continuous assessment of knowledge. The core of ABR is about spending time on the processes themselves, and to “see more, hear more, feel more” – over and over again (Bresler, 2006). Creativity is clearly anchored in the Norwegian Educational Act, which corroborates that the pupils “shall have the opportunity to be creative, committed and inquisitive” (§1-1).

Creative artistic experiences contain non-verbal means of expression, such as inner images, thoughts and emotions. The art can allow people to achieve a deeper understanding, and to immerse themselves completely in the creative process (Knowles & Cole 2008, p. 354). Sennett (2008) explains that creativity is about the connection between the hand and the head. It is shown in different disciplines, from carpentry and cooking, to design and playing the guitar. This is related to our need to express ourselves through creating, and all these skills can be awakened or discouraged to mature (Sennett, 2009, p. 9).

Based on our experiences with this project, we are of the opinion that teachers must learn more about creates excitement and the effect of Arts Based Research as a method, both in youth caring practices and culturally relevant care. “What the arts can teach education is that intrinsic satisfaction matter.” (Eisner, 2002, p. 202).

The topics that the students worked with were;
- Transformation
- Hiking/ path
- Contrasts

Literature
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Implementation of innovation in teaching textile

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Implementation of innovation in teaching textile

The development project "Innovation in Textile" is implemented according to a new course in Textile Education at the University of Iceland and learning outcomes for textiles in the primary school curriculum (2013) where emphasis is placed on working with ideas, design and innovation are noted. The project was a collaboration between a lecturer in textile and a textile teacher at an elementary school.

The aim was to implement innovation in textile education at both school levels at the same time and "build a bridge" between study and work area and increase teacher training experience, but the foundation for the project is also that the Department of Teacher Education offers too little practice in the textile education in elementary school.

The main objective of the project was to use different teaching methods and work with new and varied textile techniques in the innovation process: need-solution product, and utilize recycled textile to make clothing and other textile products. The goal was also to design a framework for the work process behind ideas, design and innovation. The emphasis was therefore placed on the work process itself and not only on the final product.

While the textile teacher trainees were working on their own innovation product they were also instructing the students at the elementary school (14-15 years old) in their innovation work. They also cooperated with the students and organized a joint final exhibition. The goal was to break down traditions, make the work process, inclusive final products, visible and at the same time "build a bridge" between student on both school level. Teacher trainees set up sixteen stations where students could learn different textiles techniques where they had the opportunity to search for different interests and strengths. The trainees were also responsible for group and team work among students, helping them identify new needs, to experiment, develop ideas, and choose textile metods. Such a working arrangement made it visible how ideas can evolve with the help of others and that they often can accomplish more together than apart.

The project was challenging for all participants, who worked with new ideas and materials in searching for new need and product. Teacher trainees who were responsible for an important part of the teaching also had the opportunity to compare their own experiences with the students' experiences, and the opportunity to see that the students' final product had the same values as their own. The project has created a new visible framework and a new stimulus in the selection of projects, and receiving good attention at both school levels.

The purpose of the lecture is to present the project's prerequisites, the cooperation between different levels of education and the methods used to achieve the goals set at the beginning.
NETWORK 3

EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH
Early language stimulation of toddlers (1-3 years) aims to promote literacy in 1st and 2nd grade

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*Intempo*

Around 20% of Norwegian pupils read at the lower levels when graduating. (1) Neuropsychology recommends early stimulation. (2) This pilot study investigates the first experiences from a systematic and early stimulation of toddlers in a community context, aimed at promoting literacy in 1st and 2nd grade. The early language stimulation was a supplement to ordinary daycare.

A systematic multi-modal and multisensory language-training program, the Bravo-game(3), was implemented. It was directed towards all toddlers in four communities for five years. It consisted of 4 x12 weeks of 10-15 minute sessions daily where the children were presented with a variety of motor skills, 550 concepts and the alphabet in written form, an illustrative picture, and tasting/smelling/touching the item/concept. Preschool teachers received some training. A three-question Teacher Questionnaire was administered to 9 schools and the teachers of 149 pupils in 1st and 2nd grade.

An average of 7% of Norwegian 1st graders are phonetic readers, while 75% read at the middle and higher levels in 5th grade. Results from the teacher questionnaire showed that an average of 49% of the children in 1st grade and 90% of the pupils in 2nd grade were phonetic readers. 17% were multilingual pupils.

In conclusion, compared to the national average, a larger group of pupils were phonetic readers in 1st and 2nd grade after receiving systematic early language stimulation in a community context. However, some carefullness in the interpretation of the results is warranted because this study did not have a control group.

References

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A dialogic atmosphere for language development in multicultural Early Childhood Education and Care

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The aim of this paper is to investigate how practitioners work with children’s language development as part of the learning environment in multicultural ECEC. Norwegian politicians have given ECEC great importance working with children’s language development. Yet, political guidelines seem to draw on theories that consider language learning isolated from children’s play, interactions and daily life, favouring a monolingual approach (Bleses 2010, Melby-Lervåg 2011). In my research, I am investigating pedagogical atmospheres that reveal within Norwegian multicultural preschool, and I analyse children’s language development as a multilingual part of daily life’s interactions and play. I question whether a monolingual approach to language development limit multilingual children’s possibilities for learning. Can multiple perspectives on language and multilingualism challenge a traditional monolingual approach to children’s language development?

Theoretical framework
According to Mikhail Bakhtin (1986), we need a dialogic approach to recognise the multiplicity of perspectives and voices that participate in people’s language use and development. A dialogical understanding of language constantly engages with other voices that lead to new information and changes. I see Bakhtin’s theories in relation to Hannah Arendt’s theories concerning ‘public space’ as a place where people ‘become visible to one another, and the world becomes visible to us’ (Arendt 1958/98). Following Arendt, I argue that the concept of ‘public space’ when aligned with multiculturalism and multilingualism, offers new openings for a dialogic atmosphere for language learning in ECEC.

Methodological approaches
This paper draws on a PHD project, investigating learning environments in multicultural ECEC in Norway. My analyses draw on focus group interviews with students studying ECEC and participant observations in multicultural ECEC. Focus groups has allowed me, as the researcher, to generate rich, complex and nuanced information from participants who see the world from different angles (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2013:40). I have done participant observations in three multicultural preschools over six months. MacNaughton and Smith (2005:113) claim that connecting with the field of ECEC, you can seek multiple perspectives and destabilize what is seen as ‘truth’. Participant observations has brought me closer to the field and revealed new perspectives.

Expected conclusions and findings
My research indicate that even though a monolingual model of language development dominates the field, children in multicultural ECEC tend to develop language skills as part of a multilingual learning environment. When children are given the opportunity to use all their language features including spoken and body language, they tend to participate more actively in the activities of ECEC.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Nordic researchers are implying that a monolingual approach is dominating learning environments in ECEC, favouring children who speak majority language (Palludan 2005, Bundgaard and Gulløv 2008, Zachrisen 2015). Johansson (2008) describes how pedagogical atmosphere affect the children’s learning environment. My research is drawing on these findings, investigating how to develop a dynamic learning environment, regardless of cultural and language backgrounds.
Harnessing children’s epistemic curiosity and its associations to executive functioning

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Research topic/aim
Children’s curiosity about knowledge and facts (epistemic curiosity) has an important role in learning and memory formation. The Swedish preschool curriculum also points out curiosity as foundational for learning activities. But how is epistemic curiosity among preschool children associated to other cognitive abilities important for learning? Can different pedagogical approaches in differing degrees harness children’s epistemic curiosity?

The aim of this study is to investigate how epistemic curiosity associates to executive functioning (EF) and how levels of epistemic curiosity influence EF measures from different pedagogical approaches. Furthermore background factors of SES and gender will be explored.

Theoretical framework
The main theoretical framework consists of the interest-deprivation (I/D) model (Litman and Jimerson 2004), which has been supported by studies differing in culture, age, educational level, and gender. The I/D-model posits that epistemic curiosity (EC) manifests in both experience and expression in two differing yet correlated ways:
1.) Interest EC (I-EC) driven by motivations of interest and expectancy of lustful, positive feelings when openly searching for, finding and learning new information.
2.) Deprivation EC (D-EC) driven by need-like motivations to reduce frustration, dissatisfaction and tension when experiencing deprivation of knowledge associated with well defined, specific knowledge gaps.

The I/D model theorizes that the mildly aversive “need like” D-EC state (in comparison to the more positive, open I-EC state) places higher demand on self-regulation (SR) in order to direct, evaluate and persist in information searches to solve specific knowledge gaps. This has furthermore been supported by studies (Piotrowski et al. 2014; Lauriola et al. 2015). Since EF serves as the basis for self-regulation skills, this highlights the potential link between EF and D-EC.

Furthermore connections between SES, EC could exist if drawing from research showing that stresses of low SES could negatively impact certain developments of cognitive functioning, including EF, but studies in this area are still in scarcity.

Methodological design
The study takes part of a larger randomized controlled trial involving 423 children in 29 preschools in the ages 4-5 in Sweden, in which pedagogical interventions were investigated for effects on EF, mathematical abilities, as well as socioemotional and language abilities. The RCT trial also investigates SES and mental health as confounding variables.
Measurements of I- and D-EC were conducted using parent administered scales (swedish version of I/D young children’s scale, translated and validated beforehand of the study). The sample size of the study was 264 children. The data will be statistically analyzed.

Expected findings
It is hypothesized that D-EC, but not I-EC will be associated to higher executive functioning.
More exploratory questions address if mediating effects of differing EC levels exists on the outcome measures from different pedagogical interventions.
Relevance to Nordic educational research
The study might provide additional understanding concerning the design of pedagogical interventions in preschool settings as well as to bring additional information on how different pedagogical interventions suits children with differing EC levels.
Parents’ and kindergarten principals’ opinions of “good” kindergartens in Norway

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Research topic/Aim
My project is part of a large study, “Better Provision for Norway’s children in ECEC”, which focus on effectiveness and quality in early education and care. My focus is on parents’ perspectives of early childhood education and care. The aim is to explore what parents’ value as qualities in kindergarten, and further more how parents may participate and collaborate in “good” kindergartens. In the first part of my study, I also investigate kindergarten principals’ opinions of a good kindergarten, to search for similar or different conceptions of what may be “good”. This abstract is a presentation of the first part of my project where I explore and discuss data-material from two surveys, one with parents and one with kindergarten principals. The research-question I investigate is:

What do parents and kindergarten principals value as a good kindergarten?

Theoretical framework. Exploring the values of qualities is a complex issue. Concepts of quality may be expressed differently, depending on various positions and dimensions, and from what is meaningful for the individual subjects (Katz 1993, Brownlee Berthelsen & Segaran 2009, Wittek & Kvernbeck 2011, Eide, Dahl, Winger & Wolf 2016, Gulbrandsen & Eliassen 2013, Moss 2016,). Katz describe four different positions to enlighten quality, Top-down-, Bottom-up-, Inside-, and Outside-in perspective. In this presentation, parents’ values from an Outside-in perspective, will be analysed and discussed together with kindergarten principals’ values from an Inside-out position.

Methodology / research design
The research-project is designed with a mixed-methods approach (Creswell 2014), where the first sequence is to explore quantitative material from the two surveys, which will be focus in this presentation. The use of Likert’s scale in the surveys, with five different answer alternatives, give more range and complexity in possible answers (Gobo 2014, p.16). However, with surveys parents and kindergarten principals answers are still fixed within prescribed response alternatives. Subsequently with an additional purpose (Brannen 2005), my research will continue as an explanatory sequential mixed method (Brannen 2005, Creswell 2014). This will involve qualitative methods comprised of various forms of interviews with parents to elaborate and explain results from quantitative studies (Kvale 1996, Kvale 2006, Silverman 2006, Krueger 2009, Kamberelis 2013, Nielsen & Lyhne 2016).

Expected conclusions / findings
This initial part of my research has revealed some patterns concerning parents’ and kindergarten principals’ values of what a “good kindergarten” may be. It seems that parents and kindergarten principals to a large extend agree about values of a “good kindergarten”. However, there are some variation between the groups when it comes to attitudes to [formal literacy and numeracy learning] if a “good kindergarten” is a place where “staff work with letters and numbers with the children in kindergarten”.

Relevance for Nordic educational research. This study provides insights into parents’ opinions and values of what are “good kindergartens”, and points to issues related to parents expectations of the pedagogical work in kindergarten. These findings are of interest to investigate further and to discuss in relation to the Nordic social pedagogical tradition.
Revitalizing local communities through ‘Kamishibai’ with Nordic Picture Books

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In Japan Kamishibai, which is a Japanese traditional form of picture-story shows and storytelling, was invented in the Edo era in the 1890s. After that Kamishibai had been gradually popular for children and parents. In the 1950s Japanese public libraries started collecting Kamishibai and storytelling to children and Kamishibai has become a type of Japanese cultural media. Recently the International Library of Children’s Literature (National Library) (2006) focused on Nordic picture books in Japan, since Nordic picture books have several unique characteristics such as sounds and stories born among green nature, pure winds from beautiful fjords and affluent folklore. Furthermore, after the Nordic picture books came across Kamishibai in Japanese public libraries, the programs and activities that librarians created have revitalized Japanese local communities, as Nordic stories have many similarities with Japanese heros and heroins in picture books, such as the similarity between Trolls and Onis (Japanese trolls) (Takahashi 2002). The purpose of this research is to precisely illustrate libraries’ programs in their local communities by using (1) Kamishibai that contains Nordic picture books’ stories and (2) related activities. The authors took case analysis by document research throughout Japan. The cases are International Library of Children’s Literature (National Library), Sendai City Public Library, Sakura City Public Library, Zushi City Public Library, and Nagasaki City Public Library. The libraries created Kamishibai and their own programs based on Nordic picture books. For instance, Sakura City Public Library not only provided Kamishibai and storytelling with Nordic picture books, but also created puppet shows based on Nordic picture books. They sometimes offered their programs in local schools as well. The other cases also have the same kind of programs with schools and local stakeholders. In addition, International Library of Children’s Literature (National Library) had an exhibition of Nordic picture books that has more than four hundred histories. The National library regularly provides Nordic storytelling for children and parents. In fact, when librarians provide other cultures’ stories to Japanese people, Japanese citizens can take note of and learn about other cultures, and at the same time Nordic countries people, especially children, in Japan also can learn their own culture. Furthermore, Nordic parents can have opportunities to join Japanese communities through public libraries. In conclusion, Kamishibai and Nordic picture books revitalizing the bond of local communities and affluent ethnicities. The authors conclude that Kamishibai and picture books became strong tools to attract children and parents, and should be highlighted in educational and social programs in public libraries and educational institutions.

\textbf{Reference}

Preschool teacher’s teaching of mathematics, science and technology

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Research topic
Since the pre-school curriculum has been revised and implemented in the Swedish pre-schools, there has been an interest in how pre-school teachers work with goals and content in the areas of knowledge described in the curriculum. There is also concern that the described areas of knowledge are treated as school subjects for younger children, and that the overall thinking about play, care and learning, which is the preschool's signature, is changing towards a more school like teaching.

According to the pre-school curriculum, preschool teachers should offer a teaching that creates the prerequisite for children to develop knowledge in mathematics, science and technology.

The aim of this study is to investigate how content knowledge (CK) and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) can be understood in relation to mathematics, science and technology. Preschool teachers' understanding of the above subject areas and how to teach in preschool was explored through questionnaires and interviews.

Theoretical framework
A theoretical point of departure regarding teachers' learning and teaching is derived from Shulman's (1986) theory of how knowledge grows through teaching and that there is a special knowledge required by teachers in teaching situations, ie. content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK).

Methodological design
Questionnaires have been sent to 300 preschool teachers and are based on ideas of subjects and teaching. A selection of 20 participants for interviews was also included to deepen our knowledge about preschool teachers' ideas of content and concepts both in relation to PCK and to CK (Shulman, 1986). The research has followed guidelines for research ethics adopted in the humanities and social sciences in Sweden (codex.vr.se). The analysis includes both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Expected conclusion/findings
The results show that preschool teachers estimate their educational content knowledge highly. Furthermore, the results show small differences in estimates regarding skills to teach mathematics, science and technology. Significant differences are observed with regard to teachers’ competences to base their work according to science and proven experience. Significant differences were also shown accord to teachers rating of the quality of teaching mathematics, science and technology. The results point to challenges in transferring teacher’s pedagogical content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge to their own teaching.

Relevance for the Nordic educational research
The project contributes to a deeper understanding of how preschool teachers can make content visible to children in daily preschool activities. The project will contribute to a) how knowledge areas such as mathematics, science and technology can be understood in preschool, b) how the teaching of these areas can be designed and c) understanding of preschool teacher's CK and PCK.

References
http://www.codex.vr.se

Keywords: Preschool Teacher, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Pedagogical Content Knowledge.
Scientific everyday experiences in preschool

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Preschool has had an assignment connected with science for almost two decades and this assignment has been even more specified in the latest curriculum. However, in a recent report from the School Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen, 2016) they noticed a lack of science content in the daily activities in preschools and also lack of science knowledge among the preschool teachers. Previous research, however, show that in everyday activities such as play by mirror, play at a playground, play with food children elaborate science concepts in everyday life (Sikder & Fleer, 2015; Larsson, 2013). These science experiences can later on be bridged to more scientific academic concepts. Beginning science, small science and emergent science are all concepts trying to catch the youngest children’s scientific everyday experiences. These concepts all have in common that children repeat the activities several times and it can be regarded as a main concern in their play. In this study we define science and science experiences based on these concepts.

The aim of this study is to provide knowledge of how play among the youngest children (1-3 years old) can provide children with experiences that can be linked to science. How can children’s activities form the basis for preschool's science assignments?

The empirical data in this study is mainly from video observations from five different preschools. We have followed children (1-3 years old) in their play. Here we show an example from one preschool where two boys play outside in the playground. In order to analyse these childrens’ activities we have used a Grounded theory approach (Thornberg & Forslund-Frykedal, 2009). We have been attentive to the main concern in their activities. The analysis process is made in several steps. In short: 1. Transcription from film to text describing the main concern 2. Open coding 3. Coding 4. Focused codes and 5. Categories.

One of the science categories we have named Experiencing gravity. This category is made up of activities with sand. The two boys let the sand slide from different heights, they stop the sliding sand and they also throw the sand. Another category we have named Using material. This category is made up of activities where the boys look at sand sliding, look at sand in their hands and they also dig sand. They also replace the sand with a stone.

Through our analysis it is possible to discern small science experiences in the play activities among the youngest children in preschool.

References


Students exploring Kindergarten Architecture together: an Interdisciplinary Approach to Knowledge Construction in Professional Education

Evenstad, Randi
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Students exploring Kindergarten Architecture together: an Interdisciplinary Approach to Knowledge Construction in Professional Education

This presentation will reveal and discuss experiences from a project exploring an interdisciplinary approach to student’s knowledge construction in the fields of pedagogy and architecture. The aim is to explore the value of an interdisciplinary approach to professional education from student perspective.

Over a period of five years early childhood teacher students from Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Science (HIOA) and architect students from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) came together for a two days seminar exploring kindergarten architecture and questioning how the building design may provide good conditions for learning, play and care. The early childhood teacher students were in their third and last year of a Bachelor degree and the architect students in their fourth year of a Master degree. Both student groups had chosen to concentrate their studies on the topic of kindergarten materiality and architecture.

The first day together the students visited different kindergartens in Trondheim in order to have some common references for their discussions. They also had a short theoretical introduction to some relevant concepts and issues in the field of Early Childhood Pedagogy and Architecture in Norway. On the second day the architecture students presented their ideas, sketches and models for kindergarten buildings in small groups with the early childhood students. This resulted in interesting and challenging ideas and new points of view for both student groups.

Every year all the participants completed a questionnaire concerning their own engagement in the project and an evaluation on this particular interdisciplinary educational approach. The study presented here is a qualitative investigation with a critical hermeneutic and phenomenological approach based on the questionnaires. The students experiences are analyzed and discussed from a social constructivist perspective and by drawing on theories of professionalisation and knowledge building in a complex society (Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons, 2001; Gustavsen, 2003; Hessels et.al.2008; Laursen 2012).

In addition to a wider perspective on the importance of developing good and functional kindergarten buildings, the students also discovered new areas of their own competences and skills. Several students in both groups said that they realized that the other student group could benefit from listening to their experiences and reflections, and that this experience strengthened their belief in their own professional identity and knowledge construction. Both student groups also reported that their respect for the other profession increased during this meeting while working together. Both groups were surprised to discover that the other profession was so seriously engaged in their work concerning kindergartens and that they had so many interest and values in common. The students highly recommend interdisciplinary approaches to learning and problem solving and we think this must be transferable to other educational contexts in Norway and abroad.
Can Faroese kindergarten experience expand our knowledge about couplings between management and the articulation of wellbeing?

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In Denmark, wellbeing is a central concept in kindergartens/preschools/day care centres (KPD). Wellbeing is positioned as a horizon of pedagogical practice, and the concept’s common sense meaning, to feel good, contains many imaginaries about the good life of children. Wellbeing is therefore a useful entry concept to exploring the field, with good explanatory potential.

Danish KPD research shows that the pedagogical gaze is increasingly shaped by social technologies like learning plans. (Ex. Plum, 2014; Ahrenkiel et al. 2012). The pedagogue’s attention is drawn to specific circumstances and consequently a hierarchy of values between the different parts that constitutes the pedagogue and the pedagogical professionalism is created (Plum, 2014:169). The introduction of these social technologies is largely interpreted as related to globalisation discourses and increased influence of associated transnational agencies such as the EU and OECD (ex. Plum, 2014; Krejsler, 2014; Moutsios, 2017). They produce a specific culture, where specific qualities are promoted, and specific ideals for the pedagogical practice are placed. Simultaneously, research shows that wellbeing is defined by the pedagogues “as something they see” (Koch, 2013:4). What the pedagogues see in the practical field, or more specifically, how wellbeing is articulated, can therefore be linked to the management of the area.

The Faroese KPD area has grown markedly in a short period of time, and as in Denmark, most children attend KPD. The Faroese KPD is though governed significantly different from Denmark. There are no social technologies within the area, and central actors of the Faroese KPD area describe the single KPD-institution as self-managed. The knowledge in play at the KPD area occurs in an (almost) non-centrally managed context. The Faroese KPD is therefore largely a producer of local knowledge and local evidence, and, in that sense, it breaks with international trends within the field of early childhood education.

The project aims to show how governance and the perception of wellbeing are entangled, how learning discourses shape understandings of wellbeing, and how local evidence based practices could challenge global evidence based practices in terms of wellbeing. Drawing on concepts and tools from the Actor Network Theory, Agential Realism, and the Theory of Discourse, I will design an apparatus of comparison to explore how the KPD management can be read in the articulation of wellbeing.

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Belonging and play at stake. Polish migrant children’s stories on transition to Norwegian ECEC

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This paper aims to reconstruct Polish migrant children experiences on transition to the Norwegian ECECs, build on democratic traditions that value children’s participation and play. The research material comprises over 10 narrative interviews with Polish children aged 3-11 who are/were attending the Norwegian ECEC. The reconstructed stories are analyzed with use of the Bourdieuan theoretical toolkit that allows to interpret “belonging to a children group” and “participation in play” as the highest stakes (illusio) for the migrant children in the Norwegian ECECs. However, a certain level of language and other social skills (cultural and social capital) is required in order to reach the illusio. Some of the ECEC practices, reconstructed in children’s stories, were supportive in “equiping” them in the necessary capitals. The other type of practices, based on the “the language comes on its’ own”-attitude, led to insecurity, anxiety and lack of belonging to the children group and the ECEC. The results contribute on the level of theory and that of practice by showing examples of good practices, but also by questioning the routines of maintaining pure respect for the cultural identity of the newcomer child, and by showing importance of language and belonging in order to benefit from a good Nordic childhood.
Are Norwegian classrooms accommodated to the firstgrader?

Becher, Aslaug

Key words: physical environment, materiality, play, learning, body, formation

Research topic/aim
This research investigates what kind of representations that are conveyed through materiality and physical environment in the firstgraders classrooms. Included in the topic are questions related to what kind of significance materialty and physical environment have regarding educational/pedagogical work. The overall aim of the topic is to illuminate whether Norwegian classrooms in school are accomodated to the firstgrader.

Theoretical framework
The last 10-15 years, there has been increasing interest internationally in investigating possible relationships between humans and non humans in several fields of knowledge which have informed research on ‘child and space’ topics. Philosophical perspectives from phenomenological, pragmatic and more postmodern oriented departures can be found this socalled material turn (Kraglund and Otto, 2005; Hultman, 2013). The theoretical framework for this research draw on Merleau-Ponty, Latour and Foucault’s theories. However, I am also relating to classical educational theories which include care for materiality and physical environments in their understanding of learning and development. Historical and arcitectural perspectives are embedded in the background for the research.

Methodological design
My main empirical material consists of photos from 15 first grade classrooms in a total of 11 public schools in Oslo and Akershus. The approach in this study, following Grandy (2010) can be placed in an intermediate position relative to the socalled instrumental case and the socalled collective case. Photographs are the primary material, however conversations with teachers and observations offer secondary supplements to the material from four schools. I have analyzed the images based on an understanding that they represent “constructive cuts” from reality (Taguchi, 2010). A systematic combination of photos, observations and interviews would give more reliable data to this project. However, one of the purposes has also been to try out perspectives that can be helpful in analyzing relationships between physical environments in school and educational intentions. In this analyzes I use concepts from architect Inge Mette Kirkeby (2006).

Expected conclusions/findings
The physical environment and materiality in classrooms convey ideas about children, how first graders learn, how education should be constructed for first graders, and how society acknowledge first graders knowledge when they attend school. Physical environment and materiality acts as an educational force in interaction with students, teachers and curricula in school. The chair has a dominant position in the firstgraders classroom. What these findings mean in terms of learning, formation, motivation and bodily experiences will be discussed. The implications of Biestas words that the call for teachers are to welcome children into the world and make them wanting to stay there (Biesta, 2013), are of relevance in the discussion.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The topic and research questions presented in this project relate to Nordic and European educational policy concerning learning outcomes and the pressure towards basic skills in national curriculums. Early intervention, the apostacy of students from upper secondary (year 10-12) and adapted education are part of this educational context.
Emotional labor, effort-reward imbalance and development of a partly web-based model of professional supervision for early childhood educators

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Research topic/aim
The aim of the study is to investigate how early childhood educators define their job environment and cope with their emotional workload. The main purpose is to develop a partly web-based professional support program and to test a theoretical model where we investigate the role of professional support on the educators' self-efficacy, personal accomplishment and work engagement.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical frame is based on three main concepts: emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983), effort-reward balance (Siegrist et al., 2004) and work engagement (Hakanen, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006). The job of early childhood educators is characterized by a continuous process of managing feelings and of expressing them in order to fulfil the requirements of the job. There is limited or no time and space to withdraw and reflect on the events that take place daily and to reflect on the feelings they evoke, because educators have to be available continuously and all the time. Educators are expected to manage their feelings and regulate their emotions during their interaction with the children, their parents and the personnel. If the educators cannot cope in a vigorous manner and regulate their emotions, a state of exhaustive coping may lead to effort-reward imbalance with work overload and job turnover instead of work engagement. One way to prevent this vicious circle is professional support that includes counseling and behavioral interventions to support the educators sense of professionalism, self-efficacy and emotional regulation. Giving the opportunity to the educators to process on their professional development and on the tasks that they individually find difficult and challenging in their job, will enhance the well-being of the children in the long run.

Methodological design
The sample will consist of early childhood educators employed by the public sector in Finland. Data will be collected by a large survey and by individual and focus group interviews. Based on the results of these an intervention is planned to take place with one group receiving professional support (partly web based) and the other group not receiving. The groups will be compared along several variables in order to develop a feasible and well-functioning model of professional support. Data analysis will consist of both qualitative and quantitative analyses. In comparing the exposed intervention group (having professional support) to the unexposed group, confounders will be controlled by propensity score matched grouping.

Expected conclusions/findings
To develop a feasible well-functioning model of professional support for preschool teachers.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The model can be applied in early childhood settings in the Nordic context

References
Supporting relational professionalism in ECEC

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Relational professionalism is an important aspect of professionalism in early childhood education and care (ECEC). In Finnish ECEC, care and education are equally valued and emphasized in national curricula. From the perspective of relational pedagogy, genuine relationships between staff and children are key in high quality ECEC. Yet, at the same time, early childhood educators are often experiencing emotional labor, affecting their overall readiness for establishing well-functioning relationships with children, as well as with parents or colleagues.

This paper reports findings from a small scale professional development project in the context of Swedish-speaking ECEC services in northern Ostrobothnia. The aim of the professional development project was to support relational professionalism through research circles. Staff were invited to participate, irrespectively of their educational background. Two research circles were established, and the participants (N=15) attended the research circles during three academic semesters. The project had a participatory approach, as each research circle decided independently on a problem or question that was the theme to be explored. Participants gathered once a month for a session of two hours, in total 30 hours. Each research circle was coached by a post doctoral researcher in ECEC, affiliated at the university. The aim of the study was to explore how staff perceive that their relational professionalism can be supported through research circles. The professional development process was followed using qualitative research methods such as diaries and focus group interviews. The research materials were thematically analyzed in order to answer two research questions; 1) What qualitative changes in the experience of the relational professionalism emanate among the participants?, and 2) What aspects of the research circle process is perceived by the participants to promote these changes?.

The findings of the study show that staff participating in research circles report an increased capacity to observe and understand children. The participants describe a strengthened ability to reflect upon and analyze their own feelings and actions in relation to children and other staff. Furthermore, they have acquired new knowledge and new patterns of action concerning relationships in ECEC. The participants also mention a better professional self-understanding and self-esteem. When it comes to the second research question, about the research circle process and its contribution to the development of relational professionalism, the results show that the participants underline the possibility to share their concerns with colleagues with the same kind of interests and experiences. During the sessions participants explore challenging aspects of their work together, but also assisted by the coach. Additionally, the research circle is seen as a community of deep thinking and mutual emotional support. Theoretical input from literature is also mentioned as a beneficial aspect of the process.

The results indicate that research circles supports in-depth collegial reflection and discussion among ECEC staff, as well as nudges new approaches and modes of action. As the study was small scale and conducted in the context of Swedish-speaking services in Ostrobothnia, further research needs to be conducted in larger scale in other cultural contexts.
Responsiveness and responsibility in early childhood teacher education

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Early childhood pedagogy emphasizes (1) recognition (Anerkennung) as central to the development of the individual child (e.g. Arendt; Bae; Honneth; Korczak), (2) metacognitive dialogues (e.g. Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson), and (3) directing the child’s attention toward various phenomena in the surrounding world (e.g. Johansson; Lindahl). They stress the responsibility of the kindergarten teachers to interact with children in ways that strengthen their sense of self and of the world. Such responsibility both presupposes and requires responsiveness to the spontaneous initiatives that children take to enter conversations with the teacher and with each other, as well as being responsive to the thoughts and ideas that find expression in such conversations. The aim of this project is to create pedagogical interventions and analytical tools that allow kindergarten teachers to respond better to children’s spontaneous curiosity and to critically examine how such responsiveness can be furthered in their training.

In this paper, we will discuss parts of a pilot-intervention that aimed to teach kindergarten teachers to be more responsive towards children’s initiative. In spring 2017, 9 first year students in Early Childhood Education at University of Helsinki participated in an intervention (five sessions á 2 h). The intervention made use of the community of inquiry, a semi-structured form of conversation developed within Philosophy for Children (P4C) (Lipman; Stanley) to strengthen communicative and reasoning skills. Children who participate in P4C have been shown to improve their communicative and cognitive skills. We study, whether the methods improve the communicative skills of aspiring kindergarten teachers.

The students were asked to write diaries about their experience and reflections throughout the intervention. In this paper, we present the analysis of the teacher student’s course book diaries. It can be seen that the students reflect on their own professional responsibility to be responsive enough to children’s initiatives that could lead to open and reflective discussions. They also reflect on what precisely they should improve to become more responsive.

Central literature
Inviting Silent Voices Into Dialogue

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The recognition of children’s right to inform their everyday-lives plays an important part in the different frameworks for the content and tasks in Early Childhood Education in Scandinavia. Nevertheless, studies show that it is the children who master the majority-language that have actual possibilities of influence (Andersen & Sand, 2011; Gjervan, Andersen, & Bleka, 2006). One of the reasons for this seems to be the staff members lack of acknowledging other signifying practices, a part from the linguistic code of the majority children (Kultti, 2012; Skaremyr, 2014). Listening to and reacting to children’s different voices calls on the Early Childhood Educators’ time and attention. An increasing political pressure on Norwegian language acquisition may affect the Early Childhood Educator’s view of the minority language children as solely becoming Norwegian speakers. This may lead to the risk of losing sight of the children’s resources and competences here and now. My purpose for the study is to show how Early Childhood Educators can facilitate contexts in which minority language children and other children may contribute to the content of early childhood centers through non-verbal forms of expression.

According to Julia Kristeva (1986) the subject as a language user is always engaged in a negotiated process between the semiotic, in the meaning of the unique and bodily desires, and the symbolic, meaning the culture and conventions of a community. This signifying process makes the subject able to negotiate her position between reproducing and opposing the symbolic order. Kristeva’s theories can provide a useful lens to look into how staff members’ attention towards children’s’ aesthetic and embodied expressions facilitate a possible space for the signifying process.

This paper, drawing on my ongoing Doctoral study, uses an aesthetically based inquiry of qualitative data, including interviews and participant observations during sessions of exploring arts and crafts together with children and early childhood educators. I have used stimulated recall as part of the interviews, where we have explored the impact of materials, senses, rhythms and words in the open-ended explorative arts and crafts sessions.

My analysis show how Early Childhood Educators gradually change their views on the minority language children’s communicative practices, valuing the importance of the bodily and aesthetic ways of making meaning.

My research aims to shed a light on the limitations when quality and democratic practices in early childhood education revolves around linguistic language practices. By looking at events in the early childhood centers from a Kristevian perspective, I hope to emphasize the intrinsic value of the poetic language, in order to encourage the field of Early Childhood Education in Norway to develop a polyphonic environment.
ECERS - 3 and Children with special needs

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ECERS – 3 and Children with special needs

In Denmark 90% of the children attend to kindergartens so we have the best chances to create equality among the children and give everybody a chance to do well in Kindergarten and later in school. But we still struggle with reproduction of negative social heritages in the terms of lack of education, weak employment rate and criminal behaviour, health issues and low well-being.

The study is a part of a larger research with focus on establishing a baseline for quality in Denmark by measurements in ECERS-3 in four municipalities. We investigate also alignment between ECERS-3 and Danish legislation and praxis in the field (Næsby, 2017).

The research question

What is high quality in kindergarten in Denmark? And how can we establish coherent between quality and equality in access for leaning and well-being for every child?

In our part of the study we look into a more specific and focused sup question – 1) How can kindergartens provides equality in learning by pedagogical approaches, structures, cooperation with parents, activities? 2) How matches the criteria in ECERS-3 as a measurement tool the focus on children with special needs?

The study investigates how a high qualitative kindergarten in practice meets the needs of children who have low social economic status and struggles with ex social, cognitive or personal development.

The research design is a case study and data gathered as
- interviews with 1) Leader 3) pedagogical staff 3) children
- observation everyday life in the kindergarten
- document analyses – procedures and homepage
- Ecers – 3 report from the kindergarten

The theoretical background is learning theory (Wenger, 2004), attachment and relations (Ainsworth, 1962) (Schibbye, 2005), pedagogical approaches (Bronfenbrenner, 1994) (Chase, 2008) and finally evaluating theory (Dahler-Larsen, 1999).

Preliminary finding indicates that ECERS-3 is suited as a tool for measurements of quality also for children with social challenges. But the study reveals also a lot of weaknesses as we can describes as “not catching” the most important issue – flexibility and sensitivity in the way the pedagogues deal with the children’s state of mind and well-being on a daily basic. Another issue concerns the amount of toys and access to toys and ex. creative materials as paint, paper, music instruments and others stuff like this. Our put a questions mark by the importance of assess to toys in general comparing to the importance of assess to proximale processes with relations, community and stability.

In Denmark we have inclusive daycare, but there are big differences between institutions and the need of inclusive praxis, according to the socioeconomic status dominating in the Neighbourhood. We distinguish between challenges for the kids into two main categories. The first is plain poverty and the deprivation children life with in this social setting. The other category contains families, where the parents have reduced capacity in parenthood, perhaps mental illness, traumas or abuse.

The two categories contribute to vulnerability in very different ways and we are interested in finding track in the pedagogical approaches according to the categories.
Bibliography


Exploring territories of playfulness – transcending theories and practices in kindergarten

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Exploring territories of playfulness – transcending theories and practices in kindergarten

In my presentation, I explore playful behaviour amongst children at the age of 1-3 in kindergarten. I focus in particular on one event that put in motion multiple vibrations in and amongst both human and non-human organisms. The event referred to, is about intraactions (Barad 2003), affect (Massumi 1995, 2015) and effects amongst and in-between children, Lego and adults. The event serves here as data for my (re)search, and was experienced/noticed and noted during a research project in kindergarten emphasizing both human and non-human intraactions and playfulness. Data collected during the (re)search project was continuously explored and re-turned (to) in the (re)search group, challenging prevailing theories and practices concerning children’s playful behaviour. These explorations add new/other data to my (re)search, and might be read as diffraction patterns put in motion by the former event.

When exploring territories of playfulness, I turn to Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) philosophy – emphasizing nomadic thinking and lines of flight. I also find Barad’s (2007, 2014) term diffraction useful while analysing and re-turning (to) the event. The concept of diffraction originates from physics, and can be exemplified by how waves move, transcend, clash and collapse – in, around, through and past obstacles in the ocean for example. Diffraction is a mapping of interference, not of replication, reflection or reproduction – mapping where effects of difference appear. Affect, feelings, emotions, thoughts, ideas and actions might be regarded as effects of interferences. I also use the term re-turn (Barad 2014) when exploring the event. While re-turning (to) the event, I turn my data over and over again – like soil in a flowerbed – to discover something new. Something that might already be there, but which I did not see before – until I explore it in new and different ways. Trying to do the familiar strange, I twist and turn my data repeatedly – attempting to make new ideas flourish. Ideas about what might be considered as playful behaviour amongst children and objects, ideas about possibilities rather than restrictions concerning children’s playful behaviour, ideas that might set of new practices in kindergarten.

As a (re)searcher influenced by an onto-eticho-epistemological philosophy (Barad 2007), I am less preoccupied with detecting «true» knowledge, yet more interested in still unrevealed possibilities, transformations and what might become (Deleuze & Guattari 1987). In my presentation, I re-turn (to) (Barad 2014) and explore diffractions and effects of what might happen when children, Lego and adults clash.

Keywords

Playful behaviour, Lego, diffraction, effects, affect, re-turning
Exploring weaknesses of the incredible years program

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Concerns about behavior problems, including bullying, underlie anger-modification programs in early childhood education, like the incredible years program (IYP) that are presented as expert knowledge of how to solve aggression and anger. In this program, strategies for preventing and solving conflicts are mainly taught as lessons for conflict-solving separated from lived life. The main aim is to reduce each single child’s negative behavior. Complex problems are limited to children who are not yet socialized, therefore, and the assumption is that, if each child learn to control his/her aggression as early as possible, society will achieve peace and damaging conflicts will be avoided. A closer analysis of the IYP, in light of Lev Vygotsky’s (1987) theory of children’s development of communication in verbal language, and Karsten Hundeide’s (2005) theory that takes departure from Vygotsky and outlines the concept of ‘cultural and historical formats for development’, reveals some of the weaknesses of this program. The analysis reveals that the overachieving aim of the historical and cultural format followed in the IYP is to curb conflict and anger. This is also in line with the historical and cultural notion of the normal child as spontaneously innocent, playing, smiling and laughing. The analysis indicate that this format on avoiding anger and conflicts can prevent children from learning how to solve problems, and causing teachers to disregard important information about injustice and disrespect. Thus, in turn, can condition a child’s co-construction of his own stigma as a victimizer or a victim.

Relevance to Nordic educational research: Program like IYP have an increasing popularity in ECE in Norway. There is a need to challenge the single dimensional causality in educational research that prove that these programs are of relevance for all children, and should be implemented as early as possible.

References


Parents’ perception about bullying in kindergarten

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The aims are to get knowledge about how parents perceive bullying in kindergarten. The intention is to listen to their voices and perceptions of their own roles and collaboration with staff to work against bullying. Earlier research reveals that bullying occurs in kindergarten, but the perception of bullying seems to be different from the understanding and theoretical framework traditionally used in schools. An alternative approach to investigate what bullying can be in kindergarten, is not to take a starting point in a ready maid definition, but to listen to what peoples who are responsible for children in kindergarten perceive and experience as bullying. According to a more bottom up perspective, it is important to listen to parents` understanding of, and attitude to bullying. Their expectations to themselves as parents and to kindergarten staff for collaboration against bullying is important to investigate. The research questions are: a) What opinions do parents have about bullying in kindergarten? b) How do they understand their own role and collaboration with staff to prevent, stop and follow up bullying in kindergarten?

The theoretical approach highlights bullying as a question of inclusion and exclusion processes. All groups can develop in an awry direction, leading to excluding and marginalization of some of the group members. The focus is about parents` understanding of bullying in kindergarten and the conditions for developing inclusion processes between children in kindergarten.

As a methodological design we make use of both a quantitative questionnaire and qualitative interviews. The questionnaire focuses on parents` perceptions of bullying and prevalence in kindergarten. What do they perceive as the kindergarten`s policy against bullying, and routines for exchanging of information and collaboration with parents. Based on the analyses of the answers in the questionnaire, qualitative interviews are completed. The interviews are about parents` experiences and challenges to cooperate with staff. Further focus is on what they consider as necessary measures for future collaboration to prevent and follow up bullying in kindergarten. Findings reveal that parents experience that bullying is important to take seriously in kindergarten. They perceive the concept of bullying mainly connected to be without a best friend or to be excluded from play. Furthermore, findings show that parents lack information about how kindergartens work with bullying. All parents express that it is necessary, not only to prevent their own child from bullying, but to collaborate with staff to strengthen the belonging to the group for every child in kindergarten. The research project is relevant because it represents a different view about bullying than the traditional models used in preventing bullying at school. Collaboration between parents and staff in kindergarten are crucial for developing new strategies for preventing, stop and to following up bullying in kindergarten.
Preschool teachers achieving agency

Hildén, Ebba

Teaching is a concept that many in Sweden associate with what teachers do in schools, but not with what preschool teachers do in preschool. Many consider teaching to be something that the teacher does in front of a class of pupils in a formal setting where the teachers provide pupils with instructions in various lessons covering one subject at a time, according to agreed curricula.

The Education Act and the curriculum regulate the Swedish preschool. According to the Education Act teaching is described as goal-oriented processes which enhances children’s development and learning and the concept is to be used in compulsory schools as well as in the preschools. The concept of teaching in preschools was included in the Educational Act in 2010, but is not mentioned in the preschool curriculum. Although preschool teachers are supposed to teach, inspections made by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate show that many do not. Many preschool teachers do not use the concept of teaching when describing what they do when promoting children’s learning and development. Instead, many talk of children’s learning. The Swedish preschool have a long tradition of positioning their pedagogical practice as something other than the pedagogical practice in compulsory schools and teaching being something that is thought of as something that is done only in schools make introducing the concept of teaching in preschool difficult. In order to get the preschool teachers to use the concept of teaching preschool principals try to focus on the concept of teaching in discussions amongst the staff.

The aim of this paper is to discuss teacher agency and how it is achieved in concrete settings by preschool teachers and other staff. Data from an ongoing project is presented. The research questions are

- To what extend is teacher agency achieved by preschool teachers when the concept of teaching is discussed?
- What structures frame the ability to achieve teacher agency?

The empirical material consist of video recordings of actual events in the everyday practice in preschool and sound recordings of discussions between preschool teachers and other staff. The research method of video stimulated recall was used in order to obtain the preschool teacher’s thoughts and reflections on their own teaching. The empirical material was analyzed with the help of Biesta, Priestly and Robinson’s (2015) ecological model of teacher agency as a “temporally constructed engagement with different structural environments” (Emirbayer & Mische, p. 970, 1998). This model is informed by John Dewey’s pragmatic philosophy and his use of transactions. Preliminary findings show the importance of professionalism for preschool teacher in forming a structure that frames the ability to achieve teacher agency.

References
Students in Early childhood educations’ professional training process through guidance in practice

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Research topic/aim
The project is based on our experience as teachers in the Early childhood teacher education. We have experienced students who express that guidance in practice is challenging. For example, they do not know what to be curious on or curious about. Some practitioners confirm this, and state that some students do not seek guidance, are passive in the scheduled guidance situations and/or “do not have anything they want to get guidance on” throughout the kindergarten day. Similar situations are described in research, both nationally and internationally. It also occurs in the general teacher profession (see Bjerkholt, 2016; Bjerkholt, Ødegård, Søndenå & Hjardemaal, 2014).

The purpose of the project is to gain knowledge on how guidance in practice can affect the professional education process of students in Early childhood education. We want to look at how different forms of guidance can contribute to increased attention and commitment to the student’s own professional training process. By looking into guidance in scheduled meetings, as well as guidance throughout the kindergarten work day, we are interested in factors that will reinforce both the students’ and the teachers’ experience of academic reflection and development.

Theoretical framework
Like other theory for the field of Early childhood education, theory on guidance is in continuous change. In the 1980’s, the master’s education stood strong. In the 1990’s, the reflection on action theory presented by Handal, Luvås and Lycke was dominant (Birkeland & Carson, 2017; Bjerkholt, 2016). Today, the concept of professional training process is used in relation to guidance in teacher education (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2012). We perceive professional training as an active and ongoing process where people create selves through critical reflection, while at the same time people are continuously being created and recreated when facing their surroundings (Bostad, 2017). We are curious about how the focus on students’ critical reflections on their own practices, and the reasons for this, influences and contributes in their professional training process. What is the space for students’ professional training process in practice, how is this space created and what does this space affect? We are therefore curious about each student’s encounter with other subjects, practices and materialities in the Early childhood education, and how they contribute to the student’s professional training. In these encounters, meetings between supervisor and student, as well as students’ critical reflection on their own and others’ practices, are central.

Methodological design
Inspired by Reinertsen (2015), we wish to receive what we will refer to as stories, from both students and practitioners that are related to guidance conducted during the practical periods for first year students, in autumn 2017. These stories will be the data material for our analysis.

Expected conclusions/finding
We will have a critical entry approach to the data material. This is to reveal other/more perspectives on what guidance can be. In addition, we believe that it might reveal how guidance in practice can be an important part of the student’s professional training process as future Early childhood teachers.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
This project will enable contribution to the knowledge of Early childhood education students’ professional training through practical guidance.
ECEC teachers’ understandings of children’s experience of belonging

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This paper aims at a) pointing out the phenomena of belonging as crucial in preventing bulling and other negative group process in heterogeneous children groups, as well as at B) reconstructing ECEC teachers’ understanding of children’s experience(s) of belonging to the children community within an ECEC institution.

The presented research-material is informed by the Cultural-Historical holistic approach developed by Mariane Hedegaard (2005, 2008). The theoretical toolkit allows to look at teachers’ understandings of belonging as a certain type of teachers’ demands that influence children’s motives and thereby activities. The limits and boarders of teachers’ conceptualizations of belonging frames children’s possibilities of experiencing it within the group. Moreover, that theoretical frame allows us to contextualize interactions between individuals not only at the institutional but also socio-cultural and political level.

The study is based on practitioner research design, where teachers conduct small studies at their own workplaces in other to get academic credits for that. The research material comprises thus over assignments written by 9 ECEC teachers participating in a professional development course on pedagogical leadership and learning environments. The task given to the students refer to understanding of the phenomena of belonging from the child perspective, during various activities during the ECEC day. The delivered texts were analyzed with use of qualitative content analysis, in order to reconstruct various conceptualizations and operationalization of the child perspective on belonging.

The findings present a map of meanings. Precisely: Teachers’ understandings of children’s experiences of belonging. The map of meaning shows qualities that the teacher are “able” to think and thereby actively work with. The other side of the findings is the silent one – the limits in taking children’s perspective as well as limits in conceptualizing and operationalizing belonging that influences daily practice and group processes in the ECEC.

Relevance to Nordic educational research

The anti-bulling policy and programs are an important issue on ongoing educational debate in Norway (and Scandinavia). In our eyes the debate has focus on concepts, categories and tools that are not helpful in losing the problem.
Symposium
Defining, defending and reclaiming Sustainability Perspectives

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During the last decades, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has emerged as an educational goal of educational policy, and the concept of Sustainable Development (SD) is in extensive use and has had a decisive impact on public policy around the world. From August 2017 the concept of SD is listed among Values in the Norwegian Framework Plan for Kindergartens. What are the consequences of the inclusion of Sustainable Development as a value in the Framework Plan? In this symposium, the aim is to inquire into some perspectives on the three connected and interdependent dimensions of the concept of SD: nature and environment, economy and social issues.

According to «Our Common Future» (1987), sustainable development regards developing the economy, but not on the expense of nature and people’s needs. Our Common future – can we find solutions? There are different views and suggestions among experts, from different fields, as well as among people, depending on geography (where you live) and what people can expect from the future. People (including experts and educators) have different interests and values. People have different believes about what is a good life.

In this symposium ESD is inquired into from disciplines (pedagogy and science) involved in ESD in the Early Childhood Teacher Education. Some possible difficulties in the interpretation of the concept of SD are presented, in particular regarding a social diversity perspective of ESD. The three presentations of the symposium:

1. Sustainability and diversity in Norwegian kindergartens – pedagogical approaches and practices. Perspectives on SD from three kindergartens are presented: Interviews with Early Childhood teachers from a sami Kindergarten, Reggio Emilia based Kindergarten and a public kindergarten.

2. Sustainable Development in food literacy for early childhood teacher education and Kindergartens. A didactic tool used to promote food literacy as part of ESD in kindergartens and Early Childhood Teacher Education in Norway, is presented.

3. Sustainable Development as a value in the Framework plan for Kindergartens. A curriculum analysis. The trajectory of the inclusion of SD in the Framework Plan, is presented. SD is inquired into to seek guidance for understanding of SD as a value. Theories that frame analysis in these presentations are socio cultural (1), cognitive learning theories and socio cultural perspectives on learning (2) and curriculum theories and theories on language and discourse (3).

The methodological designs of the presentations differ, but all of them are qualitative analyses. Presentation 2. takes departure from earlier analyzed quantitative data. Expected outcome and relevance of this symposium is to develop the teaching and learning potential of ESD, as well as to find important challenges related to the education of early childhood teachers and kindergarten staff in disciplines involved in ESD. This symposium contributes to research on curriculum development in Kindergartens. Different perspectives are presented and critical questions are posed to guide development of disciplinary content in kindergartens related to the recent inclusion of SD as a value for Kindergartens. Hence, the symposium also contributes to educational research on Early Childhood Teacher Education.
Syed, Bushra Fatima

Sustainable development is increasingly emphasized in practices in early childhood education both globally and locally. The recently adopted Norwegian Framework Plan for Kindergartens focuses on Sustainable development (SD). Hence kindergartens play an important role in promoting values and practices. Children should be given opportunities to care for and to look after their surroundings and the natural environment. For Sámi children, this means “living in harmony with, making use of and reaping the land” (KD 2017 p. 10).

Research related to pedagogical approaches and practices concerning sustainability/ SD has been limited in the Norwegian kindergarten and early childhood education. Sommerville and Williams (2015) did a review of the research field, studying/reviewing literature in the field. Three major categories of theoretical orientation were identified: Connection to nature; Children’s rights; and Post-human frameworks. In "Connection to Nature" discourse, the aim is to relate children to the nature in their early days. “Children’s right” discourse is to focus on children’s rights to participate and give them voice in relation to the major global sustainability issues that concerns their lives. Framed within Education for sustainable development (ESD) these studies focus on the intertwined social, cultural and economic global issues of SD. The posthuman approach focus has been to go beyond the binary distinction between "nature / culture", "human / nature" that has been dominated in Western thinking. In this context ingenious people’s perspective has been illustrated where nature/culture dichotomy is “troubled”.

The aim of the study presented here is to explore early childhood teacher’s understanding of the SD concept and pedagogical practices. Sosiocultural and phenomenological perspectives will be used. Further on I am inspired by postcolonial theories and Haraway (2004, 2008). Sommerville and Williams (2015) categories will be used when analyzing data.

Documents analysis and interviews with kindergarten leaders/staff on their approaches to SD will be presented, Three kindergartens have been in focus: Sami kindergarten (indigenous people), Reggio Emilia based kindergarten, and a public kindergarten, posing the following questions:

• How does kindergarten staff understand the Sustainable Development concept?
• What kind of pedagogical approaches and activities do they choose?
• How do children participate and relate to sustainably?

Expected conclusions/Findings

Different perspective and pedagogical approaches on what sustainable development is in early childhood context will be presented. The findings will also be an important resource for kindergarten staff to be aware of the diversity within the theme.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:

Researching sustainable development in early childhood educating as a source of knowledge for students and teachers in higher education. Gaining some experience and challenges of researching in the field of practice.

References


Contributor 2
Sustainable Development in food literacy for early childhood teacher education and Kindergartens

Tuset, Elly Herikstad

The aim of this presentation is to inquire into the connection between Sustainable Development (SD) and food literacy in kindergarten and in Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) education. The presentation particularly concern Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and is related to the learning area Body, movement, food and health, as presented in the Framework Plan for Kindergarten in Norway. From august 2017, food literacy has its own learning area in the Norwegian framework plan for Kindergartens.

This research concerns development of a teaching and learning tool for ECT education, as well as for staff and children in kindergartens. Learning about food preferences, and to like a variety of foods are important when educating about food resources and food consumption in a lifelong learning perspective in an ESD perspective. The study has a cognitive focus on concept development and uses socio cultural perspectives on learning. A food literacy tool has been developed and tried out in the study. This food literacy tool can support employee-child communication about food, as well as the children’s exploration and tasting of new and unknown foods.

Data were collected, as part of an observational study from 2015, in the students’ practical work in ECT-training, during their first year of education. Having collected observational data during meals, as part of a quantitative study, the students applied the tool to encourage communication about food and sensory food experiences.

I have termed this tool a tasting plate. The students encourage the children to involve all their senses and to talk about the food when tasting the food on a plate. The student use describing words about the food itself and about activities like cooking, buying and growing food. Through conversation and exploration together with the students, the children are motivated to try out various foods, and are encouraged to taste new and culturally different foods, to be aware of their own food needs, and to be able to describe sensory qualities of the food (Benn, 2014).

Students’ written narratives from experiences with the food literacy tool are presented, in order to highlight exemplary narratives. The narratives show how food literacy is connected to the aim of SD. Exemplary narratives can be utilized to guide students and employees in kindergartens to promote development of food literacy and to work with SD in kindergartens. This year 100 students are testing the tool in their practice and their experiences with the tool may give me further ideas of how to use it.

This research is relevant to Nordic educational research, being a contribution to the development of teaching and learning tools for working with SD in ECT education as well as in kindergartens.

Reference
The aim of this presentation is to inquire into the perception of Sustainable development (SD) as a value in Early childhood education and in Early Childhood Teacher Education. The presentation particularly concern Education for Sustainable development (ESD) and is related to the learning area nature, environment and technology, as presented in the Frameworkplan for Kindergartens in Norway. From August 2017, SD is listed among Values in the Norwegian Framework Plan for Kindergartens.

What are the consequences when SD is presented as an overall value for kindergartens? What is the relation between SD as a value and, in the first place, a Nordic perception on the value of nature, secondly the relation between SD as a value and the tradition of Bildung (formative development) and last but not least, the relation between SD as a value and the tradition in science education of promoting Scientific Literacy?

Through curriculum analysis of framework plans and policy documents, this presentation seeks guidance for understanding SD as a value in the Norwegian Kindergarten. The analysis will follow the trajectory of the inclusion of SD into the Framework Plan. Thematic content analysis, perspectives from rhetoric and discourse analysis is used.

In the first place, the analysis of ESD in the framework plan takes departure from a perspective from science teaching and ESD teaching, and a Nordic perspective on ‘nature’. The Scandinavian and Norwegian perception of nature presented here, emerged in the middle of the 19th century, during the area of romantic nationalism. In this period outdoor life (Friluftsliv) and The Wilderness (Villmarken) were given names, resulting from human activity, when landscapes and nature were visualized as nation building elements, for example by geologists and photographers. These visions of nature were spread and published, through journals.

Secondly, the analysis inquire into perspectives on content and curriculum for ESD, from the Bildung- and didactic tradition in Europe and into a Scientific Literacy (SL) perspectives on ESD. (Svein Sjøberg represents a Nordic perspective on General Formative Development in science education (Naturfaglig allmenndanning). A combined analysis from a Bildung perspective and from a SL perspective is justified, because the concept of Bildung has similarities to, but is not synonymous with the concept of Literacy (as used in many compositions, attached to different disciplines, as for instance in SL).

Last, but not least, the relevance of the most common definition of SD is discussed in a social diversity perspective. It is presented in the United Nations Report Our Common World (1987):“...the needs of today’s people are being satisfied without destroying the possibility of future generations...”

For whom is SD and ESD teaching relevant? This regards Others as presented by Ideland and Malmberg (2014). The analysis can give a better understanding of SD as a value in Kindergartens.

Reference
No gap and no bridge but a common matter of concern transgressing the boundaries of disciplines and practices: a neuroeducational intervention RCT study

Taguchi, Hillevi Lenz  
Stockholm University

The aim of this symposium is to discuss the interdisciplinary collaborations, struggles, solutions and transgressions made across disciplines and practices. These took place between researchers from pedagogy, early childhood education, linguistics, developmental and cognitive psychology, in a team of 14 researchers and assistants, 98 early childhood practitioners and 423 children, who collaboratively undertook the first randomized control trial intervention study (RCT) in Swedish early childhood education: Enhancing preschool children’s attention, language, communication, socio-emotional and math's skills. A randomized controlled trial to evaluate the effects of two pedagogical interventions. The shared matter of concern involves how to give every individual child equal opportunities for development and learning. Based on this concern, our agreement was to learn more about children’s development and learning as an effect of taking part in two different carefully designed pedagogical practices, during six weeks, 4-5 days a week, performed by staff. The practices were developed to enhance specific skills and learning, for which each child, randomized on a group-basis to either intervention or controls, was tested before and after the intervention period, using well established tests.

In a Swedish preschool context, where all forms of testing of children are neither recommended, nor required, proved to be a challenge. The doing of this RCT intervention-study entailed a multiplicity of disciplinary encounters, conflicts and subsequent transgressive reconfigurations among researchers and practitioners. In the first presentation, Hillevi Lenz Taguchi will discuss the boundaries of interdisciplinary research and the unexpected productive exchanges across them, and across the boundaries between preschool practices and practices of research.

The pedagogical interventions encompassed practices that did not fit into the boundaries of preschool practices-as-usual. As Anna Palmer’s presentation will show, the meaning of social-emotional learning in the group-learning intervention transgresses a more common understandings of social-emotional learning featured in internationally established SEL-practices. The researchers designing this intervention however also needed to reconceptualize what it meant to do investigative group-learning, when putting more focus on individual children as part of group-learning. This entailed acknowledging the limitations and boundaries of dominating theories, letting other theories intervene, overlap and extend the theoretical underpinnings of the investigative group-learning intervention.

The contrasting individual digital learning intervention, which followed upon the daily training of individual children’s executive functions, constituted serious transgressions of established pre-school boundaries, as Sofia Frankenberg will show. The individual intervention comprised some crucial displacements of the common usage of digital devices and practices of training embodied brain functions.

In the concluding presentation, Linnea Bodén discusses what it can mean to, as a 4 or 5 year old child, participate in the different forms of research practices and data collections that this intervention RCT study entails. The analysis challenges our taken-for-granted thinking on children taking part in research.

Reference

Contributor 1
Research-ethics and ethics in preschool practices: transformative encounters between academic disciplines and pedagogical practices in a RCT study

Taguchi, Hillevi Lenz
Stockholm University

Background and aim
This collaborative project was initiated as a result of an ongoing partnership between researchers, preschool practitioners and civil servants, in a socially diverse municipality outside of Stockholm. The shared matter of concern involves how to give every individual child equal opportunities for development and learning. The objective was to perform an evidence-based evaluation of a boosted and intensified ‘strong’ version of a well-established and widespread group-based learning strategy, contrasted with an individual digital learning intervention. Planning and putting to work a RCT intervention-study entails a multiplicity of disciplinary encounters, conflicts, negotiations and subsequent transgressive reconfigurations among the researchers from the five disciplines involved: pedagogy, early childhood education, linguistics, developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience. Moreover, it requires encounters and negotiations between researchers and practitioners, children and their caretakers. The aim of this paper is to analyze the boundaries of interdisciplinary research and the unexpected productive exchanges across disciplinary boundaries, as well as across the boundaries between educational practices and research practices.

Theory and Methodology of this paper
Cartography mapping constitutes the theoretical and methodological approach to the analysis performed in this paper (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994; Lenz Taguchi, 2016). It seeks to put the various disciplinary and institutional (preschool) epistemological claims, methodologies and practices of development, learning and ethics on a, by the researcher, constructed map. This makes it possible to show how the boundaries of these claims and practices, among both researchers and practitioners, were negotiated and resignified during the planning, designing and enacting of the project. The map also makes possible experimenting with and suggesting further possible transgressions for future research, as well as pointing to imaginable risks and offering an affirmative (self-)critique.

Findings and relevance
The main findings are: firstly the theoretical reconfiguration of how to theorize preschool children’s development and learning, as a consequence of the disciplinary encounters. This led to an agreement on some shared ontological underpinnings. The dynamics of “coactive emergence of development and learning” (Mascolo & Fischer, 2015) constitutes an elaborated relational approach of interaction effects in the recent developmental sciences, which coincides with the concurrent theoretical development of social constructionist and poststructural approaches in the neo-materialist and posthumanist acknowledgement of the co-constitutive processes of body-mind, discourse-matter interactions. Secondly, research ethics became a space for both negotiation, boundary crossing, shared learning and self-differentiating individual learning that would transcend practice-as-usual in the respective academic disciplines as well as in preschool practices.

References
What does social-emotional learning mean, enact and produce comprised by the seven components of SEMLA: social-emotional and material investigative learning?

Palmer, Anna  
Stockholm University

**Aim**
The presentation focusses on how the development of the social-emotional and material learning intervention (SEMLA) transgresses the boundaries of taken-for-granted ways of theorizing, enacting and documenting investigative group-learning in a RCT project, to which 10 preschool units were randomized. The meaning of social-emotional learning in the SEMLA intervention transgresses the more common understandings of social-emotional learning in established SEL-practices. The researchers designing the SEMLA intervention needed to reconceptualize what it means to do investigative learning as a group-learning activity when focusing also on the individual child. This entailed acknowledging the limitations of dominant theories, and letting other theories intervene, overlap and extend the theoretical underpinnings of SEMLA.

The aim of the paper is to analyze the meanings and practices produced of the concept of social-emotional learning for this particular RCT project, as the SEMLA intervention was constructed and enacted among researchers and preschool staff.

**Theory and methodology of the analysis**
The analysis of this paper is made by turning to the concept itself as an analytical methodology: in this case the concept of socio-emotional learning (cf. Lenz Taguchi, 2016).

This methodology traces the scientific or philosophical problems from which a concept emerges and develops its practices. For this paper, the tracing of the problems that give meaning and practices to SEMLA will lead us to five different fields of research and pedagogical practices: a) the investigative learning practices in Sweden inspired from Reggio Emilia b) the north American social-emotional learning practices (SEL) c) contemporary neuroeducation research d) the dynamics of coactive development and learning approach d) posthumanist and neo-material intra-active learning theory.

Thus, SEMLA’s seven components constitute a crossing of boundaries and theoretical overlaps between these five different fields of theories, research and preschool practices, and their respective scientific and/or philosophical problems. SEMLA’s components are: a relational ethics; attention and an overarching problem of investigation; multimodal and aesthetic learning; social-emotional and material learning-environment; scaffolded learning; documentation practices as tools for learning; inclusion, participation and self-management.

**Findings**
The tracing of the scientific and philosophical problems from the disciplinary encounters and overlaps of SEMLA’s components makes visible the following problems: a) the problem of equality and inclusion in education b) the problem of the child as actor in its own development and learning c) the problem of natureculture co-constitutiveness d) the problem of experience-expectant vs. experience-dependent processes e) the double-edged sword of neuroplasticity and what to do with windows of opportunities f) the problem of individualized learning in group-learning practices g) the problem of affect and emotion in development and learning h) the problem of tools/means for articulation and translation for enhanced executive learning i) the problem of the force of scaffolding in an inter-human relation and as distributed to and among other actors. Knowledge of the problems inherent to SEMLA’s components might also inform other theoretical and preschool didactic developments.

**References**

Contributor 3
Digital Individual Learning for Body and Mind: creating common grounds for a joint cause of concern through negotiations about research design and metaphors for learning

Frankenberg, Sofia  
Stockholm University

Research problem and aim
How can we best support each and every child’s development and learning in early childhood education? This is a common cause of concern among both researchers and practitioners within the field. Research in cognitive neuroscience tells us that specific training may enhance crucial skills, e.g. executive functions and early math, of importance for successful school achievements and lifelong learning (Clements et al 2016). This was the point of departure for the intervention Digital Individual Learning for Body and Mind (DIL), which was part of a randomized controlled trail in Swedish preschools. However training of specific skills is not part of the Swedish preschool tradition and much contested in the dominating discourse, causing considerable challenges for the quality of implementation and fidelity of the DIL intervention during the planning and piloting of the intervention (Frankenberg and Kjällander, submitted). The aim of this paper is to describe how negotiations within the research team resulted in modifications in the research design, and how so called ‘body and mind’-exercises were introduced to provide new ways of thinking, talking and acting for both teachers and children contributing to intervention fidelity.

Theory and methodology
The DIL intervention is theoretically understood within a framework of dynamic relational systems and co-activated action (Mascolo and Fisher 2015). DIL and takes point of departure in a digital early math game focusing number sense and is specifically designed to adjust to each child’s zone of proximal development. In the intervention the game was combined with a package of exercises focusing self-regulation in terms of focused attention, affect regulation and meta-reflection by means of strategically designed metaphors (Kendall et al. 2014). The Body and Mind exercises aims at a double effect of providing the children with self-regulation strategies and enhancing the teachers scaffolding strategies with regards to supporting the children’s interaction with the learning game.

Expected conclusions and relevance
The experiences from this study illustrate how significant adjustments were required and undertaken from both researchers and preschool teachers with regards to the original research design as well as dominating discourse, in order to create common grounds for the investigation of the common problem of concern.

References


Contributor 4
On, to, with, for, by children – the child in an intervention study

Bodén, Linnea
Stockholm University

Research aim
This paper focuses on what it means to be a child in a neuroeducational intervention study, working with multiple epistemologies and methodologies. Previous research tends to emphasize how some epistemological practices position the child as an object, while in other epistemological practices the child becomes a subject or agential (Christensen & Prout 2002; Mayne & Howitt 2015). Either the research is done on, to, with, for or by children. However, and in line with the theme for the symposium, the aim of this paper is to show how these boundary producing assumptions are often challenged in the actual process of doing research.

Theoretical and methodological design
Taking the neuroeducational intervention study as the starting point, the paper will focus on three research methodologies where children were engaged: standardized testing with scanning of brainwaves, interviews with children and ethnographic observations. Mayne and Howitt (2015) show how research that involves standardized tests or observations of children tend to position the children as objects, whereas interview methodologies tend to position children as subjects. Moreover, research departing from ethnographies or the children’s own agenda tend to position the children as co-researchers. From a transdisciplinary approach, I will try to challenge the notion that methodologies are inescapably entangled with different and contradictory epistemologies and ontologies, and the positionings of the child they entail. As a theoretical and methodological tool, the proposal of ‘going with’ the child in the different epistemological practices is put to work. It forces the researcher to pay attention to different concepts, expressions and notions related to the children, as well as related to the research ethics (Bodén 2016). The analysis will travel back and forth between previous research and the intervention study, to produce multiple versions of what it means to be a child in research.

Expected conclusions and relevance
A common concern within the intervention study has been the ethical considerations and responsibilities in relation to participating children. The ‘going with’, shows how this common concern means that notions like object and subject, participant and researcher, epistemology and ontology are constantly blurred within all methodological undertakings. The boundaries between on, to, with, for or by children are continuously turned into “ontowithforby”, making binaries difficult to uphold. This also seems to be the case when the practices of ‘going with’ are engaged with in previous research. What it means to be a child in research is thus constantly (re)defined and produces new and important insights into the challenges, but also the benefits, of working with multiple epistemologies and methodologies.

References
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Symposium
Quality evaluations in the Nordic Countries using Environment Rating Scales

Næsby, Torben
University College of Northern Denmark

Environment Rating Scales; Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) and Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) (ex Harms, Clifford & Cryer, 2015) are used widely in research across almost 30 countries to evaluate programs and the quality of specific centers, preschools, kindergarten etc. The rating scales have been applied in research on classroom and preschool quality, evaluation of programs and accreditation (Mathers et al, 2007) and they have been made available for parents and policymakers (Taggart et al, 2015). Also a range of comparative and meta reviews and studies have been conducted (Le Paro et al, 2012; Gordon et al, 2015; Vermeer et al, 2016).

For some years rating scales have been used in Norway and Sweden (for instance Baustad, 2012; Bjørnestad & Os, 2018; Os & Bjørnestad, 2016; Sheridan, Samuelsson & Johansson, 2001) and recently ECERS-3 is used in research and development projects in Denmark as well (Næsby, Medom & Bering, 2017; Næsby & Miller, 2017). The newest scale ECERS-3 consists of 35 items that are organised into six subscales that guide observers to relevant areas within the early childhood learning environment. In ECERS-3 the subscales are; space and furnishings, personal care routines, language and literacy, learning activities, interaction and program structure. Data is collected by trained and certified observers in a 3-hour observation with a prescribed scoring sheet.

Research using the scales and in combinations with other instruments in general shows great differences in the quality of preschools and hence, one could expect, in children’s outcome. Some research shows a weak to moderate effect of preschool (Sylva et al, 2010) and that there is a two years difference in the children’s competencies at preschool entry that in some cases persist in the end of preschool at age 5-6 (The Danish Ministry for Children and Social Affairs, 2016, p. 4; Taggart et al, 2015; Sylva, 2016). This is a substantial pedagogical and educational challenge and points out the need of research on how to measure and improve quality in pedagogic practice aimed at children in the early years.

This symposium will present a Nordic snapshot of quality evaluations. Researchers from Denmark, Norway and Sweden will present findings from their use of the Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) in studies on quality in Nordic preschools. The aim is to show similarities and differences across Nordic preschools.

The presentations will also discuss cultural accommodations for the scale as well as the future for quality evaluations in the Nordic region and consider in what way using the ERS-instruments affects our understanding of quality or affects the scores, how graphical representations of ERS (ex descriptive data) can be used to analyse data from the observations and what information different scoring procedures could reveal, leading to improvements in pedagogical practice.
Contributor 1
Applying an alternate scoring procedure and reorganization of indicators the Environment Rating Scales

Bjørnestad, Elisabeth¹, Hegna, Maren Meyer¹ & Baustad, Anne-Grethe¹

¹Oslo Metropolitan University

The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (Harms, Cryer & Clifford, 2006) and Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales (2003) are used by researchers worldwide to assess quality of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings for infants and toddlers (Vermeer, et al., 2016). The structure of the ITERS-R and ECERS-R items and subscales has been tested in previous research (Bisceglia, et.al 2009). However, the psychometric properties of the basic indicators ITERS-R and ECERS-R scales have not been examined in the Nordic countries. This paper aims to provide a first step in this direction by applying an alternative scoring procedure and comparing these scores to the original scores. In addition, we explored a reorganization of the ITERS-R and ECERS-R indicators, using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis.

The data we used in this study is part of the longitudinal research project «Better Provision for Norway’s children in ECEC» (BePro), one of the first studies investigating quality and effectiveness of ECEC in Norway. Observations with the Environment Rating Scales were conducted in 206 classrooms/groups.

Each item in the scales has a set of indicators which are scored as yes/no during a live-observation in the group. Groups get item quality level scores of 1-7 based on meeting the defined indicators. If the group do not meet the first indicator requirements, the observer stops scoring. However, the current study rated all the indicators of an item to gain additional information (Harms, Cryer & Clifford, 2006). The new scores were calculated based on how many yes/no were registered from the item indicator, and scaled to fit the original range; 1-7.

Analysis of difference scores reveal that originally low scoring groups score relatively higher on the new score than originally high scoring groups. In addition, the standard deviations are lower in the new scores, with few centres scoring < 3.0. Overall, there are medium to high correlations ranging from .58 to .98, indicating that there is high level of correspondence between the original and new scores. However, the correlations are consistently lower in items within three of the original subscales: Activities, Personal Care Routines, and Space and Furnishings. This tells us that the alternate scoring procedure might give us more information not previously recorded by the original item quality level score. Our initial results indicate that there is more information to extract from the scales when scoring all indicators. In our future analyses, we will explore alternative reorganization of the scales that maybe will be more applicable for the Norwegian and the Nordic context.
Contributor 2
Quality in Danish preschools as measured with ECERS-3

Næsby, Torben
University College of Northern Denmark

As research shows there are large local differences in the quality of day care facilities in Denmark (Nordahl et al, 2012; Hansen et al, 2016; Næsby, Pedersen & Skytte, 2017). Also it seems that we in general have little knowledge of whether the desired politically determined targets are being met or not and what the quality is really like nation-wide.

During 2017 we have conducted a pilot-project in order to measure the quality of preschool in Denmark and to test the use of ECERS-3 in our national context. Data were collected through observations in 65 preschools (children aged 3-6) in 3 municipalities.

The conceptual frame of the project is based on bio-eco-systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Viernickel et al, 2012; Tietze, 2016). In total this includes quality of orientation, structure, process (measured with ECERS-3) and family and network – with a specific view on children with special needs/disadvantaged children.

The preliminary findings show, that when we use stop-score procedure the Danish preschools score highest on Interactions and Programme Structure, lower on language and literacy and lowest on the subscales Learning Activities, Personal Care Routines, and Space and Furnishings. When we use stop-go procedure as to create a better outset for development projects in the pedagogical practice the scores are higher but not excellent.

The presentation will outline the findings; compare the findings with recent research as well as discuss implications of using the ECERS-3 in a Danish national context that is, mapping ECERS-3 to the new Act on Day Care Facilities (In progress) in order to study the likely alignment and to be able to outline the need for some adjustments of the scale, based on empirical data.
Contributor 3
Cultural considerations of ECERS-3 in Sweden

Williams, Pia1, Mellgren, Elisabeth1, Sheridan, Sonja1 & Garvis, Susanne1

1University of Gothenburg

Quality in early childhood education is an important topic in many countries. High quality preschools with well-educated preschool teachers have the potential to improve learning, equity and equality for children from diverse backgrounds. Participation in preschools that offer the child a good start to life and school is expressed as an aspect of every child’s right to education. Research suggests that high-quality preschool provides many long-term benefits for young children and society. How to measure early childhood quality however can be a complex issue. One approach is the use of the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS), an observational scale of the learning environment (Harms et al., 2014). In Sweden, the preschool quality has been evaluated with ECERS since the beginning of 1990, showing a significant variation in the preschool quality (Andersson, 1999; Kärrby, 1992; Sheridan et al., 2009).

This paper aims to discuss cultural, reliability and validity issues in relation to an adaptation of ECERS-3 to a Swedish preschool context. The research question is formulated as: what items in ECERS-3 are in need for cultural adaptations in a Swedish preschool context? ECERS-3 data was collected during 2016 in 153 Swedish preschools. The analyses were drawn from descriptive data from the ECERS-3 evaluation, based on observations in preschool. The analyses take an interactionistic perspective grounded in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory and a sociocultural approach which means individuals and environment influence and is influenced by each other in a continuous interaction. Together, these theoretical perspectives contribute to an understanding of the relationships between policy issues, educational goals and preschool teachers’ competence in organising and creating conditions for children’s learning and development.

The study follows the Swedish research council guidelines and ethical rules in social science research. Ethical aspects of the research were taken into consideration, including in particular requirements for confidentiality, consent, information and autonomy, along with the emphasis that participation in the study was voluntary. The results indicate that adaptations need to be made with care, considering cultural issues as well as quality aspects. While many of the indicators are easily transferable, some need cultural consideration to meet the Swedish child perspective as expressed in the preschool curriculum, the preschool design and ideas around interaction and safety issues. The article suggests that an adaptation is needed when adapting methods to evaluate early childhood environmental quality. This presentation will also discuss cultural accommodations for the scale as well as the future for quality evaluations in the Nordic region. Thus, the paper contributes to show similarities and differences across Nordic preschools.
Exploring curriculum making and design within the Scottish and Swedish Science Curriculum

Day, Stephen
University of the West of Scotland

Research Topic/aim
To critically examine the extent to which the Scottish and Swedish Science curriculum share common features; reflect their stated aims; and orientate and attend to developing students as scientifically literate citizens.

Theoretical Framework
Curriculum making operates at the institutional; the programmatic; and the classroom level (Doyle, 1992). This paper will focus on the institutional and programmatic level of curriculum making. The programmatic curriculum embodies a theory of content that aligns with the institutional expectations and teaching activities. According to Roberts (2011) two visions of scientific literacy can be identified within curriculum documents. Vision I (literacy within science), looks inward at science and relates to the discipline of science itself - the products, processes and characteristics of the scientific enterprise. Vision II (literacy about science-related situations) looks outward at situations in which science has a role and relates to the situations in which science demonstrably plays a role in human affairs - including but not limited to scientific thinking and activity. The two visions of scientific literacy are used as a framework for analysing the Scottish and Swedish science curricula.

Methodological design
A textually oriented discourse analysis of Scottish and Swedish Science curricular policy documents relating to the primary and lower secondary school phase of education was performed. First, all the relevant science curriculum documents relating to the Scottish and Swedish curriculum were identified and shared. Second, the authors read and analysed the orientation of the science curricula. Third, the authors identified the common and contrasting features of each countries science curriculum and established the extent to which each curriculum attended to the orienting vision for the curriculum.

Expected conclusions/findings
Analysis indicates that there are key structural similarities between the Scottish and Swedish science curricula in terms of breadth and range of content areas with the main differences being in content detail; specificity of language and explicit orientation. The Swedish science curriculum was more specific in its’ use of language with the Scottish being more vague. Both countries science curriculum had a clear orientation statement but the Scottish curriculum documents explicitly oriented the curriculum towards the development of students as scientifically literate citizens with skills, competencies and knowledge whereas the Swedish curriculum is more oriented towards students’ accumulation of scientific knowledge.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The Scottish and Swedish science curriculum has undergone major reform over the last decade. This has impacted upon science teachers’ perspectives on knowledge and learning. How these science curricula reforms have impacted upon science classroom practice within the two Nordic countries show similarities but differ in some important ways. Science as subject is especially suitable for comparison because science content is similar across national borders.

References
Role of learning environments and policy contexts in realization of dispositional learning outcomes in Europe

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Research topic/aim

With “A New Skills Agenda for Europe”, the European Commission [EC] doubled down on its push towards more skills-based education as “[…] pathway to employability and prosperity” (EC, 2016, p. 2). In the Agenda, ‘skills’ are defined broadly as what a person knows, understands, and can do. Emphasis on skills-based approaches was initiated in mid-90s by UNESCO under Jacques Delor leadership (Delors, 1996), followed by OECD’s Definition and Selection of Competencies (DeSeCo) project, which then led to The European Reference Framework of key competences (Official Journal of the European Union [OJEU], 2006). This paper aims to problematize and show the complexity of developing 21st century skills or dispositional learning outcomes (DLEs) by focusing on conceptually addressing the role of learning environments and policy contexts in realizing DLEs in the European context.

Theoretical framework

We frame the discussion on potential of education systems to realize DLEs around Curriculum and Didaktik traditions as per Deng and Luke (2008), where curriculum is elaborated along the lines of four main overarching perspectives, namely academic rationalism, social efficiency, humanism, and social reconstructionism, and Didaktik as European-based framework for curriculum making at the classroom level. Next, we turn to trans-national policy flows and how they have affected national education policy contexts.

Methodological design

The paper employs document analysis to address two main research questions: first, how do trans-national policies affect national education and curriculum policies? And second, how do different curriculum theoretical underpinnings affect the potential to realize DLEs? The document analysis will focus on two European national contexts – one EU (Sweden) and one non-EU (Kosovo) member state. The paper will primarily focus on dissecting policies related to curriculum, teacher education and assessment in the two countries.

Expected conclusions/findings

Prior studies have shown that emphasis of the EC/EU on key competences, learning outcomes and skills-based education have had an influence on education policies across EU member states (Pepper, 2011; Gordon et al., 2009). Therefore, the latest EC push will likely continue to build on previous strategies for affecting individual countries.

Relevance to Nordic educational research

The paper addresses a timely issue that is of relevance for Nordic educational research, as the EU New Skills Agenda will attempt to affect each of the EU member states.

References

Policy borrowing in school reform: The Norwegian projection of the Finnish example

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A key rationale of PISA and similar international large-scale surveys (ILSAs) is to provide information that can be used in the design of states’ education policy. This may occur both directly through the inclusion of benchmarks in assessment systems and indirectly through the transfer and borrowing of concepts used in curriculum guidelines and associated documents. Thus advice and expectations from the OECD may standardize how countries’ policies are exercised in certain areas which in the next step may lead to converging policy-making processes (Grek, 2009). PISA can in this way have a globalizing effect on education policy.

However, the PISA measurements are only one of several OECD sources that inform advice to member countries in the education sector. Moreover, due to other samples and knowledges which inform policies within and across countries, one cannot conclude that PISA functions as a key globalizing technology independent of the tools in use and the national reform context. Rather, it is a question how policy is translated through the use of knowledge and by projections within local and national reform contexts (Steiner-Khamsi, 2013; Waldow, Takayama, & Sung, 2014).

The paper examines the role and functions of international large-scale studies (ILSAs) in Norwegian school reform policy. During the period when ILSAs were first available for usage in reform-making processes (1986–2001), Sweden was regarded as the model for how to reform education in other Nordic countries. After the December 2001 findings of the first round of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Finland outperformed Sweden in rankings and international attraction from other Nordic countries.

The paper identifies how a state school authority responded to the Finnish success story by attempting similar initiatives in its own school system. In total, 8 Green Papers and 14 White Papers published by the Ministry of Education between 1995 and 2016 were analyzed to examine how policy makers and experts referred to Finland as a model country. The purpose was mainly empirical, i.e., clarifying the usages of references in reform policy texts written within Norway and the projections of Finland as a model country.

A striking finding is that ILSAs were only referenced through normative statements about good or bad results, legitimizing best and occasionally bad systems. Furthermore, Finland is frequently referred to as an example to learn from but largely when compared with other Northern and Western European countries.

The paper illustrates how Nordic education policy with Finland as a reference, is shaped by the reception of ILSAs within a neighboring country.

References

Analyzing the critical curriculum

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One of the most salient manifestations of the celebration of critique in our age (Boland 2013) is the ideal of “critical thinking” which today puts its mark on every institution in society. Within higher education, attempts at molding a critical subject take multiple, explicit forms – in Sweden, at least four universities have courses with an exclusive focus on critical thinking. Such forms, however, typically emerge as narrow, empty, or instrumental (Heid 2004); the elusive phenomenon of critique is obviously being subject to a radical process of pedagogical recontextualisation (Bernstein 2000) which makes possible a concrete subject of pedagogical instruction.

In this paper I present a theoretical and methodological framework for analyzing critical curricula which is to be applied in my PhD thesis “Critique and Higher Education”. A basic feature of the critical curriculum is that it contains latent pedagogical contradictions: it intends to motivate students to approach the educational institution and its content with an affirmative attitude, which is the attitude of trust, while at the same time cultivating a “negative” attitude in general, which is the critical attitude. Taking aim at this contradictory character, I propose a materialistic perspective, in which participation in education itself is understood as an ambiguous practice. This perspective is informed by the French theorist of critique Luc Boltanski, and the Austrian philosopher Robert Pfaller, whose basic claim is that agents participating in institutionalized practices (such as education) have a competency to reflect upon these practices from a subjectively constituted position of exteriority (Boltanski 2011, 57–59; Pfaller 2014, chap. 2). Besides of modelling a specific procedure for critical thinking and acting, critical curricula can strategically seek to nurture, or colonize this competency.

To illustrate this theoretical perspective, I present an empirical study including a single case, which is carried out by means of a curriculum analysis focusing on the way critique is made into an organized, teachable procedure, a reality test operating from the normative position of particular economies of worth, which are culturally embedded logics for ascription of value (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006). The critical curriculum is thus read as comprising several components, such as a description of reality, a model for testing reality, a critique justifying this test, and a qualification of the test in relation to other possible test formats.

References

Congested curricula and incompatible goals: the curious absence of ICT from school-based learning in China

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Research topic/aim
Worldwide, information and communication technologies (ICT), particularly in the sense of digital literacy, are increasingly considered as both inevitable and indispensable parts of the school curriculum. Also, international student assessment studies like PISA have on several occasions assessed computer and information literacy. Additionally, classrooms, teaching and learning, as well as school administration and school-family interaction have become more and more web-based.

China is no exception to this global trend. In parallel to its massive investment in digital infrastructure and technology, it has launched large-scale plans to digitalize education and schooling. The declared goals are not only to make teaching and learning more efficient and interactive, but also to bridge rural-urban divides in educational access and quality, thus reflecting challenges that can be found both in developed and developing contexts.

The aim of the paper is to investigate how these ICT initiatives operate on the ground, and examine (1) to which extent, and which ways, digitalization has affected the school, teacher-student-family interaction, and student learning; and (2) if these ICT initiatives have, as proclaimed, made learning more efficient/interactive and education more accessible and equitable.

Theoretical framework and methodological design
The paper draws on both document analysis (government plans for ICT in education, curriculum documents etc.) and data collected during fieldwork at Chinese schools. These data include (1) interviews with teachers and school principals; (2) class observations; (3) interviews with educational experts; and (4) lay observations made by Swedish students on an exchange visit in China.

The analysis draws on the concept of ‘translation’ as utilized within Scandinavian neo-institutionalism: globally travelling ideas and programs are not only literally translated into the local context’s words, but also into this context’s institutions and action frames (e.g. Czarniawska and Sevón, 2005); as well as on the concept of ‘micropolitical literacy’ (e.g. Kelchtermans, 2002), which takes into consideration teachers’ political and emotional learning processes when implementing the curriculum.

Expected conclusions/findings
In the course of transferring and implementing ICT into Chinese schools, the proclaimed aims of efficiency, interactivity and equity do not only become watered down, or at times completely lost; but due to structural constraints and system-inherent logics, these aims are frequently found to have been transformed into their exact opposites: regarding learning processes, into more teacher-directed learning and less interactivity, accompanied by teacher perceptions of ICT as distracting from, rather than facilitating, learning; and regarding educational equity, into an even greater divide between the digitally able, active, wealthy schools in urban centres, and the passive and poor schools in the countryside, whose role it is largely to ‘receive’ the digital content provided to them by their wealthier, better-quality peers.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Even though the empirical data pertain to the Chinese context, questions of curriculum implementation in diverse social, cultural, and political contexts are of more general interest, and findings can also provide theoretical insight. More concretely, the lay observations made by Swedish students, and analysed for this paper, contribute new methodological insights concerning lay theories/lay comparisons.

**The value base of school choice: a historical and discursive perspective**

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**Research Topic**

During the development of school choice policies in Sweden the values of pluralism, parental influence and equal education for all children were present in different ways. Since the reform in 1992, the idea of parental choice in education has reached almost a level of political consensus. However, due to declining PISA-results and increased school segregation, the political debate on school choice in Sweden nowadays has heated up after having maintained status quo since the middle of the 90s. One example is the latest report from the Swedish School Commission, which on the basis of OECD-recommendations suggests school choice-targeted solutions for balancing the values mentioned above (OECD 2015, SOU 2017:35).

The aim of this paper is to characterize the value base of the school choice debate during the period 1975-2017, with the following research question: What discursive shifts and continuities can be seen in the debate on school choice and independent schools when studying political documents from the investigated period?

**Theoretical and methodological framework**

My overall understanding of the education system take departure from curriculum theory, i.e. I view the curriculum as ideologically and politically contested (Apple 2004). In this presentation, the focus is directed to how the value base of school choice is discursively constructed and changing, emphasizing the values and “truths” that obtain recognition and legitimacy over time (Schüllerqvist 1996).

The analysis is based on a comprehensive reading of political documents (motion, government bills, official reports and policy texts). The searching and selection of documents was centered around some key words as well as the principle of intertextuality (Fairclough 1992). I will provide a brief summary of the values and arguments discussed in the 70s and 80s, but the presentations main focus will be on the present. Excerpts from documents will be used to highlight the characteristics of the value base of the school choice debate.

**Findings and relevance for Nordic educational research**

The Swedish school choice debate circles around four values: parental influence, diversity and pluralism, equal education and the tension between public and private good. The most significant trend over time is perhaps a narrowing of the democratic and pedagogical goals of school choice. However, during the 2010s, a small shift can be seen, putting stronger emphasis on how to use school choice to counteract school segregation. The actual right to choose, however, still seems uncontested and is considered “here to stay”.

The relevance for Nordic education research is mainly tied to the possibility of comparing what values have shaped the Nordic education systems over time, but also in gaining understanding of how transnational policy actors more and more seems to define domestic politics.

**References**


Teacher Education Programmes and Their Outcomes across Didaktik and Curriculum Traditions

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Research topic/aim
Examining Teacher Education and Development Study in Mathematics (TEDS-M) 2008 data as an international comparative student teacher-focused study, we aim to unpack differentiation in teacher education programmes (TEPs) from Didaktik and Curriculum education traditions’ perspective. The overarching research question is: How do teacher education programmes and their outcomes vary across Didaktik and Curriculum traditions? The aims of the study are twofold: first, to unpack differences in TEPs among sample countries and second, to examine TEP outcomes in terms of student teachers’ preparedness and capability in coverage of subject content and pedagogical skills to deliver respective content.

Theoretical framework
The study relies on pedagogical traditions of Didaktik and curriculum for theoretical framing. Prior comparative analyses and elaborations of the two pedagogical traditions (Hopmann 2007; Pinar, 2011) have provided overviews noting that Didaktik relies on the concept of Bildung, professional teacher autonomy and responsibility and thus it is more teacher-oriented and content-focused. The curriculum tradition on the other hand is more institution-oriented, methods-focused, and evaluation intensive.

Methodological design
To achieve the aims, the study employs document analysis and quantitative methods. Data from TEDS-2008 study from 4 representative countries are used, including Germany, Switzerland, Norway, and the US. Other data sources of TEPs in sample countries are also used.

Expected conclusions/findings
Prior studies of differentiation in TEPs and outcomes using TEDS-M data have highlighted differences across participating countries from Easter and Western cultural perspectives (Kaiser & Blömeke, 2013) and a four cluster variation has been proposed by Blömeke (2012), which we argue might have been created on biased conceptual assumptions. We expect to further highlight the variation in TEPs across an archetype set of countries. The plausible confirmation of variation in TEPs and their outcomes across Didaktik and Curriculum traditions is fascinating primarily because differences persist despite efforts to standardize higher education programs (Werler, 2015; Trippestad et al., 2017).

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The study’s relevance for Nordic educational research is twofold. First, the study will highlight how far conceptual framework for teacher education (like Didaktik or curriculum research) determine student teachers response on what is counted as valuable professional knowledge (here: the TEDS-M test theory). Second, we expect to argue whether it makes a difference if teachers are trained in a particular teaching culture.
References


Affected by teaching

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Research topic/aim
While the logic of marketisation and measurable standards has become increasingly dominant in the European educational system, the curriculum plan and Education act in Norway still emphasise cultivation of students humanity, their Bildung, and their desire to learn (Education Act, §1). These qualities are not measurable in the same way as students’ performance in disciplines measured by tests.
The current study focuses on non-measurable aspects of Norwegian education, especially related to the abovementioned qualities. Through the study we wanted to learn more about when students are affected by the teaching. For the purpose of this presentation we concentrate on one part of the study, and the research question is as follows:
What school experiences affected students in a positive and lasting way, and what can we learn from these experiences?

Theoretical framework
An important question today is how to live with others in a world of plurality and difference (Biesta, 2006). In this context it is not enough to be clever, we also need people who can think for themselves and make their own judgements and who are compassionate. The educational aim is not only to help students perform well at school (Eisner, 2002). Some teachers make a difference. However, developing students as human beings, teachers cannot control the impact of their activities (Biesta, 2014). Consequently it might be useful to ask students to tell about situations that have had an impact on them.

Methodology/research design
Our data source is focus groups with student teachers and students in secondary school. In focus groups the interaction in the group is a way to generate data (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999). Meaning is created collectively and in social interactions among participants. Focus groups are described as ideal for investigating experiences, beliefs and attitudes. The aim is to identify points of view and get insight into how people experience a situation (ibid). Analysis was conducted through content analysis in terms with an interpretative approach (Hatch, 2002).

Expected conclusions/findings
We have just started to analyse the data, but it is obvious that students were affected by teachers who combined the knowledge content with an interest in the students and recognised them. The students want first and foremost variations and were inspired by projects, excursions and practical work.

Relevance for Nordic educational research
The balance between predefined outcome on one hand and Bildung on the other is a common challenge in the Nordic countries and our findings will hopefully be of interest in our neighbour countries.

Literature


The Teachers’ Voices on Standards of Oracy

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The purpose of this research is to find the Norwegian teachers’ implied oracy construct in 10th grade lower secondary school. It is assumed that the national core curriculum and other defining documents for how to view and teach oracy might be essential in the constitution of the teachers’ more or less tacit conception of oracy. How essential are these documents? Is it possible that the teachers’ more or less tacit conception of oracy also might be a product of the teachers’ education, upbringing in a culture and in a society or a product of the subjects’ own special discourse? With this challenge in mind, I seek to reveal what norms, which constitute the Norwegian teachers assessment of oracy by asking the teachers and thereby giving them a voice on standards.

What the teachers are looking for when they are assessing is called a construct (Kane, 1999). Classic rhetoric theory (Aristotle) is combined with test theory (Kane 2006, Borgstrom, 2014) as analytic tools to interpret the interviews with the nine teachers. In this article, the construct validity of oracy, which is addressed should perhaps be considered as a “quasi”-construct (Kane, 2009, Borgstrom, 2014). This implies that the teachers’ quasi oracy construct, is defined in relation to oracy in the school context. It is not a construct in psychometric terms, but an implicit quasi construct based on the teachers more or less tacit knowledge (Pollyani 1966, Kane, 2009, Borgstrom, 2014).

RQ: What oracy dimensions do teachers value when assessing oral competency across different subject domains in lower secondary schools, and what is the implied empirical construct definition of oracy?

The results revile, the content of the utterance is the most valued part of oral competency. The teachers value a complex oracy construct, which is consistent within subjects. The teachers develop a unified oracy construct through their culture and traditions when given freedom to practice through vague policies.

The teachers understanding of the oracy construct, as a key competency in an assessment context across subjects is not investigated internationally nor nationally. The oracy construct has been under scrutiny in several L2 (second language) settings (i.e. Luoma, 2004, Bøhn, 2016). Since the Norwegian curriculum in 2006, introduced the key competencies, a theoretical construct for writing as a key competency was developed by Norwegian writing researchers (Berge et.al, 2016). However, there exist no such theoretical fundament for oracy. This research explore this gap.

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Changes in the lower secondary school curriculum: Framing the rationale for pre-vocational education

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Research topic/aim
Lower secondary education in Norway has been subject to multiple reforms during the last years, as e.g. a reform that envisions education to become more practical, diverse, motivating and relevant. As part of these reforms, pre-vocational school subjects with emphasis on the world of work and vocational education and training have been re-introduced into the current curriculum Knowledge Promotion 2006 (LK06). As research on school subjects mainly focuses on academic school subjects and pre-vocational school subjects are understudied, the main focus of this paper is to illuminate how the rationale for pre-vocational education is framed. This is done through an analysis of official policy documents.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework of this paper consists of two perspectives, namely perspectives on framing in combination with specific justification patterns of political ideas. Framing theory emphasizes according to Chong and Druckman (2007) that issues can both be considered and constructed from different perspectives, which influences their implications on both values and considerations. They state that “framing refers to the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue” (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 104). Daviter (2007) argues that framing is used by the European Commission to support certain policies. Several studies have focused on the impact of international organisations as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Union (EU) on national policies. Sundberg and Wahlström (Sundberg & Wahlström, 2012) have studied the Swedish curriculum reform of 2011 and argue that there is an impact of international organisations, however, the international influences are blended with national policy. Policy changes are justified through certain patterns. Daigneault (2015) states that these different justification patterns can be divided into four types of arguments: (i) values, assumptions and principles; (ii) ideas about policy problems; (iii) ideas about policy ends and objectives and (iii) ideas about appropriate policy means.

Methodological design
The policy documents included in this study are Green papers, White papers, discontinuations of political committees, official hearings and minutes of discussions in the Norwegian Parliament. Daigneault’s justification patterns will be used for coding the different documents. A discourse analysis will enable me to see the different and competing frames and discourses used for legitimizing pre-vocational education.

Expected conclusions/findings
The analysis of these different documents will show the arguments for pre-vocational education, where the policy documents most likely will present arguments that are similar to the way international organisations as the OECD and the EU frame their policy recommendations, whereas hearings and minutes of discussions in the parliament most likely will include arguments that focus more on the national context.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
This paper is relevant for Nordic educational research as it discusses approaches to governance in education policy in Norway by analysing the rationale and justification patterns for pre-vocational education in Norwegian lower secondary education.

Diffuse or hidden meaning? An analysis of the concept of Samhandling (Interaction) in Higher Education Curricula

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Research aim
In this paper, we aim at presenting a nuanced pedagogical discussion on how an increased awareness of the concept of samhandling (interaction) in policy papers may contribute to the professionalization of leadership and teacher education in order to meet unforeseen and risk-oriented situations. How is the concept of samhandling (interaction) used in local curricula adaptations of general policy documents in officer leadership education and teacher education in the Nordic countries?

Theoretical framework
As policy papers are built on experiences from real-life scenarios, as well as on predictions and strategies for possible change, they may serve as a way of balancing the local “hidden curriculum”, i.e. an established culture with a set of current values, behavior and thinking that have been developed over time in the organization (e.g. Giroux, 1988; Margolis, 2001), with tools to understand and develop competence to handle new ways of interacting in upcoming unforeseen situations of joint action. In our study, we lean on central discussions in military and educational theory linked to teacher education to answer these questions (e.g. Andersen, 2016; Carlsten et al., 2018).

Methodological design
Through a thematic analysis of documents and an interview study, we have examined terms used to identify constructs and concepts of samhandling (interaction), and how they are used in educational planning in higher education. We specifically studied how joint and branch-specific operational doctrines are used in the officer leadership education at the Norwegian Military Academy (Krigsskolen).

Expected conclusions
The findings indicate that policy papers are regarded as highly important in leadership training when it comes to understanding and guiding samhandling (interaction) in unforeseen and risk-oriented situations. At the same time, the terms used to define the concept of samhandling (interaction) seem vague and somewhat overlapping. In our data we find that the vagueness may be replaced by opinion- and experience-based views in the “hidden curriculum,” rather than serve as a basis for developing professions as a whole.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
As the concept Samhandling (Interaction) is central for both military leadership education and teacher education in the Nordic countries, we claim that a discussion of how to interpret this concept between policy papers and local curricula is relevant for understanding how professions build capacity to handle unforeseen and risk-oriented situations.
**References**


Aspects of juridification in education - enactment to comply with the laws in Swedish schools

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One aspect of juridification is that situations tend to be interpreted and described in legal terms (Brännström, 2009). Since the extension of the Education Act and other laws that concern the work in school, the reinstitution of a school inspection as well as an easy accessible system for pupils and parents to submit complaints online, the observance of the laws has tended to become omnipresent in the work at schools (Arneback & Bergh, 2016; Carlbaum, 2016; Runesdotter, 2016). When a school is scrutinized by the school inspection or a law court, they run the risk either to receive critique or being sued for damages. In order to avoid critique school actors strive to ensure that they are able to present documentation in cases that can cause complaints. School actors talk about this work as a process of learning. In many cases it implies changed assignments for teachers as well as for principals. The focus here is to study how the enactment in schools, to encompass the legal statutes and regulations affects professional ethical principles and values.

Theoretical frameworks
The juridification of education, as new ways to govern the work in schools, affect routines as well as priorities. I will try to draw on the frame factor perspective (Lundgren, 1999; Dahllöf, 1999) to analyse the enactment in schools in order to comply with these new legal frames that restrict and direct their work. The frame factor perspective is pointing at the relation between resources, processes and results, where the frames facilitate actions or render them impossible. But the enactment at schools can also be analysed as front stage behavior as the documentation is done in abundance, just in case of a possible complaint or inspection. Drawing on Goffman’s concepts front stage and back stage behavior, I will analyse how these aspects of juridification is affecting the professional discretion.

Methodology/research design
I will combine an actor perspective based on interviews with teachers, principals and school leaders at a couple of schools that frequently have received complaints or critique, with analysis of the documentation of inspections as well as the handling of complaints at the Swedish Schools Inspectorate.

Expected conclusions/Findings
How the school actors experience that routines and priorities of work in school are affected, can contribute to clarify how the enactment of juridification works in relation to teachers ethical and professional values.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research
Juridification in the sector of education is evident in the Nordic countries, although manifested in different ways. To study how the observance of the laws affect teachers and principals work is one aspect of changed conditions for the professional work at school.
Powerful knowledge across curricula, academic disciplines and school subjects

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School education should support children and young people in gaining a life they consider valuable and worth living. At the same time, it is central that young people have access to various types of knowledge, understand the different traditions from which this knowledge emerges and are able to critically use and assess knowledge. In reference to meeting these needs of future citizens, we in this presentation discuss the idea of supporting the development of ‘powerful knowledge’ (Young 2015) and particularly ‘powerful disciplinary knowledge’ (Lambert 2017) in curriculum in a broad perspective. Powerful knowledge can be understood as a curriculum principle, and focus on different forms of specialised knowledge, that teaching and learning should be based on.

We will present the overall research perspectives for two research groups, from Finland and Sweden, with a focus on how to develop a common framework for comparative research on subject specific didactics. The context of teaching and learning puts the general didactic questions about the relations between teachers, students and knowledge content in focus (Carlgren 2015). As part of different knowledge practices teachers make didactical choices where powerful knowledge can be enacted. We propose that analytical concepts of transformation (Shulman 1987) didactical transposition (Chevallard 2007) and re-contextualization (Bernstein 1999) should be used as key concepts in describing powerful knowledge in different disciplines and school subjects. We suggest that in order to understand these processes, it is necessary to consider the relationship as well as the differences between the disciplines and the school subjects (Nordgren 2017). Here we argue for the need for empirical studies. In reference to our preliminary analyses, our aim is to discuss how knowledge is selected and shaped into a subject and how teaching content for teachers and students is transformed.

The expected outcomes of this analysis are relevant for the development of subject-didactical theories and teaching of future subject teachers in Nordic universities as well as for developing teaching practices at schools. The outcomes are also expected to contribute to public discussions about curriculum, teaching and learning within the Nordic context.

References
Symposium
Comparative curriculum studies

This session includes four paper presentations on the theme of comparative curriculum research, either a) focusing on specific comparative findings, or b) discussing specific theoretical or methodological aspects related to the matter of interdisciplinary use of concepts, models, methods etc.

Curriculum theory research has arguably more than other pedagogical research been multidisciplinary, which in turn has required moderate openness for utilizing and combining different sets of theories and methodologies, original developed within different other branches of the social sciences. This specific property of curriculum theory has become even more productive, as the comparative approach has gained popularity within curriculum research.

The comparative approach opens up for temporal and spatial comparisons of school activities, school systems and educational policy making, leading to a wider understanding of school, exceeding national and contemporary bias. But this also challenges the curriculum researcher, when integrating/translating concepts, models, methods etc. from different research fields and different cultural contexts.

The presenters are from Sweden, Finland, Norway, Germany and Japan, and will in different ways present and theorize upon comparative data and findings related to national and international trends and differences, including the Nordic countries. The presentations focus different aspects of school education: teacher autonomy, student assessment, systematic overviews on teaching, and national curricular impact on school practice.
Contributor 1

Teacher autonomy in Finland, Germany, and Sweden

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This presentation aims to illuminate how teachers in different national contexts perceive and enact autonomy in their professional life. Teacher autonomy has become a subject of increasing interest in recent years, which in can be seen as a reflection of wider national and global education trends. How teacher autonomy, amongst other things, has been offered as a key ingredient for e.g. Finland’s success in PISA is a case in point (Stenlås, 2011).

In this presentation we define autonomy “as the quality or state of being self-governing. For her, autonomy is the capacity of an agent to determine its own actions through independent choice within a system of principles and laws to which the agent is dedicated (Ballou, 1998). Consequently, autonomy conditions professional agency but also needs particular prerequisites of agency in order to exist. Moreover, as described below we argue that autonomy is not an on/off phenomenon. Our contribution is theoretically framed by a multidimensional model that aims to make teacher autonomy empirically investigable. We will present a matrix that unites three different perspectives to teacher autonomy (individual autonomy at classroom level, collective autonomy in schools and professional autonomy in relation to various actors in the school system), and different domains of teachers’ work in which teacher autonomy can evolve (educational, administrative, social, developmental domains). This matrix is contextualised by both and at least school and national particularities.

We will employ this matrix with descriptive survey data on teachers’ perceived autonomy in Finland, Germany and Sweden. The countries are interestingly to compare, because they represent different governance regimes. Germany and Finland has been described by a strong inner-professional control and decision making structures, i.e. collegial arenas and a tradition of principals as head teachers. Sweden can rather be described by accountability and audit governance by other actors than teaching professionals, e.g. by municipality officials or private school owners (a group not equally important in Germany and Finland), as well as by national agencies (Wermke & Höstfält, 2014). In this presentation, we will first of all discuss teacher autonomy as issues if decision making and control (Ingersoll, 2003)

The results show that a conceptualisation of teacher autonomy with help of the described device enable us to compare teacher autonomy in different countries. It can be shown that in different contexts, teacher autonomy apparently can be organised differently: As their German and Finish colleagues, Swedish teachers experience their educational classroom work as a space of autonomous decision making, but not the social and professional development dimension both at classroom and school level. However, instead of colleagues, rather state and municipalities officials are attributed with a control function. Teachers have more decision making power in Germany and Finland. This, however, is at the price of control by peers and principals. Finally, and very interesting, in all countries, control from parents is very important regarding social and educational issues.

References


Contributor 2
Transnational Trends and Contesting Concepts for Measuring Merit

Tveit, Sverre
University of Agder

The aim of this paper is to present a project proposal which investigates transnational trends and contesting concepts for measuring merit, and its implications for curriculum, assessment and teacher education policies in the Scandinavian countries.

The theoretical framework draws on Hopmann’s (2003) much used article The Curriculum as a Standard of Public Education along with Carson’s (2007) seminal volume The Measure of Merit. By integrating Hopmann’s distinction between process- and product-controlled education systems and Carson’s distinction between the American and French republics’ approaches to assessment and testing, Tveit (2017) has developed theoretical frameworks for analysing cultures of educational assessment. A distinction is drawn between the continental European process-controlled examination culture, which emphasises subjective qualified judgments (where examiners need to agree upon quality) and the American product-controlled testing culture, which emphasises objective external measurement (where single teachers determines quality based on standardized instruments). These two cultures of educational assessment reflect largely different contexts and premises of curriculum, assessment and teacher education policies. It can be argued that Sweden represent a «blend» of these two cultures, following the termination of the «studentexam» in the 1960s, whereas Norway and Denmark to a larger extent sustain the examination culture albeit with increased influence from the testing culture following the «PISA chock» in the new millennium.

The methodology and research design is under development. The study will have a comparative design, including Norway, Sweden and Denmark along with the United States and Germany as primary «borrowing» contexts. The study integrates analyses of archive material, policy documents and expert interviews with key policymakers’ and researchers that are in the position to discuss the historical developments with respect to national curriculum, assessment and teacher education policies in the respective countries.

The expected findings include further substantiated analyses of Hopmann’s (2003) distinction between process- and product-controlled education systems. Further, an overview of the emergence of the national examination and testing systems in the Scandinavian countries will be developed, along with identifying international research projects and other transnational collaboration that influenced these developments. Ultimately, the study will illuminate different premises for the development of curriculum, assessment and teacher education policies in the Scandinavian countries which can substantiate significant differences in the countries’ contemporary policies and policymaking.

The relevance for Nordic Educational Research is substantial, as the study will provide empirical data that can substantiate widely used curriculum theories. Further, it will contribute to the understanding of significant cultural differences between the Nordic countries and between these countries and the Anglo-Saxon countries that largely influences our curriculum policies. Provided that the Nordic countries largely is reliant upon (English) Anglo-Saxon research when drawing on international research to inform policymaking, the study has the potential to provide important insights with respect to the cultural and contextual differences across countries, and to develop a «lens» that can help us get a clearer picture of the underpinnings of policymaking that can inform policy borrowing and lending both amongst policymakers and researchers in the field of education.
Contributor 3
Mapping reviews on teaching– a preliminary inventory

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Research topic/aim
The project Research about teaching - Systematic mapping and analysis of research topographies started out in 2017. The aim is to increase and refine our knowledge about teaching and teaching research. We address three main questions:

• What topics and theoretical and methodological approaches dominate research about teaching?
• What are the most important results?
• How has the knowledge of teaching developed over time and in different contexts?

This study is a preliminary inventory of reviews with high impact published in international, English-speaking journals resident in the US or the UK, which investigate the potential of different teaching (and learning) methods/approaches.

From a comparative perspective, we trace how this field of research varies with regards to a) overview methodology, b) types of teaching methods/approaches, c) claims on generality versus focusing specific subjects or recognizing differences between school stages, student ages etc, and d) how this research field has evolved over time. In this study we present some findings from our initial coding of 80 reviews 1980-2017 (20 per decade), the ones most cited from every decade that specifically address school-related teaching methods/approaches.

Theoretical framework
Our theoretical points of departure is pragmatic (Danford, 2006, Rorty, 1989) because We suggest that: a) there are different legitimate research traditions partly with their own valid knowledge criteria (Burrel and Morgan, 1979, Habermas, 1986) and b) social and educational research practices as well as findings have to be related both to the development of knowledge and to the development of society (cf Garrison, 1994). We are critically open (Bernstein 1983) towards different theoretical positions, analyzing them in terms of their values and usefulness in developing human practices.

Methodology/research design
The project takes an methodological approach based on the SMART format, stressing the importance of analyzing different kinds of recognized high impact research on a specific matter, taking their different theoretical and epistemological standpoints, methodologies etc into account. Our analysis is based on a seven-step-procedure, whereof step 1-5 serve as a basis for this preliminary inventory:

1) Discern relevant research arenas, where researchers interact, i.e. cite each other
2) Identify research with a high impact in each arena, i.e. numbers of citation
3) Assemble background data about the material (e.g. authors, gender, and institutional affiliation).
4) Categorize the material by genre (meta-analyses of effect studies, empirical research reports, concept reviews)
5) Map and analyze central aspects of publications regarding: a) topics b) theoretical tradition c) theory d) method e) outcomes and f) use of central concepts.

The next stage of this procedure includes a deeper analysis of the aspects mentioned in 5) above, followed by an overriding characterization and critical evaluation of the research area and its implication for school practice.
**Expected conclusions/findings**
Meta-analyses dominate, whereof many make general claims regarding different kinds of teaching, while some are more subject-specific and in a few cases school stage-specific. But a substantial number of reviews – from different time periods and with varying degrees of sensitivity to subjects and student ages - take alternative theoretical and empirical approaches.

**Relevance for Nordic educational research**
The Nordic countries have in recent years established National School Research institutes where systematic overviews – designed according to international standards - play an important role. And since Nordic researchers increasingly publish in international anglosaxian journals it is important to discern what kind of research these arenas cover and prioritize, and its consequences for Nordic educational research.
Contributor 4
How National Curricula affect educational practices. A comparative study of Sweden and Japan

Honjo, Megumi
Kanazawa University

Research topic/aims
The aim of this study is to show differences between the National Curricula of Sweden and Japan with respect to the extent and the way in which those curricula control educational practice. In both countries, the National Curricula describe the comprehensive educational aims and each subject’s goals and main contents, without specific teaching methods or materials. Educational practices are thus directed toward the aims and goals in the National Curriculum with the help of some measures such as authorized textbooks or National Tests. Some measures are working together with the National Curriculum to control educational practices. This study is to focus on these measures, in other words, the National Curriculum’s system of realization.

Theoretical framework
According to IEA, the concept of curriculum is classified into three types, intended curriculum, implemented curriculum and attained curriculum. This study focuses on the relation between intended curriculum and implemented curriculum. The National Curriculum, as intended curriculum, just sets some restrictions or frames of educational practice, as implemented curriculum, just as Ulf P. Lundgren pointed out in his frame factor-based curriculum theory. On the basis of this theory, this study tries to investigate and compare the different frames in Sweden and Japan.
Regarding the types of frames, influential elements for the educational practices as listed by Nishioka are to be used. This list shows the components of curriculum, for both intended and implemented curriculum and will help to explain the difference of these countries.

Methodological design
The National Curricula of elementary schools in Sweden(gr1-9) and Japan (the Course of Study in elementary schools(gr.1-6), revised in March 2017) are analyzed. Firstly, the fields and contents which are written in the National Curricula are compared. Then, the measures helping the National Curricula with directing educational practice are compared in accordance with Nishioka’s list. Through these comparisons, the common features and differences between the Swedish and the Japanese National Curriculum system will become clear.

Expected conclusions/findings
Though both the Swedish and the Japanese National Curricula show the comprehensive educational aims and each subject’s goals and main contents, they have quite different measures to control the educational practice. For example, the Japanese National Curriculum has official comments for each subject to give more specific recommendations on teaching. In addition, textbooks of each subject are examined by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) according to the National Curriculum and every school has to use these required textbooks. On the other hand, Sweden has National Tests to make teachers understand the goals related to what every student must learn. Such differences affect the teacher’s way of thinking about the National Curriculum, the autonomy of teachers and the quality of teaching.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
This study applies the curriculum theory developed in Sweden to the international comparative curriculum study. It may help the analysis and development of educational curriculum realization in both countries.
Symposium
Comparative curriculum studies - discursive institutionalism, curriculum and educational leadership

Symposium Objectives
The intention of this symposium is to explore 1) how nation state based curriculum change and related educational leadership on levels above and below is conceptualized in and by educational and curriculum theory, 2) in what respects discursive institutionalism may offer a complementary approach to understanding how educational policies, ideas and values (curriculum) relate to administrative processes on different levels. Here ‘educational leadership’ receives a wide definition. In this symposium, we consider it relevant to develop an understanding of how the dynamics between, within and across different levels may be approached. As transnational institutions of different kinds have challenged the nation-state perspective later curriculum research and theorizing has partly responded by turning into investigations into how policies travel horizontally between policy systems and how meaning translate between levels (Steiner Khamsi, 2004).

Further, the papers in the session are developing methodologies that use DI as part of inquiry on these contemporary challenges and changes. DI provides analytical tools for understanding and examine the dynamics of change, it does not provide an explicit methodology for empirical analysis of these dynamics.

Scholarly Significance
Contemporary policies and societal changes make it crucial to understand schools as societal institutions, the interplay among policies, societal trends / aims, methods, and social interactions of leadership-teaching-studying-learning within and between levels (classrooms, schools, districts, nation states, transnational). Answers to these questions are significant to educational leadership, curriculum theory/didaktik, education theory, and policy studies.

Structure of the Symposium
The symposium will be structured as a panel with the co-chairs providing an overview or introduction of the objectives and significance of globalizing policies on leadership for curriculum change.
Contributor 1
Educational leadership at the municipal level – a non-affirmative and discursive institutionalist approach

Nylund, Ann Sofie¹ & Uljens, Michael¹

¹Åbo Akademi

Aim
This paper aims at exploring in what ways and to what extent we can make use of non-affirmative education theory and discursive institutionalism as conceptual tools for understanding educational leadership at the municipal level.

Theoretical framework
Educational leadership at the municipal level reflects a multidimensional discourse between political leaders, the municipal administration and the public/parents (Uljens, 2015). This phenomenon may be understood both as an educational leadership dilemma but also as a political decision making process as well as deliberative politics involving citizens. How may we approach such a complex conversation conceptually and methodologically? For this purpose this study aims at elaborating on the explanatory power of non-affirmative education theory (Uljens 1998), deliberative political theory (Bengtsson, 2008) and discursive institutionalism (Schmidt, 2008).

Deliberative political theory tend to focus on the public sphere. Sometimes the focus is especially on the policy-sphere where policy-actors engage each other in coordinative discourses considering political constructions. Sometimes the focus is on the political sphere engaging the public in a communicative discourse about them. The coordinative discourse within the policy-sphere consists of individuals and groups constructing policy- and program-ideas together. Policy-actors such as administrators, experts, interest groups and activists work together in different ways to coordinate policies and to reach agreements. The coordinative discourse can be maintained by individuals that share cognitive and normative ideas in an epistemic community or by individuals that share ideas and that have opportunities to shape policies. (Schmidt, 2008.)

Aiming at understanding pedagogical leadership, educational theory help us to identify the aim, contents and also methods of the leadership discourse, as the object of the investigation. Political science in turn reveals how power is distributed and how decision-processes appear in a political context (Schmidt, 2002, 2008, 2014). In this study it is assumed that the relation between education and politics is non-hierarchical. Education has a non-hierarchical position in relation to politics, culture and economy and is neither positioned outside nor inside society, neither over nor under society but has a mediating role in between other societal practices (Benner, 2015; Uljens, 1998).

Design and methodology
In studying educational leadership discursive institutionalism treats institutions both as given, as the context where actors think, speak and act and at as contingent, as results of the thoughts, words and actions of the actors. This means, that inner institutions of actors function both as structures and as limitations for them and as external constructions that are shaped and changed by the actors. Actions within an institution are seen not as a product of rational choice of actors within the frames of convenient norms and rules. They are instead processes where the actors shape and maintain institutions based on their ideational background-abilities (Schmidt, 2008).
Expected conclusions and findings
We will demonstrate how a combination of non-affirmative educational leadership theory and discursive institutionalism can be applied in order to demonstrate specific features of the decision-making process, with several actors on different levels, in a municipality.

We will show how educational institutions have a relative freedom and a space that both demand and allow reflective and professional educational leadership (Kanervio & Risku, 2009). We point out what ‘non-affirmative pedagogical leadership’ means in this context and how it can be used for understanding to what extent and in what ways leadership affirms existing societal practices or political interests. For example, we will show how the administration and superintendents mediate between politicians and the general public including parents, but also how they act around these issues in relation to the principals, teachers and students. Non-affirmativity recognises that political interests affect education but does not allow political ideologies to be superordinate to the extent that education would be reduced to serve a political ideology. That would be in conflict with the open and democratic society (Benner, 2015). In conclusion we consider that non-affirmative educational leadership means that the position of education is constantly critically renegotiated.
Contributor 2
Reframing Curriculum Change - The Potentials of Discursive Institutionalism in Globalised Education

Sundberg, Daniel & Nordin, Andreas

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Research topic/aim
The question of what drives curriculum change has for decades been an issue among educational scholars working in the field of curriculum theory (CT). Due to the globalization of the curriculum field (cf. Andersson-Levitt, 2008), issues of how to address, understand and explain the role of transnational forces and actors as drivers of change have become central to the field (Nordin & Sundberg, 2014). As a result of this ‘transnational turn’ it is necessary for scholars in the field of curriculum studies to reinvent their analytical tools (cf. Young, 2013; Deng, 2015) in order to be able to analyze curriculum-making as a complex and multi-layered practice taking place in a complex interplay between transnational, national as well as local arenas and a diversity of endogenous and exogenous forces and determinants. In response to this expressed need for scholars working in the field of CT to reinvent their analytical tools (cf. Deng, 2015) the aim of this paper is to turn to discourse-institutionalism (DI) developed by Vivien Schmidt (2008, 2010, 2011, 2016) in order to examine its methodological potential and to develop a conceptual framework for analyzing curriculum change in the light of the ‘transnational turn’ within CT.

Theoretical framework
We make use of DI and Schmidt’s distinction between a coordinative and a communicative policy discourse. Somewhat simplified the coordinative discourse refers to the interaction among different kinds of policy elites while the communicative discourse refers to the interaction between these elites and the public. Furthermore, we make use of Schmidt’s stratified understanding of ideas at different policy levels, from philosophical ideas that are very stable over time, to programmatic ideas that changes somewhat easier to policy ideas who can change rapidly in order to capture the transformation of ideas travelling between different arenas and used by different actors.

Methodological design
The different kinds of ideas we relate to the five different categories arenas (where?), actors (who?), content (what?), language (how?) and legitimation (why?). Combining these different categories facilitates a coherent analysis of curriculum change as simultaneously content and discursive interaction between different policy actors at different policy levels.

Expected conclusions/findings
Ongoing research on the most recent Swedish curriculum reform, Lgr 11 is used to provide empirical illustrations of how the framework and its concepts can be used for theoretical analyses and methodological designs especially focusing travelling curriculum policies on ‘competencies’. The result shows that concepts from DI might be useful for unpacking the assumptions of linearity, state-centeredness, deliverance as prevailing premises of educational reforms. By analysing discursive forces and practices in different contexts, arenas, actors etc. new avenues for understanding and explaining curriculum change emerge. We finally argue that decision-making of leaders (political, professional, administrative etc.) cannot be properly explained, we argue, without taking into account the role of institutional settings, spaces, times and interactions under which actors use their capacities and agency.
Contributor 3
Globalization and interactive power relations in school leadership policy: comparing Norway and Sweden through the lenses of an institutional-discursive approach

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This paper addresses how school leadership education, constituted as a field of professional knowledge, has evolved into a new policy space that serves governance purposes while simultaneously facilitating learning among current and future leaders. By examining globalization and learning as prominent features, we show how the development of school leadership programs enables a borderless policy space through problem statements and strategies that individuals and organizations share. At the same time, we find that the solutions to these problems are both country-specific and locally defined, bordered by the limitations of the national providers who share knowledge and decide upon curriculum content and processes.

In total, 20 policy papers were analyzed, including OECD and EU documents, white and green papers, and strategy documents and curriculum frameworks for school leadership education produced by state authorities in Sweden and Norway. Inspired by how Schmidt (2011) articulates her epistemology for studying the dynamics of change and how she conceptualizes ideas and discourses to connect theory with data, we utilize an ideational approach to research leadership education as a policy field (Béland & Cox, 2011). Following a discursive-institutionalist approach, we argue that the ways in which social and educational questions become intertwined in globalizing reforms are dependent on cognitive and normative ideas in the public sphere and the interactive discursive processes and argumentation by which these ideas are produced, conveyed, and potentially led to collective action (Schmidt, 2012). Based on foreground discursive abilities, which comprise actions through the ways in which people distance themselves from everyday institutional activities and discuss and reflect upon school leadership education is developed and designed as an institution, the paper show on a more general level, how school leadership education changes from an “outside” perspective. Thus, globalization can be explained by foreground discursive abilities that provide the basis for a coordinative discourse that is characterized by the creation, elaboration, and justification of a certain policy across the nation-states programs for educational leaders.

By comparing two sets of country-specific policy texts about school leadership development at the national level in Norway and Sweden, the paper identifies how state authorities within two neighboring countries in Scandinavia act within a globalizing discourse while approaching their shared problems differently. We argue that a discursive-institutionalist approach helps identify how globalization emerges and how interactive power relations between the providers and the users play a role in decision courses on curriculum issues within leadership education. Finally, by addressing curriculum theory to clarify how ideas and policies connect with education reform in the selected countries (Uljens & Ylimaki, 2015; Wahlström & Sundberg, 2017), we demonstrate how policies about school leadership development connect with local practices that are partly transformed by researchers as change agents.

The paper is based on an ongoing study of transnational policy transfer within the Nordic countries. It extends the authors’ analysis of an article (Sivesind & Wahlström, in press).
Symposium - Part A

Juridification of education - challenges for school professionals in the enactment of curriculum and policy

Symposium Aims

As explored in recent research, the juridification of the education sector has increased, especially in the Nordic countries (see for example Hall 2016 and the research journal Utbildning & Demokrati 1/2016). Two distinctive signs of this is that education has been given a partly new language and that legal structures and processes now has a prominent position. The latter concerns, for example, increased national control of local schools, the ability to report deficiencies to the School Inspectorate and that students who are exposed to offensive treatment can be given economical compensation. Governments rely on school professionals, school leaders and teachers, to enact centrally initiated curriculum reforms and other policy initiatives. However, such processes are not without friction and challenges.

This symposium, Juridification of education – challenges for school professionals in the enactment of curriculum and policy, aims at theoretically enabling and/or empirically addressing key tensions arising in the institutional processes encompassing legal statutes and regulation, state curriculum and policy. Taken together, the papers will shed light on the intersection between juridification, curriculum and policy, where school professionals experience diverging expectations and accountability mechanisms.

Besides the central position of the concept of juridification, another common point of reference in many of the papers in this symposium is the work done by Ball, Maguire & Braun (2012), more specifically the concept of policy enactment. By moving beyond implementation of educational policy and policy reform, enactment is rather understood as a non-linear and complex process. Alongside enacting policy initiatives from the central government level, professionals in schools must relate to and interpret legal requirements put forth in state legislation.

Structure – symposium 1 and 2

The symposium is divided into two parts. The six papers, from Norway and Sweden, all represent empirical and theoretical examples of how juridification of the education sector shapes the practices of school professionals, such as school leaders and teachers.

Emphasising the Swedish context, Emma Arneback, Andreas Bergh and Maria Rosén explore the concepts of juridification in relation to changes in education policy. Camilla Herlofsen and Marianne K Bahus report on the legal and pedagogical dilemmas Norwegian schoolteachers and school leaders meet during their work. Third, Judit Novak examines the changing framework of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, both as an expression for “crisis management” as well as juridification.

In the second part of the symposium, Joakim Lindgren, Sara Carlbaum, Agneta Hult and Christina Segerholm discuss challenges in teachers’ enactment of policies on degrading treatment in Sweden. Jeffrey Hall reports on the Norwegian case, addressing to which extent state school inspection contributes to ensuring the rights and opportunities of all students. Finally, Andreas Bergh and Tomas Englund address the conceptual development of curriculum theory and analyse a selection of different studies of enactment process.
Contributor 1

Enactment of juridification in education - a theoretical exploration

Arneback, Emma, Bergh, Andreas & Rosén, Maria

Leaning on legal scholarly work on juridification this paper explores Blichner’s and Molander’s (2008) concepts of juridification aiming to develop a theoretical framework for further research on juridification in Swedish education. Through an abductive process of inquiry, this is done by relating Blichner’s and Molander’s concepts of juridification to changes of education policy in Sweden. The specific empirical focus is on the area of equal treatment and texts produced during the last two decades. By highlighting dimensions of juridification the paper contributes to a view of policy as both formally regulated and enacted by educational actors at different levels.

The proposed theoretical framework consists of the following processes: 1) Juridification as the establishment of legal orders and formal constitutions, for example in new national legislation and quasi-courts such as the Discrimination Ombudsman and the Child and school student representative. 2) Juridification as vertical and horizontal expansion and differentiation of law that captures different kinds of changes in legal policy over time. 3) Juridification as increased conflict solving with reference to law, both inside and outside the legal system, for examples in use of legal terms of equal treatment in schools. 4) Juridification as increased judicial power, which in the case of equal treatment is visualized in changes in power relationships between different actors and discourses. 5) Juridification as legal framing of subjects and relations, which means an adaption to a legal logic at the expense of other logics such as a moral logic.

All together the dimensions capture both descriptive and normative aspects of juridification which open for different kinds of further research with an interest both in how juridification is enacted and what juridification does in terms of interpersonal relations, pedagogical work, teacher and school leadership professionalism etc. – as well as education at large.
Contributor 2
Legal and pedagogical dilemmas in the Norwegian unified school: the perspectives of teachers and other educational professionals

Herlofsen, Camilla & Bahus, Marianne K.

The aim with this paper is to examine what legal and pedagogical dilemmas schoolteachers and school leaders meet during their work.

Fall 2017 participants at a supplementary training course in educational law at the Department of Education, University of Agder, were asked to present a relevant legal and educational issue they had experienced. These issues which were presented anonymously in writing, formed the basis for the survey which is approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data. As the informants in the project described their challenges when they applied the relevant legal regulations, we gained insight in what they experienced as challenging in daily life at different schools. Of a total of nine participants five were leaders at their respective schools of whom one was a leader within special education, two were regular teachers, one was a special teacher and the last one was a school counsellor. There were five women and four men who participated, and seven out of nine were older than 40 years of age. Six out of nine mentioned the period the issues dated from, and all were within the last couple of years. The analysis utilises hermeneutical method and the method of textual analysis in order for the researchers to thematise the challenges and dilemmas described by the participants when confronted with educational law in practice.

All participants mentioned an experienced need to improve their legal competence as reason why they signed up on the course. Issues regarding fulfilment of special education and the pupils’ right to a good psychosocial environment were the most common issues where the legal regulations were most difficult to complete. The culture and traditions at schools were also brought up by some as a hinder in improve the situation. The inadequacy of legal regulations within the field of special education was also mentioned. The following quote is illustrating: “At school I experience an unbalance between the number of hours a pupil has the right to receive in special education according to expert assessment, and the actual number offered by the school.” In relation to the pupil’s rights according to the Education Act Section 9a-3 the concept of bullying was problematised given that the experience is subjective for the pupil. It was also mentioned that the conflict escalates when the concept of bullying is used.

What can be concluded is that there is an experienced need among the participants to improve their legal competence when facing experienced challenges in daily life at school. In several areas the law does not work according to its intentions and can be especially difficult to comply by when meeting pupils who need special education, and towards pupils that feel that they are being bullied by others at school.
**Contributor 3**  
**Education Governance Juridified: The Case of Swedish School Inspections**  
Novak, Judit

While inspection of educational institutions and practices has long been a cornerstone of the governing of public education, specialized inspection agencies tasked with verifying compliance with law and enforcing administrative rules is a recent development in many countries. Armed with newly acquired judicial review procedures, governments utilize school inspection to steer education at an “arm’s length” and resolve a range of contentious political issues. Sweden provides an instructive example in this regard. The implementation of the 2010 Education Act changed pedagogical review and curricular supervision through state school inspection into a primarily judicial review of schools. State school inspectors are to “ensure” educational institutions’ compliance with the law through strong enforcement actions such as sanctions, penalties et cetera (SFS 2010:800, 26 Chapter, 2 § and 10-16 §§).

This paper critically examines the changing framework of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, particularly as a species of “crisis management,” but also as a long-term response to a series of tensions embedded within the drive of Western nations toward what has been identified as “juridification” – the reliance on law and judicial means for addressing core moral predicaments, public policy questions, and political controversies. Work of Habermas (1986, 1996), Weber (1968) and Loughlin (1996) on juridification, and work of Ball (2003, 2006) on policy analysis, forms part of the theoretical framework. This investigation is highly relevant not only for the relationship between state demands for educational accountability and certain evaluative activities, but also for the overarching issue of the tension between governance through litanies of audit and indicators, on the one hand, and the exercise of professional judgment and expertise, on the other. The claims that I shall make about the constraints placed upon both education and educational evaluation are conceptual in that they turn on wider, complex philosophical questions having to do with how we understand the nature of agency and how we view the relation between professional freedom and professional responsibility. I shall argue that the Swedish “juridified” form of school inspection reflects the State’s attempt to go beyond earlier modes of evaluation and enforce more rapid and more precise responses from educational institutions by devising a highly standardized and more widely ranging instrumentality of judgment than earlier. This instrumentality is based upon a type of contractualism between the individual and the State that is fundamentally different from the ideas of contractualism which has bound states and institutions of education together in Western nations for parts of the 20th centuries. The issue of the role of the State in framing and constraining the possibilities for contemporary education is addressed in connection with both the general question of the relationship between schooling and the State, as well as specific issues concerning how “juridified” school inspection enacts certain educational values with respect to the public interest.
Symposium - Part B

Juridification of education - challenges for school professionals in the enactment of curriculum and policy

Symposium Aims

As explored in recent research, the juridification of the education sector has increased, especially in the Nordic countries (see for example Hall 2016 and the research journal Utbildning & Demokrati 1/2016). Two distinctive signs of this is that education has been given a partly new language and that legal structures and processes now has a prominent position. The latter concerns, for example, increased national control of local schools, the ability to report deficiencies to the School Inspectorate and that students who are exposed to offensive treatment can be given economical compensation. Governments rely on school professionals, school leaders and teachers, to enact centrally initiated curriculum reforms and other policy initiatives. However, such processes are not without friction and challenges.

This symposium, Juridification of education – challenges for school professionals in the enactment of curriculum and policy, aims at theoretically enabling and/or empirically addressing key tensions arising in the institutional processes encompassing legal statutes and regulation, state curriculum and policy. Taken together, the papers will shed light on the intersection between juridification, curriculum and policy, where school professionals experience diverging expectations and accountability mechanisms.

Besides the central position of the concept of juridification, another common point of reference in many of the papers in this symposium is the work done by Ball, Maguire & Braun (2012), more specifically the concept of policy enactment. By moving beyond implementation of educational policy and policy reform, enactment is rather understood as a non-linear and complex process. Alongside enacting policy initiatives from the central government level, professionals in schools must relate to and interpret legal requirements put forth in state legislation.

Structure – symposium 1 and 2

The symposium is divided into two parts. The six papers, from Norway and Sweden, all represent empirical and theoretical examples of how juridification of the education sector shapes the practices of school professionals, such as school leaders and teachers.

Emphasising the Swedish context, Emma Arneback, Andreas Bergh and Maria Rosén explore the concepts of juridification in relation to changes in education policy. Camilla Herlofsen and Marianne K Bahus report on the legal and pedagogical dilemmas Norwegian schoolteachers and school leaders meet during their work. Third, Judit Novak examines the changing framework of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, both as an expression for ‘crisis management’ as well as juridification.

In the second part of the symposium, Joakim Lindgren, Sara Carlbaum, Agneta Hult and Christina Segerholm discuss challenges in teachers’ enactment of policies on degrading treatment in Sweden. Jeffrey Hall reports on the Norwegian case, addressing to which extent state school inspection contributes to ensuring the rights and opportunities of all students. Finally, Andreas Bergh and Tomas Englund address the conceptual development of curriculum theory and analyse a selection of different studies of enactment process.
Contributor 1
To see or not to see: challenges in teachers’ enactment of policies on degrading treatment in Sweden

Lindgren, Joakim, Carlbaum, Sara, Hult, Agneta & Segerholm, Christina

One of many challenges that teachers face on a daily basis is related to problems with degrading treatment. Teachers work in order to establish a working environment where children can learn; both knowledge and norms and values, i.e. how to live together and to understand, care for and respect each other in line with the “fundamental values” in the curriculum (The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2011). All schools are regulated by a policy of zero tolerance towards degrading treatment (The Child and School Student Representative, 2017). The challenge, however, is immense, if not abysmal: hundreds of children obligated to spend year after year in a cramped facility without ever troubling each other with derogatoriness, rumours, ridicule or shoving. Teachers take on this difficult challenge with a broad repertoire of pedagogical tools based on research, theory, experience and tacit knowledge. They deal with chaos and unpredictability in contexts where no single method, plan or manual apply (Cardell, 2017: 226).

In this paper we draw attention to how this challenge has been transformed by recent legal regulation of teachers’ work. The School Act has expanded the regulations on degrading treatment and teachers and school staff are today responsible to report any degrading treatment to the principal who in turn has an obligation to report it further to the governing body. This regulation is added to the obligation to quickly investigate and take necessary measures to counteract such treatment (Prop. 2009/10:165; SFS 2010:800).

Based on 35 interviews with municipal officials, school directors, school leaders, teachers and other school staff (n 60) in seven schools in two municipalities we describe and analyse how teachers handle issues related to degrading treatment as the pedagogical challenge has been converted into, or complemented by, a judicial challenge primarily oriented towards objective representation of past events. For instance, teachers have to determine, at every incident occurring during the school day, if it should be reported as degrading treatment or not. Reporting has certain consequences, for example time consuming activities of documentation including administration of evolving digital reporting systems, discussions with colleagues and students and communication with parents demanding careful balance and precision. Not reporting has other consequences, e.g. it involves risk taking in terms of accountability since every incident has the potential to later become part of a complaint on degrading treatment issued to The Swedish Schools Inspectorate or The Child and School Student Representative. Thus, to see or not to see incidents is not only a question of teachers’ attention and immediate subsequential action or mindful awaiting – it is a choice that involves a range of strategic and defensive considerations that in a profound way alters teachers’ professional gaze, understanding and practice.

The paper is theoretically informed by ideas on policy enactment (Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2012) that provide an overall understanding of issues of policy implementation in times of juridification. In order to qualify the analysis of teachers’ challenges and conflicts between different logics we draw on theories on teacher professionalism (e.g. Englund & Solbrekke, 2015; Solbrekke & Englund, 2011).
Contributor 2

Supervising teaching and leadership in public schools: Ensuring legal rights and equal opportunities for all students?

Hall, Jeffrey

As part of the current Norwegian inspection framework, supervision of schools is targeted at controlling legal compliance, as well as evaluating the formative assessment routines of local school districts, school leaders, and teachers. During the inspection process, teachers and school leaders are exposed to in-depth questioning concerning their organizational routines and pedagogical practices (Hall, 2017a; Ottesen & Møller, 2016). In addition, authorities evaluate to which extent schools follow up the intentions in the national curriculum (Ministry of Education and Research, 2006). Consequently, inspection processes are gradually moving closer to what takes place on the classroom level. The aim of this paper is to explore the extent in which these shifts ensure the rights and opportunities of all students.

In a larger, qualitative investigation of state school inspection in Norway, including interviews, observation of inspection teams, as well as analyses of policy documents and legal statutes, new insight of the inspection processes in public schools was offered (Hall, 2016). This paper draws on a range of findings from the overall study, as well as a follow-up study of the relationship between educational law, inspection, and student rights (Hall, 2017b).

The question of equal opportunities and individual legal rights has been widely discussed as part of the increased juridification of the education sector in the Nordic countries, having clear implications for school leadership practices (Andenæs & Møller, 2016; Bergh & Arnebach, 2015). Moreover, according to key policy documents and state curriculum in Norway, equal opportunities imply that teaching makes room for the fact that all students must be supported individually (Ministry of Education and Research, 2006; UDIR, 2017).

If supervision of schools is to contribute to overseeing that these needs are met, this paper raises questions if the current ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to inspection is sufficient. Thus, the paper suggests that to fully support schools and school leaders in their quest to comply with legal standards, there is need to address these pertaining issues in the forthcoming inspection framework.
How to theoretically understand the relation between curriculum research and enactment studies?

During the last years the concept of enactment has become more frequently used within curriculum theoretical studies. One analytical use seems to be to 'loosen up' the different levels and stand open in how the relation between different levels work, if there is a certain hierarchy or not. When used in this way, it is often emphasized that enactment is understood as a non-linear and complex process, examining how policies ‘become alive’, rather than merely (and ideally) executed. Thus, the ambition seems to be to move beyond implementation of educational policy towards processes of ‘doing’ where school professionals, school leaders and teachers, enact centrally initiated curriculum reforms and other policy initiatives.

In this paper, the purpose is to analyse and discuss the relation between the concept of enactment (or what successively has come to be called enactment) and curriculum research historically and theoretically. Can a better understanding of this relation contribute to the theoretical development for the concept of enactment as well as for curriculum theory?

The first part of the paper analyses the historically conceptual development of curriculum theory, starting with the distinction between the two arenas, formulation and realization, implying two distinct levels in a top-down perspective of one level formulating the written curriculum and one ‘lower’ level realizing curriculum in classroom practice. One specific qualification within curriculum theory, which stressed its political character, was to understand the choice of content as politically characterized, opening up for different interpretations leading to different consequences at all levels. This was done in the didactic analyses based on curriculum theory, showing how contents and school subjects were interpreted differently with different political implications.

As an outcome of the first part of the paper, some analytical questions are formulated to support the analysis of the second part, in which we describe and compare a selection of different studies of enactment process with a specific interest in how it is theoretically understood and used. One of the texts, written by Ball, Maguire and Braun (2012), has been chosen as these authors are often referred to by other researchers who makes use of the concept of enactment. Through analyzing the relations between different (and possibly separate and conflicting) concepts and perspectives, our ambition is to contribute to the theoretical development to better understand the role and potential contribution of curriculum theory.
Symposium
Curriculum standardisation in policy and practice

Symposium objectives
Transnational as well as national educational policy makers today emphasise the importance of standardising national curricula both in terms of policy and practise. The assumption is that standardised pedagogical processes will improve education by making it more governable at national, organisational as well as an individual levels. However, these processes are not neutral acts and questions have to be raised about whom the actors are pushing for a standardised curriculum? What are the consequences for the way pedagogical practises in schools are framed? What kind of pedagogical practises are facilitated and/or hampered in a strongly standardised context? In this symposium these issues are scrutinized from different theoretical perspectives and in relation to the intended curriculum as well as the enacted in different geographical contexts.

Scholarly Significance
In times of increased demands for standardisation at all policy levels it is important for educational research to develop a better understanding of the actions and actors involved in these practices and the way transnational policy borrowing and lending is used to legitimize national reform agendas. The symposium contributes with new knowledge on such practices, and how they frame national discourses on what should count as official knowledge and how this knowledge should best be assessed.

Structure of the Symposium
The symposium consists of three papers, which will be presented successively, followed by comments and discussions led by the discussant and the chair.
Contributor 1
What counts in Norwegian and Science school subjects – a study of national curriculum

Mølstad, Christina Elde¹, Langaas, Ylva¹ & Prøitz, Tine S.²

¹Inland Norway University
²University college of Southeast Norway

Research topic/aim
This paper investigates Norwegian educational policy regarding learning outcomes and assessment in schools, specifically the Norwegian and Science school curriculum. Education- and curriculum policies carry with them ways to conceptualise education that influences what teachers do and how teachers perceive themselves (Ball, 2003). As such, curriculum is used to structure the educational course and pedagogical interests to ensure an environment of high-quality learning for children formulated through the aims, content and evaluation of schooling (Lundgren 2006). Today, language and science is often portrayed as core content of school knowledge. Especially can this be discussed in relation to e.g. the PISA and TIMSS assessments (cf. Pettersson, Prøitz & Forsberg, 2017).

Theoretical framework
The educational context toward the end of the 20th century was remarkable for the growth in the use of assessments for measuring achievement outcomes in national systems of education (Kellaghan & Greaney, 2001). This development reflects a widespread expansion of learning outcomes orientation in education policy and in curriculum and assessment (Shepard, 2000, 2007). It has also brought about a change in perceptions of quality (Adam, 2004), as well as switching the focus from input indicators to outcome indicators (Fuller, 2009). It is argued that the scope of interpretation, action, and evaluation of the teaching profession have thus been reformulated and constricted (Forsberg & Pettersson, 2014; Young, 2009).

Methodological design
We conduct a comprehensive content analysis (Cohen et al., 2011; Bowen, 2009) of key policy documents. The main purpose of the document analysis is to investigate what constitutes learning outcomes-oriented education policy in Norway today by zooming in on the language in two subject curricula. Content analysis is useful for examining trends and patterns in documents (Stemler & Bebell, 1998). A discursive view of policy documents as a source of data underscores that any analysis of policy text cannot tell us about the implementation of the policies, “but it tells us which policy problems and goals that are brought to the fore and which are left aside” (Saarinen, 2008, p. 719).

Expected conclusions/findings
Considered the strengthened focus on science education in Norway the last decade due to disappointing PISA results at the beginning of the century, our finding of the non-use of the word learning in the subject curriculum is highly interesting. On the other hand, this might also be expected of a competency oriented curriculum with a stronger focus on goals defining end results. Another interesting finding is how concepts of knowledge, curiosity, creativity, inquiry, observation and experiment seem to dominate the science curriculum plan - and by that emphasize elements with high relevance to learning.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The Nordic countries have in various ways introduced a relatively new set of public management approaches in education that emphasize the combined power of performance measurement, goal setting, and a growing number of regulations and guidelines for the enhancement of accountability to mobilizing teachers’ efforts and raising student achievement (Fuller, 2008; Mintrop, 2012). This paper provides empirical example form one of the Nordic countries and as such provides insight to Nordic educational research.
Fair assessment through standardisation? Swedish teachers’ perspectives on recent curriculum reforms

Falkenberg, Kathleen
Humboldt University

Research topic/aim
The recent Swedish curriculum reform of 2011 led to the implementation of a new curriculum (Lgr11) with more detailed knowledge requirements for each subject related to a new grading scale (A-F). These changes influenced teachers’ daily assessment practices and their general beliefs regarding assessment. This paper focuses on the effects of the Lgr11 implementation on teachers’ assessment practices and their beliefs regarding fair assessment drawing on main findings from a recently finished comparative study on teachers’ justice beliefs regarding assessment in Sweden and Germany (Falkenberg, 2017).

Theoretical framework
Starting from a social constructivist perspective (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) “justice” is conceptualized as a socially constructed phenomenon that can be filled with different meanings depending on the specific historical, socio-cultural or national context. Therefore, a comparative approach using Grounded Theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) is employed in order to study teachers’ beliefs in two different contexts, Sweden and Germany. Concepts derived from the field of empirical justice research (Sabbagh & Schmitt, 2016) were included as “sensitizing concepts” for this study.

Methodological design
The study is a context sensitive comparative study (Steiner-Khamsi, 2010) of Swedish and German teachers’ justice beliefs regarding assessment in school. This paper focuses on the Swedish case. The sample includes 16 episodic interviews (Flick, 2006) with Swedish teachers from nine lower and higher secondary schools conducted over a period of three years (2013-2015) that focused on teachers’ assessment strategies and justice beliefs. Additionally, official regulations (e.g. laws, guidelines and publications from Skolverket) and assessment tools provided by the teachers were analyzed in order to reconstruct the complex interrelations of institutional framing, informal practices and teachers’ beliefs.

Findings
In this study, four sets of justice beliefs were reconstructed from the material: arithmetic, procedural-bureaucratic, discursive-interactive and compensatory justice. The analysis shows that in all interviews, “fair assessment” is described as the product of a professional balancing act for teachers that is influenced by their professional self-concept, their specific understanding of assessment and the relationships between students and teachers respectively teachers and colleagues. In my paper, I will highlight different strategies Swedish teachers revealed in their interviews on how to handle the new grading scale and more detailed knowledge requirements while assessing students (as well as the difficulties they expressed) in regard to their respective justice beliefs. As will be shown, teachers’ justice beliefs are influenced, but not wholly determined by conceptions of justice embedded in the regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, teachers’ justice beliefs influence how teachers interpret and make use of leeway written into those frameworks.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The paper aims at a better understanding of the effects of a recent curriculum reform in Sweden on teachers’ assessment strategies by relating the findings to existing research on former assessment systems.
References
Contributor 3
Externalisation as standardisation? Examining the use of references in the Swedish school commission

Wahlström, Ninni¹, Nordin, Andreas¹ & Hallbäck, Marie¹

¹Linnaeus University

Research topic/aim
Historically the presence of references to international references has been sparse in Swedish education policy. Policy borrowing in the Swedish context has therefore been described as a silent process of importing undeclared ideas and concepts (Ringarp & Waldow, 2016). In this paper we analyse the references in the green paper from the Swedish School Commission 2015 (SOU 2017:35) in order to explore changing patterns regarding legitimizing references. The aim of the paper is to describe the references constituting the scientific and argumentative base for the reforms and to examine how they are used to legitimate reforms.

Theoretical framework
During the last decade there has been a shift in the visibility and use of international references in Swedish education policy due to an emerging crisis discourse. Unlike before, references to international organisations such as the OECD and the EU have now become an increasingly important strategy to legitimate political reforms (Nordin, 2017; Ringarp & Waldow, 2016, Wahlström 2017). As theoretical concepts for understanding the fundamental processes of policies travelling between different geographical contexts ‘Policy borrowing and lending’ (Steiner-Khamsi, 2012) are used, in this paper visualised through the explicit presence and use of references. The concept of ‘legitimacy’ is helpful for understanding the different ways in which references functions as constituents in driving educational reforms (Waldow, 2012). Finally the concepts of ‘externalisation’ and ‘standardisation’ are used for elaborating to what extent and in what ways international references also contribute to converge national curricula.

Methodological design
In the first part we describe the references, distinguishing between international/domestic and scientific/other references. In the second part we make use of the theoretical concepts in analysing the way references are used.

Expected conclusions/findings
The preliminary result shows that the OECD plays a prominent role as legitimisation basis

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The paper uses Sweden as the empirical reference but similar trends can be seen in all the Nordic countries.

References


Symposyym - Part A
"The language of quantity": Educational knowledge, activities and legitimacy

For understanding how education is understood in the contemporary we have to acknowledge the notions and importance of comparisons and data usage. Today, educational comparisons are lesser about how to know about education in different contexts then about doing hierarchies of performances, where comparing school systems and their performances is serving as base and are focusing on positions in ranking and performance trajectories over time. The power of new algorithms and technologies for classifying educational systems at the intersection of international actors and national policy and science, is repeatedly expressed in education policy debates, in mass-media and in conversations with transnational education expertise on how to improve education in these respects. The emergence of this approach to education has been noted in research (Carvalho, 2016), mostly with a focus on relations between different actors at work in different layers and in transnational governance (Ozga, 2012). Others have studied different actors and how they separately frame education. However, few studies have investigated the educational activities for providing educational knowledge and how they together provide major contributions of educational knowledge. The comparative society, dependent on the “language of quantity” (cf. Porter, 1995), is a driving force for promoting specific knowledge embedded within a specific scientific reasoning (cf. Hacking, 1992). Within this reasoning, numbers and comparisons have been most important for educational activities (cf. Pettersson, Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2016). Today, quantification for describing various phenomenon has developed into a technology of distance where the language of mathematics is used and considered as highly structured and rule-bound making it possible to talk the same language all over the globe claiming legitimacy. Consequently, the use of numbers and quantitative manipulation minimizes the need for intimate knowledge and personal trust (Porter, 1995). Accordingly, a new international language develops making comparisons more accessible leading to new activities and new solutions on old problems manifested in e.g. research, science, mass-media as well as in advertising arrangements activated in the “new landscape of educational markets”.

The focus of the symposia is therefore not quantifications per se as a phenomenon but instead the activities that have arisen for producing and handling knowledge for dealing with the rationales based on quantifications and comparisons in terms of numbered data on e.g. performances or comparisons possible to make. Consequently, we are interested in activities that comes from the fear of being left behind in times when statements on being educationally modern and successful is connected with statements based on numbers and comparisons. As a result, the focus of the symposium is based on how a specific reasoning promoting knowledge and expertise based on numbers and comparisons drives educational knowledge production, instituting specific activities which reframes and reshapes actors’ ability to be involved.

With this as a frame, the symposium puts together scholars with an interest in activities taking place - based or promoted by quantifications. The symposium will be organized as two 90 minutes symposiums with papers presented in each seminar, to be followed by comments by the discussant.
Contributor 1
United in Fear: Governing Knowledge in a State of Crisis

Nordin, Andreas
Linneus University

The European educational policy space has experienced an emerging crisis discourse in the last decade. In this paper, the author examines the constitutive elements of this crisis discourse and the specific conditions it sets up for governing knowledge. The text is structured in two parts. In the first part, a theoretical framework drawing on discursive institutionalism is developed. Policy is discussed as a communicative practice, including elements of coordinative and communicative discourses. A coordinative discourse refers to the interaction among policy actors, such as government officials and experts, centered on cognitive justification, while a communicative discourse refers to their interaction with the general public, which is centered on normative legitimation. The substantive ideas communicated are related to three different policy levels. Philosophical ideas refer to traditions and ideologies, broad concepts shared by many that change very slowly. Programmatic ideas refer to more pragmatic ideas underpinning and upholding human institutions. These ideas are stable but still change more rapidly than philosophical ideas. Finally, policy ideas refer to single policies or events. These ideas are more context-sensitive and change more rapidly than the others. In the second part, the theoretical framework is applied to the practice of communicative interaction between the EU and Sweden, as expressed in National Reform Programs and Education and Training Monitor reports 2012–2016. These documents were discussed as communicative practices emerging out of the crisis discourse built around the production and use of comparable data. The analysis shows how the crisis discourse contributes to the merging of transnational and national policy arenas and an increased use of a decontextualized and quick policy language, delegitimizing the role of national politicians in educational policymaking. Devaluing the political language makes insecure politicians turn to transnational actors for guidance. In this respect, the crisis discourse contributes toward reconfiguring the practice of educational policymaking, both in terms of space and speed, redistributing authoritative power from national to transnational arenas. The paper concludes that a European education policy space built around comparable data inevitably becomes a producer of national school crisis, making fear a unifying force in the coordination of policy actions and actors within and between different policy arenas.
This paper is a result from a systematic research review on international comparisons in education by means of International Large-Scale Assessments (ILSA). We asked what research is carried out and which research results and conclusions are presented in this field of study? We started with an identification of a large set of research publications in the field – more than 11 000 texts were identified by means of search engines for the period 2004 – 2017. Of these we choose the PISA-, TIMSS- and the CIVED/ICCS-research programs – in sum more than 8 000 publications. Given the task to assess research quality we included peer reviewed scientific articles and only including primary research doing international comparisons. Important in mapping and synthesizing research was to capture arguments and conclusions in a broad field that varied in terms of study objects as well as knowledge objects. A broad result concerns what to be explained. We noted in the reviewed articles a very large share of identifications of achievement gaps over population taxonomies. To a much lesser extent differences in efficiency were analyzed. We also found research analyzing how to redirect or govern students into certain careers – often in science – being highlighted in some studies. Looking into how these explanations are made the studies referred to student characteristics, different kinds of education measures, and variations in contextual circumstances as explanations. These analyzes presented what was regarded as significant results based on the strength in associations between categories and variables – e.g. how early differentiation in a school system is related to increased social inequity or how gender gaps differ between national contexts. To our understanding, ILSA research entails a particular kind of statistical analysis and construction of data for defining the world of education. One conclusion is that the ILSA research field is heterogeneous, when the subjects of its research are described. This point was supported by the rather fragmented research communication structure that we captured by means of analyses of journal publications citation of articles. However, considering the knowledge objects there is a homogeneous intellectual organization of ILSA in terms of what can be discussed in terms of style of reasoning. This refers to the ways research objects are formulated, how research inquiries are carried out, and what is considered as valid statements in this research process. There is an internal relation in the formulation of explanandum and explanans as knowledge object plus accepted procedures for accepting or rejecting statements concerning this relation – e.g. when comparing school performances among different parts of the population. This is to our understanding basic in the style of reason at work in international large-scale assessments. Such a style of reason sets limits as well as it opens for specific analyses and production of valid statements concerning the research problematic in focus.
Contributor 3
Evidently, the Broker is the New Whiz-Kid at the Education Agora

Adolfsson, Carl-Henrik\textsuperscript{1}, Forsberg, Eva\textsuperscript{2} & Sundberg, Daniel\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1}Linneus University
\textsuperscript{2}Uppsala University

There have been a number of changes in recent decades at the international education Agora. This is especially evident in the production, dissemination and use of educational data and knowledge. An extension and manifestation of the Agora in the public and private sectors can be identified, as well as an increase in different kind of actors and activities. Consequently, the interaction between research, policymaking and educational practice has been redesigned. Furthermore, new relations have emerged with the establishment of broker agencies, further impacting the reformulation of the interaction and the knowledge that is produced and disseminated. As a case, we use Sweden and the establishment of the Swedish Institute for Educational Research (SIER), a government agency aiming to provide professionals in educational practices with a firm scientific basis to improve student learning outcomes. In order to promote this, SIER has two expressed goals: to compile the best available knowledge and to distribute funding for practice-centred research. The study focuses on the epistemological and sociopolitical effects of the reviews of educational research conducted by the agency. Data from websites, documents and interviews is employed and framed by actor network theory. The findings are discussed in relation to both assignments; the production of reviews and the funding of practice relevant research projects. Additionally, we contrast and problematize the analyses in relation to research on other broker agencies, especially those in the Nordic countries. Overall, we develop knowledge about the tensions between the formalization and standardization of knowledge compilations and professional judgement. Ultimately, questions are raised about the consequences of broker agencies as whiz-kids at the education Agora.
The interest in large-scale comparative studies of students’ assessment has increased considerably during the last decades and the results have been widely spread in media. Among the different international surveys of students’ assessment - PISA is standing out in publicity, meaning that the results have received an extraordinary significance as an assessment of the education system and education policy. The OECD seem to be well-aware of the importance of dissemination and one activity taking place in relation to the presentation of results are press-releases and “newsletters” presenting the results for media, as well as for policymakers and others in a focused and simplified way. In the paper, we pay special attention to these activities which we consider to be communicative acts (cf. Luhmann, 1996). A point of departure for the paper is that media, through the communicative acts by OECDs strategy for dissemination, creates certain conditions for how educational results are classified, regulated and communicated in society (Luhmann, 1996), and has thus become a powerful actor in the making of a comparativistic paradigm (Lindblad, Pettersson & Popkewitz, 2015) in education. We consider media as a conglomerate of actors participating in the intersection of science, educational policy, and society, the Agora (Nowotny et al., 2003) where the results are communicated and measures proposed. The aim is to analyze how valid statements are produced on the basis of PISA-results: Which kind of actors are present, what kind of comparisons are made and which conclusions are drawn, what is selected by the OECD and the media to be in focus for the reporting. The analysis has a particular focus on the making of diversity and context in terms of “failure” and “success”.

Contributor 4
PISA, Communicative Acts and the Media: The Discourse of “Failure” and “Success”

Wärvik, Gun-Britt1, Runesdotter, Caroline1 & Pettersson, Daniel2

1Gothenburg University
2University of Gävle
Symposium - Part B
"The language of quantity": Educational knowledge, activities and legitimacy

For understanding how education is understood in the contemporary we have to acknowledge the notions and importance of comparisons and data usage. Today, educational comparisons are lesser about how to know about education in different contexts then about doing hierarchies of performances, where comparing school systems and their performances is serving as base and are focusing on positions in ranking and performance trajectories over time. The power of new algorithms and technologies for classifying educational systems at the intersection of international actors and national policy and science, is repeatedly expressed in education policy debates, in mass-media and in conversations with transnational education expertise on how to improve education in these respects. The emergence of this approach to education has been noted in research (Carvalho, 2016), mostly with a focus on relations between different actors at work in different layers and in transnational governance (Ozga, 2012). Others have studied different actors and how they separately frame education. However, few studies have investigated the educational activities for providing educational knowledge and how they together provide major contributions of educational knowledge. The comparative society, dependent on the “language of quantity” (cf. Porter, 1995), is a driving force for promoting specific knowledge embedded within a specific scientific reasoning (cf. Hacking, 1992). Within this reasoning, numbers and comparisons have been most important for educational activities (cf. Pettersson, Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2016). Today, quantification for describing various phenomenon has developed into a technology of distance where the language of mathematics is used and considered as highly structured and rule-bound making it possible to talk the same language all over the globe claiming legitimacy. Consequently, the use of numbers and quantitative manipulation minimizes the need for intimate knowledge and personal trust (Porter, 1995). Accordingly, a new international language develops making comparisons more accessible leading to new activities and new solutions on old problems manifested in e.g. research, science, mass-media as well as in advertising arrangements activated in the “new landscape of educational markets”.

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Contributor 1
To Measure What We Value or to Value What We Can Measure? Performance Indicators as a Basis for School Choice

Lundström, Ulf
Umeå University

The main objective of the paper is to examine and critically discuss indicators that represent student achievement and are used as a basis for school choice in the Swedish compulsory school. The case of Sweden is especially interesting due to that Sweden today is the only country in the world that allows an un-regulated profit for the owner of schools, as well as private schools due to this circumstance is a fast-growing sector within the economy. The paper, focuses on analyzing the performance indicators in some of the commonly used evaluation systems and to what extent they represent the National curriculum. Five evaluation systems used to inform school choice are selected and analyzed in relation to the Swedish national curriculum, based on perspectives from curriculum and evaluation theories. Most indicators represent a narrow subject discourse, while the discourses that represent the broad goals of the curriculum, such as citizenship, are largely absent. The indicators constitute a conception of student achievement as easily measurable subject knowledge and as such are easy to compare. The result of this development is that appearance increases in importance both for individual reasons, choosing the best school, as well as for the owners of schools, getting students to choose them. Hence, appearance of “good achievements” are today in Sweden the cornerstone of a school system dependent on principles of the “market”.
Contributor 2

School Certification: Marketing Schools by their Appearance

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Since the mid-1990’s the Swedish School system, as well as others, has developed a closer connection between education, economy and the market as a consequence of neoliberal reforms (Fernández, 2012; Dahlstedt, 2007). Coming with neoliberal reforms is a movement of decentralisation of school systems making marketing and concurrence a natural part of the educational landscape which can be seen in most OECD countries. However, Sweden as a case makes an especially interesting example because of the intensity of this development. Today in Sweden, this can even be seen in discussing education in terms of a ‘local school market’ (Lundahl, 2002; 2010). In this new educational logic students’ have been given the role of customers enabling them to choose between schools, at the same time forcing schools to compete against each other to attract students’ (Lund, 2006; Norén, 2003). To do so, schools has developed different marketing technologies to illuminate themselves as the best option on the market or to ‘sell themselves by appearance’. These technologies are manifold such as websites, specific bonuses if choosing a school e.g. computers or summer camps, promises of a successful future due to grade rate at the schools, but also a practice of selling the schools by various certifications has appeared. Certifications are constructed in different ways and highlight different aspects with an outspoken purpose of attracting the youths of today. ‘Green certifications’ have been around for a while and the latest observed are certifications saying that the school and all the personnel are certified for knowing e.g. gender- and gay-rights. The purpose of certifications is often marketed as a way for illustrating that the school is modern and keeping up with societal developments. In order to analyse the new technology of certification as part of a new educational logic the paper historicise on institutional speech acts and different ‘styles of reasoning’ (Hacking, 1992) evident in the school contexts of today. Even though the case is Sweden with its specific characteristics, the analysis show that a lot of the trajectories have importance on a global scale. What is especially elaborated on is how appearance as a market logic with its specific technologies is directed towards individuals and as such come to play a part of educational governance. By elaborating on the phenomenon of appearance, in terms of certifications, some changes in the educational landscape can be highlighted, where marketing for individuals is more emphasized than marketing for groups and by that changes traditional historical reasoning on schooling.
In recent decades, regular education worldwide has increasingly been supplemented by organized out of school tutoring, which in international research is often referred to as shadow education (Bray, 2014). The emergence of shadow education has been attributed to factors like high-stake testing, educational performance as a capital merit and the shortcomings of regular education (de Castro & de Guzman, 2010). The availability, use and outcome of measures, comparisons and ranking are some of the drivers and motives for shadow education. On the one hand, shadow education can be seen as an offshoot of the evidence movement and a quest for educational knowledge appearance. On the other hand, different forms of private and supplementary education have a long history in many countries. However, changes at the education Agora have been identified. In Sweden, we note the increase of both suppliers and buyers and a shift from selection and exclusion to election and inclusion. Today’s education is inscribed in global educational discourses that include ideas and programmes of governance, quality assurance and accountability. Nevertheless, education is culturally embedded in the social and historical context of national educational systems and local educational practices (Waldow & Steiner-Khamsi, 2012). Accordingly, in order to explore shadow education in Sweden, its practices and consequences, it needs to be contrasted with practices in other cultural contexts. We compare practices of shadow education in Sweden with those in Russia and Canada/France as they appear on websites and in various documents. These cases vary in terms of language, political-, cultural- and educational context and history. Simultaneously, they make comparisons possible through the occurrence of equivalents. The overall aim is to compare how supplementary education shadows regular education. Our research question addresses how teaching, learning and identities are constructed and negotiated in supplementary education in various national contexts. We draw on two theoretical perspectives – curriculum theory and ethnomethodology – to investigate how knowledge, norms, values and identities are articulated in supplementary education. Through these approaches and comparisons of practices in Sweden, Russia and Canada/France, theoretical and empirical contributions are made about educational appearances and activities at today’s education Agora.
NETWORK 6

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP NETWORK
Leaders and leadership: what counts?

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Research topic/aim:
The aim of this project is to develop knowledge about how leadership-teams in upper secondary schools manage tensions and dilemmas when new systems of educational quality control are introduced. The two schools in the study, are in the context of the region-/municipality-reform, which calls for larger units, planning to merger.
Technologies like testing, measuring student’s outcomes, using value-added models on both schools and teachers and the publishing of results as league tables, have impact upon students, teachers, school leadership and local school authorities. There are governing strategies saying that school data is to be used to improve education. The result is a new complex work environment for teachers and school leaders, creating possible tensions and dilemmas.

Since 2004 we have had national tests as part of the national quality assessment system in primary and lower secondary education (NKVS). For upper secondary education, some of the measurement tools in NKVS are used, but not national tests. Upper secondary education uses other quality measurements, instruments and statistics. These are used locally and by central authorities for management and improvement of student results and for improving students’ completion of upper secondary education. In 2016, the first round of a new quality measurement system in upper secondary school was implemented; SØF Report No. 01/16. The Ministry of Education commissioned the SØF report with the intention of acquiring knowledge about quality and quality differences in upper secondary school (p.1). In June 2017, the follow-up, NIFU Report 2017/7, was published. These two surveys are different types of so-called “value-added models”, measuring schools’ and municipalities’ contribution to pupils’ learning. Value-added models are an issue for OECD (2008), several countries use value-added models and model development has come the furthest in the United States. Here value-added models are associated with “high-stakes accountability” (Amrein-Beardsley, 2014).

Theoretical framework:
Dean’s analytics of government (1999), based on his interpretation of governmentality (Foucault, 1979), are used to question the practices of quality measurements and leadership, and the link to the formation of identities.

Methodological design:
Partial ethnography (Alvesson & Deetz, 2011), as an approach where certain practices and phenomenon are studied from a critical base. Observations from staff-meetings and interviews with principals, administration staff and school owners.

Expected conclusions/findings:
Knowledge about how current strategies of governance for quality; evaluation, assessment and measurements of results influence leaders and leadership in two different cases, and an understanding of how possible tensions and dilemmas are understood and enacted by principals and other leaders, and what kind of leaders and leadership-identity is constituted.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
This is a relevant topic in all Nordic countries, in educational research and for policymaking

References:
How do teachers use national test results

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Keywords: School development, policy intention, national strategy, development of lower secondary school, motivation and mastery, practical and varied education

Research topic
Based on the Norwegian National School Development Strategy "Lower Secondary School in Development" (lower secondary in focus) this article discusses the college- and university sector’s (CU-sector) experiences of involvement in educational policy reforms for school development. Using theoretical perspectives on coupling mechanisms, as well as observation data from regional CU-participant seminars, we discuss experiences from a political school development initiative that has been conducted under the leadership of two governments that represent different policy directions. Our main focus is on the CU-sector, and the opportunities and challenges the sector has seen in the work of the four-year commitment in the program. Various understandings and practices of the national policy intention have emerged when the CU-sector has been involved as an actor in this work.

Theoretical framework
Coburn (2004) identified five coupling mechanisms, namely: rejection, decoupling (symbolic responses with no effect), parallel structures (to balance different priorities), assimilation (make a fit with pre-existing understanding), and accommodation (substantial changes in the preexisting understanding). In this article, we use these five coupling mechanisms as analytical tools in combination with the distinction between external and internal accountability in examining how school leaders respond to new policy demands within a Norwegian context. Also, context, both national and local, is important in order to understand why policies are interpreted and translated differently in seemingly similar schools (Ball et al., 2012).

Methodology
The analyses in the study, are based on the authors involvement as participant as CU-actors in the nationally policy initiated school development program, including content analysis of reports, presentations and from sharing experiences in the cooperation with schools and the national and regional collaboration between the CU-sector and the Education Directorate.

Findings
The CU-sector’s experience from the initiative has shown that it is of the outmost importance that the involved actors are active participants in the process of negotiating and creating common understanding of the intentions for key initiatives introduced into the school. In the lower secondary school, the concepts and language have been linked to the intention at the national policy level. Lack of shared understanding and pre-involvement among different actors in the program, has contributed to overshadow the original intention of more practical and varied teaching that was presented as essential in order to create a more motivating experience of the education of the students in lower secondary school.

Relevance for Nordic educational research
This study contributes to new knowledge about how national policy intentions for school development is experienced by the CU-sector, and how aiming for school development needs to be negotiated and re-negotiated. However, we find a need for future research on how coherence
between political intentions and the school's perceived needs and reality is dealt with, processed and understood at different levels in the education system.

References


Actors, algorithms and accountability-a sociomaterial perspective on leadership of school development

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In Norway, the introduction of a national quality assessment system has given rise to an unprecedented collection of data about student results. This new access to data challenges the capability to process information across the school system, and a number of digital tools have emerged. The development is rapid, and concerns all actors linked to schools. The aim of this paper is to explore how digital tools affect school leaders, and to investigate the relationship between people and technology when the social and the material work together in the creation of understandings of learning and professionality in schools. Specifically, we have set out to investigate the use of one such digital tool, called Conexus Insight.

When several components play together learning is not merely a social activity, it also has a sociomaterial dimension. Our research builds on a sociomaterial perspective, and seeks to understand how people and technology work together. In our study we are inspired by actor-network theory. This sociomaterial approach (Fenwick, 2016) allows us to trace the connections between social and material elements and throw light on the complexity of relationships when school leaders work with digital tools.

The research builds on semi-structured interviews. We have conducted a qualitative study where we have interviewed six school leaders from two municipalities, two principals and a representative of school owners in each municipality. Based on the interviews we have created images that illustrate their work with digital assessment data. The design is based on Ragins model (2011), which we found to be compatible and flexible enough for the ANT-analysis we have conducted, and for the presentation of our empirical results. Constructivism lies at the heart of our approach, but due to our theoretical framework we choose the concept material-constructivist.

The informants express that they have enough information through the data they can already extract from existing digital tools and that there is no need for more national tests in schools today. Furthermore, it is not obvious that municipalities or school leaders are concerned with how data is linked within tools that are supplied through commercial actors. The algorithms that lies as a foundation for the results that are extracted from digital tools, such as for instance Conexus Insight, are not of concern for all school leaders. Finally, our finding is that accountability also relates to who has the power to make others accountable. Our informants refer to the impact and the perceived pressure that the media exerts.

In Norway and other Nordic countries, we are still talking about the use of data, while internationally there is a growing field of research where trends are about looking at what data is doing. That is, how digital data and computer systems are actors in school development. This paper gives insight to how Norwegian school leaders and school owners are affected by the use of digital tools. We believe it is important that research, also in the Nordic countries, are conducted on how digital data and computer systems are actors in school development.
Creating common understanding - an interaction based study of leadership as sense-making processes and discursive power in a high achieving, Danish public school

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Modernization processes in governance of the Danish public, educational sector since the 1980ies, has resulted in changes in the constitutive conditions for both educational leaders, teachers and social educators (Pedersen 2004, Moos 2003, Moos, Krejsler et al. 2008) working in schools. These new conditions spawned by the use of governance and leadership technologies embedded in New Public Management rationales as economic, competitive and market oriented, creates transitions in sense-making processes and the organizing of leadership in Danish public schools where the principal and the teacher negotiate the room for autonomy and the hegemonic understanding of the future through social struggles of power.

Based on interaction analysis (Roschelle 1992, Jordan, Henderson 1995) and critical discourse analysis (Chouliaraki, Fairclough 1999, Foucault 1982) I investigate the consequences of the changes in the constitutive conditions, by investigating school leadership as interaction processes centered around the creation of common understanding in the organization. This methodological approach of the social organizing of interactions will create a scientific opportunity to understand educational leadership in a micro perspective theoretically understood as sense-making processes (Weick 2012) and discursive and relational power (Foucault 1982). In this I specifically investigate how the sense-making processes develop through discursive selections and enactments influencing and restraining the meanings and understandings, the social relations and the subject positions and identities in the conversational interactions between the principal and teachers in a specific leadership situation.

The findings of the interaction analysis is based on a specific leadership situation from a Danish elementary school context. It is part of an international, comparative and qualitative case study including two Danish cases and two cases from Ontario, Canada in the Ph. D. project “School Leadership in high achieving schools. An international, comparative perspective (Jensen (work in progress))

The paper of this presentation is in a publication process within the Nordic journal of Studies in Educational Policy, a special issue.

References:


The complacent teacher—a challenge for management and reform

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Research topic/aim
The paper addresses the need for educational leadership in order to develop and improve teaching. Based on our study we argue there are complacent teachers, who base their teaching practice mostly on personal experience and are do not respond positively to research or reforms that does not confirm their experience. This causes a challenge in implementation of reforms and management in schools. We will discuss how school leaders may understand and challenge the complacent teacher.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework for this study is the based on a distinction between teachers as deliverers and teachers as curriculum thinkers (Pring 2013). Teachers as deliverers are teachers who mainly function as technicians and «deliverers of improved outcomes, or a trainer of those who have to hit targets - not the thinker of what those outcomes might be» (Pring 2013: 116). On the other hand, curriculum thinkers are teachers who regard discourses in schools as an opportunity to enhance and legitimate teaching, and promote desired ways of life, values and norms. The theoretical framework for our discussions on school leadership is theories on management by objectives (Hargreaves & Shirley 2012) and its relation to educational leadership in schools and organizational learning (Fullan 2007).

Methodological design
This paper is based on a quantitative survey with 237 respondents in North-Norway. The survey included questions concerning teachers’ assessment of their own personal practice, competence and experience. In our discussion on school leadership, we use theories from educational leadership and organizational learning in our discussions (Fullan 2007, Hargreaves & Shirley 2012).

Expected conclusions/findings
In our findings we identify a category of teachers that we name the complacent teacher, These are teachers who are well satisfied with their own level of competence and the way they perform. Consequently, we argue that their teaching practice is less influenced less by school leadership and research based knowledge. The complacent teacher relies on his or hers personal experience. This causes a challenge for school leaders and politicians. In our analysis, we argue that educational leadership in schools must facilitate for collegial reflection and challenge established teaching practices.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The empirical data is collected from a number of schools in North Norway and we regard them as relevant to other regions in the Nordic countries. The paper discusses problems in connection with teaching practices characterized as blind practice, frozen practice or locked-in practice. Consequently, such practices represent a problem for the implementation of the national curriculum.

References
Leading, learning and teaching in a multicultural context – the case of a novice upper secondary focus school

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This paper reports on an exploratory study and discuss how a newly appointed upper secondary focus school work to achieve inclusive education for recent minority students. A focus school is supposed to have developed knowledge and skills with regard to a multicultural context, hence serve as good example for other schools. Although research has developed knowledge from focus schools, there is a lack of knowledge on how a novice focus school deals with the challenges and possibilities regarding recent minority students. The school’s objectives firstly include integrating multicultural work and diversity in all the work regarding the students’ learning and development. Secondly, develop staff to be competent in multicultural didactics and understanding. Thirdly, develop and participate in network and comply with the expectations as a focus school. Lastly, emphasize the responsibility of multicultural development. The results will be analyzed within a combination of educational leadership approach (Robinson, 2011) and a multicultural education approach (Banks, 2004). The first one is suggestive of the importance of school leaders’ role regarding use of relevant knowledge; solve complex school-based problems and building relational trust with staff, parents and students. The second offers a framework based on the following dimensions: content integration, prejudice reduction, inclusive education, knowledge production, and empowering student culture. A combination of these two approaches provides lenses to identify, describe, analyze and understand the current research topic with varying levels of depth. Methodologically, the study draws on exploratory research. The study falls into an action research design, as leaders and teachers are invited to collaborate in the identification and reflections regarding challenges and possibilities of improving leading, teaching and learning for recent minorities. Initial results from the study, through meetings and group interviews with both school leaders and coordinating teachers give indications of; engaging in inclusive practices in order to address issues such as language, critical consciousness about social justice, knowledge of inclusive practices, emphasis on student learning and classroom practice, of the need to address critical reflection, promote dialogue, or, in short, advocate inclusion, equity, and social justice for recent minority students. At the same time, school leaders emphasize that there may be necessary to be well prepared to inform staff and argue for the implications of establishing as a focus school. In the current Nordic landscape of research, research policies, and general policies emphasizing education as the solution to broad societal problems, this study provides several highly relevant issues. Firstly, the paper discusses how school leaders support teachers and learners’ participation and achievements throughout their educational trajectory, in discussions of what role education can play in contexts of migration and refugee crises. Secondly the paper addresses an interdisciplinary issue, as it argues for the integration of multicultural and leadership theory, in order to understand the characteristics of how school leaders and teachers response to the possibilities and challenges which relate to recent minorities within a linguistic and cultural diverse school context.

Key words: Leadership, upper secondary focus school, school development, recent minorities
Creating Teacher Capacity in Early Childhood Education and Care Institutions
Implementing an Authoritative Adult Style

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Research topic/aim
The paper considers the innovation process in seven Norwegian ECEC institutions that are phasing in the program Being Together (BT). BT is an early intervention approach to the promotion of social and emotional development in preschoolers (aged 1-5 years) by implementing an authoritative adult style in the institution (Baumrind, 1991; Wentzel, 2002). BT has involved more than 1000 Norwegian ECEC institutions and around 3000 supervisors from 50 municipalities, making it an extraordinary, nationwide capacity-building initiative in ECEC institutions in Norway. The ECEC leaders who commit to BT intervention are responsible for initiating sustained change in the staff groups. The main objective of this study was to investigate the possibilities and challenges in the ECEC institutions’ implementation of the program.

Theoretical framework
We focus on conditions that can affect successful implementation. We discuss the concept of implementation (Fixsen et al., 2005; Fullan, 2007), collective orientation (Senge, 2006; Stoll & Seashore, 2007), leadership (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008) and individual and organizational conditions (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). The theoretical underpinning emphasizes the relationship between high-quality interactions among participants and individual and collective development.

Methodology
The paper is based on the results gathered by the first author during the first year of implementation. The results were gathered from: (1) focus group interviews with the project groups who were responsible for creating the capacity in each ECEC institution; (2) semi-structured interviews with the BT supervisors; and (3) in-depth interviews with the project leaders who developed the idea of BT. Content analyses (Patton, 2002) were used to analyze the interview data. Data were analyzed in the qualitative software program NVivo (Richards, 2002).

Conclusions
Given the results, the success factors in the implementation process were: (1) strong commitment to the authoritative adult style, (2) strong focus on the implementation process, (3) advanced support systems, (4) highly involved leaders, and (5) a collective orientation.

References


Leadership in preschool

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Research topic/aim
Research interest in leadership in school and preschool has gained increasing attention in recent years. However few studies have paid attention to investigating leadership in a preschool context. This study analyses how leadership is practiced in a preschool context of preschool managers in connection with quality work.
Furthermore, research indicates major variations in the pre-school manager’s knowledge and insight into pre-school activities (Skolinspektionen, 2016). Previous results also point to significant variations in pre-school staff and how they look at management as well as division of labor. (Rönnerman and Olin, 2013) show in their study of quality work in preschool how different levels of leadership form the basis for each other and how leadership can hinder or enable successful quality work.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework of the study is based on a practice-oriented approach (Nicolini, 2012). The results are analyzed in relation to theories of practice architecture and practice ecologies and how different arrangements enable and hinder preschool leaders' management of quality work (Kemmis et al., 2014)

Methodological design
The survey is based on an action research project where the work of a research circle constitutes the study object. The focus group talks in a research circle with preschool leaders have been documented and the preschool managers stories about their quality work have been the basis for analyzes. The research circle has been completed for a period of 14 months and recurring meetings have taken place at eight times. At each meeting, research on leadership and quality work has been presented. These presentations formed the basis of preschool managers’ own reflection and deeper understanding of their own leadership.

Expected conclusions / findings
Preliminary results show that the way the municipality chooses to organize management structure has a clear influence on the prerequisites and form of leadership in preschool. Based on the experiences that preschool managers’ reports, it can be seen that the content and conditions for management and governance are different. The data from two municipalities show that the terms and conditions for preschool managers vary most remarkably when working with quality issues.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Research on leadership in preschool is weakly developed both internationally and in a Nordic perspective. The results from the survey can help develop knowledge about how leadership in preschool can be practiced in different contexts. Knowledge can thus help to provide a picture of the variation of how leadership is practiced in Swedish preschool focusing on quality work.

References
Leading diversity in a school and a kindergarten

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Research topic
People are moving across the world seeking for places for working and living. Some small places in Norway with good working conditions got new inhabitants engaged in the fishing industry from all over the world. We will now look further into one of these small places.
We explore how two councillors responsible for kindergartens and schools in a middle sized municipality, experience their impact on inclusion of children when the context is characterised by high degree of diversity.

Theoretical framework:
This study is conducted in a small community, an island here called Oya, in the northern Norway. Most of the families here work in the fishing industry, either as fishermen, at the pier or in the factory. In the fishing industry there is a need for workers and the population has during the last years changed because of working-immigration.

How the councillors stimulate families’ and children’s’ participation is important for integration (Putnam, 2007; Barry, 1997, 2005). Inclusion is a stronger concept, used as pedagogical principle in schools and kindergartens involving acknowledgment, democratic competence, justice, and equality (Bjørnsrud, 2005; Moen, 2014; Otterstad & Andersen, 2012).

Sense-making theory highlight the connection between educational leadership at different levels and implementation of change (Coburn, 2005; Timperley & Parr, 2009; Spillane et al., 2002; Weick, 1976). Professional learning theory (Dreier, 1999; Lave & Wenger, 2003; Vygotsky & Cole, 1978; Wertsch & Semin, 1991) and educational leadership theory (Bass, 1999; Schield, 2010) constitute the basis of this empirical study enlightening the transformation and the impact between the levels.

Methodological design
This is a phenomenological study exploring the informants’ thoughts and experiences of educational leadership of a diverse group of children. Two municipality councillors, one responsible for kindergartens and one responsible for schools, were interviewed, based on semi-structured outlines with themes (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). The interviews were recorded and transcribed and data material was systematised and reduced by turns of comparative coding and categorising (Strauss & Corbin 1998). The interpretation process was hermeneutic (Gudmundsdottir 1992) fluttering between theoretical perspectives and empirical data with phases of open and axial coding (Nilssen 2012).

Expected conclusions/findings
• Cooperation and dynamics between the different levels of leadership affects the process of inclusion
• A councillor arranging for dialogues between the levels of leadership facilitates development of relevant knowledge and forwards her demands and expectations. In collaboration, the participants improve their understanding, detect their needs and develop action plans. This becomes a process with shared responsibility. Some styles of leadership seems to result in more impact.
• Society changes towards a higher degree of diversity, this affects the leadership in schools and kindergartens.
• There seem to be some systemic differences between leadership in schools and kindergartens.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Many research projects explore how the teachers’ in schools and kindergartens master diversity, but only a few focus on the importance of municipality councillors. Exposing and understanding systematic differences between kindergartens and schools expand the possibilities doing better in leadership of diversity.
Legitimizations and expectations of social justice leadership in Norway

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Research Topic and Aims:
The educational systems in the Nordic countries are known for an emphasis on democratic values. Since the end of the 1980s, the Nordic education systems have gone through major reforms (Aasen, Prøitz, Sandberg, 2014). Those reforms are largely influenced by new managerialist ideas, emphasizing increased competition, as well as increased accountability of school results and student outcomes (Møller & Skedsmo, 2013). Research has indicated that social justice leadership in a context of accountability may pose numerous challenges. Within this context, school leaders are expected to be responsible for leading democratic processes in schools. Still, there is little research on how social justice leadership is anchored in Norwegian policy documents through recent reform initiatives.

The purpose of this paper is to examine how democracy and citizenship are presented and legitimized in key Norwegian policy documents, and to investigate what characterizes the implications for social justice leadership under increasing influences of accountability

Research questions:
1. How are values concerning democracy and citizenship constructed in key education policy documents?
2. What characterizes the expectations for social justice leadership in transforming these values into practice?
3. To what degree do values related to social justice leadership stand in tensions with different forms of accountability?

Theoretical Framework:
This study draws from theories within critical policy studies (Taylor, 1997) in order to elaborate on characteristics and expectations of discursive elements regulating democracy, citizenship and the implications for social justice leadership.

Methodology:
The three White Papers of Mld. St. 21, 28 and 31 (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2016-2017; 2015-2016; 2007-2008) are selected as they enable an analysis of democracy and citizenship conducive to social justice leadership. A synthetization of a content analysis and a critical discourse analysis is utilized for this purpose in order to uncover content and discursive struggles.

Preliminary Findings:
A main finding indicates increasing tensions between organizational and occupational professionalism, pointing to a discursive struggle between local actors and national levels of leadership.

Relevance to Nordic Educational Research:
By drawing on research and existing policy, this paper illuminates how values inherent in the Nordic model are affected by accountability policies. As such, it contributes to a broader Nordic debate in education policy studies.
Leadership preparation in two distinct accountability contexts

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In 2015 a research partnership between UC Berkeley and University of Oslo was established to explore the impacts of our universities’ value-oriented principal preparation programs on school leaders’ practice. The aim was to investigate what transpires in the field after universities bridge theoretical concepts about social justice and human rights with school principals’ practice, where one university is embedded in a high-stakes testing and accountability context (UC Berkeley) and the other is embedded in a low-stakes testing and accountability context (University of Oslo).

The study was framed with theoretical concepts from critical policy studies of education markets and the new managerialism (Apple, 2007; Ball, 2001; Burch, 2009; Trujillo & Cooper, 2014). This literature helps unpack the values and ideologies that underlie market models for public school systems, as well as their assumptions about the purposes of schooling and the subsequent roles for school leaders.

The following research questions guided our collection of data: In what ways do principals preserve or abandon a more equity-oriented, civic-minded orientation when they confront different types of testing and accountability policies? To what extent do they adopt or reject more reductive notions of social justice that center narrowly on quantifiable metrics of their schools’ effectiveness? To answer our questions, we held two four-day analytical exchanges for 11 school principals, five alumni from UC Berkeley’ principal preparation program and six from the University of Oslo’s Master Program in Educational Leadership. The principals served as participants in a comparative pilot study. We brought each country’s group of principals to visit schools in each other’s contexts, conduct classroom observations, and meet with school leaders, teachers, and students. After each visit, we conducted focus groups and individual interviews. In all, we held eight focus groups and 11 interviews. All focus groups and interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed. Both inductive and deductive codes were applied.

In general U.S. principals were struck by the Norwegian principals’ and teachers’ explicit references to democracy and the civic purposes of schooling, in contrast to more narrow American perceptions of schools’ aims related to testing and student performance. Moreover, all participants noticed that Norwegian public schools were demonstrably more resourced. It was considered as an enabling condition that created ample space and time for teachers to collaborate and to include student voice in decision-making. These observations suggest that developing or sustaining more social justice-oriented, democratic schools might be more feasible in Norway, where resources are allocated in a manner that meets more basic needs across schools and communities.

The paper helps contextualize the field of social justice leadership to include an explicit consideration of the broader policy forces that act on social justice leaders’ work. So far, the Nordic countries have invested more than other nations in the education sector. However, in a world of international/national league tables one may ask to which extent the Nordic countries can retain their position in areas where they have traditionally scored highly, such as on quality of life, and child well-being.
Across-national study on mediation in school leadership development

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The present study focuses on school leadership development. The importance of school leadership development has been acknowledged in the Nordic countries and internationally (Lumby et al., 2008; Young et al., 2009, Young & Crow, 2017). By contrast to the US, the research on school leadership development is limited in the Nordic countries. Despite a growing literature on school leadership internationally, little attention has been devoted to examining and comparing how the pedagogical tools are being used. Consequently the purposes of the present study are to contribute new insights into tool mediation in school leadership programs at universities, and to create a foundation for discussing the practical, and the research implications of the findings. The study is positioned within a sociocultural tradition drawing on Cultural historical activity theory (CHAT), because of its attention to mediation in ongoing object oriented activity (Engeström, 1987). In particular the study examines: What characterizes the tasks and the tools being introduced; what characterizes the processes of introducing and using the tools in program activities, and what is being accomplished. This study is a cross-national study consisting of two cases, i.e. a university program in Norway (Case 1) and a university program in the United States (Case 2). The cases are considered to be fruitful to compare because the historical, cultural, and policy contexts of the programs. 25h of video-recordings from program activities, the tools in use as constitute the data corpus for the present study. Program activities have been subject to interaction analyses (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). Preliminary findings suggest the main artifacts in Case 1 were power points, international and academic literature, and white papers, while the main artifacts in Case 2 were academic literature from an American context, and handouts with questions and prescriptions for the work in pairs and groups. While the literature were used actively as artifacts to answer questions in handouts by the students in Case 2, the literature in Case 1 were actively used by the faculty members while teaching. In Case 1 most time was devoted to lectures, while in Case 2 the time was mostly devoted to work with handouts in pairs, groups, and to plenary discussions. In none of the cases the students took a leadership perspective or refereed to theory if the faculty members did not explicitly ask for it.

References:
Reflective practice and webbased coaching in education for ethical leadership-experiences from a masters course in educational leadership

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This paper presents a sub-study of a Ph.D-project, investigating the perceived outcome and experience with a method of professional learning within the context of a part-time Master’s course in Educational Leadership. Students’ learning activities consisted of conducting a developmental project at work, doing ethical reflections on practice and receiving individual feedback on process through web-based coaching. The research questions are: How can a particular educational intervention with a focus on web-based coaching including situational feedback on reflective questions contribute to professional learning and ethical leadership? How can the student activities in such an educational design contribute to reflection and development of reflective practice for educational leaders?

The data is comprised of the student learning activities coupled with individual interviews, processed by text- and content-analysis. There are several expected findings. Firstly, the use of supportive language in responding to the students’ reflections was reported to be of high value. Although the responses were short, they provided support and gave the students courage to continue their work, also when this was challenging. Secondly, the issue of immediacy in the timing of the response, given within 24 hours, was considered an asset of this process, as this facilitates for reflection both in- and on- action, in addition to the sense of ‘having someone there’ in times of need. Thirdly, by doing the ethical reflections the students maintained a focus on the ethics of leadership whilst continuing their work, hence contributing to an increased awareness and a morally attentive educational environment. Lastly, for leaders in the education sector, using an online-learning platform for processes of reflection and coaching was valuable and has potential for further research. To conclude, the findings in this study indicate that when leaders face complex and challenging situations, receiving online, immediate situational and supportive response to reflections on practice can be helpful, as it helps support leadership decisions and facilitates the development of moral attentiveness and awareness for the ethical aspects of leadership. The theoretical foundations draws on self-determination theory as developed by Ryan and Deci (1985; 2008; 2000a, 2000b) issue of time and context in reflections in/on practice as outlined by Schön (1987, 1995) and others, and lastly principles of managerial coaching(Beattie et al., 2014; Mink, Owen, & Mink, 1993; Peterson & Hicks, 1996) further adapted to the field of education. This paper will contribute to the understanding of educational leadership within the research community by providing insights into the use of digital technology in one-to one coaching processes in a Norwegian educational setting.

References


Symposium

Contributor 1

Leading and organizing the educating for citizenship of the world - through technocratic homogenisation or communicative diversity?

Moos, Lejf
Danish School of Education, Aarhus University

Research topic:
The everlasting foundation and context for this discussion is the question of how, and for what purpose, societies chose to educate the next generation so it gets capable of taking over society.

Here we shall focus on two, distinctively different discourses: The global, neo-liberal market place. This perspective is named the civilization perspective, the Global Learner Discourse. The other discourse has a cultural perspective: cosmopolitanism, getting to relate, to know and to open up to the other cultures, norms and people on their own conditions, the Citizen of the World Discourse.

Theoretical and methodological frameworks:
This symposium focuses on governance (sociological and political theories), leadership (leadership theories) and education (theories of General Education and effective education). The methods used are mainly discourse analyses.

Outcomes
Differences between discourses will be analysed at 4 levels:

At the discourse context level, the level of developing and discussing discourses, one could say:

1. that the outcomes based discourse is focusing on the civilisation and the labour market and on the state’s governance. International comparisons of students’ basic learning outcomes, like the OECD’s PISA, are important tools (social technologies),

2. the cultivating/Bildungs discourse focuses on civilizations, but also on the cultural context. Focus of this discourse is the dialogue between cultures, building on understanding and acknowledgement and appreciation of the ‘other’.

The vision level is concerned with explicit and implicit expressions of the purposes/goals/aims of education:

1. the outcomes discourses’ interest for schools’ aims being the position in the PISA league table. How to meet the centralized expectations, and standards and measurement in international and national learning outcomes test,

2. and the cultivating/bildung discourse expresses the purposes of schooling: the developing of unique and free citizens and individuals with interest and capabilities to acknowledge and live with other people in democratic, deliberative communities.

The themes, concerned with the content of education,

1. outcomes discourses tend to focus on basic skills as described within a top down oriented culture of scientific curriculum and an understanding of learning being context- and content free,

2. the cultivating/bildung discourse emphasise education/instruction that focus on important societal and cultural themes (the ‘epoche-typical key problems’: like peace, environment, inequality)
The process level, the level of learning, teaching, organising and leading education:

1. the outcomes discourse focuses on individual students’ learning outcomes while producing data through tests and documentations. Management and organisation with data and accountability. Technocratic homogenisation.

2. while the cultivation/bildung discourse works with relations, teaching and communication. Schools must qualify students to get to know; to become socialized and to be subjectified: students are invited into the world as subjects.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:

Participation from Denmark, Norway and Sweden let us compare similarities and differences
Contributor 2
The great picture and processes - The interplay between context and visions

Nihlfors, Elisabet
Uppsala University

What is education aiming at; what capabilities or competences should the next generation develop in education and schools? Knowledge about the global and national situations is enacted in the local environment out of understanding, meaningfulness, and possibilities among other things. The paper moves between “big data” and “small data” by using results from empirical studies in a Nordic context, made between 2009-2017 involving school leaders, superintendents and local politicians (Nihlfors & Johansson, 2015; Moos, Nihlfors & Paulsen 2016).

Our findings show examples from schools and school owners that can be categorized into the “outcome discourse” and others in the “bildung discourse” (Moos 2017). In-between we found municipalities that we named “good enough”. “Good enough” can be characterized by schools situated in a smaller community (can be part of a bigger municipality) where more people are leaving the place than moving into it etc. We found a tension or a conflict between contributing to that young people should stay or to see them leave for to continue studying. This is rarely pronounced. A result that is visible in some places is that boys stay while the girls move (Leijnsne, 2017). These places show clearly that the purpose of schooling is subordinated the survival of the community. This leads us to a discussion about who, where and when are visions and the purpose of education seriously debated as a question deep imbedded in the local school’s surroundings? How interested, willing or capable/competent are different stakeholders (teachers, school leaders, politicians, citizens, business community etc.) to meet the demands in the local community to improve outcomes or/and support bildung? Are these different approaches (outcomes and bildung) compatible? (Nihlfors et al 2016; Moos et al 2016).

This is partly a matter of relationship and power division between politicians - professionals, but it is also a question of the school’s position and function in a sustainable, long-term view of how to develop both small and big societies (Kemp 2005). What is it in the local context, when it comes to leadership that makes a change in facing wicked problems?

References:
Enduring Tensions between External Control and Professional Trust in the Nordic Governance Chains

Paulsen, Jan Merok
Oslo Metropolitan University

The starting point of this paper is that contemporary reforms in the Nordic countries mirror two seemingly incompatible governing strategies labeled respectively external control versus professional commitment of which mutual trust between governance actors is a key component (Rowan, 1990). The tensions between these models can also be interpreted as part of a larger battlefield between a “Building” versus an outcome discourse (Moos, 2017).

The analysis, mainly based on a review of Nordic research, supplemented with more recent observations, reveal that state bodies, municipal school owners and school boards employ elements of both control and professional trust when they interact with school principals at the street level of the governance chain (Paulsen & Høyer, 2016), and superintendents mainly act as mediators. On the other hand, the review also shows that school superintendents and principals to a large extent activate professional learning forums and inter-personal day-to-day relations (Moos, Nihlfors, & Paulsen, 2016), in order to make collective sense of ambiguous and uncertain national reforms. Important learning conditions that emerge from the publications, on which the reviewed research is based, seem to cluster and cohere round learning climate, interpersonal trust, leadership support and a shared knowledge base between the school leaders and the municipal apparatus (Paulsen & Henriksen, 2017). More recent findings from a Norwegian action research study of municipal dialogue meetings populated by superintendent and school leaders support this notion. Finally, inferences from a Finnish study, where basic schoolteachers were observational units, also indicate that moral leadership exerted by principals paired with distributed leadership practices, where teachers were involved in pedagogical decision-making processes, to be a cornerstone of a trust-based school development strategy. Implications for school governance, school leadership and professional development are discussed.

References
Contributor 4
Across the Great Divide? On the Parting of the Ways and the Roads Not Taken

Eirik J. Irgens
NTNU

It seems that there are two very different traditions in organizational and management theory (Martin 2003; Barry and Hansen 2008; Fiol and O’Connor 2008), and that today we have what Moos (2013) depicts as a clash between two different discourses in the field of education: On the one hand we have an American inspired, result-oriented discourse with emphasis placed on management by objectives etc. On the other hand, we have a European, and especially Nordic, participant-oriented discourse, with emphasis on trust, the development of professional, personal and social skills. The first discourse is, according to Moos, concerned with how students are educated to useful workers, the last one with “Democratic Bildung”.

Moos claims, in line with Hofstede (1993); that the Anglo-American societies and systems were more “(...) prepared for their own inventions: neoliberal policies based on marketplace logics, economy, free choice, rational thinking, competition and comparison, scientific management theories with performance and standard as cornerstones, a strong top-down model, and a principal-agent theory with national aims and tight accountability” (Moos, 2013, p. 289). These ideas seem to represent a management tradition that Argyris, Putnam and Smith (1985) call a mainstream perspective, which, as Hofstede (1993) points out, clash with what is referred to as a Nordic Collaboration Model in work life (Øyum et. al, 2010).

In my presentation, I will draw on Michael Friedman to illustrate how the two discourses may be understood historically as a result of a parting of the ways between different schools of thought. Once there was a constructive dialogue between the two camps, but today these different schools of thought are for the most part practiced in isolation from one another (Friedman, 2000, 2005).

Friedman asks where one should start in beginning a reconciliation of the analytic and continental traditions, and ends up recommending the less-known Ernst Cassirer (1874-1945): “(One) can find no better starting point than the rich treasure of ideas, ambitions, and analysis stored in his astonishingly comprehensive body of philosophical work” (Friedman, 2000, p.159).

I will try to give a brief sketch of how Cassirer’s ideas may be applied in organization and management theory, and their relevance in an educational field that seems to be so divided that it often takes the form of a battlefield.

References
Symposium
Data use in the Scandinavian countries: Developments, similarities and differences

Mausethagen, Sølvi
Oslo Metropolitan University

In recent years, governing regimes in education that emphasize performance management and accountability have been introduced in several countries. Various types of assessment tools which produce ‘data’ on student performance provide a basis for generating information that are expected to be used for policy making and to motivate change in education. This policy of action represents a new knowledge field in education, also challenging others. Practices of data use are usually defined as what takes place when individuals interact by using test scores, grades, and other forms of assessment tools in their work (Little 2012, Coburn & Turner, 2011; Spillane, 2012). Data in itself is often considered to be efficient, standardized, uniform, and intuitive measures productive for usage in a range of processes for the development of education, teaching and learning (Porter, 1995). On the other hand, the very same attributes can lead to exaggerated expectations of what can be achieved on the basis of data and simplification of complex education processes - consequently what can be described as the alluring attributes of data and data use might mask important aspects, knowledge and nuances in education important for productive developments (Prøitz, Mausethagen & Prøitz, 2017).

Knowledge about the various ways in which data are used by authorities, school leaders, and teachers is crucial to evaluate possible developments in terms of governing education and improving educational practices (Coburn & Turner, 2011; Kelley & Downey, 2012; Little, 2012; Spillane, 2012; Jennings, 2012; Racherbäumer et al., 2013; Schildkamp et al., 2014), yet has mainly been researched within an Anglo-American context and often within an effectiveness framework (Prøitz, Mausethagen & Skedsmo 2017). As school systems, research traditions and professional status are partly different to Scandinavian countries, there is an urgent need to study these issues “closer to home” in order to enhance knowledge about how data use plays out in countries marked by a historically comprehensive school system, egalitarian values and where the teacher profession have enjoyed a relatively great degree of classroom autonomy as well as influence on political decision-making. Such characteristics have arguably shifted during the last decade(s) in particular with the introduction of quality assessment systems and use of accountability measures in the three countries.

This symposium takes as its point of departure the need for knowledge development about the workings of data use in the three Scandinavian countries. Grounded in four selected contributions from Sweden, Denmark and Norway, including one comparative contribution, which have investigated data use in education from different perspectives and through the use of different methods, the symposium will address three interrelated topics: (1) how national assessments and testing is carried out in the three countries, (2) how assessment and test data are used differently across different countries and (3) with supposedly different consequences for children, parents and teachers. Although the presentations in the symposium have their main emphasis on different aspects of the above-mentioned topics and vary by contexts, the symposium also focuses on developments that are similar across the countries.
Contributor 1
Using data in grading – using grades as data

Lundahl, Christian\textsuperscript{1} Jönsson, Anders\textsuperscript{2} Klapp, Alli\textsuperscript{3} & Hultén, Magnus\textsuperscript{4}

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The practice of grading students’ knowledge is as old as education itself (Lundahl 2006). Yet, it has not been an issue of great concern in teacher education, nor in the educational sciences, until rather recently. This means that current knowledge is limited regarding questions such as how teachers decide upon a grade, the specific competencies needed for grading, the weight assigned by teachers to different aspects of student knowledge, the relationship to official demands on formal grading, and to what degree tradition and/or colleagues affect teachers’ grading. The first part of this presentation is concerned with research on teachers’ grading practices – i.e. the assessment data teachers use when grading – both from a historical and a contemporary perspective. The presentation draws on systematic research reviews and a reading of more than 6,000 peer-reviewed articles on the topic (Hultén, Klapp, Lundahl & Mickwitz 2015, Klapp 2016, Lundahl 2017), as well as on a recent empirical study investigating teachers’ rationales for awarding grades in English. The second part of the presentation reports from an interview study, investigating how grades and assessment data are used as a basis for making decisions about the provision of supplemental support in compulsory school in Sweden. Findings indicate that grades and assessment data are used differently depending on students’ difficulties. This means, for instance, that students with learning difficulties are identified and provided support with greater precision, as compared to students with behavioral or motivational problems.

Even if we recognise a growing body of knowledge on teachers’ grading, we also find that the use of grades as data by teachers and schools is basically a white spot on the research map. We have found some indications in the literature that curriculum and assessment-system designs have neglected the perspective of teachers, leading to a de-coupling between professional assessment practice and formal expectations on data use in grading and using grades as data.
The design of organizational processes for data: innovation and sensemaking at 16 Danish schools

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¹UCC University College
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The professional debates on data use in Denmark have been marked by skepticism concerning the validity and usability of national testing for local instructional and developmental purposes (Bundsgaard & Puck, 2016). This has challenged teachers, leaders and administrators to create alternatives to the national testing apparatuses. These new testing practices aim to both satisfy the demand for increased accountability and make sense in the local context of each school (Nørgaard et al., 2017). The paper introduces a theoretical framework for understanding how Danish school leaders and teachers engage in the innovation of new test practices, while balancing exterior accountability demands with local emphasis on professional usability and organizational sense-making. This framework will be based on American accountability research (Saltrick, 2010; Spillane, Reiser & Reimer, 2002), yet adding emphasis on the innovative and creative practices of teachers and leaders.

The empirical basis of the paper consists of findings from interviews with leaders and teachers at 16 Danish elementary schools. The interviews, conducted in the fall of 2017, focus on narratives of positive and negative experiences of using standardized test and designing local alternatives.
Testing struggles in Denmark and Norway

Kousholt, Kristine¹, Mausethagen, Sølvii²

¹ DPU Aarhus University
² Oslo Metropolitan University

Standardized testing is an ambiguous and contested area in school policy across different Scandinavian countries. Testing is both argued to help the weakest students, to be a pedagogical tool able to support teaching differentiation, to be a centralized technology of control and power, to undermine teacher professionalism and to weaken ‘bildung’ in education. In this presentation, we explore what characterizes the discussions of - and struggles about testing over a 10-year time span in the media in Denmark and Norway respectively, yet also seen in light of policy developments and existing research in the two countries. This is in order to analyze how the struggles of testing has changed over time and in this way to point to changes in legitimate positions according to testing. Furthermore, this is to analyze similarities as well as differences of these struggles and the development of these across different countries with different and yet comparable educational systems. From this point of departure, we wish to point to possible developments in Scandinavian education with a special focus on the struggles of testing and in particular, testing as a legitimate/illegitimate assessment method in education. Preliminary findings indicate that there are similarities in the two countries in terms of a development towards acceptance of standardized testing. However, discussions are continuously revolving around unintended consequences of the tests and the use of test results. At the same time, debates in Denmark are more strongly marked by discussions about the validity and reliability of the tests.
Contributor 4
Data use in Norwegian municipalities – where education development and education control collide

Prøitz, Tine S.¹, Mausethagen, Sølvi², Skedsmo, Guri³

¹ University of SouthEast Norway
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A global policy trend in education is to improve teaching and learning by placing the responsibility for educational change and improving student learning outcomes on the municipal level (Farrell & Coburn, 2017). A central component in this line of thinking is the role of local authorities as drivers and motivators for the use of data in schools. The use of data for governance purposes represents new ways for national authorities to coordinate activities across administrative levels to improve educational quality (Altrichter & Merki, 2010). However, in contrast to the abundance of studies on educational leadership, researchers have overlooked the importance of the municipal level in systemic education reforms (Rorrer et al., 2008, Avidov-Ungar & Reingold, 2016). Current education policy developments in most Nordic countries also face issues related to data use in education. Such matters are often researched on the national policy level or at school level, while the issues experienced at mid authority level seldom are investigated.

The aim of this study is to investigate how data are conceptualised and used at municipal level among administrators and in local policy in Norway, and what implications this have for the local governing of schools. The theoretical framework is inspired by the scholarly debate about the alluring attributes of data being perceived as efficient, standardized, uniform and intuitive measures that are productive for the development of the educational system and teaching and learning, yet the very same attributes can lead to exaggerated expectations of what can be achieved based on data and data use. Such ideas about data and data use imply a simplification of complex education processes for example through the “‘quick language’ of data, a shorthand means of communication in educational matters” (Porter, 1995; Lundahl & Waldow, 2009), and in terms of knowledge, a simplification of the integration of knowledge sources that characterize professional decision making (Mausethagen et al., 2017). At the core of this discussion lies also a question about educational values and the consequences of data use for instructional practices in the classrooms (Prøitz et al. 2017). The study draws on in depth interviews with three school administrators, local policy documents and student performance data collected in three Norwegian municipalities over a three year period. The municipalities were selected on the basis of their differences in terms of geographical location, size and type of quality assessment system. The selection of cases can be characterized as purposeful and of maximum variation for the purpose of documenting variations emerged in adapting to different conditions, and to identify important common patterns across variations (Palinkas et al., 2015). Preliminary findings indicate that there are various conceptualisations of data use at play, dependent of contextual factors and perceived purposes of data use among administrators and in local policy. The study also displays divergent understandings and tensions between administrators and local policy within and across municipalities in relation to how data could be used to develop schools.
Symposium
Nordic Approaches to School Principal Training in Practice

Paulsen, Jan Merok
Oslo Metropolitan University

The theme of this symposium is school principal training and development in the Nordic countries with presentation from Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The level of analysis of the papers is mainly “street-level”, with a focus on practice learning within programs situated in the different national cultures. We posit that content and methods to a large extent mirrors different theoretical positions to school leadership and professional development in school organizations. It is fair to argue that one dominant approach departs from a rationalistic and instrumental position to school leadership, emphasizing school leadership as a tool for raise in student achievements (Robinson, 2008, 2011). This approach emphasizes the leaders’ role accountability for the success or failure of individual schools and their students. Subsequent research within this tradition revolves around issues such as school effectiveness. Emphasis is on a standardised content and is focusing on school leaders as loyal implementers of governmental policies. Gronn (2003) refers to this approach as designer leadership. One may here observe a kind of decoupling of school leaders from their former profession and at the same time a tighter coupling to the political steering chain.

A contrasting approach is based on constructivist perspectives describing leadership as an unpredictable, human activity. Critical perspectives on power relations and leadership roles have been predominant within this tradition as well as a democratic and pedagogical approach to school leadership based on actor openness as a core value of leadership training (Moos & Kofod, 2012). In this perspective, the principals’ focus is on fostering an open process by involving all participants in a way that gives all the participants a chance to speak out their opinions, to agree or disagree with others, and to have their thoughts heard. Central skills are: (1) setting the topic, (2) asking questions or offering reflections to advance the discussion, (3) summarizing or clarifying important points, arguments, or reflections and (4) wrapping up the session. This perspective takes on a group-level approach to school leadership practice and practice-learning -with emphasis on group-coaching and team learning. The papers in this sessions raise the two theoretical perspectives based on observations of training programs in different Nordic contexts.

References

Contributor 1
Leading group discussions: A challenge for principals?

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Abstract
The obligation to improve student results in school has led to increased interest in studying how principals can contribute to motivation and commitment with their teachers and their professional development. However, there is less research on the challenges in developing conditions for continual professional learning, for example on leading skills required for leading processes of developing collective knowledge.

In this paper we investigate principals who are leading professional group discussions. The context is the National School Leadership Program in Norway, a program designed for new school leaders. In order to examine the leadership role in group discussions, we begin by presenting the theoretical framework for group discussion as a strategy for enhancing the collective professional learning in schools. In so doing we define professional group discussion, and then identify the role of the principal as leader of discussions. Further, we introduce the background and context of the study.

We draw on data from video recordings of group discussions among school leaders participating in leadership training to exemplify critical moments in the discussion process and identify the role of the principal and how he/she can support the process of developing collective knowledge. In sum, the data includes 24 principals in their role as leaders of professional group discussions. The selected material, builds on about 500 minutes of video recordings that were recorded during 2011 and 2012. Findings show that the principals’ focus is on fostering an open process by involving all participants in a way that gives all the participants a chance to speak out their opinions, to agree or disagree with others, and to have their thoughts heard. Though, as group leaders they have less attention on helping the group to set the discussion topic, asking questions to advance the discussion and summarizing the session. We discuss the complexities of the role of the group leader, and the knowledge and skills required in balancing the goal oriented professional process with the facilitation process. The article concludes by identifying the professional skills needed for principals to be effective in leading professional discussions. These skills include four steps: (1) setting the topic, (2) asking questions or offering reflections to advance the discussion, (3) summarizing or clarifying important points, arguments, or reflections and (4) wrapping up the session.
Contributor 2
Bench-learning as professional development of school leaders in Norway and Sweden

Aas, Marit\textsuperscript{1}, Blom, Thomas\textsuperscript{2}

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In this paper, we investigate a new national collaborative Benchlearning program for principals in Norway and Sweden. Four process leaders have been running the program. The aim is to give the participants the knowledge to develop a leadership practice and school environment that is more innovative. The program includes a variety of learning opportunities, such as theoretical inputs, sharing experiences, school visits, training, and trialing of new leadership practices. Drawing on data from surveys, participants’ reflections, and the leaders’ descriptions of new leadership practice, we examine and identify successful and critical aspects of the learning process. The findings show that principals’ motivation and willingness to start change processes can be created in a synergy between structured school visits, work in learning groups, and a theoretical foundation. Working in groups across schools in two countries seems to enhance principals’ sense of efficacy, which in turn is shown to have a positive effect on their willingness to trial new practices. The findings must be seen in light of the fact that the participants had taken part in the national principal program and that they had applied for participation. Therefore, we expected that the participants’ knowledge of and motivation for school development were already substantial. As the analysis shows, many participants had already started innovative work at their own schools, but the program helped to reinforce and sharpen this work.

The implications of the study can be summed up in following four principles. First, policymakers should take into account the fact that principals’ motivation and willingness to initiate change processes can be created in a synergy between structured school visits, work in learning groups, and a theoretical foundation. Second, the individual principal increases his or her self-efficacy within the socially contracted practice in the learning group. Third, a systematic reflection process about authentic practice is an example of how principals can develop their metacognitive capacity and how knowledge can be transformed into new practice. Fourth, educators should be trained to be process leaders who can balance between being demanding and supportive in principals’ learning and their new leadership practice.
Contributor 3
Leadership education and preparation

Frederiksen, Lars Frode
University of Southern Denmark

Abstract
There is an increasing focus on school leadership and on school leadership education. The question for the presentation is how we might understand the underlying causes on development of school leadership education and an analysis of a Danish case. Design of the actual preparation programme may reflect dominant perceptions of school leadership.

Framework
The point of departure is three interrelated issues: Perceptions of school leadership; perceptions of professions and professionalization, and perceptions of school leadership education and preparation.

Perspectives on school leadership are almost infinite, and theoretical approaches are numerous. The discipline may be characterised as multiparadigmatic with interests stemming from politicians, practitioners, and academics. Nevertheless, two major positions might be discerned. One approach has been dominated by a rationalistic and somewhat instrumental approach (Leithwood et al. 2004, Robinson 2011). This approach emphasises the leaders’ role and responsibility for the success or failure of individual schools. Subsequent research within this tradition revolves around issues such as school effectiveness, evidence, what works etc. Another approach is based on constructivist perspectives describing leadership as an unpredictable, human activity (Eacott 2011; Møller 2016). Critical perspectives on power relations and leadership roles has been predominant within this tradition.

At the same time, the concept of profession has become somewhat blurred. School leaders are not a profession according to a classical definition in that they do not control recruitment and training, do not have a formal knowledge base, and do not fully have a monopoly on a recognized, societal task (Abbott 1988). However, they do live up to some of the usual traits, e.g. the development of a professional ethic, and measured by more pragmatic definitions they may be called a profession.

The third angle asking how future leaders should be prepared for the task of school leadership. What are the formal requirements, who decide aims and frames of the courses, who provide the courses, and what are the actual content, length, and structure of the courses? Many preparation courses reflect the mentioned variation in theoretical perceptions of school leadership. One approach is subscribing to a standardised content and is focusing on school leaders as loyal implementors of governmental policies. Gronn (2003) refers to this approach as designer leadership. One may here observe a kind of decoupling of school leaders from their former profession and at the same time a tighter coupling to the political steering chain. Another approach to school leadership preparation is subscribing to the more constructivist view. Here, attempts are made to link former professional values with new ideas and ethics of school leadership (Cranston 2013).

Context and case
In Denmark, all school leaders in primary school must achieve a diploma in public leadership. These programs are offered by University Colleges, but must follow centrally regulated guidelines. In a recently published report by the employer of public professionals in Denmark, the practical knowledge was generally favoured over academic knowledge (Kommunernes Landsforening 2017). Based on an assessment of the current supply, the authors suggested changes in the training programme for school leaders. They found that the current preparation course did not provide...
school leaders with the necessary tools for carrying out their job. Thus, they suggested a stronger practice-orientation and more focus on ‘what works’.

References
Symposium

Ethical perspectives on school leaders

Söderström, Åsa

School legislation contains regulations of school leader’s work. However, the law does not provide precise answers in what way a school leader ought to act in concrete everyday situations. A number of ethical considerations are linked to issues that arise. In this symposium, we illuminate some of these dilemmas and discuss some possibilities of developing ethical school leadership, with an ethnically sustainable school in focus. An anthology on ethical school leadership (Söderström, 2017), in which a group of researchers and school leader educators reflect on ethical issues of school leaders’ work, is the basis of the symposium.

Branson’s model of school leaders ethical decision-making (Branson, 2010) have been used as a theoretical basis for the work. Branson emphasizes four different perspectives in ethical decision-making: legal, critical, caring and professional. However, in the desire to develop ethical leadership school leaders need to develop a personal moral integrity. This encompasses school leaders to act empathically, to do good, and not to be driven by their own gain.

It is difficult to strengthen moral integrity. Batson (2008) refers to studies that show that it is not obvious that people always are motivated to act morally. Often moral hypocrites appear who make sense of acting morally but want to avoid the costs and are trapped in a “moral masquerade”. Various considerations in Branson’s model for ethical decision-making among school leaders show that moral masquerade can serve as an interesting concept when discussing the ethical positions of school leaders. In the symposium we will illuminate several of the moral dilemmas that school leaders face when they try to conduct their educational leadership. The large responsibility that school leaders have to create a non-violent and non-bullying environment in the school is illustrated as well as the demands that school leaders face to interest the teachers for paying attention to tendencies among the students to show each others discriminating behaviours. The dilemmas that school leaders meet when their schools are inspected is scrutinized and discussed from an ethical viewpoint. The use of scientific knowledge in the management of the school and the ethical dimensions of not using such knowledge when holding a school leader position is problematized.

Four papers will be presented during the symposium by four researchers from Karlstads universitet and three reactions on the presentations will be conducted. Åsa Söderström, universitetslektor, PhD, will present Ethics and School leaders responsibility for the work against bullying, Håkan Eilard, utbildningsledare, will present What happens with schools when the state inspects them?, Anette Forssten Seiser, utbildningsledare, PhD, will present School leadership based on a scientific approach - a foundation for ethical school leadership? and Mats Ekholm, professor emeritus will present To understand the inner life of a school – a basis for school leader ethical action. The reactions to the papers will be given by Marit Aas, Oslo university, Torbjörn Sandén, Åbo akademi och Leif Moos., Danish School of Education.

References

Contributor 1
What happens with schools when the state inspects them

Eilard, Håkan

1. Research topic.
Inspection of Swedish schools has grown fast and furious since the beginning of year 2000. In this symposium we illuminate some ethical questions that arise when school inspections are conducted. Ethical aspects about care and justice of students is targeted, as well as the question of how the Swedish School Inspectorate assess teacher’s teaching, and convinces schools and local school authorities to develop their inner qualities, by bringing legal arguments and even by using fines.

2 and 3. Theoretical framework and Method:
Drawing on theories about performativity and juridification, this article explores ethical aspects in school leadership and school management in the process of inspection. The session is based on three case studies of Swedish schools, which are sourced by research interviews and by informal data collected from school actors after inspection.

4. Findings.
Inspection heavily bumps ethical questions. Results from the study highlights general ethical difficulties in inspections of schools and particularly the inspection phenomena of governing schools by distance. It also pinpoints ethical dilemmas of school leaders when they try to take care of student’s wellbeing at the same time as they stay loyal with the teachers as well as they tell the truth to the inspectors.
Contributor 2
To understand the inner life of a school - a basis for school leader ethical action

Ekholm, Mats

1. Research topic.
Schools contain many programmatic and behavioural regularities (Sarason, 1971). School leaders need to be brave enough to look at these with a critical mind to be able to estimate to what extent the regularities serve the purpose of the school or not. The paper illuminates the responsibility that school leaders have to use the scientific knowledge about the dynamics of the inner life of a school in their ethical and pedagogical leadership.

2. Theoretical framework.
Theoretical work that have been done on the inner life of educational institutions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, Coleman, 1961, Ekholm, 1971, Miles 1965, Sarason, 1971) is used as a basis for empirical studies of the life inside schools reported here. A model for understanding the dynamics of the inner life of a school is presented (Ekholm, 2017).

3. Methodological design
In this paper critical examinations are presented on how school usually deals with the ways in which students learn about the aims of their education, how time planning not is adjusted to the time it takes to learn, how the groupings of students seldom are subordinated to the knowledge that exists on learning and socialisation. Results from empirical studies where teachers and students have reported on the regularities that exist within their schools are used as a basis for discussions on the ethical ground for school leader actions.

4. Findings.
Observations are made of school leader actions that show that important parts of existing knowledge of the inner life of schools are not in use. The reasons for the non-use of existing knowledge are discussed and a call for ethical actions among school leaders is presented. School leaders need to use the scientific knowledge about what is going on in the school for the benefit of the students and not staying loyal to traditions.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research.
The presented study illuminates the difficulties that research has to reach its users, which is a problem that is well known among Nordic educational researchers, but seldom discussed or paid attention to.
Contributor 3
School leadership based on a scientific approach - a foundation for ethical school leadership?

Forssten Seiser, Anette

1 Research topic.
There is a broad consensus that the foundation of the work school should be scientific knowledge. In this session, I will discuss and argue for action research as a way to strengthen the critical and reflexive thinking used in schools which in the long term ends in an ethical school leadership. Building school leadership on scientific knowledge requires a conscious choice between the scientific traditions that exist. Different sciences are based on various knowledge foundations, and researchers make different theoretical considerations based on how they perceive, and understand, the world and human actions. School leaders need to be aware of these assumptions.

In order to function well as leaders, school leaders need a high self-awareness so that they can critically review their practices and their leadership. One way to reach this ambition is to use action research methods as these have the appropriate qualifications that are needed to develop a scientific approach based school leadership.

2. Theoretical framework
The theory of practices architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008) is used as a lens to explore principals pedagogical school leadership.

3. Method
Action research conducted with a group of school leaders, investigating and testing pedagogical leadership.

4. Results
The result of the action research study (Forssten Seiser, 2017) was that the school leaders systematic approach to investigate their own work was strengthened. Through a critical and scrutinizing approach, they developed their professional judgement and became wiser in their leadership. Using an action research approach the school leaders improved their reflective ability, made ethical considerations and took more wise decisions. The leadership developed in the action research study is described as a leadership with the aim to do others and the society good.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research.
By conducting an action research study, a contribution to forming s somewhat more varied research on school leadership, has been given. In recent years, school leadership research has lost its theoretical diversity (Gunter & Ribbins, 2003). The critical research effort, which include action research, is a research that has reduced in favour to the evaluative and instrumental approaches. The presented study highlights the dilemmas that may arise when Nordic school leaders try to realise a pedagogical leadership based on scientific knowledge. Furthermore, the study provides an example of how school leaders can develop a critical approach to their practice and to their pedagogical leadership.
Contributor 4
Ethics and school leaders’ responsibility for the work against bullying

Söderström, Åsa

1. Research Topic
To create a school environment free from bullying is an important work. School leaders have the overall responsibility and power over this work. In Swedish schools the legal framework about bullying is clear, but at the same time it requires a bunch of moral considerations in each specific situation. What ethical demands do school leaders face in this work? In 2011, the National Agency for Education presented the results of a survey on school’s work against bullying (Skolverket, 2011). The results showed a number of effective interventions. Three of these are discussed in relation to school leadership.

2. Theoretical framework
Bullying as a group phenomenon. School improvement capacity. Ethical school leadership.

3. Methodology
Questionnaire to about 10 000 pupils. Group interviews with 840 principals, teachers and pupils from 39 schools.

4. Research findings
Three findings are discussed: 1) Stability in the school is as a key factor in the work against bullying. What responsibility does school leaders have to create stability in the school? 2) Knowledge about the relationship between pupils is another key factor in order to discover and handle bullying. It requires both courage and moral integrity from school leaders to reveal in which classes and among which teachers bullying occur. 3) It is important to create knowledge about the norms and values in the school and how these norms and values affects the occurrence of bullying. School leader needs to create space for conversations about norms and values among staff as well as among students and need to be open to examine the impact of his/her own norms on the school climate.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research:
There is a constant need to raise awareness of how schools can work to successfully prevent and address bullying and degrading treatment. The presented study is a contribution to this field of research.
Symposium
School Principal Training in the Nordic Policy Cultures

Paulsen, Jan Merok
Oslo Metropolitan University

The focus of this symposium is school principal training and development in the Nordic countries, with emphasis on how general ideas of leadership and leadership training are filtered through national policy cultures and in next turn when general ideas of national templates are translated into local cultures. Commonalities in policy cultures of the Nordic countries encompass the historical tradition of a strong welfare state model, inspired by social-democratic values, and manifest in egalitarian norms enacted by a relatively strong state system of steering schools by input of resources and a national curriculum. Further, the norms of equality in education have also co-existed with a “Building” tradition emphasizing democratic socialization of kids and youngsters, where education is regarded as a context-sensitive project embedded in a local-democratic system of governing schools. The balance between state steering and local autonomy enjoyed by municipalities have traditionally been maintained by school leaders, bound to societal legitimacy and trust to the profession. In the field of educational organization and leadership, these core characteristics are reflected in longstanding norms of democratic leadership, moral leadership and ethical leadership as well as pedagogical leadership.

Since the millennium shift, most commonly as a response to rankings in the OECD-PISA studies, a series of centralization policies, yet in different paths, have been initiated in the Nordic countries. For example in Sweden, state inspection has been built up, whereas in Norway, the introduction of national tests and the introduction of a National Quality Assurance System (NQAS) in 2005. In a similar vein, in various ways across the Nordic countries, increased emphasis is put on school leadership and education and training programs for school principals, in line with global trends. In Sweden and Norway these efforts have taken the form and shape of national programs initiated, funded and steered by state agencies. Recent research, based on program analysis, shows that the focal points in these national frames are learning about the educational context and national system, paired with human resource management and individual growth in leadership roles (Aas & Törnsén, 2016). There is also a strong sense of accountability in these national frames, evidently in the national frame set out by the Norwegian Directorate of Training and Learning (UDIR) and labeled “Leadership in Schools”. Following, the obligation to improve student results in school has led to increased interest in studying how principals can contribute to motivation and commitment with their teachers and their professional development. However, there is less research on the challenges in developing conditions for continual professional learning, for example on leading skills required for leading processes of developing collective knowledge. At the same time, we know less about how these standardized national frames are translated into local policy cultures and school culture by the participating school leaders. Thus, based on contributions from Sweden, Iceland and Norway, the overarching question that has guided the research, on which this symposium is based, is:

How are trans-national influences towards school leadership training enacted in different Nordic countries?
Abstract

The national school leadership program in Sweden started in 2009, and various follow-ups have been conducted continuously, where participants assessed the education and how it contributed to their own learning and to developing their own leadership. Any overall analysis of these course evaluations has not yet been presented and the purpose of this survey is to provide knowledge of what these course evaluations can say about the implementation of the education and these contributions to the participants' learning and development. Of particular focus in this analysis is how participants judge their own knowledge development and how education influences their own leadership.

Theoretical framework

In the field of higher education research, a special course evaluation instrument has been developed over the years, Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ). The valuation tool is based on research conducted (Marsh & Yeung, 1997) and has been shown in various studies to maintain high reliability and validity. The overall theory of the study is based on Stufflebaum's model for evaluation (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). The model is based on four different aspects (context, input, process and product) and sets them in relation to each other.

Methodological design

The data material consists of the survey material that the National Agency for Education distributes annually to the participants in the school leadership program. The group included in this study started their education in 2014 and completed education in 2016. During the educational process, they answered three questionnaires consisting of questions with fixed response options and open response options. Analyzes of both types of questions will be presented.

Expected conclusion/findings

Analyzes show that the participants state that they have developed their skills in several areas of knowledge. This is particularly noticeable in terms of school law's knowledge. There are few observed differences between school leaders in elementary school and preschool. The analysis of the open response options shows differences that can be derived from elementary school and pre-school knowledge traditions. Preschool leaders in many cases indicate that their leadership focuses on the individual children and their learning as well as on the relationship with guardians. School leaders in elementary school indicate to a greater extent that their leadership consists of and forms of the regulations and regulations governing the school.

Relevance to Nordic educational research

Education of school leaders for primary and lower secondary schools is carried out in a joint education program in Sweden. The survey shows that participants in education develop skills in different areas and that they can be related to the various knowledge traditions in preschool and school. The results are discussed in a national and international perspective.

Referencer


Contributor 2
Postgraduate education and training for principals in Iceland

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Abstract
Research has demonstrated that the leadership of principals is crucial for sustained school improvement and students’ achievement. Together with an emphasis on school-based management, these findings have increased the responsibilities of principals and amplified the pressure on them. This has led to an increased worldwide emphasis on principal preparation programs. How this has been handled differ within the Nordic countries and while some States (like Sweden and Norway) initiate, fund and steer such programs others (like Iceland) don’t.

Educational legislation in Iceland does not demand that principals have additional education in leadership or management, nor do the municipalities that run the schools. It is therefore up to the principals themselves if they seek further education or not. The universities offer master programs in educational management and leadership but little research exists on their impact and usefulness. This paper has two purposes: a) To give a short overview on the situation in Iceland regarding principal preparation programs. B) To present findings from research aiming at investigating the attitudes and experience of pre- and compulsory school principals of a master’s program in school management and leadership, and at exploring the impact they felt the program had on them and their work.

Data for the study was gathered through semi-structured individual interviews with 14 principals in pre- and compulsory schools, who had completed the master’s program in school management and leadership. The interviews aimed at searching for key concepts such as self-confidence, self-awareness, vision, leadership and educational change. The findings demonstrate that completing the programme gave the principals an increased sense of competence and deepened their understanding of their roles as principals, increased their self-awareness, theoretical knowledge, and reflective and critical thinking. They reported of changed way of practising leadership, of vision building and of working towards school improvement. The most practical part of their studies was their work on their theses. However, some of the principals called for more practical assignments/programs, especially regarding financial and human resource management. The findings also showed that what was considered practical by one principal was regarded as less practical by another one. They give reason to believe that completing a master’s program such as the one investigated in this study is important for the principals’ understanding of their work and their behaviour in a way that is likely to make a difference for school improvement and to students.
Contributor 3  
**Standardized principal training in Norway: Lost in translation?**

Paulsen, Jan Merok  
*Oslo Metropolitan University*

**Abstract**

During the last decade a strong wave of re-centralization has been exerted by the Norwegian state in order to enhance educational quality outcomes in basic schooling, and at the purpose of adapting national policies closer to educational standards diffused by transnational agencies such as OECD. In a similar vein, in various ways across the Nordic countries, increased emphasis is put on school leadership and education and training programs for school principals, in line with global trends. In Sweden and Norway these efforts have taken the form and shape of national programs initiated, funded and steered by state agencies. Program analysis shows that the focal points in these national frames are learning about the educational context and national system, paired with human resource management and individual growth in leadership roles (Aas & Törnsén, 2016). There is also a tendency to include models from international meta-analyses both in the frame of reference as well into the curriculum of the providers.

As noted, researchers have frequently seen this shift as a transition from local autonomy towards tighter national control through the establishment of a national quality assurance system (NQAS). Less discussed is the enhanced normative and cultural control (Rowan & Miller, 2007) established by national directorates and agencies through a series of national leadership training programs for respectively school principals, school leadership candidates, day-care leaders and leaders of special education services. Research on non-educational organizations and institutions shows that global and national standards are spread through dynamic translation processes rather than straightforward adoption. Thus, at least in theory, a variety of different adaptation processes may take place at the “street-level” of school leadership, including modifications and buffering (Brunsson, 2002; Brunsson, Rasche, & Seidl, 2012; Røvik, Eilertsen, & Furu, 2014). By means of document analysis of student developmental projects, where local decisions and negotiations in their schools are key components, it is possible to analyse whether core elements might be “lost in translation” through local sense-making processes - or imitated and adopted. Implications for further research and local governance are discussed.

**References**


NETWORK 7

VALUES ISSUES AND SOCIAL RELATIONS IN EDUCATION
Social pressure and standpoints in moral dilemmas made by twelve year olds in 1973 and in 2017

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Research topic

earlier research show that parents have a major influence on children’s moral standpoints by acting as social models (Hwang & Nilsson, 2011; Giddens & Sutton, 2014). During the adolescence, peers become more important as models (Ziehe, 2000). Bronfenbrenner (1967) constructed a moral dilemma test (MDT), to study how parents and peers affected standpoints taken by young people in moral dilemmas. In the mid-1970s, Andersson (1979; 1980) made a Swedish MDT-study of 11-14 years' reactions to social pressure.

Aim

We share a similar interest of finding out to what extent parents and peers have social influence towards young people. The aim is therefore to study young people’s standpoints in moral dilemma situations and how these standpoints vary when pressure comes from parents respectively peers. The aim is also to compare the patterns of influence of today with the patterns detected in the early 1970s.

Methodological design

We are re-using the Bronfenbrenner’s MDT that investigates "crushing situations" where young people in a fictional situation are asked to take a stand in a moral dilemma situation. The questionnaires are given under three different conditions (a) students are asked to take a stand in eight dilemma situations (b) students are asked to take a stand in eight similar dilemma situations, while being told that their parents later on will find out about their answers and (c) students are asked to take a stand, while being told that their answers will be presented to their classmates. In 2016, we modernized the Swedish MDT created in the early 1970s. During spring 2017 we made a method testing with 111 students in school year 6, 47 girls and 64 boys.

Findings

In the presentation, we present the differences in standpoints taken according to the presented conditions, between boys and girls and between young people in the 70’s and young people of today. Relevance for Nordic educational research

The study will illuminate changes in the subtle interplay that goes on between young people and their main social agents that might have occurred during the last fifty years. This retrospective study will present an example of research well needed in the Nordic countries.

References

Between the legalist and the Dirty Harry: Ethical dilemmas as experienced by Senior Investigating Officers under further and continuing education

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Senior Investigating Officers (SIO’s) constantly make choices that influence the perception of policing both in society as well as internally as a role model. These choices effect both the role as manager, in relation to which cases that are taken, as well as in the role as leader, in that employees should be put to do work assignments they master and are competent performing. Some of the choices made, are in nature an ethical dilemma; choices that may be perceived as equally wrong as right. Studies that have investigated how bachelor students in policing develop from student to professional members of the Police Service have found that they may go from being characterized as “legalists” into “Dirty Harry’s”. This study investigates similar issues among police professionals during further and continuing education. According to theories of moral development, stating “not breaking the law” as the primarily line of argument for decision making may be interpreted as reasoning on primarily one level of moral development. This study investigates ethical dilemmas, as perceived by SIO’s during education. Data was collected by approaching SIO’s that were attending education in Investigative Leadership at the Department for further and continuing education, Norwegian Police University College. The preliminary results show that perceived dilemmas take the form of dilemmas closely associated with the main issues of a leaders work, management and leadership, in the form of weighing the lack of competence of ones employees against the ability to solve cases when the perceived and/or actual cost of investigation work is under budgeted as well as weighing the perceived cost of utilizing information from a source and the risk of the person being retaliated against by the persons of criminal milieus that are exposed. The results are discussed in relation to theories of ethics in general and moral development in particular.
Learning from differences - Increasing teacher professionalism through internationalization

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Research topic/aim
This paper presents a case study of an intensive international course (CSEI), funded by the Nordplus Programme, focusing on inclusion. 23 teacher and social pedagogues students from six Baltic and Nordic countries were interviewed during and after the course on how their professional knowledge was influenced by the course.
The aim of this study is to explore the students’ experiences of the Nordplus CSEI course and how this contributed to their knowledge and understanding of professionalism. The research questions are as follows:
What are the students’ understanding of professionalism?
What professional experiences do the students talk about?
How could the students’ experiences contribute to their work as professional teachers?

Theoretical framework
Schools are transformative institutions which call for teachers with a strong professional awareness combined with reflective thinking (OECD, 2010). Teachers are required to respond to students diversity in all its aspects and to meet students’ individual needs on equal basis. Teachers’ professionalism needs to include both academic knowledge (Hargreaves, 2000), and how to reach out to all students and to maintain collaboration and teamwork with colleagues. The EU Commission’s (2017) report on preparing teachers for diversity, states that teachers must be effectively prepared to “embrace the benefits of diversity for schools and all students” (p. 23). The authors of the report argue that teachers are an important aspect of the quality of the educational system

Methodological design
Semi-structured group interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) were used to collect data. 23 students from six different countries were interviewed by their teacher and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to analyze the interviews.

Expected conclusions/findings
The results show that the students’ understanding of professionalism is multifaceted, and they gained several experiences during the course. One of the main results is the co-operation and opportunities that the course provided the students with in developing skills to cooperate with different people, to appreciate differences and to learn from others. The students learn to understand the significance of inclusive education in the globalized world. This allows us to conclude that students can be trained to consider the importance and understanding of knowledge and its use for now and in the future. Thus providing such short term internationalization potential is an important part of studying and becoming a teacher or pedagogue for the globalized future.

Relevance to Nordic educational research.
Inclusive education and social justice are high on the educational agenda in the Nordic countries. The CSEI Nordplus course for student teachers deals with above issues combined with globalisation and professionalism and the content of this paper thus speaks directly into the Nordic framework.

References


To be free and to belong: the views of children with and without special educational needs about what matters for them in their early school years

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The aim of this study was to investigate children’s perspectives, both of those children with and without special educational needs, of their early years education and to describe matters that children consider to be of importance for their well-being and development during these years. The study is part of a larger study (Lundqvist, 2016) in which the same group of children was followed from preschool to first grade. A total of 56 children, between 5 and 7 years of age, in 65 educational settings in Sweden were included in the study. Twenty-nine children were described as having special educational needs. The children’s views of what matters for them in their early school years were collected during 2012 to 2015 using drawings and interviews, and analysed with a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Research ethics in research with children (Siljehag, 2015) are discussed. Nine themes were identified that reflected matters of importance for the children as well as needs and values. In order to thrive in early years education, the children needed to have a sense of belonging with peers; opportunities for play, creative activities and thinking; experiences of speed, excitement and physical challenges; elements of coziness, withdrawals and comfort for recreation; to feel safe; to experience growth in knowledge and understanding of the world; to feel free and autonomous; to have comfort objects and bonds with home and family; and to connect with nature. These themes are discussed and linked to previous research (e.g., Allodi Westling, 2002), educational evaluation models (i.e., the ECERS-R and the ICP), and theories of needs and motivational values such as Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008) and Schwartz’s model of universal human values (Schwartz, 2012). Theoretical frameworks of the study are these theories of needs and values. The results of the study cannot be generalised in terms of other children or contexts. The study has relevance on Nordic educational research because it can form a basis for discussion needs and values of children and facilitate the development of educational settings that meet the needs of children, contribute to their well-being and are experienced as joyful and meaningful by them.

References


“I’m rarely as calm as I seem.” High functioning young adults with autism spectrum condition experience of friendship

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Research topic/aim:
Most high functioning young adults with autism spectrum condition (ASC) experience difficulties with social relations. Research show that children and young adults with ASC experience a higher degree of loneliness than their peers despite longing for forming and maintaining friendships (e.g., Calder, Hill & Pellicano, 2013). There is a lack of studies relating to children with ASC in general and young adults in particular and their experiences. Most studies have had qualitative approaches and on younger informants (e.g., Parsons, Guldberg, MacLeod, A., Jones, Prunty, & Balfe, 2011). The aim of this paper is to describe how high functioning young adults with ASC experience friendship.

Theoretical framework:
The study is done with a phenomenological approach and with the ambition to study and describe the phenomenon of friendship without preconceptions.

Methodological design:
Data was collected through fourteen semi-structured (ten individual and four done in groups of two) interviews with high functioning informants with ASC at four upper secondary schools in Sweden. The informants, age 17-21, all attend classes organised for pupils in the spectrum but within regular schools. Altogether fifteen young adults, including six girls, were interviewed. Three boys participated in both types of interview. The data material has been analysed using interpretative phenomenological analyses (IPA).

Expected conclusions/findings:
Although the experiences of friendships differed in the group, all expressed a desire to attain friendships. Analysis has established four superordinate themes on the phenomenon of friendship in the data: “Friendship as a difficulty”, “Friendship as attractive”, “Friendship as possible” and finally “Friendship as an investment”. These four superordinate themes will be described in detail, discussed and exemplified in the paper.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
This paper is to be part of a boarder study in educational science that focuses on capturing young adults experience of social relations. Specific focus in the boarder study is on the phenomena of friendship and conflict. Young adults with ASC are present in schools on every form, grade and country today, whether or not the organisation, teachers and classmates know about their diagnosis or not. It is essential to know more of how these, often already struggleing young adults, experience social relations in able to support them. Understanding different experiences of friendship can also help us understand why problems with social relationships arise. Findings on the phenomena of friendship (i.e. successful social relation) also has relevance for understanding when it does not occur (i.e. loneliness and conflict).

References
A thematic analysis of students’ descriptions of bullying experiences

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During 2010-2016 the anti-bullying organization Friends has been collecting data from 54,066 sixth-to ninth-grade students from all parts of Sweden. A large questionnaire of 29 questions covering issues on school climate and bullying was used. Among these quantitative questions there were a few open-ended questions where students were asked to describe in their own words why a bullying incident had taken place; why they felt unsafe and if they had any suggestions on how the school climate could be improved. This qualitative data has not been used elsewhere and we are now analysing these written replies in our research project, where we aim to take an explorative approach towards students’ subjective descriptions of how they frame their experience of bullying. The specific open-ended question we have analyzed was a follow-up question about their own bullying experience. Firstly, the students were asked whether they had been bullied or not, and if the bullying had something to do with gender, ethnicity, sexuality, or if not, they were asked to describe in their own words what the incident was about. Of the 54,066 participants, 10,625 said they had been bullied. 6,028 of them replied that it was for another reason than the ones provided in the questionnaire, and 2,975 of them wrote a description of the incident. We have used thematic analysis to identity key themes in their replies (Agar 1996; Walford 2008). We have identified four themes: “Because of me”; “Because of the bully”; “Quarrels happen” and “Non-labeling”. “Because of me” contains descriptions where the students in different ways position the incident as happening because of themselves (being wrong; having the wrong looks; hanging out with the wrong people). In contrast, “Because of the bully” instead positions the bully as the reason for why the incident happened (Jealousy; Stupid; Aggressive person). In the third positioning, “quarrels happen”, the students diminish the incident and make the peer group responsible (happens to everyone; just a fight). The fourth way to position the incident, “Non labeling”, contains positionings where the students can not or will not label the incident (Is there always a reason; I don’t know why they did it; I am not telling). Overall, these four ways of positioning the incident raise questions about identity, as students either position the incident on themselves, as having something to do with them as persons, or position the incident outside themselves and onto the bullies or as part of their peer group climate as a regular activity. However, some students also position the incident without any clear labeling of it. This might point to an act of resistance towards using a clear categorization of the incident. This paper could contribute to Nordic educational research, Network 7: Value Issues and Social Relations in Education since it concerns students’ perspectives of social relations in school.
Moral Disengagement and Bullying among School Children: A Short-Term Longitudinal Study

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
According to the social-cognitive theoretical framework, moral disengagement refers to social and psychological maneuvers by which self-regulated mechanisms can be deactivated and moral self-sanctions can be disengaged, which in turn promotes behaviors that harm others without feelings of remorse or guilt. Examples of moral disengagement mechanisms are moral justification, diffusion of responsibility, perceptually distorting or minimizing the harmful consequences of the actions, dehumanization, and blaming the victim. Previous research has found moral disengagement to be positively associated with bullying behaviors among children and adolescents. Most studies have however used cross-sectional designs, and the directionality of the association is therefore not clear. Theoretically, Bandura suggests a bidirectional, reciprocal relationship between moral disengagement and behaviors that harm others.

RESEARCH AIM
The aim of the current study was to examine whether moral disengagement can predict children’s bullying behaviors, and whether children’s bullying behaviors can predict moral disengagement over the period of one year. Because previous studies have found boys to be more inclined to morally disengage and to bully others, the longitudinal associations between moral disengagement and bullying were examined for boys and girls separately.

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN
A short-term longitudinal design was adopted. One thousand three-hundred and fifty-four (706 females and 648 males) students from 108 Swedish primary classrooms in 69 public schools participated in the study at both Time 1 in fourth grade and then around one year later at Time 2 in fifth grade. During these times, the participants completed a questionnaire in their ordinary classrooms.

FINDINGS
The results showed a positive correlation between moral disengagement and bullying both at Time 1 and Time 2. Structural Equation Model analyses revealed moral disengagement at Time 1 to positively predict bullying at Time 2, when controlling for bullying at Time 1. Furthermore, bullying at Time 1 positively predicted moral disengagement at Time 2, when controlling for moral disengagement at Time 1. In addition, moral disengagement at Time 1 positively predicted moral disengagement at Time 2, and bullying at Time 1 positively predicted bullying at Time 2. All associations were significant for both boys and girls. In other words, children who scored high, in relation to their peers, in moral disengagement in fourth grade were more inclined to bully others in fourth grade, but were also more inclined to bully others one year later. In addition, they tended to score higher in moral disengagement in fifth grade. Moreover, children who scored high in bullying behaviors in fourth grade were more inclined to score high in moral disengagement in fourth grade, as well as in moral disengagement and bullying behaviors in fifth grade.

RELEVANCE TO NORDIC EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
The current findings suggest a reciprocal relationship between moral disengagement and bullying, as proposed by Bandura, and shows the necessity for teachers and policy makers to address moral disengagement in bullying prevention and intervention methods and efforts. The study contributes to the Nordic educational research field by demonstrating a conceptual and empirical overlap between school bullying and values education.
Inappropriate Behaviour in the Academia – Students bullying their Lecturers

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The experiences related to teaching in the collage classroom, can sometimes include destructive, demeaning, and intimidating experiences for those lecturers involved. The student bully who targets his or her lecturers, is a neglected area of study and is the focus in the following study. Students may display a variety of openly aggressive or other more concealed behaviours, to establish power or dominance over the targeted professor or lecturer. These behaviours, their impact on the lecturer and the learning environment, are of interest here. The study encompasses the victim’s perception of inappropriate behaviour or bullying, and focuses on the triggers (e.g. lecturers’ formal competence, sex, ethnicity) and settings (e.g. classroom, public places, office) of the bullying events and the contrapower strategies (Lampman, Crew, Lowery, & Tompkins, 2016; Lampman, Phelps, Bancroft, & Beneke, 2009; May & Tenzek, 2017).

Research findings suggest that the prevalence of workplace bullying is increasing across the world (Pheko, Monteiro, & Segopolo, 2017). Studies on and campaigns against bullying in Norway have been many, especially since Prime Minister K.M. Bondevik initiated a campaign against bullying at the work place in 2004 (Einarsen, Hoel, & Nielsen, 2005). However, studies on educational system internationally, are mostly concerned with bullying between students and bullying of students by teachers (Brewer Jr, 2017; De Shannon Lawrence, 2017). Few studies are directed towards bullying in higher education (Enwefa, Enwefa, Dansby-Giles, & Giles, 2010; Faria, Mixon, & Salter, 2012; Gorlewski, Gorlewski, & Porfilio, 2014), and those studies are directed towards bullying within the staff or within the students, or from professors to students (Chapell et al., 2004; Lewis, 2004). However, there is a significant lack of research explicating the student bully who targets lecturers (May & Tenzek, 2017).

The aim of this research was to reveal the degree, nature and possible consequences of bullying or inappropriate behaviour among students directed towards their lecturers. It also asks to what degree and why certain types of behaviour are tolerated.

Method of study is digital questionnaires to lecturers from colleges all over Norway. The data are drawn from mail surveys to academic staff of the rank of full professor, associate professor and assistant professor at 20 teacher education programs. The data consist of self-reported experiences of being bullied, and personal and institutional consequences.

In a report to the Government, the Ministry of Education and Research in Norway states that: The objective of higher education is for students to learn as much as possible and to achieve the best possible learning outcome. (Meld. St. 16 (2016-2017), Quality Culture in Higher Education, 2016). Included in the learning outcomes are self-reflection, which encompasses personal development, maturity, and metacognition. These goals are contradictory to bullying behaviour. The student teacher’s learning on this area will also be reflected in their future as professionals, where they constantly must work against all kinds of bullying in schools. It is utterly important that teacher education institutions, national and international, have strategies to register and counteract all kinds of bullying.
School cafeterias as social arenas for school bullying

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For the past six years, the anti-bullying organisation, Friends, has conducted online questionnaires with school students throughout Sweden. The findings from these questionnaires have provided important information regarding school bullying and students’ feelings of insecurity in schools across Sweden, and have provided the basis for Friends’ annual reports. In their 2016 report, for example, Friends reported that 7.5 percent of students in grades 3-9 have been subjected to bullying during the past year. They also reported that bullying and degrading treatment is more common among students in grades 4-6 than grades 7-9, and that large numbers of students feel unsafe in particular spaces of their schools. For grades 3-6, 18% reported feeling unsafe in the toilets, 14% in the changing rooms, and 6% on the internet (Friends 2016). In their questionnaires, Friends also asked about feelings of safety in schoolyards, classrooms, corridors, and school cafeterias, and provided space for students to explain why they felt unsafe in those spaces. In this paper, we are particularly interested in students’ perspectives on why they felt unsafe in their school cafeterias.

In discussing students’ feelings of insecurity in their school cafeterias, we utilise Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1977) ecological systems model. In doing so, we focus on the microsystem of the school cafeteria and approach it as a particular arena for bullying, which is located within the broader institutional arena of the school (Eriksson et al. 2002). While numerous researchers have adopted social-ecological approaches to school bullying, they have tended to focus on the interactions between individuals or groups of individuals within the microsystem, rather than the ways in which the environment of the microsystem is implicated in those interactions.

The paper draws on data provided by students to Friends’ annual questionnaires. In particular, we focus on the 1,547 answers provided by students in grades 3-6 to the open-ended question, ‘Why do you feel unsafe in the cafeteria?’ The answers were printed out and then analysed with the use of thematic analysis (Agar 1996; Walford 2008). Five themes were identified, including Food, Spatiality, Staff, Older Students, and Negative Actions. While at first glance, some of the answers provided to this question may not seem particularly relevant to school bullying research, a closer analysis suggests that, taken together, these answers actually provide for a particularly nuanced understanding of school bullying and the ways in which it is influenced by the environmental framework of the microsystem. While the findings from Friends’ questionnaires have tended to be used more quantitatively to map the scope of the problem of school bullying, our more qualitative reading of this open-ended question provides a thick description of the microsystem of the school, and particularly the school cafeteria, as a potentially risk-filled bullying arena.

The paper is thus highly relevant for Nordic educational research, and the 46th Congress more specifically, as it provides a bridge between somewhat bounded bullying research traditions and breaches commonly-held ideas about the reasoning involved in school bullying situations.
Recognition and dropout

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Research topic

The risk factors for dropout are well known, and national programs have been implemented, with limited success. While some youth, being in a “a vulnerable position” in terms of risk factors, complete upper secondary school, others drop out. Why is it like that? In this article our focus is the youth’s experiences of being recognized inside and outside school from early on and until they dropped out.

Theoretical framework

Axel Honneth (2008) emphasized recognition as a universal principle essential for the individual’s development and dignity. He elaborated recognition in three different recognition-spheres, followed by three forms of relationship to oneself. Violation of recognition will have consequences for the individual’s experience and for culture in general. Research-based knowledge of Honneth’s two last forms of recognition are sparse, but both clinical and social psychological experiences suggests that these forms of intersubjective recognition means more than previously assumed (Lysaker, 2011). It is therefore interesting to associate this with school participation and youth’s experiences.

Methodological design

The project use longitudinal method and indirect qualitative approach, following 70 youth from 2013-2023. The interviews are conducted in a way that resemble ethnographic fieldwork, collecting an in-depth knowledge of the individual life stories. The method is based on narrative theory and hermeneutics, where every interview is treated as participant observations (Moshuus & Eide, 2016), used when the informants do not share the same context and where these different contexts make up contested ground (Bourgois, 1998). Of the recruited youth from Telemark County in risk positions for workfare measures, one half of the group is at risk of experiencing drop out, while the other half already dropped out of school.

Expected findings

This article tries to give the stories behind the risk factors for dropout, from the youth's perspective and through their expressed life-stories. The indirect approach tell us more of their experience of recognition in close relationships, but also in relation to rights and social status.

Relevance to Nordic educational research

In the knowledge society, education is considered as the key to the labour market. In the Nordic countries, the educational system has recently assumed a dominating position, where the consequences of dropout are greater and can lead to marginalization.

Literature


Hand-on-shoulder touch in classroom interaction

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In classrooms, teachers are expected to organize and maintain pedagogical activities and classroom order, and take care of the students’ well-being; students, for their part, orient to classrooms as sites of academic endeavor and as a space to live their life with peers (Öhrn & Holm 2014). Since classrooms are dense with various activities and embodied participants, the context calls for haptic interaction: touching is frequently present in classrooms. Touching serves both prosocial purposes (Goodwin 2017) and purposes of social control and affection (Cekaite 2016; Cekaite & Holm Kvist 2017). However, in the context of school, touching is seldom discussed or analyzed in other terms than as a risk for teachers (Öhman & Quennerstedt 2017).

In this paper we analyze touching in classroom interaction as an everyday, partly conventionalized activity. As our method we use multimodal conversation analysis; our data is drawn from a larger data base of over 100 hours of video-taped Finnish classroom interaction in comprehensive and lower secondary schools. We are interested both in teacher-student and student-student touches, and in this presentation we focus on a specific type of touch, namely, putting hand on shoulder or arm of another participant.

Our preliminary findings show that hand-on-shoulder/arm touch is one of the most routinized touches for comforting or calming down a pupil or student. Particularly teachers use this type of touch as an intervention, in order to stop student’s restless movements or otherwise disorderly conduct. However, also students may put their hand on a peer’s shoulder/arm for different reasons, including that of teasing. By analyzing hand-on-shoulder touches we will show how they are used as a resource in classroom activities and illustrate the ways in which linguistic and embodied actions are co-constructed, synchronized and laminated.

This presentation is part of the project Touch in School (funded by Kone Foundation). The project aims to analyze practices of touching in classroom and construct a framework of touching and its interactional functions in this institutional setting. We hope to open up new kind of discussion and empirical research about this important phenomenon in the Nordic countries where the research on touch in educational settings is only in its early stage.

Teachers’ joint evaluations of the quality of the social climate as a starting point for interventions: a small test in two teacher teams

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The aim of the study was to test with teachers’ team a self-assessment instrument of the social climate, in order to investigate how the instrument was evaluated by the teachers; whether the joint assessments provide a useful profile of weaknesses and strengths; and if the assessments function as starting point for interventions planned by the teachers that aim to change and improve the social climate in the class.

The theoretical framework includes: theory of values (Schwartz, 1992), self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012) integrated in a model, Goals and Values in School (GAVIS) that takes account of children’s evaluations of their learning environments (Allodi, 2002, 2007, 2010, 2014). According to the model the goals to pursue in order to experience a good social climate have to cover various basic needs: the needs of autonomy, competence, belonging, openness and stability.

Mixed method: teacher questionnaires, and recorded conversations in two teams were collected. Based on the GAVIS model a self-assessment instrument for teachers has been developed that contains 50 items covering 10 domains. The teachers were asked to rate the items choosing one option: this is a challenge; this is something we have worked with, but that can improve; this is a strength. The participants were 10 teachers, 6 working in grade 7 and 4 in grade 8. The teachers discussed the results of the assessments and planned possible interventions. The outcomes were followed up after two weeks.

The contents of the instrument were relevant, but some formulations could be improved. The assessments could identify meaningful strengths and weaknesses. The joint assessment in the teams originated discussions and identified targets for interventions. At the follow-up the teachers had introduced changes and improvements, but they expressed that more time was needed.

The self-assessment model seems relevant and useful according to the teachers in order to discuss the social climate and plan common interventions. Some item formulations could be improved by mean of classroom observations.

References

Policing the school: dialogues and crime reports

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Behaviour among students in the Swedish schools previously described as teasing and fighting has during the last decade become a part of a legal discourse. School violence is a global phenomenon which encompasses a wide range of behaviours, from school shootings to minor theft, bullying and sexual harassment. Sweden and the Nordic countries has for a long time been viewed as exceptions, focusing on care and social pedagogical measures, instead of punishment (Estrada, Pettersson and Shannon 2012). Furthermore, the Nordic countries has for a long time been known for its progressive education with a strong emphasis on equality. However, in the last two decades, Nordic societies has been through a number of reforms. The debate of the so-called crisis in schools, has been a traveling discourse, transformed in the European and Nordic context, advocating for stricter measurements against “youth problems”. The purpose of the present study is to investigate how the school officials at nine schools described various measures taken to handle school violence. The focus is on what role expert systems play in the current tendency towards juridification of the schools. The study takes a sociological-narrative perspective. (Hacking, 2004, Czarniawska, 2006). The student welfare team can be described as an expert system, in that it contains competences relevant to assisting children and young people in need of support. Whereas the institutional discourses set certain limits on what people can and should talk about, how they solve different problems and frame their professional roles, institutional reflexivity enables them to think through and critically approach the professional cultures and institutional discourses. These processes can be framed in terms of discipline and control systems (Foucault, 1979). Central to the analysis is also trying to understand how different forms of power are connected to the processes of categorization of conduct. Focusing on key statements and the attitudes of the professionals, where talk about police reports is present, our ambition is to get closer to the different ways in which schools approach violence and what forms of power are used. The results showed the school official mainly reported physical violence to the police. However, reporting to the police was not necessarily linked to the degree of violence inflicted on the students. Furthermore, the results show that the professionals report to the police in order to draw a clear line on what behaviour is not tolerated.

References

NETWORK 8

GENDER AND EDUCATION
Teachers' perceptions of gender differences in the classroom

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In most countries in the Western world, girls’ school performance is superior to boys. Boys’ lower grades give them a lesser chance of being accepted in higher education, and in the end, this may affect the boys’ opportunities to achieve success in the labour market. Even if most teachers try to be fair and strive to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students, studies have pointed out that teachers generally have lower expectations of boys’ academic performance and behaviour in school. Boys are considered underachieving and troublesome, and girls are considered independent, motivated, and high achieving. The problem must be addressed in school and in the classroom, based on the assumption that the teacher and teaching are central to the students’ academic outcomes, and gender differences must be taken seriously; otherwise, there is a risk that gender differences will increase further.

The aim of this study was to describe how primary school teachers perceive differences in behaviour and learning between boys and girls in relation to their teaching and methods. The objectives were to learn (a) how teachers perceive boys’ and girls’ achievements, learning, and behaviour in the classroom; (b) how the teachers perceive themselves as teachers, their teaching, and methods in the classroom; and (c) how teachers’ perceptions of boys and girls correlate with how they perceive their teaching. The study used a quantitative approach with descriptive statistics and bivariate correlation. The conceptual framework of the didactic triangle was used for the reason that it emphasizes teaching, learning, and teachers’ responsibilities for the students’ academic outcomes. The results show that the teachers generally had low expectations of the boys, even though they described a positive view of their teaching and their effort to adapt to meet the prerequisites and needs of the students. The results also show that individual work was a frequently used teaching method, although this was perceived as unfavourable for the boys’ learning. The boys’ negative classroom behaviours were perceived as signs of dependence, idleness, and low motivation for learning, characteristics that may affect teachers’ expectations of high learning outcomes and can ultimately affect boys’ school performances negatively.

In the study, a number of implications for the professional practice of school and for educators are identified; teachers must be aware of boys’ and girls’ different learning strategies and how these are enacted in the classroom. Poorly adapted teaching can cause boys to be perceived as restless, idle, and less motivated. Given the idea that equal conditions should be created in the classroom, boys’ lower outcomes and gender differences need to be discussed without prejudice. Teachers must be prepared to critically discuss and problematize their teaching instead of their students’ performance and behaviour.
Special needs education - a gender dilemma

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Special needs education are often complex situations and it give rise to a number of democratic, ethical and gender dilemmas. There are underlying normative beliefs that gender and diagnostic characteristics usually favor boys and disadvantage girls in support of school interventions. Previous research (Honakasilta, 2016; Hjörne & Evaldsson, 2014; Lassinantti, 2014, Velasquez, 2012; Hjörne & Säljö 2004), in combination with current review (Pettersson, 2017) in which support given to girls and boys with adhd by the National Agency for Special Needs Education Schools, indicates that there may be such patterns.

The gender aspect of girls' emergence as students becomes an important starting point in understanding all pupils' right to receive the support they need. The social construction of what it means to be a girl with adhd in school and how it is possible for a girl to show her difficulties, to become a girl at school, is about fulfilling expectations, demands, and being respected and confirmed in it. Adhd as a genetic diagnosis gives us the opportunity to visualize girls' conditions for support. Girls have to deal with both the norm of being a girl and the adhd norm, for what is a suitable behavior for a girl with adhd. The current review (Pettersson, 2017) reinforces the image of the two different normative approaches: mimicking the good girls at school and making sense of the school, or opposing the norm to be a girl and approaching the extroverted norms of adhd. Regardless of what does the girls break with one of the norms, either what it means to be a girl or to the norm for adhd.

Gender awareness in the special education support may mean that teachers review their didactic decisions and enter into gender awareness about knowledge, school achievements and who are expected to be good at what in school or a particular topic. As regards students, and especially girls, it is important to raise questions about educational implications at adhd. Does this task suit all students regardless of sex and disability? Will girls and boys be addressed in the same way by the content of the task and the way it is designed? Teachers need to discuss and formulate didactic questions about expectations and how they can change their work, not to limit the abilities and interests of boys and girls, and indicate what experiences they want the children to get in school.

Gender perspectives visible the expectations of girls and boys behaviors. Ask questions like: What do the standards of a girl and boy look like? Are the norms maintained, and how are they challenged and violated? What gender positions are available for girls and boys? In what way are they situational? Another challenge is about approach and attitude, making a point of view that it is the student's disabilities, which is understood as a problem that the difficulties arise in a specific social school context and that the support and special education work needs to be done in that specific situation.

References

Re-envisioning educational research: the international agenda on "what works" in research and the effect on equality/inequality

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Currently, education and educational research are more and more concerned with ‘what works’, to the exclusion of all other considerations. Globally, governments look for ways to improve ‘student achievement’, often measured by standardized test scores. Yet, we are warned of the need to move away from merely looking at achievement as this can hide much of what students really “know, can do, and care about” (Hattie, 2012 p. 3). Nevertheless, performance-based management is a frequent strategy for educational reform, and the neoliberal trend has had significant influence in policy debates. Reforms have sought to improve efficiency of education by introducing business-like principles of management, and research knowledge about “what works” in practice is gaining terrain, while critical research has been marginalized and labelled as irrelevant among many politicians and administrators.

Although improvements in achievement scores are welcomed, they do not answer important questions about what constitutes good education. Moreover, the research on which they are based is not the only legitimate way to do educational research. In fact, educational research and the focus on achievement has been debated as far back as Plato through Rousseau to modern thinkers like Hattie, Biesta and others. I argue that we simply cannot ignore the distinctive nature of what we study in education, which is a social activity where questions of meaning and value cannot be eliminated, and where interpretation and judgment play a crucial role. In this paper I reflect on the effects of evidence-based practice and the fact that despite the overwhelming focus on evidence-based education, there is still relatively little consensus around which interventions are most effective at raising attainment generally, and closing the attainment gap specifically. Finally, I argue that there is a clear need to expand our thinking of the relationship between research, policy, and practice and this relationship should not be solely restricted to finding the most effective ways to achieve certain ends, but also address questions about the desirability of the ends themselves. In particular, I want to problematize the focus on evidence-based education and the effect this may have on equality and inequality.

While I will not seek to address the concerns Lather (2004) had about the evidence-based movement, my paper will touch upon similar questions:

First, what is happening to make me willing to return to the scene of my doctoral training... to immerse myself in the language of "treatment homogeneity," “setting invariance,” the “promiscuous” use of quasi experiments (Cook & Payne, 2002, p. 173), and my favorite, “inadvertent treatment crossovers,” in this case of a principal in the treatment condition married to someone in the control school (Cook & Payne, 2002, p. 163)? Secondly, what are the implications for qualitative research of the NRC report, a report that intended a “catholic view toward research methods” in delineating “high quality science” (Shavelson, Phillips, Towne, & Feuer, 2003, p. 25)? (p. 16).
The distribution of knowledge in gendred upper secondary programmes

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Analyses of Swedish Upper secondary curriculum show differences between vocational programmes in terms of to what extent students are provided with knowledge for empowerment (Ledman et al. 2017). The male-dominated Vehicle and Transportation programme (VT) distinguishes as a program with strong context-bound knowledge, where students are trained to ‘do’ and ‘adapt’, while the female-dominated Health and care programme (HC) also provides students with competences such as critical thinking. The aim of this paper is to explore if, and if so how, these different pedagogical discourses are expressed in practice in the two programmes, and to discuss how pedagogical practices interact with the gendered structures of the two labour sectors in the forming of civic competence in terms of critical thinking. RQ: What values, competences and pedagogical methods are given priority in the VT and HC classroom, and how is adaption and critical thinking taught?

Bernstein’s (2000) concepts related to democratic rights are used as primary analytical tools. We look at the ‘degree of verticality’ in terms of what level the knowledge relates to – to what extent it promotes not only individual enhancement but also participatory competences (Ledman et al. 2017). Drawing on feminist theories on labour market structures and citizenship (Pateman 1970, Siim 1999), the characteristics of the pedagogical practices are discussed in relation to characteristics of the labour market.

The analysis draws on ethnographic data from four VT- and HC-classes in three Swedish schools, in total 60 days of observations and interviews with 58 students, 8 teachers and 3 principals. Data were coded and sorted inductively and subjected to further in-depth analysis with guidance by the theoretical framework.

Preliminary results indicate an uneven distribution of knowledge important for empowerment between the two programs, which harmonises with policy analyses: In VT the teaching focused adaptation, while the HC contained elements of critical thinking and encouragements to civic discussion and action. However, such teaching usually targeted work-place participation aiming at contributing to ameliorate the quality of the care giving, more than political participation in a wider sense. The gendered work practice influenced the pedagogical practice with the result that the critical thinking and civic action got a touch political participation in the ‘private sphere’.

The paper contributes to Nordic educational research about vocational education and training and the long-standing debate about ‘the schooling of the gendered citizen’, a debate which highlights the gendered routes of education and careers, and challenges the notion of neutral education.

References
The long mission towards gender equality in teacher education: reflections from a national project in Finland

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Since the 1970s, gender equality has been an aim in international educational politics and policies and the importance of teacher education has been repeated, but the actual pace of change has been very slow. In this paper we focus on a national project on gender awareness in teacher education (TASUKO 2008-2011) in which we both were involved in, analysing its sustainable impact some years after. We will reflect the project to the long history of equality projects and to Nordic collaboration. Our aim is to find out possible changes in cultures and curricula in relation to gender awareness in teacher education. Theoretically we draw from feminist studies in education. The data includes documents of the project, curricula of teacher education, responses of the former activists of the project and interviews with teachers in one teacher education unit. We also use auto-ethnographic methodology.

Our first conclusion draws from the general critic of equality work that is conducted as a limited project. We argue that without sustainable resources it is difficult to get sustainable results. The ideas and activities that have been shared within the project typically did not reach all members of the staff and the main persons in charge of teacher education seldom took responsibility. Gender awareness remained the responsibility of those teacher educators who already were committed to it. A step forward might be followed by two steps back, at least if you are not alert. When universities are under pressure about resources and teacher educators under pressure of time, gender issues are the first to be sacrificed. This is especially the case during the neoliberal turn at the universities.

However, our data suggests that there seems to be space for small agency. During the years of TASUKO project feminist teacher educators were empowered with somewhat more leeway, legitimacy and resources to act and new colleagues joined in. This experience had more sustainable impact not only on their own professional development but also to the whole atmosphere in the institutions where gender issues now were easier to talk about. We will also argue that the existence of a national project had some impact on educational politics and policies. We will demonstrate some positive changes that have taken place in administrative decisions and in the level of schools and universities – even during the current neoliber al and antidemocratic political climate. A question remains, how much TASUKO has contributed to the changes.

Also internationally TASUKO has had some impact. We hosted a Nordic conference and organized symposia and workshops in various international contexts. The need to work for gender awareness in teacher education was generally regarded as important. We will demonstrate one impact of TASUKO project through presenting the GENTE webpage for Nordic teacher educators (https://nordgente.org/) that was built 2015-2017 in the context of the Nordic centre of excellence JustEd (http://www.justed.org/organisation/).
From administrative burden into transformative action? Gender mainstreaming implementation in Finnish academia

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Nordic countries have represented models of sex equality, whose aims have been a part of mainstream educational and employment policies for past decades. In Finland, the current political climate, however, indicates the understanding of equality between men and women as already achieved or self-evidently advancing with no actions required. Nevertheless, gendered realities in universities are well elaborated worldwide. Horizontal and vertical segregations in Finnish academia follow the equivalent divisions in working life but are also reshaped within the organizational changes.

Finnish universities went through a massive reform due to the new Universities Act in 2009, which involved the change in juridical position of universities and employees, and the reforms in funding and management system. At the same time, concerns on the persistent inequalities in higher education has pressured institutions to implement equality politics. Academia is obliged to actively promote equality and prevent discrimination in its actions. Through equality legislation, they implement transnational recommendations of which the latest policy of gender mainstreaming promises to mainstream a ‘gender perspective’ into all levels and fields of education and work.

In this presentation, I analyze how gender mainstreaming principle is received in practice by actors involved at different levels. Which actions are supported and whose expertise accounts? Finally, I formulate an understanding of implementation of equality politics in relation to transforming academic regime.

I answer my research question by the thematic content analysis of the documents and 17 key actor interviews from four Finnish universities, of which two faced comprehensive organisational reform. The documentary data consists of equality plans as the main guidelines for equality promotion. Interviewees were selected based on their institutional position in equality work at different levels. Seven interviewees come from the university administration and ten actors represent the personnel at different fields. Through actor groups of ‘administrators’ and ‘personnel representatives’, I trace different viewpoints between university administration and academic staff members.

I interpret universities’ gender mainstreaming implementation by the commonly used division into integrationist and agenda-setting or transformative approaches. The carrying idea is whether equality actions are incorporated into existing procedures or strive for actual change. In addition, I shortly comment the latest perspectives on the relationship between the policy and the institute, and discuss universities’ preconditions for multidimensional equality activity.

Equality actors balance between the fulfilling bureaucratic demands and questioning prevailing practices in academic work, based on the staff’s concerns. Integrative orientation, that operates through administrative procedures such as auditing, training, statistics and manuals, is dominant in Finnish universities. The equality politics increasingly follows managerial logic, which easily depoliticizes the question of sex inequalities. Group-based supportive action target for encouraging women to apply for leading positions. Individually oriented discourse of ‘wider’ non-discrimination or diversity focuses rather on personal differences and special arrangements than on relational gendering. Still, institutionalization of equality work offers structures for discussion and initiatives that concern systemic inequalities and bring out for instance the need for recognize care in academia.
Video Studies and Time Scales

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1. Research topic/aim
The use of video-recordings as a data source in qualitative research presents challenges when it comes to selecting an appropriate time scale. Here, we discuss the implications of selecting time scales in regards to the interpretations and conclusions of a classroom event. The analyses draw on data from a large-scale video study of six ninth-grade math, science and reading classrooms in Norway.

2. Theoretical framework
Video data is rich and multi-layered, and deciding which events to analyse is crucial. There are pitfalls relating to both the use of overly reduced units of analysis as well as of holistic units of analysis (Lefstein et al. 2015). Blikstad-Balas (2016) highlights three main challenges involved in analysing shorter time segments of video data: issues regarding (1) contextualization, (2) magnification and (3) representation. By analysing only fragments of the data material, we run the risk of amplifying or magnifying events that are not representative for either the participants or the context we are trying to explore. Conversely, by analysing small portions of a data set, it might prove difficult to provide readers with sufficient evidence to evaluate whether conclusions are plausible.

3. Methodological design
Our data includes video-recordings of three science lessons from one of the recorded classrooms. We examine how five students (15-year olds) prepared for and performed an oral presentation. The first analysis, Time Scale 1, focuses exclusively on the students’ oral presentations, while the second analysis, Time Scale 2, includes the students’ oral presentations as well as the preparation phase. We compare the results of these two analyses.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
According to the first time scale, only two of the students can be described as excellent speakers who manage to demonstrate involvement, enthusiasm and engagement throughout their presentations. However, when we use a longer time scale, we find that these two students engaged in little participation in the preparation phase of the oral presentation. However, when we use a longer time scale, we find that these two students engaged in little participation in the preparation phase of the oral presentation.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
Video analysis has become an important tool for educational researchers studying phenomena that take place in classrooms. The length of a time segment can have a major impact on the possible results and findings of a study. Classroom videos are multi-layered and rich, and deciding which aspects of the video to investigate is a crucial task. The selection of phenomena to be studied and how best to study them via video are determined by the research questions being investigated, their theoretical foundations and the units/time scales of analysis.

The results of the analysis of all the three lessons reveal the importance of observing group work and indicate that teachers must assess the work process and provide ‘to-the-point’ feedback (Klette 2003, Svenkerud 2013) on the level and extent of student cooperation and participation.
The influence of outcome-based instructional activities – bridled by tradition? A study of lesson structure in Norwegian Lower Secondary classrooms

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1. Research topic/aim
The research questions are: 1. What are the typical combinations of instructional activities in the lessons of eight teachers in four Norwegian Secondary schools? 2. How can the content-treatment of these structures be explained considering relevant pedagogical traditions?

2. Theoretical framework
The conceptual framework is inspired by Alexanders (2000) comparative study of lesson structure. Classical pedagogical texts are employed to answer research question 2 (Herbart, Dewey, Grundtvig, Vygotsky, Ziehe).

3. Methodological design
Non-participant observation of instruction in classrooms in four lower secondary schools. Eight teachers’ teaching in all academic subjects over a week. The observation documented the sequences of the lessons, the time-frame of each instructional activity in minutes, the frequencies and variation of students’ participative verbal utterances, and the content of teachers’ and students’ subjects matter-utterances.

4. Findings
RQ 1: The most typical lesson structures are plenary conversation-seatwork (in that order) (finding A) and multiple lesson structures, with shift in instructional activity every 1-4 minutes (finding B).
RQ 2: Finding A: The plenary conversation is a mix of IRE-reproductive conversation and shared interpretative dialogue, and seatwork is characterized by being textbook exercises. We call this structure ‘expository-practice’. We argue that this is the dominant, and the traditional, discourse in these classrooms due to the heritage of relevant pedagogical traditions in the Nordic countries (Grundtvigianism, progressivism and socio-cultural theory) forming the hidden curriculum of ‘sociability before individuality’. Explanation of finding B: We call this structure ‘hyper-structure’ and explain it by recent educational policy seeking remedies to motivational challenges and boredom in Secondary Schools (policy documents, Ziehe, Dale, media theory as metaphor).
Conclusion: Instruction in Norwegian Secondary Schools is more traditional than what was expected, and that the influence of neo-liberal policy, individualization and outcome-based instruction is present but not dominant.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
This study revealed a new perspective on these ‘Scandinavian’ mixed lessons that Lindblad and Sahlström (1999) found in Swedish schools from the 90’s and offers a nuancing perspective on the claim that the increased time spent on seatwork in Scandinavia can be explained by the influence of neo-liberal policy on the educational sector.

References


Applied learning in primary school: Integration of interdisciplinary learning and inquiry based learning in biology and physical education

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Research topic/aim
Teaching is school is often detached practical relevance of learned knowledge, for example in physical education or biology, and by that leads to reduced motivation, engagement and learning outcome for the students. Following, the aim of the study is to investigate how a combination of interdisciplinary learning (IdL) and inquiry based learning (IBL) can make the subject of learning more relevant and by that stimulate students’ engagement, motivation and learning, and moreover contribute to development of the limited literature on the topic Applied Learning (Ovenden-Hope & Blandford, 2017)

Theoretical framework
Applied learning incorporate both IdL and IBL used as theoretical framework, as they both have a constructivist learning-approach, encourage use of critical thinking skills, prompt authenticity in the learning situation, and increases the ability to recognize and accept multiple perspectives (Metzler, 2011; Spintzyk, Strehlke, Ohlberger, Gröben, & Wegner, 2016). However, where IdL concentrate primarily on theoretical concepts and challenges from different subjects, do IBL concentrate on problem solving and how to investigate and work with stated challenges as a complementary learning approach. Moreover, both approaches support meaningfully, relevant learning, autonomy and collaboration which are central concepts in applied learning, and altogether promote students’ engagement, motivation and learning.

Methodological design
126 students (boys = 62; girls = 64; age 12-14 years old) and eight teachers from four schools in Denmark participated in the project. Two learning units based on IdL and IBL in biology and physical education were conducted or four to six weeks duration. Data consisting of semistructured interviews, video recordings, field notes and a questionnaire were analysed by thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Findings
Preliminary thematic analyses of the interviews lead to motives and barriers for the combined learning approach. Motives as co-determination and learning by being physical active were among themes interpreted from students’ interview, where enhanced professional immersion among students and development of competencies were themes from interviews with the teachers. Additional, themes like lack of time and lack of control are interpret as barrier for the approach. Further analysis is needed to support students’ learning outcome.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
As the findings could be interpret as enhanced students’ engagement and motivation for the subjects, this combined learning approach can contribute to literature of applied learning, and further extend both the way applied learning is understand and the benefit of this approach.
References
The purpose of the present study is to illustrate the dichotomy between 20th century discipline and 21st century classroom management. Educators in today’s schools are faced with classroom management challenges that were previously unheard of. Educators world-wide are tasked with adapting to the ubiquitous technologies in the classroom and/or modifying preexisting teaching modalities to reflect the fast-paced acquisition of factual information. Traditional forms of instruction such as lecturing, no longer maintain the attention spans of students who are socially sanctioned multi-taskers. Concurrently, the concept of respect for authority in the classroom has evolved from the top-down (I-thou) concept to a reciprocal one. Research will be conducted via literature review, and analyses of state and federal school discipline statistics. It is predicted that the outcome of this research will:

a. highlight the lack of utility of traditional discipline programs and practices
b. illustrate the extent to which effective classroom management has evolved from punitive reactions to collaborative relations.
To strengthen the teaching practice of student teachers and experienced teachers

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In Sweden a small number of experienced teachers who supervise and mentor student teachers during their internship courses (known as VFU in Sweden, practicum in other parts of the world) receive some training to be a supervisor. This one-year long project aimed at building on this training where Mentor teachers (referred to as LLUs) and researchers from Gothenburg University cooperated to improve both the skills of supervising and the experience of VFU for student teachers. This research further examined how partnerships between a teacher education program at Gothenburg University and three schools were strengthened with a targeted intervention in the VFU program.

The teachers participating in the study taught pupils in grade 1-6. The three schools differed in size and socio-economic location. The intervention introduced a descriptive observation tool (the ‘protocol’) to record as evidence teaching practices (pedagogy) that both LLUs and student teachers utilized. The teachers were asked to use the protocol during ten minutes at least three times a week when observing the student teacher.

We used a qualitative research design to investigate the effects of the use of evidence-informed records in combination with a dialogic approach could strengthen the teaching practices of both student teachers and experienced teachers in these settings. In this presentation we highlight how these experienced mentor teachers used the protocol when supervising and how the LLU observations of the student teachers developed over time when using the protocol.

The protocol was found to encourage and mediate LLUs’ post-lesson conversations with student teachers. In an earlier study Kriewaldt, Nash, Windsor, Thornton, and Reid (2018) found such a protocol could be a strong foundation for multiple loops of evidence-informed feedback on teaching practice. The interactive tool contributed to increasing the discussion about teaching, not only between the mentor teacher and the student teacher, but also between the mentor teacher and the teacher trainer from the university.

The push for the positive use of classroom evidence to improve teaching practice is well documented internationally (eg. Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Henningsson-Yousif & Aasen, 2015). We believe this presentation is relevant in the Nordic educational context since the VFU or work practicum courses and the supervising situations are critical parts of teacher education, not only in Sweden but also in the Nordic countries.

References


How do you VOI? - Vocationally oriented instruction in Norway and Sweden

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This proposal examines the notion of vocationally oriented instruction, hereafter VOI, (No.: yrkesretting, Swe.: infärgning) in common core subjects taught in Norwegian and Swedish upper secondary schools. Vocational students in both countries are required to study a certain number of common core subjects (e.g. English, maths), which are usually viewed as academic, rather than vocational, in nature (Repstad, 2013). The role of these subjects has been the issue of significant debate, as they have commonly been perceived as demotivating and irrelevant in a vocational perspective. VOI is considered a method capable of bridging a gap in the learning experience of students who are caught in a limbo between competing educational traditions (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [Udir], 2014), by reframing academic subjects as relevant in a vocational setting. In Norway, common core teachers are required by law to adapt their instruction to the study programmes of their students (Ministry of Education and Research, 2008, p.80). In Sweden, vocationally oriented instruction is recommended, but not required (personal communication, 18.09.17). However, very little is known about how such adaptations are made. This paper examines the idea of VOI, as described by teachers in selected studies conducted in Norway and Sweden. The aim is to explore how practicing teachers claim to understand and operationalise the rather fuzzy concept of VOI.

The analysis presented in the paper is part of a larger doctoral research project on VOI. The current analysis is based on a literature review of relevant research, as well as a review of empirical master theses from a selection of universities in Norway and Sweden. The theses were selected based on set criteria for inclusion and relevance, and the full texts where analysed with special attention to teachers’ reported views of VOI.

The following research questions are addressed in the paper:
- How is vocationally oriented instruction conceptualised by the teachers?
- According to these teachers, how is vocationally oriented instruction enacted?

Preliminary findings suggest that there are some clear, and subject-specific, trends in the way VOI is understood and operationalized. This suggests that at a subject-level, VOI is less rich than other types of instruction, and potentially a threat, rather than a remedy, to student motivation and notion of relevance.

There is currently a lack of empirical research on VOI in Norway and Sweden. The comparative perspective is relevant because there are clear similarities between the two countries in the way vocational students balance between academic and trade-oriented traditions. By juxtaposing data from Norway and Sweden, the objective is to present a rich account of the way teachers describe and teach vocationally oriented instruction.

References:


Alchemy and the Purpose of Religious Studies Education

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In this presentation, we take a closer look at the transformation from religion as a scientific subject to a school subject, using a content analysis of the national curriculum (LGY11) and the syllabus for religion studies education in upper secondary education. The content of the school subject is quite clear, but when it comes to its purpose, its intentions are quite vague. Religious studies education has historically had a dominant role when it comes to changing the dispositions and character of the younger generation, both when its purpose has been religious or non-denominational. We wonder why the subject has become so diffuse when it comes to the upbringing of the younger generation.

Our point of departure is inspired by Thomas Popkewitz’s understanding of alchemy, as both as the organization of a school subject (in our case religion), and as a normalizing practice of teaching. For any given academic subject an alchemy occurs when it moves from the academic field to a school subject. Any given school subject is organized in relation to its purpose, syllabus and theories of learning. The knowledge of an academic field is transformed into social psychologies of instruction and theories changing the dispositions and character of the child.

Through an analysis of the national policy for religious studies education, we have identified three dominant discourses with explicit guidelines teachers are supposed to follow, regarding its purpose, content and grading. The first tradition, the denominational (1842-1950), focused on the clerical Christian inheritance and its purpose was to produce a subservient and Christian citizen. The second tradition, or the objective (1950-1994), aimed to foster a broad-minded citizen responsive to religious plurality, by focus on world religions, secular philosophies, and existential practices (with a special focus on Christian ethics). The third tradition, the uncertain (1994-2011), is characterized by a non-denominational and scientific content and classroom practice in order to form a humanistic critical citizen (with Christian undercurrents).

With this historical understanding in mind, we engage methodologically in a critical reading of the curriculum for upper secondary school (LGY 11) and its syllabus for religion studies education in order to scrutinize the alchemy of the subject. Through our critical analysis, we reach the conclusion that this tradition is more defined than it initially seems to be, with an explicit scientific-rational content, and an exceptional position for Christianity in relation to other world religions. Hence, the purpose for the current religious studies education is to form a rational citizen with a firm understanding of religions, but with less emphasized understanding of the importance of existential questions. In relation to the two former traditions, this current tradition has taken at least two steps backwards when it comes to the importance of existentiality in its ambition to delimit and framing the content of religion as a school subject.
Teachers’ understanding and experiences with inquiry teaching in mathematics and science in the first years of primary school

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Inquiry teaching is a central aspect of primary school. This paper addresses inquiry teaching in school subject as mathematics and science. The topic has been discussed and highly valued by leading educational analysts and philosophers both in the USA and Europe (Skovsmose & Säljö, 2008). Inquiry teaching is recommended for enhanced achievements for older students in science (Barrow, 2004, Knain & Kolstø, 2011) and mathematics (Jaworski, 2007, Goodchild, 2014). Few studies are done on this topic that involve children in the first years of school.

The study focuses on how to meet active and curious younger students and their desire of learning by experimenting, asking questions in dialogue with other students and teachers (Samuelsson & Carlsson 2009, Brostrøm & Frøkjær 2016).

Theoretical perspectives are related to
- Subject oriented vs problem oriented content, teacher oriented vs student activity (Munthe, 2010, Helgevold, 2014)
- Research on learning mathematics and science through inquiry (Skovsmose & Säljö, 2008, Knain & Kolstø, 2011)
- Dialogic inquiry (Dysthe 2012, Wells, 1999).

Data is gained through qualitative interviews with six teachers who use inquiry teaching in mathematics and science. Preliminary results show some examples of how teachers are using the method.

The topic has relevance both in Norway as well as internationally. The Norwegian National Curriculum recommends that students meet inquiry learning in mathematics and science classrooms. This is important in learning higher-order thinking.

References:
Teacher as orchestrator of collaborative knowledge projects in health education

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1. Research topic/aim
A new national core curriculum has been recently introduced in Finnish basic education (FNBE 2014). It aims to address, among others, the requirements of sociocultural approach to learning, emphasizing the significance of effective classroom talk, and modern information environments necessitating developing learners’ skills in critical literacy. Online information environments require new kinds of literacies. Specifically, health-related information appears complex and contradictory, which may confuse young people. It is challenging to know what/who to believe and trust in the ever-changing flood of information. Although health education has been taught as an independent subject in Finnish secondary schools since 2004, sedentary lifestyle increases among adolescents leading to health problems, e.g. obesity. This study addresses the above challenges by examining how teachers orchestrate (design and scaffold) group-based knowledge projects including information seeking and assessment in the context of health education. The multiple-case study in three Finnish secondary classrooms investigates teachers’ working, aiming to clarify its impact on health-related knowledge building in the groups.

2. Theoretical framework
To implement the ideas of the new curriculum, the teacher needs to design pedagogically meaningful social practices and, in real-time, to support group dialogue to enable collaborative information seeking and knowledge building in groups, promoting critical literacy and creative production. Many researchers (e.g. Sormunen et al. 2013) have revealed difficulties in information practices among adolescents; teachers may overestimate learners’ abilities to learn information behavior and they often face challenges in scaffolding collaborative information seeking projects. We employ concepts such as Alexander’s (2005) dialogic teaching and Mercer’s (1995) exploratory talk to understand the complex process.

3. Methodological design
In their cases, the three teachers assigned student groups in Grades 8 and 9 to produce posters, PowerPoint presentations and videos about health-related themes. We video-observed all activities of the projects. At the end of the projects, we examined the students’ learning experiences by using a short questionnaire (N=37) and interviewing Grade 9 students (N=16). The video-observed data are being analyzed thematically using QSR NVivo.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
Preliminary findings reveal the teachers’ various types of project implementation. During the projects, they appeared not to teach how to use different kinds of information sources. In one project, the teacher provided the groups with printed “trustworthy” material produced by formal institutes. Some students used their mobile phones to seek information but the teachers did not encourage them to discuss the information content, sources and their trustworthiness. In Grade 9, lack of motivation was prominent and group discussions remained modest. The teacher failed to scaffold knowledge building in groups.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
The field is internationally current and needs more research to promote successful introduction of new literacies. The study helps to enhance pedagogical value of health education.
References
Sormunen, E., Alamettälä, T., & Heinström, J. (2013, October). The teacher’s role as facilitator of collaborative learning in information literacy assignments. In European Conference on Information Literacy (pp. 499–506).
Hybrid and interdisciplinary work in co-teaching settings in teacher education

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Hybrid and interdisciplinary work in co-teaching settings in teacher education

This paper focus on the potential of using a two-teacher collaboration within higher education. The master programme in Kindergarten Knowledge at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences uses teacher teams in the different courses, which cross the teacher educators’ academic backgrounds. This has provided opportunities to collaborate closely with each other not only during planning, but also in carrying out the teaching, supervision, seminars and assessment. Previous research on two teacher systems has primarily focused on primary school teachers with little research on two-teacher collaboration within Higher Education. The research question is “How is the two-teacher collaboration experienced as potential for bridging disciplinary boundaries and supporting innovative approaches to teaching, supervision and assessment?”

The research project is anchored in a Cultural – Historical approach, emphasising the involved teacher educators as researchers. The teacher educators are seen as actively and collaboratively creating their own teaching, supervision and evaluation, conditioned by the subject, context and the social practice. According to the theoretical framework, knowledge is constituted by the agents’ own activities in the intersection of the past, the present and the future. The teacher educators’ different professional backgrounds are recognised as an important resource. At the same time, they also explore possibilities to transcend earlier professional experiences into new knowledge and understanding of their own practice, across their professional belongings.

The teacher educators’ teaching in the first year of the programme (2016-2017) participated in the study. An interview guide was developed to ensure the collection of similar information from all participants. The guide was semi-structured and contained an outline of the topics to be covered: roles, cooperation, experiences, challenges and thoughts of the planning, preparation and implementation of the lectures and the review of the mandatory work tasks and exams. The teacher educators were interviewed in 6 pairs according to the courses they taught. All interviews were transcribed and categorized during the analysis. To enhance the validity, the data and the analyses were discussed between the authors to ensure that we had similar perceptions of the expressed meanings of the participants.

The findings included that collaboration between two teacher educators facilitated coherent teaching of hybrid courses bridging disciplinary boundaries. Furthermore, the collaboration created a professional space of solidarity for teacher educators that a) allowed for exploring and discussing a richer set of options for organising the lessons b) shared the responsibility for the social space in the classroom which gave more freedom and ability to take risks in the teaching c) provided a broader base for evaluating the teaching both on lesson and subject level. The extra time spent in lessons was experienced differently: for some teacher educator pairs, the gains were not worth it; for others having stimulating collegial company in the relatively unchartered territory of a hybrid subject and the ensuing professional satisfaction made the premises for assessing the time issue less clear. This case study can have an innovative impact on hybrid and interdisciplinary work in co-teaching settings in teacher education in the Nordic countries.
Students’ and teachers’ conception and perception of the content in, and understanding of, Didaktik in teacher education

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Research topic/aim
In this paper we explore students’ and teachers’ conceptions and understanding of Didaktik as being conveyed during teacher education. We investigate how students and teachers conceptualize Didaktik, and which aspects of Didaktik they perceive to be conveyed in teacher education at the Department of pedagogical, curricular and professional studies in Gothenburg. The aim of the study is to develop and improve core courses within teacher education with the starting point in the results of this study.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical point of departure is that Didaktik is a contested concept. From the field of educational science we extrapolate five prominent conceptions of Didaktik: historical tradition (science); models (teaching); didactic questions (method); curriculum studies; and last but not least “Bildung”. These conceptions provided the starting points for the design of the interviews and survey, and the analytical framework applied in the analysis.

Methodology/research design
We applied both qualitative and quantitative methodological approach. We have selected students and teachers in the “core” courses in two teacher programs (F-3 and 4-6). Approximately 100 teacher students in their final semesters participated in on-line survey. In the main study 12 university teachers’ conceptions are investigated by means of qualitative interviews. All teachers are teaching in core-courses in primary school teachers’ programs. Both survey and the interviews are structured with the aim to address the main topics of this study: Didaktik as a science, understanding teaching, teaching method, curriculum studies and “Bildung”. On-line survey also explored student’s attitudes toward teaching and teacher education, as well as self-efficacy beliefs related to their future tasks in teaching profession.

Expected conclusions/findings
The main results from interviewing teachers are that they more or less include all the five main conceptions in their understanding of Didaktik. Their general view is that teacher education has become better of conveying how this skills are linked to teacher practice in asking meta-questions about teaching (aim and goals), teaching methods (didactical questions and models) and curriculum studies (the societal context). They perceive a lack of historical tradition of didaktik, and would like to see a greater emphasis on relating didaktik to teacher practice and teaching method (integration of HFU and VFU). Students differ in their conceptions of Bildung and Didaktik, as well as in their attitudes toward general- versus subject specific- didaktik. They recognize the importance of competencies in didactics for teacher’s profession, but position those competences as relatively less important than teaching methods or subject knowledge.

Relevance for Nordic educational research
In our time when neo-liberal ideas influence school as well as teacher education the Nordic and continental European Didaktik, with its roots in the concept of Bildung, represent a different and somewhat new way of meaning making. In this study the Nordic philosophy as well as research on Didaktik constitutes the starting point of our endeavor to develop this tradition inside teacher education - something we consider is of great relevance to Nordic educational research.
Taleworlds of becoming a teacher

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A phenomenological investigation of student teachers’ storytelling about moving experiences from their internship

Research topic/aim
Teacher education tends to focus merely on the epistemology of teaching (theory of knowing), like acquisition of knowledge and skills, but there is a lack of a perspective on being and becoming a teacher with a focus on ontology (theory of being), where knowledge and skills are embodied and enacted (Dall’Alba, 2009). Following that perspective on becoming a teacher, this study focuses on students’ retelling of anecdotes concerning lived experiences (van Manen, 2014) and because the aspect of the lived body is usually left out in narrative research (Hydén, 2008), the oral narration should also be studied from an intercorporeal perspective (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Young, 2011; McNeill, 1992).

The aim of this phenomenological investigation is to describe what it is like to become a teacher during teacher education through student teachers’ embodied orally narrated lived experiences of events that touched them during their first internship in primary school.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework is that of phenomenology of practice (van Manen, 2014), including narratives as a way of sharing lived experiences (Ochs & Capps, 2001).

Methodological design
Using a phenomenological perspective on an in-depth analysis of a video recording where the student teachers tell stories about experiences that touched them from their first internship.

Expected conclusions/findings
A strength of oral storytelling as a way of describing lived experience is firstly, from an intercorporeal perspective, that the storyteller’s lived body is of importance in understanding a pedagogical situation and secondly that the storytelling illuminates the ambiguities in teaching.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
This study is relevant from the perspective of being and becoming a teacher, because I find that these students’ storytelling is not primarily a way to answer questions about “what to do?” as a teacher. Instead I suggest that their storytelling is rather to be seen as a possible way to explore and raise questions about becoming a teacher from an ontological perspective.

References


A pedagogical essence in a looking glass

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Folk high schools in Sweden have had a discussion over a century on what their specific brand is when it comes to pedagogy, teaching practices and educational philosophy. The common perception a few decades back and up to today are that the teaching practices of folk high schools vary between schools, teachers and participants. This paper studies the written history of folk high schools in Sweden in order to describe what is included in the specific traits of folk high school pedagogy, how it is expressed in text and to which teaching practices and philosophy it refers. The paper concludes that there is in fact a specific brand of pedagogy and it originates from different sources. First the folk high school pedagogy was formed by the early teachers pragmatic sense of "lets use what we can get", secondly, by complementary ideas such as "lets not do what other schools do", and thirdly by an informed discussion on the usefulness of the ideas from famous pedagogues in history.
How the Learning Sciences reconfiguring Authority in Teacher Education

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Western Norway University of Applied Sciences

1. Research topic/aim

Examining Teacher Education and Development Study in Mathematics (TEDS-M) 2008 data as an international comparative student teacher-focused study, we aim to unpack differentiation in teacher education programmes (TEPs) from Didaktik and Curriculum education traditions’ perspective. The overarching research question is: How do teacher education programmes and their outcomes vary across Didaktik and Curriculum traditions? The aims of the study are twofold: first, to unpack differences in TEPs among sample countries and second, to examine TEP outcomes in terms of student teachers’ preparedness and capability in coverage of subject content and pedagogical skills to deliver respective content.

2. Theoretical framework

The study relies on pedagogical traditions of Didaktik and curriculum for theoretical framing. Prior comparative analyses and elaborations of the two pedagogical traditions (Hopmann 2007; Pinar, 2011) have provided overviews noting that Didaktik relies on the concept of Bildung, professional teacher autonomy and responsibility and thus it is more teacher-oriented and content-focused. The curriculum tradition on the other hand is more institution-oriented, methods-focused, and evaluation intensive.

3. Methodological design

To achieve the aims, the study employs document analysis and quantitative methods. Data from TEDS-2008 study from 4 representative countries are used, including Germany, Switzerland, Norway, and the US. Other data sources of TEPs in sample countries are also used.

4. Expected conclusions/findings

Prior studies of differentiation in TEPs and outcomes using TEDS-M data have highlighted differences across participating countries from Easter and Western cultural perspectives (Kaiser & Blömeke, 2013) and a four cluster variation has been proposed by Blömeke (2012), which we argue might have been created on biased conceptual assumptions. We expect to further highlight the variation in TEPs across an archetype set of countries. The plausible confirmation of variation in TEPs and their outcomes across Didaktik and Curriculum traditions is fascinating primarily because differences persist despite efforts to standardize higher education programs (Werler, 2015; Trippestad et al., 2017).

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research

The study’s relevance for Nordic educational research is twofold. First, the study will highlight how far conceptual framework for teacher education (like Didaktik or curriculum research) determine student teachers response on what is counted as valuable professional knowledge (here: the TEDS-M test theory). Second, we expect to argue whether it makes a difference if teachers are trained in a particular teaching culture.

References


Symposium
Models and realities in Teachers’ and Teacher educators’ didactic work

Tveit, Sverre
University of Agder

This symposium aims to critically examine two widely used approaches in pre-service teacher practicum and in teachers’ and teacher educators’ lesson planning and classroom interaction: The use of the «Didactic Relation Model» («den didaktiske relasjonsmodellen»); and the (exhaustive) emphasis on «learning goals» («læringsmål»). These, we contend, are ideological incompatibilities in the Scandinavian state governed teacher education discourse.

The «Didactic Relation Model» was first developed by Bjørndal and Lieberg (1978) as a response to Tyler’s (1949) influential rational model for curriculum planning. Bjørndal and Lieberg contended that Tyler’s goal-driven model was not suitable for didactic planning in Norway. They proposed the «Didactic Relation Model» as an alternative framework for reflexive and critical analyses of teaching, arguing that all didactic categories («Goals», «Students’ Preconditions», «Content», «Frame Factors», «Learning Activities» and «Assessment») were equally important. This confronted Tyler’s hierarchal model, where all didactic approaches were subordinated to the «Goals» category. The «Didactic Relation Model» was soon embraced by educators and teacher education programs (e.g. (Engelsen, 2014; Gundem, 1990; Helle, 2017; Hiim, 2006; Hiim and Hippe, 1998), and is to date widely used in Norway and Denmark as a framework for lesson planning and supervision during pre-service teacher practicum.

Following the so-called PISA chock at the turn of the millennium, and subsequent curriculum reforms of 2006 and 2014 in Norway and Denmark respectively, a shift (back) to more goal-driven teaching can be observed. These reforms gave emphasis to international review studies (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Hattie, 2009) which emphasized the use of specific learning goals and criteria, as basis for lesson planning and student feedback. In other words, one can observe a renaissance in the use of Tyler’s principles for curriculum planning. It is a thus a paradox that the «Didactic Relation Model» is so strongly emphasized as a framework for lesson planning and supervision. This symposium aims to critically discuss this paradox, and the implications of the increased goal-driven lesson planning and teaching in pre-school, primary and secondary education.

In the paper The «Didactic Relation Model» – Time for a Reality Check, Sverre Tveit and Andreas Reier Jensen (University of Agder, Norway) critically examines the use of this model during the supervision of pre-service teacher practicum in Norway and proposes a new model better fitted for supervision and planning.

In the paper «Didactics in Pre-school – the Tension Between Child Involvement and Learning-Objectives, Dag Nome (University of Agder, Norway) draws on post-structuralism and social-constructive theories of bildung when exploring how pre-school-teachers balance between learning-outcome and child-involvement, utterance and subjectivity in their way of planning, documenting and evaluating pedagogical work.

In the paper Academic Subjectivities in Goal-Driven Teaching, Merete Munkholm (Aarhus University, Denmark) use a theoretical framework from Foucault-inspired studies in subjectivity and studies in affectivity to examine how Danish teachers’ use of learning objectives together with a lot of other interacting forces may create relations and subjectivities in new ways.

Conclusively, Kirsten Sivesind (University of Oslo, Norway), discusses overarching issues addressed in the three papers. Sverre Tveit chairs the symposium.
The «Didactic Relation Model» – Time for a Reality Check

Tveit, Sverre & Jensen, Andreas Reier

University of Agder

This paper aims to critically examine the practical applications of didactic models in the supervision of pre-service teacher practicum in Norwegian teacher education.

The theoretical backdrop to the study is the «Didactic Relation Model», which is widely used in the fields of pedagogy and teacher education in Norway (Engelsen, 2014; Gundem, 1990; Helle, 2017; Hiim, 2006; Hiim and Hippe, 1998). The model is reported to originate from Bjørndal and Liberg (1978), as a response to Tyler’s (1949) rational model for curriculum planning. Tyler contended that educators should consider four questions when designing curricula: (1) What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? (2) What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? (3) How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? (4) How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? According to Bjørndal and Liberg (1978), this goal driven model was not well fitted for curriculum planning in Norway. They proposed the «Didactic Relation Model» to be used instead, as a framework for reflexive and critical analyses of teaching. This model includes «Student Preconditions»; «Learning goals»; «Content»; «Frame Factors»; «Learning Activities»; and «Assessment». The model was soon embraced by educators both in pre-school, primary and secondary education and associated teacher training programs, and is to date widely used by teacher educators.

The «Didactic Relation Model» has proven to be useful to illuminate various factors that influence teachers’ practices. However, we content that its current use as a process model, characterizing stepping stones in teachers’ planning and practice, is misplaced. This is obvious given the holistic approach that Bjørndal and Lieberg (1978), and further developed concepts of the model (e.g. Engelsen, 2014), relies on. Especially considering the shift to more goal-driven and outcomes-oriented curriculum and policy discourse following the 2006 reform, the theoretical underpinnings of the «Didactic Relation Model» – perceiving all didactic categories as equally important – misrepresent the realities of teachers’ work. This context invites us to address an ideological incompatibility in contemporary teacher education discourse. Rather than serving as a didactical model we content that the «Didactic Relation Model», by under-communicating the goal and assessment dimensions, conceals a prevailing (or reawaken) goal-driven teacher practice.

The research design and methods includes document analysis of planning and observation documents used in pre-service teacher practicum. The study reports on preliminary findings from piloted use of the «Three-Step-Model», an alternative model that is being implemented for the pre-service teacher practicum at the University of Agder. This model captures three steps teachers and teacher students should consider when teaching:

1. Classroom management: The social rules that serve as regulative discourse for the instruction.
2. Content Instruction: The provision of the subject content through sequencing, pacing and criteria.
3. Adapted instruction: (inter)relations between classroom management and the content provided through instruction

The paper reports on preliminary research findings from this implementation. Relevance for Nordic Education Research lies in the confrontation of theoretical models that are widely used in Norwegian and Danish teacher training with the realities of teachers’ work.
Didactics in Pre-school – Planning, Documenting and Evaluating in the Tension Between Child Involvement and Learning-Objectives

Nome, Dag

Research topic/Aim:
Alongside a fast-growing emphasis on documentation, objectives and learning-outcome in Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Norway, the theoretical understanding in ECE-research highlights the agency and the subjectivity of the children as contributors to the institutional context. Thus, their involvement in day-to-day planning and evaluating, utterance of resistance and the development of critical thinking are key-features in the new Norwegian ECE-curriculum. This paper explores how preschool teachers reason about learning-objectives, subject-related content on one hand – and here-and-now-focus, child-involvement and children’s utterance on the other, in their didactic praxis. The aim is to gain knowledge that can ensure a better informed critical approach to didactics in pre-school teacher education.

Theoretical frameworks:
The paper is inspired by post-structural theory of identity and social-constructivist theory of bildung. The subjectivity of a child is shaped by both the power of learning-expectation and outcome-thinking imbedded in the institutional context and at the same time how their utterance of resistance and their first signs of critical thinking can create space for changes in that context. Both processes can be expressed in different ways of conducting didactics. The study relates to other researchers who, based on similar theoretical framework, have explored these differences, expressed critique against traditional objective-oriented didactics and developed innovative ways of performing didactics in ECE (Broström, Lafton, & Letnes, 2014; Kolle, Larsen, & Ulla, 2010; Pålerud, 2013; Åberg, Lenz Taguchi, & Manger, 2006).

Methodology/research design:
The study will be based on a forthcoming fieldwork in three to four Norwegian Pre-schools with an emphasis on how the staff perform their planning and evaluating processes in formal and unformal meetings. To attend, observe and record these meeting will be an important part of the data-collection. There will also be conducted interviews with eight to ten pre-school teachers.

Expected conclusions/Findings:
Through observations and interviews it will be possible to gain knowledge on how the didactic processes balance between object-orientation and child-involvement. It will be possible to see the impact of learning-expectations and outcome-focus in planning, documenting and evaluating, and it will be possible to see if the mandate to develop critical thinking and resistance among the children have any influence in these processes.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:
The tendencies to increase the importance of learning-outcome in ECE are common Nordic phenomenon. The theoretical emphasis on child-involvement and children’s agency as a fundamental educational credo, is likewise. Knowledge on how pre-school staff balance between these two conflicting tendencies in their didactic work is important for pre-school-teacher educators, ECE-researchers and educational policymakers across the Nordic region.
Contributor 3
Academic Subjectivities in Goal-Driven Teaching

Munkholm, Merete
Aarhus University, Denmark

Research topic/aim:
In 2014 a school reform was implemented in the Danish public school. The purpose was among others to improve the academic standards for all children. The Common Objectives (Fælles Mål) was clarified and simplified to ensure learning objectives which are more focused on pupils’ learning outcome, and which supports the teachers’ work with goal-driven teaching (Danish Ministry of Education, 2014).
The aim of this paper is to examine how the use of learning objectives together with a lot of other interacting forces may create relations and subjectivities in new ways.

Theoretical framework:
The correlation between teachers’ use of learning objectives and student achievements is thoroughly investigated (Hattie, 2009; Morisana & Locke, 2013), but existing research often focus on a causal correlation between the qualities of learning objectives and the learning outcome. In line with the symposium’s ambition to critically examine the use of learning objectives and to offer other kinds of answers than those already existing, this paper examines the performative effects of learning objectives with a focus at the affective and discursive forces. The analyses are based on a theoretical framework from Foucault-inspired studies in subjectivity (Butler, 1997; Davies, 2000; Staunæs & Juelskjær, 2016; Søndergaard, 1999) and studies in affectivity (Kofoed, 2013; Massumi, 2002).

Methodological design:
The paper draws on empirical material produced through classroom observations, classroom videos and interviews with pupils and teachers in the lower secondary school in connection with the PhD project: ‘Academic inclusion and exclusion in lower secondary education after the school reform in the Danish public school’.

Expected conclusions/findings:
It seems that the use of learning objectives entangles with storylines about diagnoses, gender, teachers and academic subjects. And that the learning objectives may sometimes produce a particular discursive and affective order, which may contribute to illegitimate academic positions for some pupils.

Relevance for Nordic Education Research:
The common use of «learning goals» in Scandinavian classrooms, despite its controversial nature in the political discourse both historically and in the contemporary setting.

Literature
“Oh please God, not an oral presentation” Effectiveness of feedback on oral presentations in foreign language teaching: the students’ perspective

Kostina, Antonina  
*University of Tartu, Estonia*

Oral presentations are part of our everyday life. We, as teachers, often assume that speaking in public is something that everyone can do and we often give students the opportunity to present different academic topics individually or in groups. We evaluate the content of these presentations and we usually also give some feedback, but we rarely address the work that is done before the presentation is held.

Oral presentations and preparation for them (Penne & Herzberg 2015), feedback effectiveness (Poulos & Mahony 2008), feedback differences when provided by the teacher, peers or peers guided by tutors (van Ginkel, Gulikers, Biemans & Mulder 2017) and peer feedback have been studied in various fields (Topping 1998; Falchikov 2001; Liu & Carless 2006). However, not as much attention has been paid to the actual use of feedback provided to students. This is the blind spot which this research attempts to shed light on.

The purpose of this study is to investigate students’ experiences with oral feedback in foreign language learning: what kind of feedback is usually reviewed by the students and what kind of feedback has been most helpful in preparing for the next oral presentations. A one-year-long systematic oral presentation training is attempted. Norwegian philologists will be presented with background knowledge on a good presentation, they will be asked to hold several presentations both in groups and individually and they will practice the role of active listeners. In addition, the feedback from both students and the lecturer will be provided.

The project is expected to help the teacher understand where the biggest stumbling blocks are for students and what kind of support or feedback they need to manage with them. It is believed that such practice will improve the quality of students’ oral presentations and reduce their anxiety over the presentations.

Challenges of second and foreign language education in globalized word is highly relevant. Therefore, the question of didactics and the acquisition of high level of proficiency in Nordic languages as a second language is also highly relevant and has become even more so due to the population changes in the Nordic countries in the last years.

References:


Teaching that engages! - how can students’ experience with teaching develop kindergarten teacher education?

Santana, Marianne
University of Southeast Norway

Research topic:
This research explores teaching quality in the Norwegian kindergarten teacher education. The theme of the research is taken from Studiebarometeret 2016 (Nokut, 2017), and seeks to examine how teachers can develop teaching based on what the students tell about how they experience teaching. I will complete the research during the autumn of 2017.

Previous publications that relates to my research is Steinnes og Haug (2013), which emphasizes that the kindergarten teacher education does not provide relevant and necessary competence. Student experiences with the kindergarten teacher education reform show a varying result of how satisfied the students are with the education (Skauge, Kvitastein & Hansen, 2017). Further work on previous research will take place in the autumn of 2017.

Theoretical framework:
The research is underpinned by Biesta’s concepts of qualification, subjectification and socialization (Biesta, 2009, 2014). In keeping with Biesta’s perspectives, I examine how these can help develop teaching based on the students’ telling.

Methodological framework:
The research has a hermeneutic approach because interpretation of the students’ experience of teaching is central (Grønmo, 2004; Mattson, 2013; Thagaard, 2013). Data is collected using the adapted letter method (Berg, 2000) among nine kindergarten students. The interpretation of student letters provide the basis for developing teaching.

Expected findings:
The preliminary findings are the students’ experience of;
• a clear context between the curriculum and what the teacher communicates.
• teaching becoming difficult when there are many and different teachers in a subject and teachers do not have insight into what each other does. This seems to create confusion among the students and disturb the context they want to achieve.

Relevance to Nordic Educational Research:
The study is relevant to Nordic Educational Research, because it requires more research in teaching to increase the quality of higher education, (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017; Meld. St. 16 (2016-2017), 2017), and kindergarten teacher education in particular (Følgegruppen, 2017).

References:
On the way to early childhood teacher profession (Paper 1)

Mørreaunet, Sissel
Queen Mauds University College Early Childhood Education

Research topic:
Research topic in this session is what kind of motivation the part-time student have for the study when starting. The empire is from the study "On the way to early childhood teacher profession". Two cohorts of part-time students were followed through 4 years education towards a bachelor's degree as early childhood teacher. The students in the study have long experience from work either in ECE or other professions when they start their education. What characterizes student motivation for the study when starting? Does the student's motivation change during the first period in study? Answers to these questions show some variation that can be linked to both background and previous experience in education and work.

The theoretical framework:
The theoretical framework are based of Deci and Ryan's motivational theory (2000), which emphasizes three main groups of psychological needs that represent the very basis for inner motivation. The motivation factors will be highlighted by the theories derived from professional theory. The discussion will focus especially on the relationship between education as a qualification and certification for the profession (Heggen, 2008; Smeby & Mausagen, 2011, Steinnes 2013).

The methodological design:
The methodological design are case-oriented in which a survey is combined with semistructured depth interviews. The survey is processed through a frequency analysis and are used as mapping and basis for identifying items for the depth interviews. The semi-structured depth interview has been used as a comprehensive method in the study. At the end of the study, the interviewed students participate in a focus group interview to produce data that is not as easy to get when the students are interviewed individually. For a retrospective look, all students were interviewed one year after graduation. The sample consists of a total of 24 informants, 12 in each cohort.

Expected findings:
From the study indicate that the student's motivation to apply for the study is linked to the desire for different degrees of certification and/or qualification. Some student’s motivation is clearly linked to be certified and others to qualification. I will look into those which motivations are linked to certification. Possible reasons for this are discussed in this presentation.

The relevance to Nordic educational research:
Research on early childhood teacher profession is highly relevant to the Nordic educational research. Historically, the Nordic countries, changes of teacher education in approximately the same time periods. Studies of part-time students’ motivation in early teacher education context provides comparable challenges across the Nordic countries.

References:
On the way to early childhood teacher profession (Paper 2)

Granrusten, Per Tore
Queen Mauds University College Early Childhood Education

The project "On the way to early childhood teacher profession" has followed two cohorts of part-time students through 4 years education towards a bachelor’s degree as early childhood teacher. The topic of this presentation is the student’s expectations for the study when starting, and the experience of the start of the education.

The theoretical approach is competence development in interaction between profession, education, and work (Smeby, 2008; Smeby & Mausethagen, 2011). Smeby & Mausethagen (2011) discuss the relevance of professional education for further qualification in the profession, and the distinction between education as a qualification and certification for the profession. Moving between different arenas, such as education and work, can be described as "border crossing" and these transitions can be important learning processes. Steinnes (2013) uses the same perspective when problematize also change of status and position in the same community as a challenge. For our sample, this is a relevant situation where several students change status from assistant to early childhood teacher on dispensation during the study, and then after graduating being qualified and certified for a permanent early childhood teacher position.

The sample consists of a total of 24 informants, 12 in each cohort. Individual Interviews have been conducted in each of the four years, a focus group interview at the end of the education, and an individual interview one year after graduation. Some informants worked in early childhood centers as assistants before and during their education, others did not when starting, but got jobs in early childhood centers during the educational period. In total, the material consists of 99 individual interviews and four focus group interviews. The findings in this presentation are from 21 interviews in the first interview session when the students were about to finish the first semester.

Based on the preliminary analyzes, there are three categories of expectations among the students:
The first category is those who say they have no special expectations. The second category is those who say they have expectations for the qualifying content in the study. The third category is those who have expectations for the way the education is organized and designed so it’s possible to complete a bachelor degree in the life situation they are at the start of studies.

The contribution of this study to existing research is that it will be possible to present data from the same informant group throughout the education period, and one year after graduation. This will probably provide other and supplementary knowledge to previous studies with a more retrospective perspective.

References:
Early Childhood Centers (ECC) as learning arenas for students and staff

Ljunggren, Birgitte¹ & Lorentzen, Ranveig¹

¹Queen Maud University College

Workplace-based early childhood education and care (ECEC) teacher education (ABLU) is a four years part-time education (180 ECTS), aimed at the unskilled work force in the ECEC sector- the assistants. They are referred to as ABLU-students here. To attend the education, the students must work minimum 40% in an ECC in the education period (Høydalsvik og Gulbrandsen 2016). Students are employees, which can be a source of role conflicts. The scheme is supposed to raise the competence of the students and the staff. The ECC is supposed to work as an important learning arena for ABLU students (Kompetansesstrategien 2018-2022). The scheme is criticized, particularly related to student guidance in practice, as lacking or not sufficiently theoretically funded (NOKUT 2010, SINTEF 2014). ABLU students have little time to solve educational tasks in the ECC (TFOU 2017:9). The ABLU scheme inhibits interesting tensions related to the ECC as a learning arena for students and staff under scrutiny in this paper.

To analyze the data we apply theories on organizational learning (Senge 1999) and theories regarding the ECC as a sociocultural arena (Säljö, R. 2001). Additionally, to further address learning, we apply the notion of knowledge transfer between different learning arenas (Eurat 2004). This includes reflections on vertical and horizontal learning discourses (Bernstein 1999) and the notion of recontextualization of knowledge (Heggen & Raaen, 2014).

This is a case study in three different ECC in Norway. The ECC have been selected because they host ABLU- students affiliated to three different universities offering this education scheme. We assume that different organization of the education scheme in combination to organizational traits could affect how students experience ECC as a learning arena. The study is based on individual – and group interviews with ECC managers, ECEC teachers and assistants. Documents from the different education schemes were also analyzed.

ABLU- students enhance the competence of colleagues, and this relates to the organization of staff learning in the ECC. Organizational frames (available time) limits organizational learning. There is no formal system for knowledge transfer between student and staff. ABLU students initiate themselves the application of new knowledge and skills acquired at campus. Vertical learning discourses are reflected in the student’s practice, but we find limited time for reflection and guidance. The ECC is a learning arena for resourceful students who themselves take initiative. The students experience some conflicts between the student - and the employee role. There are contradictory expectations for the mentor role in the ECC. The study questions the ECC’s capability of being a learning arena extending basic learning related to practical experience.

The EU request more flexible teacher education schemes (European Union 2015). There is a large variety of differently structured kindergarten teacher educations in the Nordic countries where the ECCs are supposed to be a learning arena for students. There is lacking knowledge on how such flexible education schemes work in practice, a knowledge gap this paper speaks to.
Assuring Quality Assurance in Swedish Higher Education: A National Try-out Evaluation

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¹Umeå University

In the Nordic countries and beyond, evaluation and quality assurance are becoming increasingly institutionalised as means to govern the welfare state (Dahler-Larsen, 2011). Higher education is no exception (Leiber, Stensaker & Harvey, 2015; Jarvis, 2014). Since the 1990s, different national evaluation systems have been developed and implemented in Swedish Higher Education (HE) (Segerholm, 2016). Over time, these systems have displayed different political purposes and designs. One major component in the most recent system in operation from 2017 and onwards is national evaluation of the higher education institutions’ (HEIs) own internal quality assurance systems, carried out by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (SHEA) (Lindgren & Rönnberg, 2017).

This paper aims to analyse a SHEA try-out evaluation in which HEIs internal quality assurance were evaluated. The following questions guide our study: What enactments do these try-out exercises entail and what actors are involved? What kind of knowledge is mobilized and used in these enactments? We focus on two cases where the work with and experiences from a) HEI actors, b) officials at the SHEA, and c) external review panels are analysed. We collected data as the national try-out evaluation was implemented. This include near 30 interviews with SHEA staff, HEI actors, and members in external review panels. Extensive documentary materials, such as self-evaluations from the HEIs, schedules, plans and SHEA decisions, were also analysed.

This paper is part of a larger research project, “Governing by evaluation in higher education in Sweden”, analyzing how evaluative activities govern Swedish Higher Education policy and practice. We conceptualise governing as activities composed of assemblages of places, people, policies, practices and power (Clarke, 2015). Following this, we analyse the activities and the actual work connected to quality assurance and its policy-making, and how it is enacted and learned (Ball et. al, 2012). Drawing on Freeman and Sturdy (2014), we see knowledge in policy as taking different forms, i.e. as embodied, inscribed and enacted.

References:
Trust in peers – conditions of trust in faculty based peer-feedback of teaching

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Research topic/aim:
Teaching in higher education has traditionally been considered as an individual responsibility (Biggs & Tang 2010). A challenge related to this privatized culture is that levels of consciousness and sharing of experiences appear as limited. Previous research also documents positive outcomes related to engaging teachers in peer-observation and feedback of teaching (Thomas et al. 2014). The aim of this study is to investigate a particular approach of peer-based feedback in a university setting. The study specifically investigates the role trust in this setting and what significant trust holds in creating a productive environment for its participants.

Theoretical framework:
Trust is commonly referred to as interdependence between trustor and trustee involving risk and vulnerability, often with focus on rationalist versus normative calculations (Kramer, Brewer & Hanna 1996). Of particular interest in this study however, is how trust is formed collectively; i.e. how micro-social trust emerges collectively in peer groups (Markova, Linell & Gillespie 2007).

Methodological design:
The context of our study is a research-intensive university in Norway observing a peer-group with four university teachers during a period of one semester. Empirically the study draws on video observations and interviews. These data are approached on basis of interaction analysis of peer-discussions, which are related to participant reflections from the interviews.

Expected conclusions/findings:
The analysis emphasizes the role trust in exposing each other’s teaching in a peer-group setting and how this evolves over time. Analyzing trust from this perspective intends to pursue how trust emerges and grows into group expectations, norms and relational stability. In particular, we look at the willingness of taking risk, readiness to expose oneself to observations and what seems to be important in achieving mutual confidence.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
Building trust in peer-based settings is highly relevant in the sharing of experiences and critical reflecting about teaching. Findings from this study are therefore of potential value for developing supportive approaches for developing teaching in a way where exposure is considered as safe and productive by the teachers themselves. Results from the study are in this respect relevant for any Nordic higher education institution as well as the Nordic higher education sector.

References:
Valuation Practices and Academic Socialization: Exploring the Effects of Performance Metrics in the Social Sciences and Humanities

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The emergence of a “metric culture” in academia has led to a crisis of academic valuation practices (Fochler, Felt & Müller 2016). More complex considerations of quality and academic merit are successively being replaced by quantitative performance indicators, changing the ways in which academic organizations and individual academics assess and compete (Espeland & Sauder 2007). These dynamics are often mentioned as particularly problematic for researchers in the social sciences and humanities (SSH). However, the ways in which SSH researchers themselves engage with indicators, and the new strategic possibilities they offer, have to a large extent been neglected in empirical research.

The aim of the ongoing study is to contribute to a better understanding of how performance metrics affect valuation practices of PhD candidates and postdocs in the SSH. Combining bibliometric methods and qualitative interviews, the study will highlight the interplay between different orders of worth and how junior researchers at a comprehensive, research-intensive university in Sweden learn to live, work, and produce knowledge. The study will thus offer a new perspective on academic socialization, taking the effects of a being governed by the logics of New Public Management into account.

Theoretically, the study is inspired by the new field of valuation studies. The field shares an interest in “how value is produced, diffused, assessed, and institutionalized across a range of settings” (Lamont 2012, 203). From the perspective of academic socialization, valuation is viewed as practice; as evaluative principles that junior researchers successively learn to inform and justify their actions.

Drawing upon the concept of “regimes of valuation”, an initial pilot study demonstrates that junior researchers in the SSH relate to different, and often contradictory, orders of worth when carrying out their everyday work. On one hand, junior researchers feel pressured to adapt to long-upheld values within their own disciplinary field. On the other hand, as shifts in the ways in which research is evaluated is intrinsically linked to career structures, junior researchers also feel pressured to relate more narrowly to an indicator-driven regime of valuation. Thinking strategically with indicators is described as a way of surviving in contemporary academia, often mentioned in contrast to the conditions under which an older generation of researchers were socialized.

Due to the emergence of a metric culture, the questions of valuation practices and academic socialization becomes increasingly important for the field of higher education research. Are junior researchers socialized into an ever-narrower regime of valuation? If so, how does this affect the PhD education as form of social learning? And what are the consequences for the future knowledge production in academia?

References:
Assessment during clinical studies in nursing education

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The aim of this study is to generate new knowledge about the assessment of nursing students during clinical placements in specialized and municipal health care services.

Theoretical framework
Clinical studies for nursing students are important in many respects, and characterized as an irreplaceable component of nursing education. The students’ direct experience with patients is important for their acquisition of a variety of knowledge forms. The importance of conducting this research is underpinned by studies which show several challenges concerning assessment situations such as; unclear criteria for the expected level of student competences, unclear and insufficient language in the assessment form, difficulties in assessing the attitudes of nursing students, lack of consistency in assessment processes which open to the subjective bias of the assessor (e.g. Butler et al 2011, Helminen et al. 2016 ). The midway assessment can be characterized as a mix of a process and a summative assessment, exacerbated by the process of filling out the assessment form as well as conclusions in regards to whether the student’s clinical practice is “as expected” or not. Even though the nurse mentor have the main responsibility for the daily assessment of the nursing students, the teacher, on behalf of the nursing education also participate in midway- and final assessment situations.

Research questions: How do nurse mentors experience assessment situations ?
1. How do they recognize an expected level of students’ competences?
2. How do they perceive the usage of assessment forms?

Methodological design
The study has a qualitative design with 18 in-depths qualitative interviews and three focus groups interviews with nurse mentors from various levels and fields of nursing education. A hermeneutic approach will be used where the research questions are the basis for a reflective interpretation. The analysis will be inspired by Brinkmann & Kvale’s (2015) approach to qualitative analysis, and will be carried out using various tools such as coding and categorization of meaning on different levels.

Expected conclusions/findings
This is an ongoing study, so findings be presented and discussed at the conference.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Assessment is a key element in the supervision of students during their practice period in vocational studies.

References:
On Formative Assessment: A Critical Analysis

Opdal, Pål Anders
The Arctic University of Norway

Research topic/aim:
The concept of formative assessment is considered highly important in accounting for student learning. According to Lorrie Shepard “Everyone knows that formative assessment improves learning” (2005, 8). Nirit Glazer has argued that both “Educators and policy makers recognize … feedback as an essential factor in student learning” (2014, 277). Yet, the concept of formative assessment is poorly demarcated. Mantz Yorke has argued that formative assessment “is not well understood across higher education” (2003, 477). Randy Bennett maintains that “formative assessment’ … does not yet represent a well-defined set of artefacts or practices [and that] existing definitions admit … a wide variety of implementations” (2011, 5).

This paper is a critical analysis of seminal parts of the research literature on formative assessment. Based on the analysis, I stipulate a definition of formative assessment for use in Norwegian higher education. The definition does not lay claim to being final. Rather, it is an invitation to further debate.

Theoretical framework:
The paper’s theoretical framework derives from central distinctions in the research literature on ‘formative assessment’. In addition, a classificatory scheme, derived from Aristotle, is utilized. First, a distinction is made between summative and formative assessment (Bloom 1971). Whereas summative assessment is assessment of learning (and hence after the fact), formative assessment is assessing learning that is ongoing (Glazer 2014, 277). Similarly, a distinction is drawn between assessing a product and assessing a process (Kousholt 2011, 81). Second, Derek Rowntree’s claim that formative assessment is “a spectrum … ranging from the very informal … to the very formal” (1987, 4-5) is analytically applied in the paper, as is the Aristotelian distinction between things (artefacts), methods and purposes.

Methodological design:
Methodologically speaking the paper is a conceptual exploration. Its basis is ordinary language philosophy (Wittgenstein 1951; Ryle 1963; Austin 1961), in particular the claim that “our common stock of words embodies all the distinctions men have found worth drawing … in the lifetime of many generations” (Austin 1961, 130).

Expected conclusions/findings:

a) The paper demonstrates the disagreement between researchers as to the conceptual content of ‘formative assessment’.
b) The concept of ‘formative assessment’ is not well demarcated. It needs to be specified before it can fulfill its function. The definition in this paper is an attempt at this specification.
c) Formative assessment is defined “purposefully” in the paper: not by the activities or the methods it assumes, but by the purpose which it is for.
d) 'Formative assessment' is a possible ingredient in the so-called ‘learnification’ of higher education (Biesta 2005, 2006). This implies an (externally) critical perspective on formative assessment, which the paper investigates.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
According to Kvalitetsreformen (St.meld. 27 (2000-2001), formative assessment is to be applied more intensively in Norwegian higher education. Still, according to Studiebarometeret, feedback is amongst the things Norwegian students are least satisfied with (Damen et al 2016, 20). For these reasons, amongst others, the investigation projected in this paper is highly relevant.
References:


Working out the principles of improvement of the medical students language

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Foreign language (predominantly, English) is a compulsory subject for all the students at Russian universities, including the Schools of Medicine. Professionally oriented course of a foreign language is taught there, with a rather small amount of classes. Not all the Russian students have a profound knowledge of a foreign language after studying at the secondary schools because the teachers were using the reproductive methods there. It has been confirmed by the results of the survey of 100 first-year students of the Medical and Pharmaceutical faculties of Kursk State Medical University carried out in September 2017 (similar surveys are carried out annually). At the same time, 41 % of the students surveyed expect a university teacher of English promote the creative educational environment at the classes.

In order to correspond to the students’ educational needs we have developed the reflective and creative approach (RCA). It is based on the symbiosis of the components of the professional reflective culture and creativity. The approach is being implemented practically in the process of the medical students’ language training. We have worked out the principles of increasing the effectiveness of the students’ language training with the usage of RCA:

• The principle of interactive relations in the systems ‘a teacher – a student’, ‘a student – a student’, ‘a student – his/her academic group’. The interactive relations will be more efficient by means of the implementation of creative educational technologies and revealing the students’ creative potential by the teacher.
• The principle of maintaining the motivation to learn a foreign language in the context of interdisciplinary relations. This principle implies that mastering the language for medical purposes would be more efficient in case of creative adjustments of the working programs by the foreign language teachers and teachers of Medical sciences and Humanities for the parallel study of the identical topics.
• The principle of taking into account the initial level of the students’ verbal creativity. It is necessary to rank the students in the academic groups on the basis of the expressiveness of their verbal creativity indicator and select the proper individualized tasks for them.
• Principle of scientific substantiation of the use of feedback in the learning process. Evaluation of the efficiency of the foreign language teaching will increase in case of the usage of the complex of traditional assessment tools and modern reflective tools (e.g., creating portfolios).
• The principle of the transfer of the acquired quasi professional skills to the professional conditions. The formation of a future healthcare provider’s social competence will be effective in case of the usage of the educational technologies based on RCA, which reconstruct at the classes the specifics of the future professional communication.

The proposed principles allow a teacher to implement the practice of language training with the usage of RCA on a completely new level. Only innovative and effective language training developing both professional and cultural competences is able to form a future specialist’s creative personality.
Speed practice - an innovative response to a distant profession

Stalheim, Odd Rune
Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences

Research topic/aim:
This study explores the student-led initiative “Architect students in speed practice”. The initiative aims to engage students directly with architectural practices through an annual two-week program of miniature internships, office seminars, and professional discussions. The study focuses on how a student-driven innovation increases and affects students' learning processes and development of entrepreneurial skills in practice.

Theoretical framework:
There is a growing interest in entrepreneurial and innovative ways of teaching and learning in higher education and a need to embrace a broader view on entrepreneurship. Creative initiatives give students' opportunities to experience, experiment, and play with different aspects of everyday entrepreneurial learning processes that can increase their awareness for skills needed in an unknown future (Johansen, 2014; Karlsson & Moberg, 2013; Steyaert & Katz, 2004; Ulla, Pekka, Jarna, & Jaana, 2010).

Methodological design:
The study is an explorative phenomenological case study, which consists of several individual and group interviews as well as observations of student groups attending the workshop. Analysis and coding of transcripts and observations have been performed by using NVIVO 10.

Expected conclusions/findings:
There is an agreement among students that there exists a distance between the design of the training of architects and the real world. Students express a feeling of insecurity of what are expected from them when they graduate and a limited awareness of the opportunities offered by their profession. They describe an education focusing on the artistic and aesthetics part of the syllabus, suppressing other valuable skill sets, leaving the professional education in the hands of the profession to be completed upon employment. The paper points at how increased engagement with broader communities of practice through dialogue and interaction increases students' confidence in their own abilities, their critical engagement with their education, and improve their overall view of their professional identity.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
There is an increased attention in the Nordic countries to how innovation contributes to the development of quality in higher education. Fundamental questions such as: how do student engagement and innovations contribute to higher quality in teaching and learning, are vital to pose in the discourse. The study presents a broad and inclusive account of how a student-driven workshop affects students' experiences with practice within their studies.

References:
Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ): A view from the perspective of Item Response Theory

Obiekwe, Jerry
The University of Akron Wayne College

Research Topic:
Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ): A view from the perspective of Item Response Theory.

Theoretical Framework:
The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) is a self-report instrument that evaluates college students’ motivational inclinations and their application of learning strategies. This instrument is used widely for assessing the motivational strength and learning strategies of college students. Information gleaned from the evaluation is used to help students succeed academically. The fundamental concepts of Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire are rooted in motivation and learning theories (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, and McKeachie, 1991, 1993).

MSLQ has two sections: the motivation and the learning strategies scales. Both sections contain 81 seven-point Likert type questions. The motivation scale has 31 items designed to elicit six dimensions. The Intrinsic Goal Orientation refers to learning a task primarily for self-fulfillment, which is driven by internal locus of control. The Extrinsic Goal Orientation refers to learning a task motivated by external locus of control. The Task Value refers to the perceived usefulness, and the importance of the task. Control of Learning Beliefs refers to efforts that give birth to positive outcomes. Self-Efficiency for Learning and Performance refers to task performance and self-efficacy. Test Anxiety is the anxiety that bubbles up as a result of test and it has cognitive, and emotional dimensions.

The second section of MSLQ contains 50 items with nine measurable dimensions. The Rehearsal dimension refers to basic rehearsal strategies. Elaboration dimension refers to elaboration strategies which help in the storing and recalling of information from the long term memory. The Organization dimension refers to student use of organizational strategies. The Critical Thinking dimension refers to students’ utilization of previous knowledge to current situation for purposes of problem-solving. The Metacognitive Self-Regulation dimension refers to the use of metacognitive strategies such as self-regulation in learning. The Time and Study Environment dimension refers to time management and conduciveness of study environment. The Effort Regulation dimension refers to effort management. The Peer Learning dimension refers to students’ cooperative endeavors with follow students. The Help Seeking dimension refers to students’ effective use of declared support system.

Methodological Design:
This study utilized Item Response Theory (IRT) to examine the response pattern of students to determine whether each item on the questionnaire was interpreted the same way by all students. Expected conclusions/Findings:
Details of the results of how each student interpreted the questionnaire items as well as the explanation of the mathematical concepts of item response theory will be discussed at the presentation.

Relevance to Nordic Educational Research:
This paper has implications to educational measurement and evaluation, so is consistent with the objectives of the Nordic Educational Research Association (NERA).

References:
Teaching towards employment or preparing students for life? Recovering the pedagogy of university teaching

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The aim of this paper is to revive and discuss the pedagogical dimension of university pedagogy. University pedagogy has gained increased importance in higher education in Sweden. Courses in university pedagogy are provided at universities as part of competence development, and are even decisive in certifications of university teachers’ pedagogical merits. At best, these courses can lead to new ideas and reflections among university teachers regarding their practice and challenge traditions; important functions in a system challenged by new student groups. However, higher education has been highly influenced by international policy-discourses (Biesta et al, 2009). A specific example is the relation between the Bologna process, as an instrument for massive coordination and standardisation, and constructive alignment (Biggs, 1999) which has become a popular tool to align teaching practices and organisation of education programmes. Aside the risks of implementing a “one-size fits all” model of teaching over all subjects and contexts, this development is also a matter of a performative teacher discourse in which university teachers increasingly become administrators of knowledge in factories producing degree holding employees for the market (Friberg, 2015).

Emerging is a limited and instrumental view of the role of higher education as a socio-political tool (Lyotard, 1984), which risks excavating university pedagogy of its pedagogical dimensions and reducing the autonomy of university teachers with focus on standardisation and emphasis on effective output. Instead of claiming a return to a soon forgotten university, shaped by Humboldtian ideals, we suggest that the shape of higher education and its pedagogy can escape the grip of techno-political instrumentalism as well as transcend the limitations of Enlightenment and Modernity. We emphasise the relational and emancipatory possibilities given by higher education. By understanding the relationship between teachers and students as a gathering for common interests, higher education can maintain its pedagogical dimension (Simons & Masschelein, 2009). We maintain that good university pedagogy must revolve around the teacher’s reflections regarding the subject and students, as well as educational dimensions such as qualification, socialisation and subjectification (Biesta, 2009).

Given how encompassing ideas of university pedagogy is in Nordic higher education (Andersen, 2010; Friberg, 2015) the paper has relevance for research and teachers within Nordic higher education.

References:
Student`s media practices in education and leisure. Preliminary results from a Norwegian case study

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Research topic/aim:
Recent public and educational policy and debates focus on the relationship between young people`s technology-use, learning, and formal education (Bulfin & North, 2007). Within this context, this paper discusses a case-study among Norwegian students, as a way of investigating learning in different media practices in education and leisure (Burnett, Merchant, Pahl & Rowsell, 2014). Learning is investigated in terms of connectedness and disturbances /disconnections between a range of media practices in different contexts. The study is about how students benefit or are disturbed from engaging in media practices, for example cooperation on texts and creative digital productions, assessments, guidance from supervisors, searching and evaluating online resources to mention a few. The following questions guide the study: What media practices are students engaged in at campus and in leisure time? How do they experience the relevance of different media practices in education and leisure? How do they relate to possible connections and disturbances in these practices?

Theoretical framework:
Adopting a socio-cultural (Wertsch, 1998) and a systems theory approach (Luhmann, 1995) on learning and human development, the analysis is guided by an understanding of media-practices as situated and interconnected across various spaces (Lankshar & Knobel, 2006). Hence, it is problematic to use simple distinctions and binaries about media practices in different domains. Following Bulfin and North (2007), we suggest the idea of ‘negotiated practice’ as a way of understanding young people’s media practices “(...) and how these are connected and ‘worked out’ across home, school and other contexts” (p. 248).

Methodology/research design:
The paper draws on results from an ongoing research project focusing on third year Bachelor-students participating in the subject of Media Education (15 ECTS) at a Norwegian university. The data collection includes focus-group interviews, self-reporting and digital stories. A focus group approach was used to gain insight into discourses and negotiating processes. The material will be analysed according to a mediaethnographic approach (Drotner, 2008; Heath, Street & Mills, 2008).

Expected conclusions/findings:
The presentation discusses selected examples on student`s reflections on their media practices at campus and outside. The aim is to arrive at descriptions of how they experience and understand the phenomena in question, such as media practices, learning, education, and knowledge, and how their experiences contribute to connect learning across contexts. Particular attention is put on how existing contextual frames regulate practices.

Relevance:
By focusing on the interplay between media practices in and between two contextual requirements, the paper contributes to expand public and academic debates that limits itself to highlight how potentially transformative modern technology might change educational practice. The paper is relevant to Nordic educational research by highlighting the importance of investigating how young people reflect and interpret media practices within certain pedagogical and organizational frames. The relevance also arises from our argumentation that rest on the assumption that technology and anticipated benefits for educational purposes cannot be studied detached from specific participants and pedagogical contexts. The paper is relevant to the network 10) Higher education and 13) ICT and education.
Promoting active learning through developing and using a digital tool for assessment

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This paper aims at examining how dedicated software and criteria for formative assessment and feedback contribute to supporting active learning in a computer science course. The reported study is part of a larger project, which examines and develops formative assessment practices and tools that facilitate students’ learning and meta-cognitive strategies, beneficial beyond the course context. Empirical studies point at the potential of peer assessment and feedback to support active learning. Recent studies (Carless et al. 2011; Price, et al., 2011) indicate that feedforward, i.e. providing information about performance that shapes future steps in learning, is especially beneficial in supporting students understanding of their own learning.

In combination with the idea of constructive alignment (Biggs & Tang, 2011), wherein various elements of a course are connected to generate coherence, feedforward becomes an intrinsic part of teaching, and places the learners at the center, supporting them taking control of their own learning.

The empirical dataset was generated during redesign of the undergraduate course, INF3400 - Digital Nano electronics, at a Nordic university. For the final compulsory assignment, the students were given a choice between an ordinary hand-in and participation in a peer-review assignment. Each student attending the peer-review study conducted five reviews of fellow students’ performance, using a customized assessment data program, which included guidelines for assessment. The data program consists of several criteria and checkboxes which guide the reviewer through a process for pinpointing weaknesses and strengths of the assignment. The lecturers also reviewed all students’ assignments, using the same assessment program. The joined data, corresponding to 175 reviews, gave the possibility to extract the level and the domain of the students’ understanding. Furthermore, data from a previous year was used for comparing learning outcomes. In addition, we have conducted both questionnaires and qualitative interviews with students, in order to capture their experiences with this approach and the digital tool.

Preliminary findings indicate a strong correlation between students’ assessment of each other and teacher’s assessment of student performance. However, we suggest that this is dependent on the development of clear and explicit assessment criteria, and the familiarization and appropriation of these by the students. The way students are familiarized with assessment criteria and how these support students understanding of the “way of the discipline”, and their activities, appear to be crucial.

In the Nordic higher education context, formative assessment in connection to active learning is high on the agenda. This study provides an insight into how tools and practices of teaching can be used with awareness for constructive alignment, and how that can contribute to meaningful learning, deeper engagement in learning activities, and better retention.

References:
Flipped Teaching in Higher Education - the role of Learning Videos and classroom activities

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In the course of criticism of traditional forms of teaching and learning a number of didactic approaches have been developed since the late 1990s to offer alternative ways to design and implement teaching in Higher Education (Handke 2015, Goerres et al. 2015). These teaching methods which later became known as Flipped Teaching or Inverted Classroom are pedagogical approaches in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the instructor guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter (FLN 2014, p. 1). Flipped Teaching aims to make the classroom experience more active and intense for students and so to foster a deeper understanding of the learning content (Schäfer 2012, pp. 3f.). Empirical results and findings on the effectiveness of flipped teaching exist numerous. Studies on Flipped Teaching either focus on students’ perception of flipped sessions (subjectively), on the process respectively the instructional-design or on the learning outcomes (objectively) (Franqueira & Tunnicliffe 2015; Bishop & Verleger 2013). The goal of our experimental study is to explore the interplay between individual learning space and group learning space in respect to learning outcome. Precisely our first research question addresses the relation between subjective student ratings on the quality of the learning input (video) and the objective learning results. Our second research question wants to find out if different classroom activities and respectively instructional designs have an effect on participants’ learning performance. Different classroom activities have been designed according to Chi’s ICAP-Framework (2009). The sample of our study consists of 50 students of a bachelor’s program in educational science at a German University. By randomization three groups were formed. The treatment group (n = 19), the control group 1 (n = 14) and the control group 2 (n = 17). 96% of the students are female and only 4% male. To answer the first research question, a correlation matrix was calculated with SPSS. For the second research a covariance analysis was conducted with SPSS. Results show that the student ratings on the quality of the learning input (video) does not correlate with the learning performance, but fosters active learning. Besides it turned out that interactive learning tasks play a key role in flipped teaching settings. Interestingly the results do not indicate a significant difference between low, medium and high tutorial support on learning performance in the group learning space. But all groups have benefited from the classroom activities according to the test results. The posttest results were higher than the pretest results for each group. Our findings serve as groundwork for further research especially in Finland in order to check cross-cultural differences on the effectiveness of Flipped Teaching.

References (shortened):


Leading Universities: Senior Leaders’ Perspectives on the Contributions of Academic Developers?

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This paper reports on data from an international project funded by the Norwegian Research council (NRC) with partners from four Nordic universities, one Irish and one US; Formation and Competence Building of University Academic Developers http://www.uv.uio.no/iped/english/research/projects/solbrekke-formation-and-competence-building). We investigate two research questions, both of which are posed to senior leaders in five universities:

• What is the purpose of the university in contemporary society?
• Describe the roles and work of academic developers, (those who teach the university teachers and guide educational leadership to improve teaching and learning)?

By undertaking a fine-grained analysis of senior leaders’ responses to these questions, we seek new insights and understandings of educational leadership.

Theoretical framework:
Our analytical framework combines literature on university orientations and distributed leadership. University orientations (Traditional, Scientific, Entrepreneurial and Bureaucratic) (Sutphen, Solbrekke and Sugrue under review) are used to critically analyse leaders’ responses to our first research question. Thereafter, we apply the concept of distributed leadership (Youngs 2017) to interrogate their responses to the second question. In combination, these help us gain insight into the implicit theories of educational leadership embedded in senior leaders’ responses to the question on the purpose of higher education and, in turn, their expectations of academic developers’ contributions to leadership of higher education.

Methodological design
We use an abductive and insider/outside approach (Sutphen, Solbrekke and Sugrue under review) to the analysis of interviews conducted in Spring 2016 with the top university leader having a specific educational leadership responsibility for education in two Norwegian, two Swedish and one North American university. The same external interviewer conducted all of the interviews while in each setting an ‘insider’ was part of the interview process, thus having a contextual grounding within the organisation to complement the external perspective. All interviews were conducted in the offices of the interviewees, lasted between 1-1.5 hours, were audio recorded, transcribed and analysed using an abductive method among the authors.

Expected conclusions/findings
The analysis indicates varied orientations of current universities and that it is necessary to understand educational leadership and the possible contributions of Academic Developers in light of how a university’s purpose and orientation is conceived. We anticipate that the analysis will enable us to refine understandings of university orientations while simultaneously permit us to understand how leaders shape their respective organisations, and how they seek to harness the expertise of ADs as a means of leading the transformation of teaching and learning.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Data from four Nordic universities: two Swedish, two Norwegian, speak directly to those contexts, while simultaneously contributing to international discourses on ADs roles and responsibilities and leadership of higher education.

References:
How can I influence my students` engagement in learning? Introducing a motivation model and an inventory for a better understanding of student academic motivation

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Keywords: Motivation, assessment, achievement

Learning and achievement is strongly related to student motivation. Teachers like students to be motivated and engaged in their studies to ensure deep learning of both knowledge and skills. However, it is often difficult to understand what motivates students to be engaged. The MUSIC Model of Motivation (www.MUSICmodel.com) was developed after a thorough study of theories and research on motivation. It is comprised of five components that have been found to be very influential in motivating and engaging students in the classroom context. The acronym MUSIC stands for: M= eMpowerment; U=Usefulness; S=Success; I=Interest; C=Caring. The model was developed to assist teachers in keeping in mind what factors are important for student motivation. A motivation inventory has been developed and validated from the MUSIC Model, one that teachers can use to assess how students experience the classroom environment with regards to these five components (Jones, 2009, 2015). The inventory, the MUSIC Model of Academic Motivation Inventory, originally composed in English, has been validated into more languages and is being used by teachers and researchers at several education levels to assess student motivation. It has been validated for the Icelandic language and culture (Schram & Jones, 2016). Research results from one department at the University of Iceland will be introduced as a way of showing the usefulness of the inventory as a tool to help teachers develop teaching methods that encourage students to engage in their studies, more student-centered strategies. Some of the study results will be discussed in some details. In general, students did not perceive that they had much autonomy in their studies (eMpowerment) and they did not describe the teaching methods are varied. However, they rated their teachers as caring individuals who wanted them to succeed. Results from the inventory can be used to inform instruction. It can be used in courses early in the semester and repeated later, once the teacher has responded to the results by modifying teaching strategies or influencing the classroom context. The inventory could be validated in the other Nordic languages, and subsequently be used with the goal of improving students` academic motivation.

References:
Use of seminar as a teaching method in higher education - How can we develop a quality culture of teaching in seminars?

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Research topic/Aim:
Use of seminar as a teaching method in higher education - How can we develop a quality culture of teaching in seminars?
In this project we want to highlight a theoretical framework on how higher education can use seminars to enable practice-oriented teaching within the classroom.

Research questions:
1. How to understand a seminar as a learning arena?
2. In what way can seminars help to increase the student's experience of learning?

Theoretical frameworks:
We have chosen to take into account Boyer's 4 scholarships in order to see if an extended scholarship thinking can make teaching seminars more applicable and practice-oriented for students. We base this decision on an assumption that the scholar will be a better teacher when focusing on professional development within the context of an extended scholarship.
The theory used in the analysis is Gregory Bateson communication and learning theory and System theoretical perspectives by Niclas Luhmann.

Methodology/research design:
The research uses case as a methodological approach. Case studies as an empirical survey (1) «investigating a contemporary phenomenon (2) within its real-life context; (3) when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and (4) in which multiple sources of evidence are used» (Yin, 2009) In the study we have used student reflection notes, questionnaires and participatory observation.

Expected conclusions/Findings:
Boyer's four scholarships is an extended scholarship thinking which meets the political aims in the white paper Meld. St. 16 (2016–2017) Quality Culture in Higher Education. It is therefore a useful frame for the scholar to develop his or her professional teaching competences. We have found that there is no link between attend in seminars and grade in the exams. Nor are there any links between engagement and grad. But students feel that seminars are engaging, motivating and meaningful. They state that they prefer more seminars instead of lectures.
Our next step will therefore be to see the lack of correlation between the students subjective feeling of learning outcome and the learning outcome measured by exams.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:
The Ministry of Education and Research has issued Meld. St. 16 (2016–2017) (white paper) Quality Culture in Higher Education. With this white paper, the Government wishes to provide more of the tools and guidelines required to raise the quality in higher education. The overarching aims of the Ministry of Education and Research include: knowledge for new understanding, social development and competitiveness, as well as expertise, development and active involvement in society (Meld St. 16 (2016 – 2017) p 11). The Ministry of Education and Research is also working on a proposal for demands for Scholars to document high quality of teaching.

References:
Enacted leadership in higher education classrooms

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Globally, there is a strong rhetoric on a shift from teacher- to student-centred teaching in higher education and a call for new teaching approaches. Politicians are focusing on educational leadership at all institutional levels as one of the solutions to improving the quality of teaching (St.m. 16, 2017). In this paper we demonstrate the importance of studying teaching in practice in order to grasp how leadership in higher education may encourage the quality of teaching. Within the perspective of distributed leadership, we explore how a Norwegian teacher educator employs leadership in her classroom and what tools and routines are empowering students and their learning.

Our theoretical framework is inspired by theories of distributed leadership which emphasize how leadership is "stretched" across the organization (Spillane 2006). Such perspective allows us to foreground how teacher educators and students enact leadership when engaging in tasks and interactions. Additionally, in a distributed leadership perspective tools as objects are seen as designed with a purpose toward enabling action, and routines as patterns of actions that happen in a specific setting. In this study we apply these concepts to identify what tools and routines the teacher educator draws on in the classroom.

In a broader study which investigated academic literacy in teacher education in Sweden and Norway (Solbrekke & Helstad 2016), students emphasized the significance of teaching approaches which empowered them and their learning. These findings encouraged us to interview and observe one of the teacher educators who were mentioned to be one of “the best teachers”. The teacher educator was interviewed twice (2013 and 2014) about her beliefs about teaching and classroom observation was carried out in Spring 2017, followed up by a new contextual interview linked to the observation with both the teacher educator and a group interview with four of her students. In this paper, we primarily make use of the observation data.

The exploration of this teacher educator’s practice demonstrates tools and routines that encourage students to engage in the leadership of both individual and collective learning. By urging students to articulate, listen, collaborate, negotiate meaning and take a stance when struggling to find solutions to both disciplinary tasks and pedagogical challenges, the teacher educator opens up and invites students to take responsibility in leadership engagement while at the same time being the director of the whole teaching and learning process (Helstad & Øiestad 2017).

Quality culture in higher education (2016-2017) Ministry of Education and Reseach, Report to the Storting (white paper)
Equal opportunities for all? Accessing higher education from a working-class background in Finland

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In Finland, the higher education system has expanded considerably during the last 50 years. In line with the social democratic welfare state model, Finland has placed strong emphasis on educational equity (Antikainen, 2006). At least all the formal barriers restraining students from applying for universities, related to e.g. students’ age, gender or socioeconomic status, have been removed. However, persistent social class inequalities when accessing higher education still seem to emerge in research from year to year (Kivinen et. al., 2012; Nori, 2011).

This study focuses on university students from working-class backgrounds in Finland. The study examines working-class students’ access to university education as well as their engagement in studies. The study utilizes a mixed-methods approach and combines survey data from the EUROSTUDENT VI -questionnaire (Finnish data, N=3756) with qualitative interview data from Finnish university students from working-class and middle-class backgrounds (N=12).

Our results show that university students from working-class backgrounds in Finland transfer to university studies more slowly and are more uncertain about their suitability for university education than their middle-class peers. Working-class students seem to have limited access to cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) in their childhood families. Since their parents have no personal experience of university studies, they also lack the kind of strategic knowledge that could help their children navigate their study paths to a higher level of education than their own. During their studies, working-class students seem to be more obliged to work while studying and to take up a study loan for securing their financial situation than middle-class students. Working-class students also have slightly less time for studying and they estimate their suitability for university at lower level than the middle-class students do.

Social class is often regarded as a politically invalid concept in a Nordic welfare state, where the education system is built to create equal opportunities for all (Thomsen et al., 2013). This study indicates that access to higher education is still strongly linked to social class, and even in the Nordic countries, the ideal of equity is not yet reached.

References:
The workplace as an arena for education: Healthcare students’ experiences of emotionally challenging situations

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Learning at workplaces is an essential part of professional undergraduate education, such as teacher and healthcare education. The workplace environment is complex and unpredictable. Studies have shown that many situations during clinical training evoke strong emotional reactions in healthcare students. The present study explores medical students’ experiences of emotionally challenging situations during clinical practice and what these often negative experiences lead to. Learning to become a healthcare professional is viewed as a social and continuous process where students interact with patients and healthcare professionals, constructing the meaning of being a healthcare professional (Scanlon, 2011; Wenger, 1998).

An exploratory qualitative research design was chosen. Data was collected by focus group interviews. The students were asked about their experiences of emotionally challenging situations during clinical training and how they dealt with these situations. Students in their third year (n=8) and fifth year (n=6) participated in the interviews, two groups from each year. A constructivist grounded theory approach was used to analyze the data. Throughout the analysis, the emerging categories were discussed in the research team.

Our findings suggest that students had experienced a range of emotional challenging or distressful situations such as witnessing patient’s suffering, finding their place in the medical team when not knowing what was expected of them, and the struggle to find a balance between closeness and distance. These situations related to the students’ encounters with patients or their encounters with the clinical environment. Students’ main concern was found to be the feelings of uncertainty – uncertainty about having obtained enough knowledge and skills needed in practical clinical work, uncertainty concerning the role as a student in the professional medical team, uncertainty in how to relate to the current values in the health care system when conflicting with their own values, and uncertainty about how to maintain a professional approach towards the patient in an emotionally challenging situation. The uncertainties that were not handled in a sufficient way when they emerged tended to remain as worries about the future work as a physician.

That the workplace can evoke feelings of distress that can lead to uncertainty and professional inadequacy has also been found in a study among teacher students (Lindqvist et al, 2017) as well as in healthcare education (Monrouxe & Rees, 2012; Rees et al, 2015). This suggests that students’ emotional experiences during workplace practice need special attention. More studies are needed regarding how education and workplace learning prepare students for their future professional life.

We believe that these findings and the issues raised are of interest and relevance to Nordic Educational Research.
University lecturers as reflective practitioners – how boundaries and pre-conceived notions influence our practice

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Research topic/aim:
The topic of this paper presentation is to analyze how we as lecturers set boundaries for interaction with students, through our pre-conceived notions of our students and of what constitutes “good” learning. As researchers and lecturers within the field of “pedagogik”, we have extensive knowledge as well as ideals concerning learning and what is needed in creating learning environments – but the suspicion is that this does not always correspond with our actions as lecturers. Part of the aim, then, is to bring our knowledge and ideals closer to our teaching practice. The other part of the aim of this paper presentation is to discuss in what ways this method of analyzing our own work might make a contribution to others’ practice and to the field of higher education research. The aim of the presentation is to make a contribution to collegial learning and to the field of higher education research by exploring this issue.

Theoretical framework:
The theoretical framework consists of the concept of the reflective practitioner, which was first developed by Schön (1983). Schön has characterized reflective thinking as having two forms: reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action. Reflection-in-action refers to the tacit processes of thinking which is linked with doing, and which continuously modify practice so that learning takes place. Reflection-on-action is viewed as a teacher’s thoughtful consideration and retrospective analysis in order to learn from experience (Schön, 1983; Leitch & Day, 2006).

Methodological design:
This presentation is based on what may be termed action research, or introspective reflection. The method is simply put to use one’s own experience as empirical material, and use reflection and theoretical concepts in order to create new knowledge. This method is sometimes criticized for being too subjective and risks becoming too individual (Leitch & Day, 2006). We maintain that by subjecting our own practice to theoretical analysis we will be able to draw conclusions on how to bring theory and (individual) practice together, which transcend individual experiences.

Expected conclusions
As stated above, the paper aims to develop the notion of the university lecturer as a reflective practitioner. The conclusions will point to possibilities in reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action as ways of bringing together theoretical knowledge, ideals and teaching practice.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
This paper is relevant to Nordic educational research in that it makes a contribution to the research field of higher education. University lecturers’ work in higher education is one not often theorized or analyzed, and we maintain that this subject matter is of importance for NERA.

References:
Doctoral Students' Conceptions of Teaching

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Over the last two decades, the provision of doctoral degrees has increased in a number of national contexts. In historical terms, such an expansion demonstrates a massification of the doctoral layer within higher education. It also calls for a renewed attention on the purpose of the doctoral education, the quality of supervisory practices and the formation of doctoral students’ identity. While previous studies explored the development of doctoral students as researchers (Sinclair, Barnacle & Cuthbert, 2014) and identified how doctoral students conceive of research (e.g. Stubb, J., Pyhältö, K. & Lonka, K., 2014; Pitcher, 2011), relatively little has been reported about how doctoral students teach and how they conceive of teaching. With the exception of one study where postgraduate students’ views on teaching were used as evaluative indicators of the overall quality of teaching (Saroyan, Dagenais & Zhou, 2009), no studies explored or identified doctoral students’ conceptions of teaching, particularly after experiencing teaching as active teachers themselves. This two-dimensional ontology of the doctoral student identity (a supervised student and on the cusp of becoming an academic teacher) can be deemed of crucial importance. The key premise of this study is that examining the relationship between doctoral students’ conceptions of teaching and teaching practice as a necessary condition for understanding and enhancing doctoral students’ teaching practices and, consequently, student learning. Earlier work proposed that enhancing teaching often derives from changes in how teachers think about their own teaching (Dall’Alba, 1991). Accordingly, it is postulated that doctoral students conceptualise teaching in a number of qualitatively different ways; some of them may replicate traditional pedagogical approaches while others may endorse transformational notions of teaching. The central research question can therefore be formulated as: What are the qualitatively different ways doctoral students conceive of teaching in higher education?

Phenomenographic studies identified a continuum of relationships between how teachers conceive of their teaching, their approach to teaching and the quality of students learning outcomes (e.g. Martin & Balla, 1991; Trigwell, Prosser & Waterhouse, 1999), with some of these studies exploring directly the relationship between teachers’ conceptions of teaching and the quality of student learning (e.g. Gow & Kember, 1993). Akerlind (2003) reported commonalities with regards to teaching seen as transmission of information on the one end towards development of students’ conceptual understanding on the other end. Additionally, there has been consensus regarding a focus ranging from the teacher and their strategies towards the students and their learning. Twenty doctoral students with teaching experience were invited to attend semi-structured, phenomenographic interviews lasting between 30 to 70 minutes. The sample was drawn from the departments of Education and Teacher Training of two institutional contexts: a research-intensive, elite, traditional Swedish university and a teaching-focussed, modern English university. The aim was to maximise the range of reported experiences of teaching and include participants from a number of sub-disciplines and doctoral student with differing levels of experience. Rounds of iterative analysis produced qualitatively different, hierarchically-inclusive and logically-related categories of how doctoral students conceive of university level teaching. These related to a continuum ranging from teacher- to student-focussed conceptions of teaching. Variation was observed in terms of content- focussed and process-focussed conceptions of teaching which is discussed in light of previous studies in this area.

References:
Ethical principles in the peer review processes of scientific journal articles perceived by Finnish educational authors

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Philosophical Faculty, University of Eastern Finland

2. Theoretical background was based on ethical principles and theories regarding evaluation. Ethical codes for evaluators and journals were used for understanding the key ethical criteria for peer-review (constructive, thorough, balance, diplomacy, fair-minded, confidential, author’s property right, promptness). Broader principles (autonomy, no harm, beneficence, justice, fidelity) were discussed.

3. The empirical research focused on the experiences of the feedback that Finnish educational scientists had received from their article manuscripts submitted to scientific peer-reviewed journals. Internationally research on peer review has concentrated more on medical and natural sciences but less on social, behavioural or human sciences. Research on peer-reviewers, editors and editorial teams and bibliometric analyses dominates the field but the voice of authors is not much present as is in this research.

The research questions (RQ) were as follows: 1) How were the ethical principles followed in the feedback perceived by authors? 2) How did the authors describe the best and worst review process which they had ever experienced? A 9-item measurement tool was designed for the first RQ and two open-ended questions for the second RQ. Empirical data were gathered by means of online anonymous survey in the spring 2017. 121 authors completed the questionnaire. 67 % of respondents were female and the mean of their academic work experience was 18 years. The variation of the published articles was 3–227 articles. Several statistical analyses were administered to the numerical data of structured items. The thematic content analysis was used to the text data of open questions.

4. Among the 9 ethical principles the best were (based on means; scale 1 = seldom ... 5 = often) that the feedback was honest (3,9), constructive (3,8) and fair (3,7). The authors were most dissatisfied with the delay (2,7), unbalance (3,2) and lack of diplomacy (3,3) of the received feedback. A few statistically significant differences were found between some respondent subgroups.

In their open question concerning the best review process (210 statements), authors recalled well-argued feedback (44 %), reviewers’ expertise (24 %) and fluency of communication with the editorial team (11 %). 23 % of statements concerning worst review processes (179 statements) dealt with inexpertise of reviewer (23 %). They complained also of the reviewer’s impolite personal style of communication (12 %), delay (11 %) or generality (11 %) of feedback, and focus on just personal opinions (11 %).

More than half of all statements (f = 389) that were written for the two open-ended questions focused on two ethical principles: “feedback must be constructive” and “reviewer must show expertise”. Constructive feedback related mainly to the perceived good review process but the lack of expertise was related to both perceived good or bad processes.

5. There seem to be little evidence of Nordic educational authors’ experiences of peer-review of journal articles although the pressures on academic publishing are strong.
Peer review in the development of scientific articles experienced by Finnish authors in the educational sciences

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2. Theoretical framework was based on the ideas of developmental evaluation: its characteristics, philosophy, and impact. The summary of previously published international surveys concerning peer review was presented. The key strengths and weaknesses of peer review were analysed to indicate how developmental approach may come true in review processes (genuine improvements) or how the exercise of power may end up in problems (gatekeeping). New forms of quality control in science (various types of open review) were presented.

3. The empirical research focused on the experiences of the feedback that Finnish educational scientists had received from their article manuscripts submitted to scientific peer-reviewed journals. Internationally research on peer review has concentrated more on medical and natural sciences but less on social, behavioural or human sciences. Research on peer-reviewers, editors and editorial teams and bibliometric analyses dominates the field but the voice of authors is not much present as is in this research.

The research questions (RQ) were as follows: 1) What factors can be found from authors’ experiences concerning the last five years of publishing? 2) What kinds of relationships are there between the factors and authors’ background variables? A 30-item measurement tool was designed for the first RQ. Empirical data were gathered by means of online anonymous survey in the spring 2017. 121 authors completed the questionnaire. 67 % of respondents were female and the mean of their academic work experience was 18 years. The variation of the published articles was 3–227 articles. Several statistical analyses were administered to the data (factor analysis, correlation coefficients, t-tests, one-way Anova).

4. Four factors were extracted from the original items (item communalities .33 - .76, model explained 57 % of the variance) as follows: F1 Developmental appreciative feedback, F2 Negative power-based feedback, F3 Reviewer’s insufficient expertise, one-sided feedback, and F4 Developmental supplementary feedback. Developmentally oriented feedback dominated educational authors’ experiences although 9–16 percentages of respondents reported that they had noticed often or quite often also exercise of power or too critical and one-sided feedback (F3) which did not ensure them of reviewer’s true expertise.

According to statistical analyses where the sums of items representing four factors were as tested variables, male authors reported more than females about negative power-related feedback (F2). Postdoctoral researchers had received more than any other group developmental supplementary feedback. Experiences of developmental appreciative feedback were more typical among the authors 1) who had high expectations on their own publishing activity, 2) who were very experienced in publishing and 3) whose experiences of peer review covering their whole publishing career were positive. Academic work years and experience as peer reviewer did not indicate any statistically significant differences.

5. There seem to be little evidence of Nordic educational authors’ experiences of peer-review of journal articles although the pressures on academic publishing are strong.
Nurturing global consciousness through internationalization in teacher education

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The topic of this article is nurturing global consciousness through internationalization in teacher education. As a teacher educator, I have been supervising 29 student teachers in their three-month practice in Namibia and Uganda over a four-year period. Here I have focused on the students’ experience according to global consciousness with a primary focus towards their global sensitivity. The purpose of this article is threefold. The first purpose is to describe the nuances of global consciousness and the connection between the three sub-areas: global sensitivity, global understanding and global self-representation. In this article, the concept global consciousness will be highlighted as an intersubjective process. This means that the term will appear as an educational-psychological value and category more than a political-geographical term. Being global conscious is about being sensitive, registering and having an understanding of events both inside and outside ourselves.

The two concepts intersubjectivity and attunement will provide a meaningful contribution in the definition of global consciousness. Secondly, I will argue that internationalization, as a 3-month long practice abroad in itself, is not sufficient to nurture global consciousness. Thirdly, I will describe a pedagogical approach to nurture teacher student’s global consciousness through a set of five different tasks. The research question for this article is: How can teacher education contribute in nurturing student teacher’s global consciousness through counselling and practice abroad?

Methodologically the study is grounded in a phenomenological tradition. In the analysis of the material, I have had a primary focus at the students' experiences concentrated toward the concept “global consciousness” and the sub-areas mentioned above.

The conclusion of this study shows that when students accomplish their practice in countries in the global south, they experiences significant and composite emotional that require pedagogical support both before, during and after the students' international practice. Overall, all students have expressed the impression that their experiences from the workshop as a guiding method has strengthened their global consciousness. Based on this study, I will argue that students who accomplish their internationalization through practice in countries in the global south need even closer support than those who take their practiceperiod in their own country. This study has shown that nurturing the student’s global consciousness requires that the students are invited to get in touch with their intersubjective experiences and their attunement.
“They shouldn’t work all by themselves!” Supervisors’ understandings of student independence in undergraduate projects

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That independence is a concept of scholarly interest in relation to higher education, is evident within the research field on independent learning, as well as in research on supervision within higher education (eg Broad 2006; Cukurova et al 2017; Gurr 2010; Lau 2017; Lee 2008). That it also in other ways constitutes a significant concept within the academic context, is evident for instance in how independence in the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance is described as one of the main goals of higher education (Swedish Council for Higher Education 1993).

At the same time, independence is characterized by a certain conceptual ambiguity, and, consequently, tends to be understood differently in different academic contexts, both nationally, internationally and interdisciplinary. This may pose a problem not least in relation to the supervision of undergraduate projects. In this paper we examine how supervisors understand the concept independence and how their understandings might influence their attitude to and practice of supervision of undergraduate projects. The analysis is based on focus group interviews with supervisors from two education programs, teacher education and journalism, in two countries, Sweden and Russia.

In our findings we highlight and discuss several understandings of independence that were evident in our material, and in which phases of the undergraduate project these were regarded to be most significant. The theoretical framework for the paper connects to how a number of concepts that are central within higher education, such as criticality/critical thinking, learner autonomy and independent learning, tend to be characterized by conceptual ambiguity (cf Borg and Al-Busaidi 2012; Gardner 2007; Moore 2011). Using Wittgenstein’s ideas on family resemblances, we discuss how the concept independence may be understood in relation to such associated concepts (Wittgenstein 1958).

The paper is of relevance to Nordic educational research through its focus on a concept that is rarely discussed and defined, even though it is most significant within higher education and for supervisors’ attitudes and didactic choices.

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Lau, Ken. 2017. "The most important thing is to learn the way to learn: evaluating the effectiveness of independent learning by perceptual changes." Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education 42(3):415-30.
Educational opportunities and challenges for immigrant students in three Icelandic universities: The issue of teaching methods

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Research topic/aim:
Access and support in higher education is crucial in counteracting marginalization and isolation of immigrants and encouraging their active participation in society (Geiger & Lund, 2010; Nordisk Ministerråd, 2004; Ragnarsdóttir, 2010). The increased number of immigrants in tertiary education in Iceland requires raising awareness among university authorities, teachers and campus communities of potential language difficulties, cultural precepts and social marginalization of immigrant students (Anderson, 2008; Gundara, 2000; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The aim of the paper is to explore educational opportunities and challenges that immigrant students face in relation to teaching methods at the three Icelandic universities.

Theoretical framework:
The paper uses the theoretical lens of critical multicultural studies (Parekh, 2006) and culturally responsive adult education (Guy, 1999). Further, the paper builds on the ideas of cooperative learning (Dewey, 2009; Johnson & Johnson, 2009), its advantages and limitations (Sharan, 2010), as well as on diverse methods of assessment for adult learners, including self- and peer-assessment (Spiller, 2016). Previous studies show that positive atmosphere in the classroom (Boesch, 2014), the acknowledgment and use of immigrant students’ background in teaching (Brookfield, 1995), maintaining high expectations toward them (Swaminathan & Alfred, 2003) as well as partnerships between teachers and students (Hill, 2014) are important for immigrant students’ learning and empowerment.

Methodological design:
Qualitative methods were used in the study. Data collection included seven focus group interviews (Morgan, 1997) and semi-structured in-depth interviews (Flick, 2009; Kvale, 1996) with 35 individual students. The participants were immigrants who at the time of the study attended or had dropped out of three selected universities in Iceland. The analytical process took place simultaneously throughout the research period and thematic analysis was used to synthesize main findings (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Conclusions/findings:
Preliminary findings indicate positive experiences of immigrant students despite the various challenges they face, related to languages, cultures and diverse expectations towards university education. Teachers are considered accessible and enthusiastic about teaching. Participants stress the importance of a learning environment that is based on flexible teaching methods and the use of previous experiences, as well as on fair assessment. Most challenges relate to group work and while it is generally considered to be an effective way of teaching, it is important that its characteristics and aims are well explained and the process itself and evaluation structured, because otherwise it may be perceived as unclear and unfair by immigrant students.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
This paper presents findings from the project Educational aspirations, opportunities and challenges for immigrants in university education in Iceland (2016-2018) funded by the Icelandic Research Fund where interviews with staff members, including counsellors and teachers were conducted in addition to interviews with the students and policies were analysed. As student groups in universities are becoming increasingly diverse with growing number of immigrants in the Nordic countries, the project is highly relevant for Nordic educational research. The project provides an input into the discussion on opportunities and challenges faced by immigrants in tertiary education.
**Educational opportunities and challenges for immigrant students in three Icelandic Universities: The importance of networking and the challenges of being alone**

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Today’s society is inevitably becoming more diverse. With the growing numbers of immigrants and refugees in Nordic countries it has become clear that not only economic and cultural issues need to be considered, but also education and social issues. Research has shown that some immigrant students have difficulties in establishing networks with local students (Fischer, 2012; Van Niekerk, 2012). Immigrant students find it easier to build trusting relationships within their own cultural groups (Albrecht & Ko, 2017; Verbera, 2015)

This paper derives from the research project Educational aspirations, opportunities and challenges for immigrants in University education in Iceland (2016-2018) funded by the Icelandic Research Fund. The major purpose of this paper is to examine how networking affects immigrant university students in Iceland in their quest to overcome some of the academic and social barriers they face.

The theoretical background for this study is based on social capital network theorizing, i.e. the range of resources that exist in family relations and in community organizations that are useful for the cognitive and social development of a child or young people (Coleman,1988). Coleman (1988) and Bourdieu (1986) agree that the value of social capital exists in relationships and ties between individuals. According to Reeder (2007), social capital refers to “social networks, norms, and sanctions that facilitate cooperative action among individuals and communities”. Data was collected in three Icelandic universities in focus groups and interviews with individuals with an immigrant background. Seven focus groups were created with four to five participants in each group (Morgan, 1997). Semi-structured in-depth interviews with 35 immigrant students were also conducted (Flick, 2009; Kvale, 1996).

The main findings of the study indicate that immigrant students receive support from multiple resources including their nuclear and extended family, friends and teachers. Furthermore, the participants claim that universities can provide space to increase their social network. Students stress the importance of friendships when it comes to practical issues concerning their studies. They tend to rely on Icelandic-speaking peers for information which they might otherwise have missed due to language-related difficulties. However, other participants express difficulties in making friends with the local students, which consequently compels them to connect more with peers who share similar linguistic and cultural barriers. The difficulties in establishing a strong social network was often due to lack of knowledge in Icelandic language and cultural differences. The interviews also reveal that there is an interest in peer support programmes which provide assistance and make the adaptation process easier. Their concern, however, is that the current programme is primarily designed for exchange students who have different circumstances than immigrant students.

The presentation concludes with discussions about the increasing need for universities in Iceland to strengthen their support environment to better ensure that students who come from other countries and cultures are able to contribute effectively and bridge and bond with their new peers.
This symposium presents empirical studies of student-centered learning and teaching practices, together with the way they are envisioned, employed and supported in higher education in two Nordic countries. The aim of the symposium is to identify how student-centered learning and related teaching practices are designed and employed in order to foster productive learning.

Changing societal demands and conditions for higher education are challenging conventional teaching and learning in this sector. As teaching and learning activities in the past were guided by clearly defined knowledge, structured curricula and standard teaching strategies, the situation today is marked by increasing complexity with rapidly changing knowledge, varied institutional arrangements, new digital tools and more diverse student populations, which necessitate more tailored pedagogical approaches. In this vein, student-centered learning (Hannafin, 2012) has been proposed as a pedagogical approach in response to these challenges, assuming that student-centered activities enhance learning through engagement and participation.

Studies have shown that participation and engagement can be beneficial but also that it places more responsibility on students to self-manage their learning; and on teachers and educational institutions to organize and support such educational arrangements to ensure their quality (see Damşa et al., 2015 for a review). Furthermore, the processes of planning, teaching, learning, and assessment appear strongly interrelated; underlining the importance of internal coherence between these elements (Biggs & Tang, 2011). These findings bring about the question of how the above recommendations are played out in HE teaching and learning practices and what challenges that follow from their implementation. Hence, we need to learn more about how student-centred learning and teaching approaches are enacted and shaped to ensure productive learning and how they are institutionally supported.

This symposium is based on empirical work conducted in a large research project that examined two Nordic higher education systems. It presents an examination and discussion of how student-centered teaching and learning practices are organized, enacted and perceived in different higher education domains and program contexts, with an eye on how the quality of these practices can be enhanced. In addition to shedding light on practices with potential to construe quality, the symposium provides an illustration of research methodologies applied to examine teaching and learning practices in newly emerging contexts. The presented studies also identify and describe examples of good practice with regard to student-cantered learning design, which can inform teachers, teaching communities and institutions in Nordic higher education.

References:


The aim of this study is to investigate how portfolio assessment is designed and implemented in an introductory course in biology, and how the teacher and students experience this implementation. Since the Norwegian higher education quality reform, an increasing number of course designs make use of so-called ‘disciplinary course work portfolios’ (Dysthe & Engelsen, 2011). Their main purpose is to ensure the students’ mastery of the disciplinary content through several written assignments that cover central topics of the subject. While some studies have addressed portfolio assessment from a conceptual perspective (Habib & Wittek, 2007), only little empirical research exists on its design and implementation.

The study is based on a case study of a biology course at a Norwegian university that employs a disciplinary course work portfolio design. The dataset was collected as part of the wider QNHE project and comprises pre and post-course interviews with the teacher, post-course interviews with the students and observational data of different course activities. The analysis of the teacher interviews employs an adapted version of the Assessment Design Decision Framework (Bearman et al., 2016), to identify instances before and during the course in which the teacher decided how to organize content and timing of the portfolio elements and related course activities. The post-course interviews reveal how these decisions were implemented and experienced. Observational data support the findings emerging from the interview analysis.

Preliminary findings show that envisioned learning outcomes of the overall course were translated into learning outcomes for individual portfolio elements. The teacher’s decisions were influenced by both internal (e.g. pedagogical and disciplinary expertise) and external factors (e.g. institutional regulations, student characteristics). The implementation of design decisions emerged as a shared achievement between main teacher, co-teachers and students. Student and teacher experiences of the implementation differed in several points and were related to previous pedagogical experiences. Challenges emerged in cases where the assessment criteria of portfolio elements were informed by contradicting learning outcomes, and students struggled to identify the underlying reasons for certain design decisions made by the teacher.

The study’s relevance lies in revealing opportunities and challenges of portfolio assessment designs and what teachers need to keep in mind when designing and implementing a course. This is especially relevant for the Nordic higher education context, where student-centered approaches like portfolio assessment designs are steadily gaining in importance.

References:
Simulation in nursing - Enhancing quality through technological training environments

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This study presents a broad account of how technological innovations of high fidelity simulations affect students’ experiences in practical nursing during on-campus training and how they perceive quality of this training. Further the paper investigates how simulations assist nursing students in reducing the gap between theory and practice under safe conditions. The aim of the study is to examine how digital simulation as a student-centered learning activity can contribute quality in teaching and learning.

Simulation prepares students for real life by letting them practice human patient simulation, as well as it is easy to adjust the level of difficulties when letting students practice vital procedures (Tosterud, 2015). Health simulations in safe environments thereby offer students an unique opportunity to practice skills and build self-efficacy without risking human injury or distress (Rooney, Hopwood, Boud, & Kelly, 2015). In addition, simulation and the use of manikins can demonstrate the therapeutic value of nursing (Thidemann & Söderhamn, 2013). After the activity follows debriefing that gives students the opportunity to go through their actions, reflect, and learn from eventual mistakes (Tosterud, 2015).

This study is an explorative case study, which consist of six interviews and two observations in the simulation lab. Interviews were conducted individually and in groups with students, teacher, study program leaders and supervisors as well as observations of simulation activities including debriefing. Analysis and coding of transcripts and observations has been performed by using NVIVO 10. All the data were first independently reviewed (video, audio and field notes), and then pedagogically interesting moments and passages were identified. These interesting passages made a structure for further analyses and final themes and categories were created based on the coding process.

The study displays findings of broad relevance for the quality of nurse education in the Nordic space. Simulation offers a wide range of possibilities and pedagogical intentions and gives implications that simulation, as a method is useful for practicing procedures ahead of real life practice. There is an agreement from the informants that simulation is more a theoretical method for learning and not a substitute of real life experiences. Simulations make students more confident in procedures and help secure that they learn the same. In spite of the opportunities to practice and gain more self-efficacy, students show fear of failing and emphasized the need for close and supportive care from their supervisors. This leaves us with implications pointing towards the importance of real life experiences and that supervisors and teachers are present and stay close to the students, factors that are hardly replaceable by technology.

References:
Contributor 3
Participant or observer in an online MBA?

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Online studies that are combined with working life in different ways have increased in numbers in higher education over the past twenty years. Empirical studies show that that the way technology is used to facilitate student participation is crucial. This paper aims to generate knowledge of how technology supports learning in an online experience-based master's program in Economics and Management (MBA) in Norway. We studied how one particular MBA course is adapted to the specific target group, when it comes to technological, pedagogical and administrative aspects, with a special look at how such technology-supported study format activates students in their learning process (Arduser 2016) of the

Inspired by Skjervheim (1996) and Hrastinski (2009) our assumption is that online students often balance between being an participant or an observer in such studies, and therefore we ask the following question: How is technology used to facilitate students learning and participation in an online MBA program? We are particularly interested in how the facilitation of the students' learning process is balanced between work, university and the digital content presented (Asterhan 2010, Busing & Poloccsay 2016).

In order to investigate the role of technology and professional organization for student activity in this particular online master, we draw on the following empirical data sources: pre- and post interview with teachers in the course, group interview with involved students, and observation data of various course activities and forms of online teaching. In addition, our analyses build on a review of relevant documents such as study plan, evaluation reports and available study material. The study shows that the tension between being an online participant and observer offers a number of challenges for students' learning. These challenges go beyond classical notions of being a student and teacher. Student participation, which in this study context involves interaction between several arenas, therefore, reveals a number of contradictions between the teacher's intentions and how the students are actively involved. The findings reveal challenges that the UH sector needs to take into account in the development of online studies, both in terms of audience, format and use of technology when organizing participation and student activity in online experience based study programs.

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Exploring how law students’ regulation of learning is related to their experiences of the teaching-learning environment

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This study aims to gain a better understanding how law students’ regulation of learning is related to their experiences of the teaching-learning environment. In addition, this study aims to identify the students groups with different regulation of learning among law students, and explores whether these student groups differ in terms of the perceptions of TLE. Such insights provide valuable information for the quality enhancement in teaching and learning.

Regulation of learning have been shown to be an essential factor for university students in their study progress. Surprisingly, little is known about how these aspects are related to students’ perception of the teaching-learning environment (TLE). Students do not experience the same teaching and learning environment in the same way. According to previous studies, students’ experiences of the TLE greatly influence their studying and, thus, have been found to affect the quality of students’ learning outcomes (e.g., Asikainen et al., 2014; Haarala-Muhonen et al., 2011).

The 3 ECTS research method course in Law is part of a master’s degree program in a large Finnish research-intensive university. The course provided students a chance to deepen their understanding of legal methodology. A total of 103 law students filled in a questionnaire including scales measuring regulation of learning and the perceptions of TLE at the end of the course. Statistical analyses (e.g. correlational analyses, multiple regression, ANOVA) were used to explore the interrelations between the observed variables.

The results revealed that there was a positive inter-correlation between the scales measuring perception of TLA. The correlational analysis further demonstrated positive correlation between the scales measuring self-regulation and external regulation and scales measuring perception of TLE. The scales measuring perception of TLE correlated negatively with lack of regulation. Three student groups of self- and external regulation and lack of regulation were identified. Significant differences in perception of TLE within the groups were found. Explanations for the differences between groups will be discussed in detail.

The findings will help teachers, teaching communities and institutions in Nordic higher education to understand better differences between students’ achievement, as well as develop pedagogical practices to enhance higher education students’ regulation of learning. This study also helps us in designing teaching-learning environments that meet more appropriately the varied needs of heterogeneous student population.

References:
Student-centered learning in Norwegian and Finnish higher education – a research based perspective to quality

Contributor 1
Study program leadership: a matter of organization?

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In Norwegian policy debates of higher education, educational leadership is in policy debates often emphasized as a means to facilitate better quality. The leadership of study programs in Norwegian higher education has been characterized as weak, thus being perceived as a challenge that needs to be addressed (see, e.g. the new White Paper on quality that was launched in 2017, Meld. St. 16, (2016-2017)). Yet, there has been comparatively limited information about study program leadership in the Norwegian context.

In this contribution, study program leaders are defined as those with a formal responsibility for a bachelor or a master program. It is study programme leaders who have an important function in coordinating teaching and learning processes within study programme, acting as the connection point between micro processes of teaching and learning, and their wider embeddedness in higher education organizations. In this manner, they have an important function in deciding what kind of measures should be adopted for improving quality in a specific study programme. This contribution addresses this issue by examining the factors that condition how study program leaders conduct their job and their organizational embedding, not least concerning personnel and economic issues and how organizational coordination takes place. The survey is part of the project “Quality of Norwegian Higher Education”, and the empirical data that forms the basis for this discussion is derived from a large quantitative survey targeting study program leaders (N=551) at 33 Norwegian universities and colleges (see, Aamodt et al., 2016) with an explicit focus on their role in quality enhancement practices, and a small number of in-depth interviews with selected study program leaders enabling a further elaboration of key findings from the quantitative survey.

The main argument in this contribution is that the ways in which academic and administrative responsibilities are distributed impact the way study program leadership is conducted, and create several tensions, not least with respect to how academic and administrative concerns are balanced in study program organization and delivery. This suggests that when discussing specific processes of teaching and learning on a micro level, it is also important to keep in mind the organizational setting in which they are embedded in (Damša et al., 2015). In the conclusion, it is argued that study program leadership is a matter or organization and suggestions are made for available options for future experimentation.

References:
Elements of study program plans – organising for alignment?

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Recent quality developments in higher education in Norway, as in other countries, have emphasised student centered teaching paralleled with a growing learning outcomes orientation in curriculum development (Sweetman, 2017). Meyers and Nulty note that: “High quality learning outcomes should result from the interplay between students’ learning efforts, the curricula and the teaching methods used” (2009, p. 3). Yet, a recent study on programme plans in England and Norway have noted too much emphasis on singular elements in curriculum research, such as bullet point learning outcomes analysed in isolation from other curriculum elements that may lead to oversimplification of the complexity of the functioning of study programme plans meant to inform planning of education (Prøitz, Havnes; Briggs & Scott, 2017). Consequently, a broader remit for a discussion of elements of study program plans and the ideas of organizing for alignment seem appropriate. The study is anchored in well-known concepts of curriculum alignment (Biggs & Tang, 1999), curriculum coherence (Muller, 2009) and curriculum congruence (Ashwin et al., 2015).

The aim of this paper is to two-fold: 1) to present an analysis of study programme plans as a tool for curriculum planning and 2) to discuss the functioning of plans for alignment of teaching and learning in higher education. The study draws on an analysis of qualitative data material from 4 study programs in Norway and combines document analysis of study program plans with interviews with study program managers. Combining document and interview material allows for comparison of various ways of organising elements in program plans for the planning of teaching expressed in curriculum documents and the experiences of such efforts described in interviews with study programme managers.

Preliminary findings indicate variations, although surface resemblance, in how main elements of plans are emphasized and considered to be of importance among informants. The study is expected to contribute to a broadened understanding of the functioning of programme plans in education planning valuable to further curriculum development in higher education.

References:
Contributor 3
Exploring plenary sessions and their potentialities for student learning

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The movement of student centered learning has, since the 1970s, encouraged teachers to step off the lecture treadmill by providing students the opportunity to explore their own interests through active engagement (Northedge, 2003). However, plenary sessions are still an important part of teaching in higher education. Based on two empirical cases from a large project, we will explore 1) what content the plenary sessions have and what role they play as part of the study design as a whole, 2) what types of student engagement they apply in plenary lectures and 3) what potentiality such activities can have for student learning.

Our analytical approach is based on a dialogical perspective, where learning is defined as a process of exploring actions bridging different signs, symbols, and experiences into new senses of meaning (Dreier, 1999). In addition, the concept of topic space is applied to illustrate how cohesive devices, such as repetition of key words and semantic associations of utterances, can create a common focus on learning (Linell & Korolija, 1997).

Empirically the chapter draws on two case studies. Case A is selected from a Bachelor Program in organization and management. This course is based on group work with cases and role play, including a final report containing these assignments in a submitted final repost. In addition to group work, there are planned learning activities organized as plenary sessions with specific focus on facilitating student group activities. Case B is a course in a five-year Master Program in Law. The students in this case encounter case-based approaches to learning and practical court room simulations concerning how to act and operate within criminal law practices. In this case we display how students and teachers engage in plenary feedback sessions going through and providing feedback on particular practical assignments in the course.

By analyzing selected episodes in-depth from these two cases, we identified the content of the plenary sessions offered by two mentioned different Nordic institutions for Higher education. Preliminary findings suggest that students level of participation varies between presences according to the minimal requirement to students that take actively part in all plenary activities and that the possibility for active engagement inspire them to prepare themselves for the plenary sessions. Based on our theoretical approach, we argue that the latter group of students benefit from the learning potential offered in the plenary sections as they engage in actions of bridging different signs, symbols, and experiences into new senses of meaning.

References:
Space and Spatiality in Educational Research: A Review of Articles in International Journals

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There has been an increasing interest in space and spatiality among educational researchers the last two decades. This is part of a broader ‘spatial turn’ in social sciences. However, in relation to other disciplines in social sciences, educationalists have been slower to realize the significance of space. A general view is that space/spatiality is ‘under-examined’ and ‘under-theorized’ in educational research (Gulson & Symes 2007:100).

As part of a larger project, the aim of this paper is to analyze how space/space analysis is manifested in educational research with focus on research in sociology of education: RQ1: To what extent are spatial perspectives present and applied in educational research studies? RQ2: How has space been conceptualized and theorized? RQ3: What spatial dimensions (Lefebvre 1991) have been in focus? RQ4: What issues do the applied spatial perspective/-s give rise to?

The project will focus on the time period 1970-today (to include research before and after the ‘spatial turn’ in social sciences). However, in this paper, the analysis is based on articles published 2014-2017 in five international journals selected on basis of being based in Europe, and covering a wide range of research in sociology of education. Within the individual journals the top ten articles when searching for the terms “space” and/or “place” were selected for analysis (N=50).

Preliminary results indicate that researchers in sociology of education deal with space/spatial theory in various ways. There are studies based on theoretically grounded conceptual analyses (often based on a relational understanding of space), but also studies that un-problematically apply a ‘spatial perspective’; where ‘space’ is used rather metaphorically, and where the spatial analysis is missing. When including all studies referring to ‘space’, ‘spatiality’ and ‘place’, spatial analyses and perspectives turn out as a widespread phenomenon in sociology of education. However, when excluding studies where space is used un-reflected, spatial analyses are not as common as it seems at first glance. The practice level and politics of education are the spatial dimensions that are given the most attention, while there are fewer studies dealing with the lived dimensions.

Drawing on the analysis, the paper discusses the implications of the ‘spatial turn’ in educational research: What are the contributions and problems with an emphasis on space and spatiality in educational research?

The paper contributes to knowledge about space and spatiality which is a growing interest among Nordic educational researchers (e.g. From & Sahlström 2016), and where we find influential ‘pioneers’ such as Gordon et al (2000) and Paulgaard (2002).

References:
Securing Organizational Survival – a historical inquiry into the configurations and positions of the OECD’s work in education in the 1960s

Ydesen, Christian
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As a result of its country reviews, international assessment testing programmes and re-ports, the OECD has risen to prominence as one of the most powerful International Organi-zations (IOs) in the shaping of a global education space. But while most research recognis-es the supremacy of the OECD as an education policy trendsetter, little effort has been put into understanding the history and events that brought the OECD to this important policy mediator role.

The article takes a historical perspective to analyse the configurations and positions of OECD’s work in education in the first decade of the organisation’s existence; the 1960s. Our focus is on the first OECD conference on education held in Washington in 1961, the compre-hensive programme for Educational Investment and Planning (EIP) launched in 1962, and the accords made with UNESCO; a competing organisation in terms of defining education internationally. The 1960s is an interesting object of analysis in terms of understanding the cradle of what has been termed the ‘Global Testing Culture’ because it is here that we find the reverberations of the shock of the Soviet launch of the Sputnik satellite in 1957, which carried immense importance in terms of how education planning in the Western world was construed. The 1960s is also the decade which saw the transition from the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) to the OECD and the establishment of a sub-division dedicated to work in education, namely the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). In examining the historical junctures of the OECD in education in the 1960s, the article will ask the following questions: How did the OECD operate in the field of education? How did the OECD seek to secure its work in education? And to what extent did the OECD pursue a strategy of making impact?
What is the Grundtvigian pedagogical heritage in Swedish folk high schools?

Paldanius, Sam
Örebro Universitet

This paper concerns the development of a tradition in Swedish folk high schools. In Denmark, N. F. S. Grundtvig’s ideas about folk high schools consecrated into the first functional school at 1844. Soon after a number of schools opened and spread to Norway, Finland, Sweden and Germany. Many of the ideas in the Danish folk high schools originated with Grundtvig’s vision and were interpreted and put to use by local teachers. In such a way the pedagogy to some part became defined by the church tradition. Sweden followed another path and came to put greater emphasis on local needs and resources, universities, science and book reading. Basically mixing some of the distinctions Grundtvig had set out. In 1868 the first tree schools in Sweden opened. Already from the beginning the Swedish schools made a distinction towards the Danish folk high schools. One area of difference between the Danish and Swedish schools was pedagogy or didactics. In this paper I will investigate how the notion of pedagogy/didactics in the Swedish folk high school context has evolved and changed over time in.

The analytical twist contributing to the results is that this reading will be performed with a Grundtvigian perspective of pedagogy. The perspective is constructed by historical didactical concepts in writings on Grundtvig’s ideas. By using such a perspective I hope to outline what traces and parts of the Swedish texts on folk high school didactics display similarities and differences to the Grundtvigian didactical concepts. The results presented in the paper are based on a reading of a selection of texts about the folk high schools in Sweden from 1868 up to present time. The main criteria for selecting texts was words like pedagogy, didactics, teachers, pupils, participants in the content (not only headlines).

The results show that the picture is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand on a conceptual and practical level it is clear that the Grundvigian heritage has always been a part of the Swedish folk high schools but it is also clear that much effort has been spent on deliberately trying to redefine the Grundtvigian influence to something more appropriate for Swedish folk high schools.
Compulsory school attendance as a child welfare initiative. About the socio-political function of education legislation with respect to vulnerable children in Norway

Kvam, Vegard
Universitetet i Bergen, Institutt for pedagogikk

The history of Scandinavian social welfare services is a well-established field of research. Numerous studies have examined the principles and consequences of poor laws and criminal legislation with respect to various social groups, the emergence of child-rescue institutions and their activities. The socio-political function of education legislation has however received little investigative attention. This article discusses the relationship between child welfare, the parental prerogative and compulsory school attendance with respect to vulnerable children in Norway 1814–1900. Questions concerning the parental prerogative and child welfare arose within the school sector from the debate concerning compulsory school attendance specifically for neglected, poor and ‘abnormal’ children. The issue prompted arguments for family intervention and the forceful relocation of children to new families/institution that could cater better for their education. At the same time, the authorities sought to protect the parental prerogative. This article argues that compulsory school attendance represents a link between the fields of socio-politics and the history of education, which in turn raises fundamental questions about the family as society’s primary institution for the provision of children’s education.

This article is based on empirical analyses of preparatory legislative works of an academic and political nature, from the period up to and including the passing of the Education Acts of 1816, 1827, 1848, 1860 and 1889. Primary sources relating to education policy are seen in connection with poor laws, criminal legislation and the Penal Code, and are further linked to the findings of earlier research. Debate arose about the treatment of children who were neglected, poor, blind, deaf and dumb or ‘feeble-minded’ partly because the law, and the social debate in general, referred to children and young people who dropped out of school and society as a single group, and partly because the child welfare measures enshrined in the education legislation were directed towards these groups.

By way of an introduction, general principles will be clarified relating to the relationship between compulsory school attendance, compulsory education and the parental prerogative in the 19th century. From this follows a discussion of the relevant principles at work in cases that involved children considered to be neglected by their parents and in cases that involved children who were burdened with particularly significant moral challenges. I will then examine the relationship between poverty as a social challenge and compulsory school attendance for vulnerable children in general, before I finally go on to discuss the relationship between compulsory school attendance, the parental prerogative and social welfare services aimed at children labelled as blind, deaf and dumb, or ‘feeble-minded’. On the basis of the overall presentation I draw conclusions about the socio-political function of education law in the 19th century.

Keywords: child welfare, the parental prerogative, common schools, compulsory school attendance, home schooling, special education pedagogy.
NETWORK 12

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
Information Processing and the C-SIP (Cooper Screening of Information Processing)

Cooper, Richard  
_Harcum College, USA_

The presenter of the poster session will illustrate and explain the modified theoretical framework of Information Processing that the presenter uses to help individuals understand how they think and learn differently. The poster will show the various thought processes in this modified model. The model includes all five senses showing how variations in taste and smell, although not the important in most classrooms, may make an enormous difference in employment and social situations. It also includes attention, either/or thinking, organization and sequencing. The poster will illustrate how perception, processing and communication are distributed in the population.

If the program committee accepts the presenter’s paper on information processing, the members should consider this poster session to further explain the work he has done for the last 40 years. The C-SIP, referred to in the paper session, is based on the presenter’s model of information processing that comes from his personal and professional experience working with thousands of individuals ranging in age from 4 to 80. A copy of the C-SIP is available for download at the website www.learningdifferences.com

In the poster session the presenter will explain how the theoretical model is used and how the screening instrument is related to the model. The C-Sip is used in many adult education program in the USA. It is available as a free download on the web site. It is easy to used and understand and also available in Spanish.

NERA networks that this projects applies to are Inclusive Education and Higher Education.
Shyness in Norwegian Elementary Schools – Leaders in Action

Solberg, Stine
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Providing shy students with an inclusive and safe school environment is pertinent in order to help them socially and academically. The current study is part of a project at the Department of Special Needs Education; “Supporting Shy Students – A National Study of Teaching Practices” funded by the Research Council of Norway. The aim of the larger study is to identify beneficial pedagogical actions that teachers take towards shy students. Shy children’s behavior is characterized by less verbal activity, avoidance of social and novel situations, anxiousness and insecurity. They are at risk of experiencing internalizing problems, such as, depression or anxiety. Shy students can serve as an example of a behavior that lies below the threshold for special needs education. Including these children in the general classroom activities is crucial. Initial data-analysis from the larger project reveals that teachers who are successful with shy children respond very sensitively to them. However, the fundamental aspects of leadership have to be taken into account as research strongly indicates school leadership as important, both as an indirect facilitator for student’s learning, inclusion and development, and for teachers’ development and professional agency. In this study, I am exploring how school leaders in Norwegian elementary schools support teachers’ work with children who are perceived as shy, and their motives.

This qualitative study is based in a cultural-historical approach that recognizes how society, institutions and persons within institutions mutually interact and affect each other. The data collection consists of individual in-depth semi-structured interviews with school leaders and teachers within the same school (e.g. principal, dean, social teacher). Schools are recruited based on teacher recommendations from the larger study. A group conversation with all informants’ is also conducted. In the analysis, attention is drawn towards motivation, in actions, in activities in institutional practices. Consequently, I can identify how and why school leaders interpret and support teachers in their work with shy children.

The findings from the two of the three case study schools indicate that school leaders have a multitude of approaches to facilitate teachers work; from providing teachers with arenas for discussing shy students, to specific approaches such as allocating resources, recognizing the need for outside help, and working relationally with teachers and reminding them of their competencies. There is a question whether these actions are used towards shy children specifically or generally towards children displaying psychosocial difficulties. There is also an expressed need for more knowledge and ability to recognize these students. Also, school leaders are reliant upon teachers to identify these students.

An understanding of the actions school leaders take with regards to shy students and their teachers can help reveal a) the underlying logic of school leaders’ activities and thereby help other schools evaluate strategies they are using b) provide concrete insights on potential resources when working on a complex issue. This study can offer a view on what matters to school professionals, and hence be of value to local and Nordic authorities regarding what support is needed in school’s working with shy students.
Parent guidance in cases of selective mutism

Omdal, Heidi
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Research topic:
Children with selective mutism (SM) constantly avoid speaking in specific social situations. Often, they remain silent at school, while speaking normally to parents and siblings at home (APA, 2013). SM interferes with learning and social communication and gets more and more ingrained the longer it lasts (Omdal, 2007). Early intervention in mainstream schools and kindergartens, and close cooperation with parents is crucial to prevent serious mental health problems in these children (Oerbeck et al., 2014; Omdal, 2016). I started a parent group with nine SM families in 2017, holding six meetings where parents exchanged experiences and received guidance from the researcher. During two weekends, the children and their parents gathered at the researcher’s home and went on trips in the wood and by the sea focusing on non-verbal activities. I also visited most of the children at school.

Theoretical framework:
My previous research suggest that SM could be seen as a specific phobia of expressive speech (Omdal & Galloway, 2008). Other people’s expectations decided whether or not the child started to speak. Egan’s problem-solving model (Egan, 2014) was used in the parent guidance, highlighting that parents needed to take the lead in their child’s change process.

Methodological design:
Qualitative observations from the weekends with the families, and focus group-interviews during guidance sessions in the parent group formed the data base of the project. Content analysis (Patton, 2002) was used to analyze the data. Common themes from observations and interviews across cases were analyzed in NVivo (Richards, 2002).

Expected results:
A common theme among the families was how to find the right balance between supporting and challenging the SM child in communication with others. How to promote greater independence in the parent-child-relationship was the main question from the project. Practical implications for parent-teacher-cooperation is highlighted.

References:
Navigating Sweden’s Parental Choice Education System: A Study of Asylum-Seeking Parents

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Stockholm University

Research Aim:
The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of asylum-seeking parents within the urban Swedish school choice system. The thematic analysis of qualitative interviews explored the information that was available to these parents towards school enrolment and selection.

Theoretical Framework:
The modern Swedish education system was reformed in the 1970s creating what would be known as the ‘Swedish Model’. This education system was built on the concept of plurality attempting to promote equity through shared experience while supporting equity creating initiatives. Yet, over the past 50 years Sweden’s education system has undergone a unique shift from a centralized to a decentralized parental-choice model. Proponents of this choice model argue that the values of plural education were maintained across this decentralizing shift in policy. Research has begun to show that these values are not being upheld. Marginalized groups, such as asylum-seekers, face a number of barriers in accessing the choice model. Most notably, the degree of access to complete and accurate information towards school choice and the ability to overcome societal barriers can limit the breadth of schools available for enrolment.

Methodological Design:
In this qualitative study, seven asylum-seeking parents were asked to describe their experiences entering their children into the Swedish compulsory school system. Semi-structured interviews explored the barriers, information and strategies each parent had for enrolment and school choice. As grounded theory was used, contextual research and the conduction of interviews occurred concurrently.

Findings:
Thematic analysis found that parents had insufficient information for school choice, few strategies to find new information and faced a number of barriers to accessing schools. These results suggest that parents relied on word of mouth for information and the need to actively search for information which meant motivated parents with formal education had more success enrolling their children into school. Those with little or no formal education had difficulty navigating the bureaucratic system. Adding to this, financial and locational barriers eliminated a majority of schools from consideration. The implication of these findings are that these asylum-seekers did not have the sufficient support, knowledge or ability to participate in school choice.

Relevance to Nordic Educational Research:
As high levels of forced migration continue to challenge Europe, countries like Sweden are attempting to incorporate asylum-seekers into its education system. Yet, significant residential segregation appears to be further exacerbated by a school system that relies on cultural capital in the form of information and existing barriers to school choice. Due to the recency of the migration crisis in Europe and the unique nature of Sweden’s education system there is a strong need for further research. A deeper understanding of the challenges faced by asylum seekers would allow Sweden to introduce more inclusive policies.
How age, educational level and intellectual level influenced by information processing

Cooper, Richard  
Harcum College, USA

As a clinician, I have worked with thousands of individuals who learn differently. They are very individually different but, in some ways, very much the same. They have learning differences (mild problems) learning difficulties (moderate problems) and learning disabilities (severe problems). As an inter-generational educator, I found similarities in individuals ranging in age from 4 to 80 years old. This research project intends to demonstrate that identifying thought processes can lead to instructional techniques that are compatible with those thought processes no matter the age or level of the individuals.

The theoretical framework for this study is the psychological theory of information processing and the continuum of learning differences. This theory has been used in the United States for many years to understand how individuals deviate from the norm. I have expanded the theory to better understand the whole person rather the only how it effects individuals academically. This expanded model is a useful tool for understanding individual learning differences and how to modify instruction.

The design of the study includes ten case studies of current students at Harcum College at two year institution in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. These students were referred to me because they were in jeopardy to failing one or more of their courses. I evaluated them with the C-SIP (Cooper Screening of Information Processing) to determine their thought processes. These students then received specific instruction (interventions) in study and test taking skills. The results were compiled.

The expected conclusion of the study is that an understanding how individuals process information differently reduces the students’ belief that they are not capable of completing a college degree and improved their test scores through the use study techniques that matched the way they learned.

Relevance to Nordic education research

In 2002 I presented a paper on Teaching Math to individuals who learn differently using this model at the International Dyslexia Conference in Uppsala, Sweden. It was well received and I believe that this information will also be useful to Nordic educators and researchers.
Special teacher education in Finland and in Sweden

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¹ University of Oulu

Research aim:
The aim of this study is to find the core as well as main similarities and differences in the curriculum designed by universities for special teacher education. The curriculum from Finnish (N=6) as well as Swedish (N=7) universities are analyzed.

Theoretical framework:
Although inclusive education (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education 2016) is the leading educational principle in most western countries, special education and support needs exist, and they have to be responded. This comparative study is based on curriculum theory as well as on inclusion. A curriculum reflects values and goals which are considered important in society. So a curriculum is a kind of a mirror reflecting what is important and what is wanted in the future from those who study according to it. Finland and Sweden are seen as quite similar Nordic welfare states, both having a 9-year compulsory education with special education services included (Lundahl 2016). Although quite similar social and democratic societies, some educational differences exist, e.g. Finland has almost no private schools, but Sweden does. This and other differences make the comparison interesting. A European Stakeholder Agreement on the framework for inclusive education contains following core values: Valuing learner diversity, Supporting all learners, Working with others and Personal professional development (Watkins & Donnelly, 2016). We study, weather these elements are included in the curriculum. In addition, the four dimensions of a curriculum as such will be used as theoretical lenses, namely scientific, professional, social and ethical dimension (Karjalainen et al. 2007).

Methodological design
To study the curricula, we chose the headlines and the description of the goals of each course in the 60 (Finnish) and 90 (Swedish) credit special teacher programs, available in the internet. They are analyzed using content analysis (e.g. Kondracki, Wellman & Amudson 2002) and the four dimensions of a curriculum will be searched.

Findings
The core in the Finnish special teacher education has courses dealing with the essential skills in the profession, teaching practice and courses related to main learning disabilities. In Swedish curriculum, common area was an independent research work and courses related to the special teachers’ main responsibilities. Teaching practice was not a core issue nor the knowledge base of various learning disabilities. More results are discussed in the presentation.

Nordic educational research
Finnish and Swedish special teacher education has common areas which could also be taught together. Possible co-operation between these two countries could bring new perspectives and combine expertise, so we find this study highly relevant to the development of Nordic education.

References:
Shy students and anxiety-reduction at school: A qualitative study of teachers’ objectives and actions

Mjelve, Liv Heidi1 & Nyborg, Geir1

1Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo

Research topic/aim:
In this study we explore elementary school teachers actions and objectives connected to anxiety-reduction for shy students. Concerned about shy students difficulties at school we find it relevant to focus on teachers’ roles/tasks towards them. Anxiety is a main issue connected to shyness. The school setting is challenging for shy children (Coplan & Rudasill, 2016). The presence of a large peer group and the academic demands for verbal participation can exacerbate their feelings of social fear and may contribute negatively toward their withdrawal from verbal engagement (Coplan, Huges, Bosacki, & Rose-Krasnor, 2011). Over time pupils can develop connections between feelings of anxiety and classroom verbal demands and this is likely to interfere with their ability to concentrate on schoolwork and achieve academic success (Crozier & Hostettler, 2003).

Theoretical framework and methodology
This study is based on a cultural-historical perspective and inspired by Leont’ev’s work (1978). According to this perspective, objects and actions are closely linked. It is the object of activity that gives it a determined direction. Therefore we want to elaborate what strategies teachers use as well as why they use them. The study consists of three sets of data: Observations of teaching situations; Recalled interviews with teachers based on these observations; Focus-group interviews. Eight teachers participated in the observations and in the recalled interviews. In the focus groups 11 teachers participated.

Conclusions/findings:
Our preliminary findings are that teachers’ objectives in order to reduce shy students’ anxiety are: Knowing goals and content for each day; well-known classroom-rules; being prepared for oral presentations; having good time during breaks; positive teacher-shy student - relationship. Teachers’ actions: Schedule/plan for the day on the board; teacher collaboration about rules; safe seating; not putting shy student on the spot in class without agreement; preparing shy student for oral activities and breaks; indoor activities during breaks; building trust.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
According to educational research shy students tends to go unnoticed by teachers. In Nordic educational research it seems to be a lack of studies focusing on shy students in school, more specifically on anxiety reduction in elementary school. Since anxiety is one main issue for shy students, it is of high relevance to explore how teachers can support these students.

References:
Video feedback and assessment for learning, use of digital assessments in kindergarten teacher education

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Research topic/aim:
In the Norwegian strategy plan Digitaliseringsstrategi for universitets- og høyskolesektoren 2017-2021 main goals are to enhance high quality in higher education and research and an efficient, diverse and solid higher education sector. For students, some of the aims are to meet an academic community of teachers and students where digital tools are used, in active and varied learning and assessment forms that create the best learning outcomes and provide the professional and digital qualifications students will acquire in the study program. The students should have access to a modern, personal learning environment that facilitates individual learning, efficiency, interaction and flexibility in the study. This call for a research question: In what way may verbal feedback as assessment in forms of short videos affect student’s perceptions of their own motivation and learning outcome?

Theoretical framework:
Assessment feedback is important and central to students’ orientation to learning (McConnell, 2006). Research show that feedback contributes to the quality of student experience improves motivation and facilitates students’ development and improved future performance. In order to improve the value of feedback, some principles relating to the design of teacher-created feedback have been developed (Henderson & Phillips, 2014). In order to apply them, the potential of video as an alternative method to text-based feedback will be focused on in this presentation. Video-based assessment feedback in response to students’ written assignments has shown that Australian students report them as being specific, personalized, supportive and motivating, but also weaknesses as anxiety about watching videos and difficulties in matching comments and the text-based assignments (Hattie & Timperley).

Methodological design:
Our research design is an intervention with control groups. Among 100 students are divided into two equally large groups. The students are given the same written task to be individually resolved. One of the groups the feedback will be given as a text-based assessment, and the other group will get a video-based feedback assessment.
All the students will be asked to participate in a survey where the questionnaire focus are the students’ experiences with the feedback and how the assessment affects their learning outcome and motivation. The result from the questionnaire from both groups will be compared.

Expected conclusions/findings:
We are expecting findings in these following areas: A positive response to the video-based feedback, and that the video-based feedback is experienced more individualized than the text-based feedback. The individualization might be understood as a personal assessment. In additional we expect to find that the video-based feedback is perceived as supporting and that this might affect the students’ motivation.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
Despite a focus on quality in assessment in higher education there are signs that assessments do not fulfill their possibilities in affecting the students learning outcome. Research on video-based feedback assessment might answer some questions about personal verbal feedback and students experiences of their own motivations and learning outcome.
Special education needs assessment reports in Sweden and Germany: comparative perspectives.

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¹ University of Erfurt & University of Gothenburg
² Kristianstad University

Research topic/Aim:
Recently, in discussions on inclusive education, questions of testing and diagnostic cultures attracted attention (Hamre, Morin & Ydesen, 2018). Within the framework of this project, we have examined special educational needs (SEN) assessment in the Swedish region Scania and the German state North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). In both countries, investigation procedures are carried out before a pupil is categorized as having SEN. However, the SEN definitions and the categorization processes in Sweden and Germany differ. The investigations are carried out by different occupational groups and decision makers. Special education teachers are always involved, but they are expected to cooperate with other professionals, e.g. regular school teachers (NRW) and the pupil welfare team (Sweden). As an in-depth study, our research aims to examine and analyse the outcomes of these different structures and procedures in Swedish and German SEN assessment reports. The research addresses the following questions:
1. What are the central elements of SEN assessment in Sweden and NRW?
2. How do guardians and the pupils concerned participate in the assessment?
3. Which consequences do the SEN assessment reports suggest?
4. Which thought styles become apparent in the assessment reports?

Theoretical frameworks:
The research is inspired by the work of Fleck (1979), seeing the supplement, development and transformation of thought styles as being responsible for empirical discovery. It is supposed that the SEN reports are characterised by different thought styles which can be related to a categorical or relational perspective regarding school problems (Emanuelsson, Persson & Rosenqvist, 2001).

Methodology/research design:
A qualitative research approach was adopted. 30 assessment reports were collected in Scania; 29 in NRW. We accessed the material by contacting schools (Scania) or school administrations (NRW). A content analysis was conducted. Limitations can be seen in the low number of reports and the selection process, being dependent on the preselection of professionals.

Expected conclusions/Findings:
In an international comparative perspective, both differences and similarities were found. Observations were used as a method of investigation both in Sweden and Germany. However, intelligence tests were often conducted in NRW, but only exceptional in Scania. In both countries, the perspective of guardians and pupils is hardly documented. Regarding consequences of the assessment, measures on the individual level dominate, in the German examples even more notable than in Swedish cases. In line with earlier research this tendency is interpreted as maintenance of a thought style focusing on the pupils’ individual “failure”, and to less extent on the adaptation of the learning environment.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research: Comparative research on assessment will contribute to further discuss and elaborate diagnostic approaches both in the Nordic countries and international.

References:


Marginalisation and Co-created Education – enhancing the quality and relevance of student’s knowledge and skills. A comparative study aimed at preventing dropout

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1VIA University College

Research topic/aim:
By modernising undergraduates and masters pathways across partner Higher Education Institutions (HEI’s), this project strives to improve the quality of the student experience, prevent dropout, and enhance graduate employability. The project responds to youth unemployment within the EU area, and by training undergraduate and postgraduate students as co-researchers, the project aims at enhancing the student’s skills in order to give them better opportunities during their education and later in their work career. In relation to EU efforts to reduce social inequality, we focus on marginalised locations and strive to learn from those who live with the consequences of marginalisation.
The project is a collaboration between partners from the University College of Southeast Norway, University of Cumbria in the UK, and VIA University College in Denmark. The researchers and students in the project are from the teacher’s and social educator’s educations. The researchers and the students will interview informants, aged 16-21, with dropout experiences. The project’s total duration is 36 months, with a start in September 2017.
In this presentation, we will focus on preliminary reflections on the methodology of the project and the importance of collaborating with students in order to enhance social inclusion and prevent dropout – viewed from the perspective of the Danish partners in the project.

Theoretical framework:
The theoretical framework of the project is still to be developed. For now inspiration from research on dropout (Dorn, 1993; Jonker, 2006; Brown & Rodríguez, 2009; Tanggard, 2013) is being discussed in the group of Danish researchers. A broader theoretical basis among all partners in the project is being developed around literature on deprivation and marginalisation.

Methodological design:
The project builds on an ongoing longitudinal study carried out at the University College of Southeast Norway. This project uses ‘the indirect approach’ – a specific method of qualitative interviewing where the informant’s narratives are highly important (Moshuus & Eide, 2016). In the present project, we develop ‘the indirect approach’ in order to further qualify the method’s ability to grasp the student’s perspectives and understand the relevance of context in relation to dropout.

Expected conclusions/findings:
In the project we will work towards completing 6 intellectual outputs. In the presentation we will focus on two of those; 1) an Open Access Journal, where students involved in the project can publish their research findings, and 2) a book of papers by students and researchers that more thoroughly presents the theoretical and methodological basis of the project, as well as research findings.
More broadly, through this project, we expect to further understand the mechanisms of dropout and use such insights to prevent marginalisation in our societies.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
In contemporary nordic societies marginalisation and dropout is an important challenge. In this project we strive to exceed boundaries between researchers/teachers and vulnerable students in order to enhance social inclusion in our societies. The comparative setup in the project will gain fruitful insights into varied perspectives on dropout, and the intellectual outputs will make this knowledge available through open access channels.
References:
Inclusion and diversity: Conflicting questions in education?

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Educational sciences, Lund University

The concept “en skola för alla” was coined in the 1980 curriculum of Swedish elementary school. It has its counterparts in other Scandinavian countries. “En rymlig skola” is used in Denmark, and in Norway, the concept “inkludering” is used to describe the ideal work process of schools (Haug et al, 2006). These concepts come from an overarching ideology, rooted in the Salamanca statement (1994), often referred to as inclusive education, promoting a high grade of participation, integration and inclusion of all students. My PhD-project aims at contributing to the understanding of inclusive education empirically, by examining the experience of students with disabilities, in regard to their perceptions of what an inclusive community is.

My PhD-project stems from a pilot study carried out in 2016, implying that it is plausible, as suggested by Simons and Masschelein (Tremain, 2015), to express the relation between inclusion and community in terms of governmentality. From this perspective issues regarding self-determination, in-group exclusion and normalization emerge, putting inclusion as it is expressed in a dominant Swedish educational discourse, into question (Bernmalm 2017). In order to address this problem, my PhD-project applies a phenomenological frame, built on the work of Merleau-Ponty (2002), alongside with Foucauldian concepts on exercise of power (Tremain, 2015). Hence assuming that inclusive education is both socially constructed and perceived differently depending on the student’s position in existence. Empirical data consist of interviews with upper secondary school students in education specific to adolescents with disabilities.

Two different but related circumstances in the field of research motivate the aim of my PhD-Project. Firstly, there is a conceptual diversity in research on inclusive education, complicating attempts to understand and realize inclusion in School. Secondly, empirical research on how inclusive education is achieved is quite rare, particularly when it comes to describing the constituents of inclusive communities (Göransson & Nilholm, 2014). My PhD-project underscores that students’ accounts are a prerequisite in order to characterize the concept inclusive education in a way that corresponds properly to inclusion as condition; equally students’ accounts offer empirical input vital to describe the relation between community, inclusion, normalization, and in-group exclusion. Accordingly, an enhanced understanding of students’ experience of inclusive education is important to the characterization of the concept, and to deal with everyday ethical and educational dilemmas in Swedish school of today.

References:
How can mini-enterprises enhance inclusive education

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This paper presentation contributes to the literature on how to enhance inclusive education when working with mini-enterprises in lower secondary school. Entrepreneurship education is a national and international priority area, and both Norwegian and EU policy documents have been expecting entrepreneurship education to help develop and enhance both academic learning and personal qualities and attitudes. Entrepreneurship education is understood in many ways and covers various activities aiming to foster entrepreneurial mindsets, attitudes and skills (Fayolle, 2008). However, some traits and skills are more highlighted in the political policy documents, and the political commitment thereof might work as a non-inclusive strategy. This paper presentation will investigate whether mini-enterprises, as a specific entrepreneurship education project, might enhance inclusive education.

In this paper, I have chosen to focus on inclusive education as a strategy where schools and teachers might succeed to a greater or lesser degree. When trying to define what an inclusive education might entail, I have chosen to use the work of Haug (2003). According to him, four elements are specifically relevant to inclusion: fellowship, participation, democratization and benefit. These elements represent working areas for the school, and Haug (2003) argues that the school as an institution needs to focus on providing a fellowship for all pupils, an environment which promotes active participation for all, where all pupils have the possibility to be heard and influence their own education, and that all pupils shall have both an academic and social benefit from their education.

The empirical data for this study is based on a survey conducted in 2012 in 37 lower secondary Norwegian schools, including 1880 pupils, with a response rate of 84 per cent, and interviews with both pupils and teachers working with mini-enterprises, a total of 24 respondents. The collection of data was conducted during the work of a ph.d.-study. The main focus in this study was the academic and social learning outcome for pupils with special needs. The survey looked at differences in the academic performance between pupils with special needs who participated in mini-enterprises/not participated in mini-enterprises, and the interviews looked at how the pupils experienced the process and how the teachers organized the project period.

The result from this study conclude that working with mini-enterprises is positive for pupils with special needs by being a project for all pupils at a certain level of education. Most of the pupils experienced the project period as a process where all pupils participated, they were able to participate in democratic processes together with their peers, and the survey indicated that pupils with special needs who participated in mini-enterprises have better grades in Mathematics and Norwegian than pupils with special needs who did not participate is such an entrepreneurship education project.

References:
Balancing educational ideals? – Swedish head teachers about inclusion and marketization

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The educational ideals of marketization and ideals of inclusive education, as expressed in policies, are often seen as contradictory and incompatible. In for instance Sweden, an education system that has emphasised inclusion and education for all, marketization has escalated social segregation within the school system (Blossing et al. 2014). However, this may appear differently in different schools, where policies are interpreted and enacted. While there are studies of either inclusive education or marketization, there have been few attempts to study the interplay and consequences of their coexistence and enactment in schools.

This paper describes preliminary results from ongoing research with the objective to develop a theoretical understanding of how the educational ideologies of the market and inclusion influence school’s work and organisation. Twenty-two school leaders from both municipal and independent schools were interviewed. Their schools had different demographics, were in different areas, and in municipalities both positive and negative towards marketization. The questions regarded how marketization and inclusion translate into the head teachers’ work, the school organisation, and whether they saw any conflicts between these ideals. The interviews (ranging from 50 to 90 minutes) were transcribed and analysed using qualitative content analysis and a theoretical framework inspired by Ball’s definitions of policy and policy enactment (Ball et al., 2012), tools from inclusive education (e.g. Göransson & Nilholm, 2014; Clark et al., 1998;), and curriculum theory (e.g. Popkewitz 2008).

Preliminary results show that the head teachers have varied experiences and opinions of marketization and express very different notions as to what constitutes inclusion. The theoretical consequences are several. As regards inclusive education, there is need for further research regarding what practitioners and head teachers place within the concept, given the wide array of definitions and what they consider good practice. The variation calls for further theoretical refinement and clarification of policy ambitions. Also, there is need for theoretical nuancing of the consequences of marketization for education. The responses here indicate sometimes either negative or positive results, but more often emphasize that the market has different consequences for different schools, areas and pupils.

This research has relevance for the Nordic research context as it illustrates nuances often missing in research on marketization and inclusive education. Given that Sweden has taken on an exceptional path towards marketization, these results can both function as both cautionary and inspiring, and as grounds for further research in the Nordic context.

References:
Educational Psychologists’ Perceptions of Inclusion

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This study explored the perceptions of inclusion of Educational Psychologists (EPs), who play a pivotal role in the education of learners with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEND). Previous research has used primarily quantitative methods to investigate EPs’ attitudes, their perceptions of the ideal educational setting for children with SEND, and possible barriers to inclusion. One study did interview EPs, but focused solely on their perceptions of dual placements, so was limited in scope. Therefore, this research aims to address a gap in the existing literature. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 4 EPs to gain an in-depth understanding of how EPs describe inclusion, what factors they think might hinder or promote inclusion, and what more could be done to include children with SEND into mainstream schools, and the wider community. One key finding is the lack of a clear, unified definition of what inclusion is, which researchers argue is detrimental to its implication. All EPs recognised that inclusion is made up of multiple elements; however, definitions varied with regards to whether inclusion relates only to SEND, or other factors such as ethnicity, language and background. Some also focused on inclusion as a human rights issue, which echoes international definitions. Another key finding was that only one EP advocated every child being in a mainstream school, regardless of their level of need; the other EPs believed in inclusion for most, but not all, children. Type of SEND was cited as one contributing factor, and some mentioned that children with Emotional and Behavioral Difficulties are potentially more challenging to include. One EP also spoke of pressure from parents of mainstream peers, and suggested that training for parents could help overcome negative attitudes and create more tolerance. Furthermore, type of school may also impact on inclusion. The EPs felt that a lack of monitoring may lead to some academies not engaging in good, inclusive practices. Although the initiative to make all schools into academies is no longer running, the effects are still being felt by EPs, and greater monitoring may be needed to ensure consistent practice regarding admission of pupils with SEND. The last finding relates to EPs’ perceptions of how to overcome the barriers identified. All EPs suggested that initial teacher training programs could be improved so that SEND modules focused less on categories of need, and more on broader issues relating to inclusion. This may foster a more inclusive mindset from the beginning, rather than medicalising SEND, and so help overcome the barrier of mainstream school teachers holding negative views of inclusion.

References:
Attitude change among students to children with special needs

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Research topic/aim:
The aim of this study is to examine the attitudes of students in kindergarten teacher education towards children with special needs before and after kindergarten teacher education.

Theoretical framework:
Attitudes will emerge in teacher behavior, for example in how they express themselves or write, and in what they do in the daily work with children. In the develop of attitudes there are two aspects of the concepts that are important; a cognitive aspect representing knowledge and an affective aspect related to the subject (Rosenberg 1960, Eagly & Chaiken 1998, Ajzen 2005). The attitudes the students may develop can therefore be positive and negative and contain the two aspects, knowledge and emotion. Research have shown that teachers who have positive attitudes usually have positive impact toward children with special needs (Avramidis et al 2000, Monsen & Fredrickson 2004, Park et al. 2010).

Methodological design:
This is a longitudinal study with a pretest – posttest design. The students have been answering the same survey questionnaire in the early start of their education, and after three years when the students was in the end of their education. The students respond to a 5- or 6-point scale in which they agreed or disagree to the categorical questions. The survey consists of 18 questions that intend to measure attitudes of students in early childhood education institution towards children with special needs. 81 students participated in the study.

Expected conclusions/findings:
The expected conclusions are increase positive attitudes towards children with special needs among students in kindergarten teacher education.

Relevance to Nordic educational research: By 2016 about 2.9% of the children (8300 children) in Norwegian kindergartens had special needs. In order for these children to thrive and be well included in kindergarten, it is important that the staff had knowledge and positive attitudes towards these children. Since positive attitudes influence child development, it is particularly important that the kindergarten teacher education focus on developing students’ positive attitudes towards vulnerable groups of children, such as children with special needs.

References:
Why don't we ask the kids?

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An Empirical study on the model Collaborate and Proactive Solutions in a Danish Public School

Research topic/aim:
For decades, the ideal of 'one school for all' have influenced the school development in Scandinavia. Despite massive efforts, Nordic research literature indicates several challenges in creating inclusive learning environments for all children. Over the last ten years, there has been an increased interest in perspectives and methods that can help professionals take into account the students subjective perspective. The aim for this project is to examine collaboration and student involvement in problem solving. The paper will discuss the implementation of the American psychologist, Ross W. Greene’s model Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) (Greene 2016) in a Danish school context.

The research question:
The project examines from an adult perspective if and how CPS is perceived as a useful tool in challenging behavior at school, increasing the professional’s sense of efficacy. From a student’s perspective, the project examines how the professionals using CPS can help increase the student’s experience of participation and inclusion.

Theoretical framework:
The CPS model is described to be a ‘hybrid’ of converging lines of theory and research (Greene & Doyle 1999). The model is, among others, influenced by Albert Bandura (1971) and his social learning theory, and by Salvador Minuchin’s Systemic Family Therapy (1974). In addition, Russel Barkley’s (1997) understanding of development of self-control is an important inspiration. Finally, the model coincide with themes from the field of developmental psychopathology as described by eg. Sroufe & Rutter (1984).

Methodological design:
The study is constituted by mainly a qualitative research design. The qualitative data is based on interviews with students, teachers and pedagogues.

Findings:
The findings indicate that working with CPS from an adult perspective is perceived to be expanding in terms of opportunity conditions. It helps eliminate the perpetuity of powerlessness in dealing with students in difficulties and creates enthusiasm and job satisfaction due to the experience of closer relationships to the students and an expanded understanding of students in difficulties. The findings also point towards the students expressing relief from being met by adults who endeavor aim to see and incorporate their perspectives. They experience co-involvement in solutions of difficulties, being met in a qualitative new way and motivation to participate in solutions.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
Our project is inspired by Swedish psychologists, who too work closely together with Ross Greene in the attempts to examine the relevance of CPS in Scandinavia. The findings discussed in the paper will contribute to Scandinavian understandings and practical implications of the notion of collaboration and involvement of children’s perspective in inclusive practice. The paper will emphasize the significance of the subjective and experienced dimension of collaboration, which is imperative in future inclusive educational practice and research.

References:
The three-tiered support system and the special education teachers’ role in Swedish-speaking schools in Finland

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The aim of the study presented in the paper is to contribute to new knowledge about the special education teachers’ role in the three-tiered support system in Swedish-speaking schools in Finland. The research questions are:

1. How is the decision-making process and the practical implementation organized regarding the three-tiered support system?
2. How is the work of the special education teacher divided between different levels of support?

Since year 2011, the special educational support in Finnish schools has been arranged according to a three-tiered model with three levels of support. The focus of the support has changed from individual interventions in special groups to preventive support within the regular class (Björn, Aho, Koponen, Fuchs & Fuchs, 2015). The tree-tiered system can be considered as an attempt to fulfill the vision of inclusive education and bridge the gap between special and general education. This development has had an influence on the special education teachers’ work and role. The role is complex including instruction as well as multi-professional collaboration and consultation (Rytivaara, Pulkkinen & Takala, 2012). The implementation of the three-tiered system has been studied in a Finnish speaking context (Björn et al, 2015; Jahnukainen, Kontu, Thuneberg, Vainakainen, 2006; Pesonen et al, 2015). However, the conditions in the Swedish speaking parts of Finland have not been investigated.

The study has a quantitative design with a questionnaire as data collection instrument. A web-survey has, in October 2017, been sent out with the aim to reach all special education teachers (n=395) in Swedish-speaking comprehensive schools in Finland. The questionnaire is a modified version of a questionnaire designed by Björn & Paloniemi at the University of Eastern Finland, and consists of both multiple-choice and open-ended questions. In this paper we present preliminary results using descriptive statistics. The preliminary results will be analyzed and provide us with an over-all picture concerning the implementation of the three-tiered support system and the special education teachers’ role. These results will function as base for more sophisticated methods of analysis, and indicate which areas need to be more deeply elaborated.

The Nordic countries have for many years been working towards a more inclusive school system. The Finnish three-tiered support system is a step in this direction. Findings of the study presented in this paper can contribute to a discussion of how to create inclusive school environments where special education plays a part.

References:


Three classrooms - three teachers: Are they assimilative, supportive or inclusive?

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In line with the overarching principles and values underpinning reformed basic education in Norway from 2020, teachers are expected to enact the values of inclusion in their classrooms. School is mandated to take student diversity into consideration and ensure that everybody is given a chance to feel included at school and in society. The purpose of this presentation is to explore how the practices and cognitions of three teachers manifest themselves as inclusive, assimilative or supportive.

The presentation draws on material from research into teachers’ language choice in English lessons in three Year 4 multilingual classrooms. Two of the teachers were novice practitioners, whereas the third had several years of professional experience.

The research material, generated in the spring of 2016, comprises observations of teacher talk in the three classrooms, followed by semi-structured interviews with the teachers. These data are analysed in terms of categories developed by Chumak-Horbatsch (2012) based on a corpus of studies of classroom practices in linguistically diverse schools.

The classrooms studied and the cognitions of the teachers are found to be characterised more by assimilative and supportive than by inclusive practices (Bourne, 2003). The policy of making sure that learning the majority language has top priority at school has consequences for the teachers’ language choice even in English classes. It also has consequences for the language socialisation of minority students, their identity development and perception of valued knowledge in the classroom (Conteh & Meier, 2014).

Theoretically this study is framed by a complexity approach to multilingualism (Jessner, 2008). Students who grow up with a home language different from the language of schooling and learning English as a foreign language from the start are seen as emergent multilinguals (García, 2009). Multilingualism is recognised as a potential asset for all learners. The reason why “potential” is added as a qualifying element is that various factors in the educational context may compromise these potential benefits.

This paper will contribute to a clearer understanding of discursive and affective characteristics of learning environments and what an inclusive classroom practice may sound and look like. New insights can in turn be shared with student teachers to facilitate their crossing of the border between teacher education and the practicalities of linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms.

References:
A school for the Future- but not for all? A critical inquiry into aims in education for students with intellectual disability in Norwegian school policy documents and guidelines from 2014-2017

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Inclusive education is a globally endorsed political ideal for education. Although a contested research concept, special education research appears highly influenced by this ideal (Göranson and Nilholm 2014). Inclusion can be perceived as a broadening of responsibility for the ordinary schools to meet the learning needs of all students (Nilsen 2010). Students with intellectual disabilities (ID) today have an obvious place in mainstream schools. What is not so obvious is whether the curriculum reflects these students diversity in educational needs and interests. Whereas prior policy analysis address the conditions for the entire group of students in need of special support (ibid), little is known about students with ID in particular. The purpose of this current study is to inquire into the aims for education for these students as they are expressed in recent school policy documents and guidelines. Focusing on marginalized groups, the study is inspired by a critical pedagogy-tradition (Freire, 1970). Following Goodlad’s (1979) conceptualization of curriculum inquiry, the ‘ideal curriculum’ is of particular interest here. Cigman’s notions on inclusion, self-esteem and education without condescension (2001, 2007, 2014) forms the analytical background for the discussion. Content analysis of the selected documents is applied as method, interpreting them for ideas and intentions regarding aims in education for this learner group. The expected finding is that the needs of students with ID are not addressed explicitly in the documents, but that curriculum standardization and a pursuit of common academic competence objectives appears as salient features. By ‘mainstreaming’ in practice, I argue that both teachers and students face practical, ethical and didactic dilemmas which may impede individual adaptation of curriculum content and inclusion for students with ID. In turn, this implies a risk of marginalizing structures within allegedly inclusive policy. In order to investigate the need for curriculum change, more research is needed to inquire the match between students with ID and the curriculum. This study contributes to a Nordic research- and policy discourse regarding schooling for students with ID, where inclusion serves as a legitimate, but also an ambiguous ideal.

References:
Participation and learning: Quality of life in school for youth with general learning disabilities

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Research topic/Aim:
Since the 1990s, the concept of inclusion has become central to the development of Education for All. This has led to policies that strive for more acceptance of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities in ordinary school environments. The emphasis on inclusion may increase quality of life in school for disabled pupils through increased participation and competence development. This study aims to increase understanding of the conditions which impact quality of life in school. I will begin by describing the school life of youth with general learning disabilities, and comparing it with that of non-disabled youth. This will provide a starting point for assessing the similarities and differences in quality of life between the two groups.

Theoretical frameworks:
My theoretical frameworks are the quality of life concept and the sense of coherence concept.

Methodology/research design:
This study adopts a qualitative comparative approach to methodology to measure similarities and differences in perceived quality of life. Data is collected through classroom observations and in-depth interviews of disabled and non-disabled youth in upper secondary school in Norway. The central question for this study is: How do youth with disabilities experience the school situation in comparison to non-disabled youth with a focus on perceived quality of life? I will address this topic through four sub-questions:
1. What is the relationship between peer interaction and quality of life for disabled youth compared with non-disabled youth?
2. What is the relationship between participation and quality of life for disabled youth compared with non-disabled youth?
3. What is the relationship between competence development and quality of life for disabled youth compared with non-disabled youth?
4. What is the relationship between self-determination and quality of life for disabled youth compared with non-disabled youth?

Expected conclusions/Findings:
Based on my literature review of quality of life and Antonovsky’s concept sense of coherence, I posit several hypotheses. First, I expect that participation and competence development are related to high levels of quality of life. Second, I expect that participation mainly concerns involvement in the school’s social communities; participation in valued roles and friendships are especially important. Third, I expect that learning mainly concerns competence development and self-determination (e.g. formalized pupil democracy).

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:
Several quality of life researchers underlines the relationship between quality of life, and mental health. White Paper form the Education Ministry in Norway entitled, “Læring og fellesskap; Tidlig innsats og gode læringsmiljøer” for barn, unge og voksne med særlige behov” (Eng. “Learning and Community; Early Intervention and Good Learning Environments for Children, young people and adults with special needs”) shows that the relationship between the learning environment, quality of life, and mental health had priority in politics.
A case study of a school’s work towards inclusive practice

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The aim of the study is to analyze and present how school staff describe their work towards inclusion of all pupils during regular lessons. Policy changes in Sweden for provision of support measures were introduced in 2014, viz. “extra adaptations” (SFS 2010:800), implying that teachers are obliged to provide and evaluate extra adaptations in regular classrooms prior to referring pupils to special support.

Skrtic’s theories of the bureaucracy approach and adhocracy approach (Skrtic, 1995) are used as a theoretical framework and for analyzing the result. The new policy may reflect difficulties encountered when implementing the policy in bureaucracy-steered schools.

A case study is presented of a school’s work towards inclusion of all pupils. We conducted focus group interviews with school staff. We also collected critical incidents reported by teachers. The incidents were discussed together with the school staff. The project is a coproduction between a university and a school.

Expected findings are that the school may encounter difficulties when trying to work towards inclusion and that collegial discussions of critical incidents can help staff to handle such difficulties and implement high quality inclusive education over time. Previous studies have shown that school staff may feel ignorant and uncertain when it comes to support measures (see e.g. Sandström, Klang and Lindqvist, 2017). Kurth and Keegan (2014) found that adaptations elaborated by regular teachers were not as effective as those elaborated by special needs teachers.

Previous studies have discussed reasons for children’s support needs and the responsibility for responding to the support need (Göransson, Lindqvist & Nilholm, 2015). There is no consensus about the interpretation of the concept of inclusion, but researchers agree that inclusion is more than placing pupils in need of support in regular classes (Mitchell, 2008). Previous research has shown that schools often find it difficult to handle support measures. The study is useful since it implies working closely with users, trying to find solutions to a broad societal problem; if not noticed in school, children in need of support may become adults who do not fit well in society.

References:
Attaining new knowledge on Inclusive Education: A case-study of students voices

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The purpose of this research was to gather the voices of students undertaking a Master’s programme on Special and Inclusive Education by exploring their perceptions of what they have learned about inclusive education during the programme. Lawson, Parker, and Sikes (2006) argue that the translation of policy into practice is shaped by the way individuals understand inclusive education. Moreover, teachers’ attitudes to and understanding of inclusion, have been shown to change after training or further studies on inclusion and special needs education (Cologon, 2012; Boyle, Topping, & Jindal-Shape, 2013; Costello & Boyle, 2013; Lawson, Norwich, & Nash, 2013; Cameron & Jotveit, 2014). Darling - Hammond (2016) argues that building teachers’ competence is a significant prerequisite for successfully implementing reforms in schools and improving practice. The present study investigated 10 students’ understanding of inclusive education during their participation in a Master’s Programme in Special and Inclusive Education (MASIE), and the possible changes to their understanding. MASIE intends to meet the needs for developing teacher competence and understanding of inclusive education with a specific focus on the education for pupils with special needs, and to enhance and support practice. We used the case study approach in order to investigate the students’ perceptions and reflections on their learning outcomes related to how they understand inclusive education, with specific focus on the students’ awareness of change, how they understand the principle of inclusion and their explanations of inclusive education. Ten students participating in the Master’s programme took part in the study. Data were collected with an open-ended questionnaire tool that students completed half way in their studies. Students’ qualitative statements were analysed through an inductive approach and three main themes emerged: “understanding of inclusive education”, “awareness of change”, and “success criteria for practicing inclusive education”. Since the purpose of MASIE is to build teachers’ competence in inclusive education and to enhance practice, we wanted to investigate in detail the new knowledge, if any, that the students attain through their studies, in what ways they think their understanding may be changing and how they expect this new knowledge to influence what they do in practice in their future professional practice. This research indicates that teacher competence influences the teachers’ understanding of inclusive education and how they implement it in practice. Results suggest that the student group as a whole considered that they had attained new knowledge, expanded and nuanced their understanding of inclusive education, and the majority of the students were aware of how they had enriched their knowledge and were able to state how they will go about implementing inclusive education in practice. The new knowledge the students attain through their master’s studies will be an essential factor in their future competence to implement inclusive education in practice in Nordic as well as in a global context.

Keywords: Diverse Needs, Inclusion/Inclusive Education, Policy and Practice, Student teacher perceptions.
International Classroom Studies of Inclusive Practices - Comparing teaching-learning processes

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International Classroom Studies of Inclusive Practices  
Comparing teaching-learning processes

Research topic/aim:  
The main issue of this European research project is: How does the school teach in accordance with pupils’ different levels of mastery and needs for support in the learning process? What are the recourses, barriers and dilemmas in the schools’ development towards inclusion?

Theoretical framework:  
This is a European international comparative research project drawing attention to the interplay between regular and special needs education in development of inclusive practices in the regular school. It focuses on three theoretical approaches; 1) culture-historic approach to the study of teaching, learning and development; 2) didactic-curricular perspective on inclusive practices. 3) theoretical-methodological approach to international comparative classroom studies inspired by Robin Alexander’s extensive work Culture & Pedagogy. International Comparison in Primary Education (2000).

Methodological design: Qualitative, mixed methods

Expected conclusions/findings:  
At present presentation and discussions of findings from seven research teams are being completed. The international comparative analysis of qualitative studies is, as mentioned, inspired by Alexander (2000). The process of gathering research findings in a comprehensive joint presentation is based on an incremental compilation process.  
A summary of findings will be in focus of this presentation. They are embedded (Alexander, 2000) in accordance with eight pre-decided main aspects:  
The pupil/s – Assessment - Educational intentions - Educational content - Class organisation and teaching methods – Communication - Care - Context  
Seven categorises focus on teaching-learning processes on micro level. The eighth aspect - context - situates findings within different cultures, thus avoiding a pitfall of international comparative studies, namely naïve borrowing.

Findings:  
With seven different studies under a common research issue and structure, it may come as a surprise how many similar “inclusive practices” are found, such as a) the central role dedicated to the class teacher, b) the importance of cooperation between ordinary- and special needs educators; c) the great awareness of pupils’ well-being.  
The principle of inclusion is affirmed in national policy papers and educational acts of all participating teams. However, the gap between principles and practice is strongly emphasised by all. In the Norwegian case, several principles concerning special educational needs, the right to participate in the ordinary school for all and inclusion, were integrated in amendments to the educational act in 1975 and later. Several measures followed in national curricula, education of teachers and special needs educators. Still, there is reason to accompany the European fellow research colleagues, asking: What has become of the teaching of special needs educational and inclusive aspects in the regular teacher education?  
Where are the special needs teachers in the schools?
Could it be that the traditions of the ordinary school – both in practical education and mentality – overshadows - or overpowers - special needs educational knowledge, skills and attitudes in the school for all?
These are highly relevant questions for the Norwegian school as well as for the other schools participating in the research cooperation. Could it be that they are relevant for the other Nordic countries, too? (5.Relevance to Nordic educational research)
Experiences in Using Minecraft with Student Teachers in Social Studies: Preliminary Reflections

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In this paper we present findings from a pilot study where student teachers specialising in Social Studies for grades 5-10 were introduced to Minecraft. The students worked in groups of four. The assignment was to create a model of the Norwegian parliament building and to engage in collaborative learning through a role play of a political decision-making process, for example the process of preparing a bill. Thus, the students had to acquire technical skills in Minecraft, detailed knowledge about the parliament building and how the physical structures reflects the political processes as well as how political decision making are played out.

The study was organized as an experimental teaching activity between two educational institutions (A and B) over a three week period. Institution A provided educational resources and institution B carried out the learning activity based on a jointly created assignment. Masters students from institution A introduced student teachers at institution B to Minecraft, and server was set up locally at institution B using Minecraft.edu. During the learning activity the students from institution A participated as tutors for building in Minecraft and they set up a facebook group for asynchronous interaction.

The research was informed by a conceptual framework combining sociocultural and constructivist learning theories for understanding how students can learn through a dialectical interplay and hands-on (building) activity and collaborative learning (role play) activity (Mørch, Caruso & Hartley, 2017). The role-play learning activity was scripted by the students and recorded by video-capture tool (Screencast-O-Matic). Data was also collected by observation and questionnaire, using a qualitative approach and triangulation of two data sources. Sixty students participated, and 52% responded to the online questionnaire.

Minecraft is described as the most popular video game among children between the ages of 9 and 14 years (Medietilsynet, 2016). Studies have indicated that, when used in an educational setting, Minecraft can motivate children for learning (Dikkers, 2015; Roberts-Woychsein & Piller, 2015; Craft 2016). A prerequisite for learning with Minecraft in school is that teachers, and student teachers, are able to use Minecraft and to grasp its pedagogical potential.

Preliminary findings indicate that student teachers who had no previous experience in using Minecraft needed more time to master the technology than what was allocated for the activity. On one hand, 38% indicated negative attitudes, voiced through a claim such as “I will never use Minecraft” in their future teaching practices, described as taking time away from Social Studies focus. On the other hand, 47% indicated positive attitudes, such as describing future practices of Minecraft in their own classroom and outlining motivation as a reason.

Our experience is that balancing the technological challenges and the academic/subject matter is crucial in order to ensure that student teachers’ learning experiences are grounded in problem solving enabling deep learning (Meld. St. 28 2015-2016). This is possible with Minecraft but we are not there yet. Furthermore, a gap that needs to be bridged is between children’s interest in Minecraft at home and student teachers’ attitudes toward its educational potential. Further work is underway to address these gaps.
Using oral, video-based feedback on students work

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The purpose of this study is to gain knowledge about video-based oral feedback, or audio-visual feedback, on student texts. Students work on assignments is commented by using screen-capture technology, and are handed back to the students as links to the videos produced. Earlier research suggests that audio-visual feedback provides important contributions in the work of building relationships between teachers and students and that such feedback increases the accuracy of student feedback and that they also help to simplify feedback work (Mathisen og Wergeland, 2010, Mathisen, 2012).

A key assumption in this study based on several years of doing this kind of feedback is that audio-visual feedback enhances the relationship between teacher and student. Concepts as immediacy and intimacy will be used to discuss findings. Another assumption is that audio-visual feedback makes it easier for the teacher to express doubt and uncertainty in how to progress with the texts, thus empowering the students to make their own choices and not merely do what the teacher tell them to do.

The students in this study meet this kind of feedback through two assignments during one semester. Data in the study is gathered from focus-group interviews with three student groups. All the students has received audio-visual feedback on two assignments, and the interviews are conducted towards the end of the semester. The main topics of the interviews are 1) a comparison between this kind of feedback and written feedback. 2) How the audio-visual feedback can be improved, and 3) what works and do not work for the students with this kind of feedback.

With a student-based perspective, the study will shed light on how the students perceive the feedback. A possible secondary topic arise, as the students themselves are teachers. Data concerning whether the students would like to try out this kind of feedback themselves will also be gathered.

The project is directly relevant to key topics in teacher education; teacher's competence in basic skills, especially oral competence and digital competence.

References:
Mathisen, P. 2012 Video Feedback in Higher Education – A Contribution to Improving the Quality of Written Feedback Nordic Journal of Digital Literacy 7(2) 97 – 116
Becoming a teacher in the digital area

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Social Network Site (SNS) usage in Norway is high among pupils and preservice teachers (Helleve, Almås, & Bjørkelo, 2013). It is argued that SNS can contribute to young individuals’ critical reflection, development of basic competencies, social capability and to build a bridge to young individuals’ lives. During the time from the student teacher enters teacher education till the final exam is finished and the certificate to teach is obtained the student goes through a transition from a private to professional person. There is a shift in identity or self-understanding from student to teacher. The concept self-understanding is used in line with Kelchtermans (2009). According to Kimmons & Veletsianos (2014) participants in SNS’s such as Facebook decide how they want to present themselves as participants in social media; that is acceptable identity fragments. Teachers are responsible for supporting young people in their way of understanding themselves and how they relate to each other. This presentation presents preliminary findings from parts of the data from a longitudinal study on ethics, social media, and teacher education (Helleve et al. 2013).

The aim of the current study is to focus on challenges concerning professional digital competence for teacher education and the research questions are:

What kind of private and professional experiences do student teachers/teachers have with FB?
How has the topic SNS been treated in their teacher education?

Methodology:
The longitudinal study is conducted among 475 teacher education students. T1 and T2 were conducted as paper- and web questionnaire respectively. T3 is presented in this study. At T3, vignettes (Fougler et al. 2009) were applied in a interview guide based on the previously applied questionnaires as well as experiences from the previous studies.

Findings:
The preliminary results show how that becoming a digital professional teacher includes more than to be able to design pedagogical learning activities supported by technology. Through vignettes, the student teachers seemed to come closer into personal reflections concerning their role in the transitional process. For example they are able to discuss how they think about their self-understanding and self-presentation as professional teachers in social media. Implications of the study may be that teachers’ self-understanding and how they present themselves may be one way to go into discussions about how they do this in practice, as they transcend from teacher students into their professional role. For student teachers it is not enough to be told what and how to act when they have finished their studies. Theories and concepts are difficult to adapt. The challenge for teacher education is to create possibilities for reflection.

References:
Kimmons, R. & Veletsianos, G. (2014). The fragmented educator 2.0: Social networking sites, acceptable identity fragment
Exploring how teachers experience the use of ICT in primary and secondary education for adults

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¹Oslo Metropolitan University

Research topic/aim:
The emergence of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is influencing the Nordic educational system. Since 2006, the capability to use ICT tools in learning has been defined as basic skills in Norwegian primary and secondary education. However, this emphasis on ICT has nearly been absent for adult following primary and secondary education for adults. This abstract addresses how teachers working in adult education experience the use of ICT in their teaching and learning practice.

Theoretical framework:
The use of digital technology in teaching is a controversial topic (Langford, Narayan and von Glahn, 2016). On one hand, research indicates that ICT can be an obstacle in the learning process (Langford et al., 2016). On the other hand, recent research underpin perceived usefulness of ICT, meaning that teachers and students recognize the importance of ICT when it comes to completing a task. Perceived usefulness and distraction of ICT is related with the intention to use ICT and self-efficacy. Further, recent findings show that using ICT can contribute to motivation (Zheng, Warschauer, Lin & Chang, 2016) and achievements (Cheung & Slavin, 2013), in addition to preparing students for working in a digitalized world.

Methodological design:
Data is collected by sending a questionnaire to public adult education centers in Norway and they were asked to forward the online questionnaire to all teachers and leaders at each center. It is matter of self-selection and the sample could be biased. A total of 894 teachers and leaders answered the questionnaire. We cannot generalize our answers, but the findings provide insight into the situation of these 894 teachers.

Expected conclusions/findings:
Preliminary findings indicate that the majority of the teachers experienced that the use of ICT is meaningful in teaching adults because it helps to motivate and differentiate in the learning process. In addition, the use of ICT in the classroom helps adult learners in a technology driven society outside the classroom. The main obstacles are the lack of digital infrastructure in the classroom, insufficient internet capacities and training opportunities for teachers.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
First, the emergence of ICT influence educational systems in the Nordic country. Second, due to the rapid changes in working life, most citizens will experience the need for lifelong learning. Overall, common for the Nordic countries it seems to be a lack of focus on and resources to the use of ICT in adult education.

References:
When moocing, apping and streaming - how do higher-ed teachers cope with new technologies?

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When we hybridize our studies there is a need for developing new practices with the use of digital learning resources. This is a complex issue to address, and the complexity is why faculty are discouraged from such models. However, we do not need to start from scratch. Designing better teaching practices means, understanding where the existing pieces can best be reshaped, brought together, or played down.

This article represents findings from a study of three cases from the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences and the University of Stavanger. Our first one is the master’s programme in nursing with students distributed in 3 campuses. A major part of the teaching are streamed from one site to the others. MOOCs are also part of this programme. The two other programs are separate teacher education programs using apps with their students.

The aim of this article is to present experiences on how higher education teachers reflect and practice their on-site teaching, when MOOCs, apps and streaming video occur in the learning environment.

Theoretical framework:
The prime actors in our pedagogy is the teacher, the student, and the content. Anderson and Dron (2011) describe the development of relationships among these three and separate three generations of pedagogy. Our theoretical perspective is based on the generation of “constructivism” and “connectivism” (Anderson & Dron, 2011). When integrating digital resources, a critical area requiring further discussion and research is the understanding how online communities and resources function. To analyze teaching within this perspective, one should focus on how teachers reflect and practice their teaching as “discussion leader”, “guide on the side”, “critical friend” and “co-traveler” (Anderson & Dron, 2011, p. 92), through a variety of resources.

Methodological design:
Our approach is based on observations and interviews (n=9) from three different cases. Two cases are from teacher education. Some respondents in these cases have been involved in developing the digital resources others have not. The third case represents teachers in a master’s programme in nursing with students distributed in 3 campuses. These teachers use streaming technology and MOOCs as main elements in their teaching. As part of our validation process, interviews will be conducted by one researcher but categorized and analyzed by a group of 3 researchers.

Expected conclusions/findings:
How do higher education teachers reflect and practice their on-site teaching, when MOOCs, apps and streaming video occur in the learning environment? Some of the respondents in this research have been involved in developing ICT-resources and some have not. What kind of questions will be raised by higher education teachers when they reflect on their on-site teaching? And how do they cope with new technologies? Will teachers engaged in sustained collaborative design processes, respond different than other teachers?

In this project, we are trying to describe how experiences with moocing, apping and streaming will elaborate our new practices.

References:
Social media groups as arenas for teachers’ collaborative learning through sharing of ideas and engaging in pedagogical discussions

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With shortcomings in teacher professional development well documented, teachers have turned to social media groups as flexible and expedient arenas for acquiring new knowledge and skills for their teaching profession, subject specialization and job responsibilities. To date, research examining this phenomenon is largely informed by interviews and surveys that focus rather instrumentally on teachers’ perceptions of the value of engaging in social media groups. Few studies have systematically analyzed teachers’ online discussions or used computational techniques to work with the large amounts of trace data that social media platforms produce.

This study contributes by working with a corpus from a large teacher professional Facebook-group that includes 2,970 posts, 15,135 comments and 692,007 likes from a three-year period. It uses this data to address the need to investigate and unpack the discussions taking place in teacher social media groups in detail by examining online interactions themselves. The aim of the study is to explore teachers’ interactions and the resulting norms in relation to their professional development. Theoretically, the study draws on the Goffmainan interactional, dramaturgical approach to understand participants’ online communication. To select particular interactions for detailed analysis that reveal the norms of the group, divergent discussion threads were selected on the grounds that cases where norms are broken reveal much about those norms. Using computational analysis techniques, threads that deviated from the general trace data characteristic that most posts received a relatively equal number of comments and likes were examined and the subset that received significantly more comments than likes was selected. Detailed analysis of the selected threads was then carried out using the Goffmainan notions of performance team and interpersonal rituals as orienting concepts.

In general, the findings from this analysis are aligned with previous research where social media is described as providing a space for teachers to simply support each other and share resources. However, the detailed analysis of the selected discussion threads in this study also shows that such supporting and sharing does not constitute simplistic requests, but may instead initiate discussions involving important issues at stake for teachers. The findings show that teachers engaged in professional identity work by employing, for instance, interpersonal rituals related to being a legitimate member of the Facebook-group and to the established norms of the group with regard to performing the role of professional teacher.

To move beyond the rather shallow picture generally found in the literature of teachers mostly having their immediate pragmatic needs satisfied through online interactions, this study has focused on identifying in-depth discussion and analyzing them in detail. From the findings, it is evident that extensive professional identity work is taking place in at least one Nordic Facebook-group, and that this activity, and social media groups in general, have the potential to provide teachers with opportunities to learn and develop in professionally relevant manners.
Bildung perspectives by students in a modern society

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Research topic/aim:
This paper addresses the bildung perspectives in today’s society, especially searching for the perspectives of the students. The aim of the research is to investigate Bildung perspectives in a modern society specifically in the context of digital learning (Erstad et al., 2016).

Theoretical framework:
We apply four different perspectives of Bildung theory (Honneth, 2008; Humboldt, 2000; Klafki, 2011; Straume, 2013) to discuss the perspectives of bildung among the pupils. Further, in order to understand the perspectives and learning possibilities of the pupils the concept of learning and democracy given by Dewey (2008) is the fundamental understanding of learning in the study.

Methodological design:
To investigate the bildung perspectives we have conducted interviews with twelve focus groups of students in four upper elementary schools. The schools use ipads in their learning and digital learning is a part of the daily learning. Analyses have been completed in a bottom up procedure bringing forth the perspectives of the children.

Expected conclusions/findings:
The argument of the study claims that Digital judgment (Engen, Giæver, & Mifsud, 2017) must be seen in correlation with Bildung, meaning the development of the individuals ability to reflect, take part and critically be aware of itself in the global society.

A common denominator among the pupils is a resignation in including the adults in their digital conflicts. Where they explain that the conflicts merely expand when the adult take part in them. Findings that give a basis to discuss in which ways the pupils should take part in their own learning and development together with their peers and teachers.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
The study is specifically relevant to the Nordic educational research related to digital learning and learning across contexts (Erstad et al., 2016). Norwegian pupils score high on the development of democratic competence (Fjeldstad, Lauglo, & Mikkelsen, 2009) however this learning advantage is not exploited in the Norwegian school. European studies show that a substantial minority of pupils lack digital skills suggesting there is a lot more that can be done to teach children how to use the internet and the social medias (Livingstone et al., 2014) related to their own learning process. A study on cyberbullying give an overview of the extent and forms of cyberbullying in the EU (Dalla Pozza, Pietro, Morel, & Psaila, 2016). In terms of measures to decrease these tendencies this study argues Digital Bildung as one of its possible solutions.
Programming at Swedish Science centers

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Aim:
The main purpose of this study is to develop knowledge of teaching and learning at Science centers. In this presentation we will focus on observations in programming lessons. Which learning opportunities take shape in programming lessons at Science Center? When do students get personally involved and which dilemmas can be observed?

Theoretical frameworks:
In this presentation the concept of Computational Thinking, by Jeanette Wing (2006), will be used as a theoretical framework. A socio-cultural perspective is used in the examination of learning and teaching in programming at Science center.

Method:
The method used in this study is based on observations and informal conversations made during programming lessons at Science center. The Science centers in Sweden have the purpose of supporting development of education in Science, Technology and Mathematics. To gain insight of methods and techniques in teaching and learning at Science centers, three centers were selected. 10 programming lessons in three SC (for students in elementary school, 1st-8th grade) were observed in spring 2017. During the learning activities, different types of visualized programming tools were used. Robots adapted for teaching were used in six of the lessons. 40 students participated in informal conversations with the observer. After transcription a thematic analysis was conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Findings: The preliminary result shows that context – in relation to society and the students themselves, is of great importance on the lesson at science center. This is in line with the governing documents that apply to elementary school (Skolverket, 2017). Students show commitment and joy during the lessons. We will discuss the result in terms of learning opportunities on lessons on the Science center according to the students’ statements, behavior and reactions. To some extent, the learning opportunities agree with the abilities identified as important in Computational thinking (Wing, 2006). Despite good external circumstances, dilemmas sometimes cause students' achieved dedication and learning opportunities to decrease.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
The example of programming is current due to the 2017 revision in the Swedish curriculum for elementary school, LGR 11 (Skolverket, 2017). Projects have been conducted in several municipalities with the purpose to facilitate teaching programming in school (e.g. www.halmstad.se, 2015). Few teachers have experience of educating in programming and therefore seek support for their teaching in different ways. Among many other stakeholders, Science center offers support and continuing education in programming. Since teaching is to be founded on scientific grounds and proven experience, it is therefore important to follow up the teaching and learning at Science centers.

Keywords: Programming, Computational thinking, Science center, Learning environments, Learning opportunities
‘Sketch, Sculpt, Splash… Swipe?’ - Digital ‘Doing’ Dispositions for Musical Pedagogy

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Research Topic/Aim:
This research examines how interactive digital technologies can be harnessed as expressive tools in and out of the music classroom as a way of promoting deep learning, or instances of learning which “[develop] the learning, creating and “doing” dispositions that young people need to thrive now and in their futures’ (Fullan and Langworthy 2014, p.i).

Theoretical Framework:
Children’s use of digital technologies, such as the touchscreen tablet, is increasing at a substantial rate both in and out of the classroom (Clarke and Svaneas 2015). This has significant pedagogical implications for interaction and socialisation as well as learning and discovery, and has led to the recognition of ‘new pedagogies… enabled and accelerated by digital technology and resource, and that take place in environments that support “deep learning”’ (Clark and Svaneas 2015, p.7; Fullan and Langworthy 2014). However, relatively little attention has been given to how such resources may support creative expression, and the inherently experiential and collaborative modes of learning present in music. This research examines resources, strategies and perspectives on how digital technologies may be used to meet existing curriculum aims and promote deep learning in early-years music education.

Methodological Design:
This presentation draws from explorations of bespoke and existing digital resources for musical creativity in the primary school classroom conducted during my PhD research project, leading into new research examining how children are using interactive digital technologies in ways that can lead to self-directed learning and creative expression. I have worked with primary schools to deliver music lessons incorporating digital technologies and conducted a qualitative analysis of the processes and outcomes. This has focused in particular on instances of creative interaction that are uniquely present when using such resources.

Expected Conclusions/Findings:
My research in this area has explored various applications of digital technology in facilitating musical creativity and expression, and examined how these function within a classroom dynamic. This has resulted in promising musical results and high levels of engagement. I am now investigating how these outcomes can lead to independent and collaborative learning which continues outside of the classroom.

Relevance to Nordic Educational Research:
Nordic educational systems are regarded for their experiential and creative content. How to retain such values whilst addressing new technological trends is an increasingly pertinent consideration. In Finland, for example, where music is regarded as a particularly important component of mainstream education, there has been recent attention on the social and creative pedagogies of digital technologies such as virtual games (Vahtivuori-Hänninen et al. 2014, pp.26-8).

References:
Interplay of future visions and extensive use of ICT in sustaining a rural upper secondary school in Iceland

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A study on the foundation and development of an upper secondary school in rural Iceland in 2010 will be presented. An upper secondary school was considered important for supporting the community’s sustainability although the small cohorts of possible students undermined its feasibility. In preparing the formation of the school it was decided that all teaching and learning would be accessible online. This opened up for enrolment of older students, offering flexible attendance and access to teachers and learning materials online. By offering local people the opportunity to enrol, for example to finish their matriculation exams alongside their adult obligation, the number of students increased. However, in 2015, the fifth year of the school operation, the existence of the school was threatened with too few students. Then the possibility of enrolling distance students became the school’s life-line, when the number of distance students from all around Iceland heavily increased and strengthened the feasibility of running the school. The research explores this development with a focus on the way in which teachers developed their practice when including distance learners in their regular courses and what supported the school’s success in attracting distance students?

Cultural-historical activity theory is used for analysing the change process and Engeström’s expansive learning theory is used for analysing the development of the school practice. The school responded to the problem of too few students by enrolling distance learners thereby expanding the school practice. The theory is relevant for revealing the challenges faced by the teachers and the school authorities and identify what supported them in overcoming dilemmas and conflicts and expand their practice. The unit of analysis in the cultural-historical approach is the dialectical interactions of individuals and their circumstances where the use of tools, both material and conceptual are included. Data was generated in ethnographic fieldwork in the school during the years 2013–2017. The rich and diverse data consists of field notes, interviews with school staff and students, and the school web where the school curricula and information on the school activity is accessible. The data analyses are directed by the expansive learning theory.

The results reveal how the design of the school model and the decision to plan the courses in LMS systems online, enabled enrolment of unconventional and distance students. The interplay of material ICT tools, and conceptual tools such as the future vision of the principal, the school policy emphasizing innovation and creativity and learner focused pedagogy adopted and practiced by all teachers is considered to be the key to success. Extensive use of ICT at all levels of the school practice has supported the teachers in dealing with challenges and develop their practice. Understanding the way in which small rural schools may be sustained is relevant in all the Nordic countries.

References:
Didactical and Cultural changes with LMS’s? Implementation as interaction between LMS-design, teaching practices and school culture.

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¹University College CapitóI

Research topic/aim:
In 2013 a comprehensive school reform aiming at increased learning and well-being for all children took place in Denmark. As a part of the reform all municipalities are obliged to purchase and implement the use of LMS’s in their schools before the end of 2017.

Studies show that when LMS’s are implemented both leaders, administrators and teachers associate them with a change in the character of the school and the organizational culture. The teachers specifically see implementation engendering a standardized approach to teaching (Selwyn 2011). Studies furthermore show that the interface design and the overall concept of the LMS is crucial to teachers’ evaluation of the LMS (Granić & Ćukušić 2011).

In the research project entitled Læringsplatformsprojektet (‘the learning management system project’), running from March 2017 until December 2018, we aim to explore the process of implementation and use of LMS’s in a specific primary school in Copenhagen, asking [1] if uses of LMS’s influence and change teachers’ work in regard to planning, practicing and evaluating teaching, and [2] whether the design of the portal produces new conceptions of the task of the school?
In this paper we shall report of the initial findings of the project.

Theoretical framework:
The project rests on culture theory and socio-material theory conceptions of the relation between practice, culture and technology as a continuously evolving exchange between social and material conditions that produces new understandings and new forms of practices (Borgman 2006). Teacher professional expertise is investigated through Anne Edwards’ notions of relational agency and common knowledge (Edwards 2017).

Methodological design:
The project is carried out as an ethnographic field study including observations, informal conversation and individual and group interviews (Hasse 2015). We specifically aim to produce data on subject teaching and subject planning in mathematics and physical education, and on courses and professional guidance related to the implementation of the LMS.

Expected conclusions/findings:
The paper will present the initial findings on subject teaching practices created in cooperation with the LMS as well as emerging findings on culture production created through the platform implementation process.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
Use of LMS’s is an international trend and a new actor in the Nordic primary schools. A deeper understanding of the implications in relation to teaching practices, didactics and pedagogics is needed.

References:
How do librarians and teachers make their public libraries the “Third Places” in local communities for teenagers?: International Comparative Analysis among Nordic Countries, Japan and the U.S.

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Oldenburg (1989) defines the “Third Places” as that are nothing more than informal public gathering places, and lend a public balance to the increased privatization of home life. The phrase “Third Places” derives from considering our homes to be the “first” places in our lives, and our work places the second. Today’s youths are taking advantage of the increase in digital media being produced, but this has the negative effect of decreasing the utilization of “Third Places”, making these social venues less lively, less visited, and less relevant in today’s society. Within the last decade, there has been a sharp decrease in youth’s after school activities. Additionally, with the migration of people to cities and the increase in population, there is less room for creating meeting places and other social sites for teenagers to gather. Those places that do exist have their own challenges, such as upkeep of the buildings and proper supervision. Outside meeting places are an option, but then large groups gathering outside are also targets of violence and possible criminal activity. Ito et al. (2009) described teenagers’ current daily life activities, and their research has had a significant impact on the educational and public libraries’ world. Each library in the Nordic countries, Japan and the U.S. developed their own unique programs and spaces with schools and some local stakeholders. The purpose of this research is (1) to illustrate the ways of creating new services and programs, and inventing each library space as “Third Places” for teenagers, and (2) to compare these programs and spaces in each country. The author utilized ethnography and document research as the research methodologies. Research objectives are Ørestad library and Copenhagen Main Library in Denmark, Nydalen Library in Norway, Okubo library and Musashino Place Library in Japan, and Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and Chicago Public Library in the U.S.. First, Nordic libraries have made closer and stronger ties with public schools and created new activities and programs together. Furthermore, Ørestad library integrated virtual and face to face communication through their facilities in order to enhance digital media. Second, Okubo library in Japan enhanced outreach services in order to reach toward multicultural communities with an emphasis on teenagers in order to recreate the bond with local schools for teaching foreign languages and revitalize their local society. Musashino Place Library reinvented a special place for teenagers where there are no adults. Finally, American libraries created special places for teenagers in order to develop youth’s IT literacy and stimulate after school activities. In conclusion, even though approaches are different in each country, creating a bond between local communities, schools, libraries, and other local stakeholders by utilizing educational and digital theoretical frameworks are conceptually the same in practically all the countries.

References:
History teaching for nation-building in exile: Textbooks as a tool of building national identities in Tibetan refugee schools

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History is essential to the construction of a national identity. However, the issue of how refugee communities construct their national identity and the image of their historical legacy via the teaching of history is an understudied one. As such, this study examines the role of history teaching in the construction of national identities in the context of Tibetan refugee schools in India.

Modern nations have used history education as one of the primary vehicles of nation-building project. Schools promote and legitimize a certain category of knowledge as the official knowledge (Apple, 2014), and participate in the reproduction (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) of the existing social relationships. In order to engender a nationalistic collective identity, Volkan (2001) highlights that the historical narratives often invoke two types of memories of the past – chosen glories and the chosen traumas. In the domain of the teaching of history, Podeh (2000) distinguishes between three different pedagogical approaches – the nationalist, the academic, and the synthetic approach.

With the help of above mentioned theoretical lenses, this study problematizes and analyzes the key features of the project of building a national identity of the Tibetan refugees, and how nation-building project manifests itself in the curricular and pedagogical practices of history education. The study employs critical discourse analysis of the Tibetan history textbooks with a focus on power and representation, and how certain types of memories are evoked and their political currency to the community and its ruling regime. It also employs a thematic analysis of classroom observations and interviews with fifteen history teachers, conducted at five Tibetan refugee schools in India, to understand the role of teachers as the mediators between the state and the child in carrying out the nation-building agendas. The preliminary findings of the textbook analysis show an overwhelming burden of political and cultural agenda in the teaching of history. The paper argues that refugees and other communities in diaspora live in an unstable socio-political climate where the use of history for the construction of collective national identity is more pertinent and urgent.

Many nations including Nordic countries are witnessing a tremendous increase in refugee or migrant population, resulting in tension vis-à-vis the question of integration. As such, there is a need to develop a research-based understanding of refugees and construction of their national identities via the teaching of history.

Reference:

Keywords: Nation-building, history education, refugee education, history didactics, collective memory
Allowing translanguaging space in L2 English

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Multilingual students’ use of their linguistic repertoires when learning and using non-native languages constitutes an active research field (García 2009; Gunnarsson et. al. 2015; Tullock & Fernández-Villanueva 2013). Recent research has revealed the beneficial effects of allowing space for other languages in L2 instruction (García 2009; García & Wei 2014). Yet, there are those still advocating the monolingual principle, in which languages are kept separate and the target language used exclusively in the language classroom (for an overview see Cummins 2007).

In Swedish classrooms today, we are experiencing an increase in the variety of languages present among our students. However, a recent report suggests, that we do not take the students’ language background into account when teaching, leading to a lower grade average among multilingual students after nine years of obligatory schooling (Swedish Schools Inspectorate 2010). In the subject of English, most teachers have a native Swedish background and are able to make comparisons to Swedish, thereby favoring students with a native Swedish background (Tholin 2012).

The study draws on the translanguaging theory. The theory posits that all languages contribute to a multilingual’s complete linguistic repertoire (García & Wei 2014). It further advocates stepping away from the notion of teaching languages as compartmentalized subjects, as do the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages on which our curriculum is based (CEFR 2001).

The purpose of the study is to investigate year nine multilingual students’ use of translanguaging as a method to prepare for the oral part of the national test of English.

This presentation provides the design of the study in terms of method and theory. It further offers an outline for the questionnaire that will be used to initiate the project.

References:
Breaches and bridges? A case study of bilingual teachers´ experiences of inclusion in Norwegian local schools

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Research topic/aim
Inclusive education is a main goal in UN declarations (UNESCO 1990, 1994, 2000, 2015) albeit it lacks a common understanding of what is the purpose of inclusion internationally and nationally (Kiuppis 2011, 2014; Brossard Børhaug & Reindal, 2016; Göransson & Nilholm, 2014). Its lack of purpose raises the question of boundaries, and how diverse school actors can become breaches or bridges in the school’s community. In this paper, we want to explore inclusion from bilingual teachers’ point of view. More specifically, the paper focuses on how bilingual teachers experience to be included in Norwegian local schools where they teach minority pupils.

Theoretical framework
Usually, inclusion models focuses on pupils (Haug, 2014, 2017; Lund, 2017), and research shows clearly a difficult inclusion process of minority pupils within Norwegian educational context based on assimilative laws and discriminatory practices for language teaching (Hilt 2016, Jortveit, 2015; Nes og Nordahl, 2015; Remøy, 2017; Spernes, 2013; Aarsæther, 2014; Øzerk, 2010). However, research also shows that bilingual teachers are often standing at the periphery of the school’s community (Dewilde, 2013; Fee 2011, Forman 2012; Fjeld & Spernes, 2015; Moussavi, 2006; Tkachenko et al., 2015). We argue that such marginalization can be understood as epistemic injustice (Murris, 2013), and leads to weaker teaching opportunities devaluing bilingual teachers’ act of teaching (Biesta, 2017) and eventually reducing opportunities for minority pupils’ inclusion.

Methodological design
The study is based on semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 2001) with 10 bilingual teachers in primary and lower secondary schools in a city of Western Norway in 2017. The selection is done through snow-ball sampling, which is regarded as a particularly effective tool when trying to obtain information on and access to ‘hidden populations’ (Noy, 2008: 330). The interview guide focused on the teachers’ own perceptions of their inclusion in the mainstream school on local level. The two researchers conducted the analysis through Nvivo-program.

Expected conclusions/findings
Preliminary results from teachers’ narratives are emerging. Firstly, bilingual teachers see themselves as indispensable bridges linking favorably the ethnic minority background of pupils and families, and the Norwegian majority educational context. Secondly, the teachers experience themselves as poorly included within local school practices. Poor working conditions are based on sporadic and vulnerable contact with mainstream teachers and school leaders. Thirdly, bilingual teachers face local and systemic challenges: invisibility of teachers’ pedagogical resources and academic qualifications; depreciation of mother tongue teaching facing hegemonic Norwegian language teaching policy; insecurity towards further job perspectives.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Devaluation of the bilingual teachers’ role and teaching opportunities on local school level lead to experiences of marginalization and breaches, and it more generally puts at stake the multicultural school’s bridging project for teachers’ and pupils’ inclusion.

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This paper presents part of a Ph.D project that explores human rights education as a way to promote equality and social justice. Borrowing from institutional logics, a branch of institutional theory that focuses on how belief systems shape and are shaped by individuals and organisations (Powell & Bromley, 2013; Thornton & Ocasio, 2013), this paper asks the following question. If and how is the global logic of human rights experienced and adhered to by students studying the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP) in in Norway and Poland?

The International Baccalaureate (IB) was developed in the 1950s/60s, firstly, to promote the human rights ideology of a peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect, and secondly, to address the pragmatic concerns of increasing numbers of mobile families (Hill, 2002). In the intervening years as the IB has grown into a global organization, offering an international curriculum for students spanning the 3-19 age range, these founding aims persist.

The research question is explored using a case-oriented comparative method (Skocpol & Somers, 1980). The study adopts a multiple methods approach, the central premise of this approach being that a combination of approaches provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone (Creswell, 2013, p. 16).

Using data from student surveys and interviews the preliminary findings reveal the following. Firstly, the ways in which students experience the IBO human rights logic in the school learning community varies. The human rights logic is not promoted evenly within a particular school community or between different schools. Secondly, the human rights logic faces competition with a market logic that has become embedded within the IBO. Thirdly, the data reveals that the way in which students respond to their experiences of the human rights logic varies. There is a large variation in how students choose to engage with the IB programme. Some completely embrace and engage with the human rights logic, while others reject it and disengage from it. A factor in this is the influence on the students of competing logics from wider society, e.g. family, religion, media.

The study concludes that different logics coexist and compete, impacting the ways in which students in the participating IBDP schools both experience and respond to the human rights logic of the IBO. The study contributes to our understanding of how the human rights logic is experienced by students in school learning communities and how students respond to these experiences as evidenced by their attitudes and behavioural intentions. The study is also a theoretical contribution to our understanding of how ‘global’ ideals intersect with local contexts. A better understanding of how different logics within the school learning community coexist and compete can inform both policy and practice. If human rights education is a way to promote equality and social justice then as researchers and practitioners we must continue to develop our understanding about how and why students develop competence in this area.
"Becoming ordinary": a standard and a threat of inclusion. Newly arrived youth crossing the borders between introductory classes and regular school in Norway.

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This session aims at exploring how inclusion is practiced in the Norwegian introductory classes for newly arrived youth, qualified for education and an introductory program. (Education Act §2-1, §2-8). Inclusion is considered a core value of the Norwegian public school system, comprising pupils with widely different backgrounds and capabilities (Haug 2014).

However, what inclusion is in practice may not necessarily be given. The demands of the school system as well as classroom interactions can show the limits and the diverse situations that might constitute inclusion. Therefore ask: How is inclusion practiced in Norwegian introductory classes? The aim for this session is to explore the range and the boundaries for how inclusion is practiced for immigrant pupils in school. I argue that a description from the introductory might reveal deep controversies and boundaries in what constitutes inclusion and question its aim as a golden standard for Norwegian education.

Inclusion as immanent ethics

Many key challenges of inclusion might not be framed within a set of predefined ethical rules. Inclusion tend to evolve differently in practice and through action. In this session I will therefore turn to practice based perspectives. I give a reading of Deleuze and Guattari to establish an empirical and interactional approach to inclusion. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and Deleuze (2009), ethical issues must be studied as events and practices in the meetings between people, materials, discourses and orders of society. Inclusion can be studied as events, revealing different degrees for capacity for action for teachers and pupils.

Methodological design

The study is an empirical and qualitative case study, where I have conducted ethnographic fieldwork in introductory classes in the eastern part of Norway (Flyvbjerg and Cambridge 2011, Madden 2010). In this paper I will conduct a thematic content analysis of two excerpts from fieldwork in one introductory class with pupils from grade 8 to 10.

Findings

The analyses show the introduction class in a period of transition to a regular school. The class will be split up and the pupils transferred to different schools. On the one hand, the analyses show an inclusive group in terms of affirmative and safe personal relations. The group is characterized by great tolerance for diversity and support for vulnerability. However, as the transition to a regular public school approaches, and the focus of both the teachers and the pupils is to “fit in” to the new school, to becoming Norwegian and becoming so-called “ordinary”. “Becoming ordinary”, then, is a standard of inclusion with a high price to pay in terms of loss of individuality and a devaluation of diversity.

Youth crossing boundaries in life and coming into the Norwegian school might not only display the breaches in the practices of inclusion, but also question the very notion of inclusion as it is practiced today.
Leading, learning and teaching in a multicultural context – the case of a combination class

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This paper reports and discusses how an upper secondary school works to achieve inclusive education for recent minority students between 16-20 years old in two combination classes. In a combination class the students are offered differentiated teaching from pre-upper secondary curriculum. In Norway only Thor Heyerdahl Upper Secondary School has experience with combination classes. Inspired from this, several other upper secondary schools provide such classes from 2017. Although reports on local level have described and distributed experience and good examples, there is a lack of systematic research within this topic. Hence, it is of great interest to develop knowledge from a novice school in its initial year. The results are framed and analyzed within a combination of educational leadership approach (Robinson, 2011) and a multicultural education approach (Banks, 2004). The first one is suggestive of the importance of school leaders’ role regarding use of relevant knowledge, solve complex school-based problems and building relational trust with staff, parents, and students. The second offers a framework based on the following dimensions: content integration, prejudice reduction, inclusive education, knowledge production, and empowering student culture. A combination of these two approaches provides lenses to identify, describe, analyze and understand the current research topic with varying levels of depth. Methodologically, as this is research does not aim to provide final and conclusive answers to how the school work with regard to the combination classes, the study draws on exploratory research. At the same time, the study also falls into an action research design, as leaders and teachers are invited to collaborate in the identification and reflections regarding challenges and possibilities of improving leading, teaching and learning for recent minorities. Initial results from the study, through meetings and group interviews with both school leaders and coordinating teachers give indications of; engaging in inclusive practices in order to address issues such as language, critical consciousness about social justice, knowledge of inclusive practices, emphasis on student learning and classroom practice, of the need to address critical reflection, promote dialogue, or, in short, advocate inclusion, equity, and social justice for recent minority students. In the current Nordic landscape of research, research policies, and general policies emphasizing education as the solution to broad societal problems, this study provide several highly relevant issues. Firstly, the paper discusses how to support learners’ participation and achievements throughout their educational trajectory, in discussions of what role education can play in contexts of migration and refugee crises. Secondly the paper addresses an interdisciplinary issue, as it argues for the integration of multicultural and leadership theory, in order to understand the characteristics of how school leaders and teachers response to the possibilities and challenges which relate to recent minorities within a linguistic and cultural diverse school context.

Key words: Leading and learning, recent minorities, upper secondary school, combination classes.
“Do you teach about real knowledge?” Different ideas between parents and teachers from unlike cultures about the role of schools and education.

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Research topic/aim
The research is situated in Akureyri, a small town in a rural area in north of Iceland. In light of the recent increase of the immigrant population with children entering the Icelandic school system (Tran 2015), including Akureyri, this paper focuses on the experiences of immigrant parents and teachers in compulsory schools in Akureyri.

Theoretical framework
This research draws on three main strands from theories and literature; home-school collaboration, structuralism and post-structuralism and Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory. The literature on home-school collaboration emphasizes the importance of building a culturally responsive relationship (Ameta, 2013) where the school plays a leading role in communicating with the parents. Elements within structuralism and post-structuralism (Jóhannesson, 2010; Peters & Wain, 2003) are useful to understand social structures and how these affect our way of thinking and being. The cultural dimensions theory developed by Geert Hofstede (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2010) describes how cultures affect societies regarding values held by their members and how these values reflect behaviour and people’s entire being.

Methodological design
The research presents data from an ongoing project on the education of immigrants and refugees in Iceland. Seven semi-structured (Esterberg, 2002) group interviews (Bender, 2013) were conducted with 38 teachers, one with a school counsellor, ten in-depth interviews with parents of immigrant students who have a European and two Syrian parents (a couple) were interviewed as well.

Findings
The findings are introduced by one main theme: The role of the school as an educational institution which is divided into five sub-themes; Lack of discipline and respect, academic demands, the relationship between teachers and students, approach to learning, keeping up with their home country curriculum. The paper will as well discuss how the Icelandic school system challenges immigrant parents’ understanding of school as a traditional place for learning.

Relevance to Nordic educational research.
One of the main findings relates to how parents and teachers of different background and cultures understand the role of education. This is highly relevant in a Nordic communities that have for long time been rather mono cultured and still are in some remote areas. This causes some challenges that teachers and parents need to be aware of.

References
Prospective teachers` encounters with student diversity

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Prospective teachers’ encounters with student diversity
The guidance on how teacher training can improve student teachers’ competence in their encounters with increased student diversity is vague (Dyrnes, Johansen & Jonsdottir, 2015; Tolo, 2014). For two years, we have cooperated on an action research project (Levin & Greenwood, 2001) at two teacher training institutions. The project, comprised of four actions, in addition to a summative assessment in practical pedagogical education (PPE) at both institutions.

The empirical data is derived from the summative assessments at the end of the academic year. We pose the following questions:
To what extent and how is diversity thematised in the students’ presentations and submissions?
What traces of the four actions are visible in the material from the summative assessments in pedagogy?
We draw on Second wave, white teacher identity research (Lowenstein, 2009)
These studies emphasise that student teachers are faced with a resource perspective. Furthermore, we have introduced both critical-multiculturalism and interculturalism (Dervin, 2013).

Two PPE cohorts form the basis for the study. One cohort was comprised of 92 full-time and part-time students with backgrounds in science subjects. In the cohort. In the other cohort, there were 30 part-time students with vocational training backgrounds.
We apply thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify and analyse patterns in the data material.

There is substantial variation in how thoroughly the students refer to and discuss the topic.
An important finding is that the teacher students do not differentiate the term diversity.
They refer to the influx of refugees and increasing multicultural elements in Norway.
The students’ own backgrounds, i.e. “the Norwegian” is rarely thematised.
The discussion is related to experiences from their classroom practice.
The challenges are related to language and cultural differences.
The vocational training students, relate the discussion to a greater extent to course teachings than the science subjects students.

This topic appears to be insufficiently explored in the Nordic countries. Much of the research and theoretical development are derive from USA and are thereby not directly transferable to Nordic teacher training (Thomassen, 2016).

References


“What we can see is that we don’t succeed with them” The construction of “newly arrived students with little or no previous schooling” in three Swedish compulsory schools

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Research topic/aim  
The aim of the study is to investigate how the category “newly arrived students with little or none previous schooling” is constructed in three Swedish schools.

A newly arrived student with little or none previous schooling here refers to a student who has arrived to Sweden after the age of 7, and who has been in Sweden for a maximum of 4 years, and has less years of formal schooling than the majority of the students in the same grade (National Agency for Education, 2016a).

Newly arrived students with none or little previous schooling are described as "non-fit" students in the current Swedish school system (SOU 2017:54), where schools haven’t always developed procedures for, for example, basic literacy education for older students.

Theoretical framework  
A theoretical point of departure is that there is no inherent essence of categories, concepts or subjects; they are constructed and made "recognizable" in the discourses that circulate in the place and time they appear (Youdeill, 2011). School is here seen as a normalizing practice, where differentiation instrument such as age, classes and grades creates images of the normal/desirable pupil (Foucault, 1977).

In addition, the concept of color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2010) is being used to analyse the emphasis placed on culture by some of the informants.

Methodological design  
The study was conducted through ethnographic fieldwork in three Swedish municipalities. Interviews were conducted with both employees outside the schools, involved with education for the newly arrived students in the municipality, and with employees in the schools. Traditional ethnographic methods, such as observations, field notes and audio recordings have also been used (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007)

Expected conclusions/findings  
In my material, I’ve identified three main ways to construct the students from a deficit perspective: they are constructed as "weak", in need of a diagnosis, or as bearers of a “deficit culture.”

There is also a fourth way of constructing these students, which I don’t label as “deficit”. Here the students are constructed as learners who haven’t yet had the opportunity to learn certain school-related skills, such as reading and writing or specific subject knowledge.

Relevance to Nordic educational research  
Since 2008, there has been a large increase in new arrivals to Sweden from countries where schooling is not available to the entire population (National agency for education, 2016b). Implications of this have not been researched to any greater extent.
References
We are in Norway you know and then we analyze Norwegian food.

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Two sixteen year old students, Merve and Emily, are sitting at the back of the classroom, preoccupied in front of their computers. They look immersed in their work. The science teacher has given the class a task: Please calculate the nutritional content of a dinner dish you ate this weekend. Like the majority of their classmates, the girls have chosen to analyze the content of a taco dish. I ask Merve: Did you have tacos this weekend? She gives me a little smile and shakes her head. Why did you choose tacos then? I ask. Merve replies with a question: Do you think I ought to analyze kebab? Emily interferes: Tacos because, we are in Norway you know, and then we analyze Norwegian food.

We are in a year one class in an upper secondary school in the eastern parts of Oslo. The class is culturally and socioeconomically heterogeneous. Fourteen out of eighteen students are born in Norway; while ten of them have, one/both parents born in a non-western country. These students, among them Merve and Emely, self-identify as foreigners. As a participant observer, I followed the students in science classes for nine months.

The aim of this ethnographic study (Parker-Jenkins, 2016) is to explore discursive identity formations in this heterogeneous science classroom. This perspective on student’s identity formations in science classes seems to be rarely explored in Nordic context. In the considerable international literature on this topic, the focal point appears to be on how student identity affects science learning and scientific literacy (Brown 2005). However, in this study the perspective is the opposite. I want to highlight the students’ opportunities for identity formations through participation in science classrooms: What characterizes and affects the students' identity work in the science classroom? Data is collected through mixed-method approach and includes field notes, audiotaped small-group sessions, students’ written work as well as reflections and interviews with the students.

The theoretical framework is primarily found in a critical and constructivist approach to interculturality (Dervin 2010). The analysis draw on James Paul Gee’s perspectives on identity (Gee, 2000)

My preliminary findings reveal that the students value the diversity in the student community. The students consider the science classroom as a place for production of education. The classroom is apparently culturally neutral. However, that is just seemingly.

The teacher offers the class a number of open assignments, which (hypothetically) could enable them to draw on their personal experiences. However, they do not take that opportunity, nor are they encouraged to do so.

References
Educational needs and challenges of Syrian refugee children in Icelandic schools

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Linguistic and cultural diversity among pre- and compulsory school children and their families in Iceland has grown over the past few years and currently around 11\% of all preschool children and 7.6 \% of all compulsory school students have heritage languages other than Icelandic (Statistics Iceland, 2016a, 2016b). These include refugee children. According to UNHCR, altogether 597 refugees have settled in Iceland in the past decades, from 1956 to 2016 (Rauði kross Íslands, 2016) and a group of 55 Syrian refugees arrived in early 2016 and settled in three municipalities. These included eleven families; 20 adults and 35 children, all arriving from Lebanon. Before the arrival of the refugees, preparations took place in cooperation with the UN Refugee Agency (UNCHR). The refugee families receive support for one year in Iceland: Three to four support families, housing, courses in Icelandic, financial assistance, health care and after school programs (Rauði kross Íslands, 2016).

Educational policies and curriculum guides in Iceland emphasize equity and inclusion (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 2011; 2014). Some schools in Iceland have responded to the diversification of their children and students by exploring and implementing various innovative and empowering educational practices as well as building partnerships with parents and communities (Ragnarsdóttir, 2015; Ragnarsdóttir & Schmidt, 2014). However, various challenges appear in these partnerships with parents and in the children’s schooling.

The aim of the study is to explore the educational needs of newly arrived refugee children in Icelandic pre- and compulsory schools, the structures created for their reception, participation, learning and wellbeing as well as challenges in their school settings in three municipalities.

The focus of the study is on how educational practices and structures are created for the inclusion for the children and educational partnerships with their parents and what challenges appear. The study also explores the special provisions provided in cooperation of schools and health care services for the refugee children in light of their experiences and traumas.

The theoretical framework of the study includes critical approaches to education (May & Sleeter, 2010; Nieto, 2010) and multilingual education for social justice (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012; Skutnabb-Kangas, Phillipson, Mohanty & Panda, 2009) as well as research on cooperation between educational institutions, and health care institutions in working with refugee families and their children (Archambault, 2012; Jones & Rutter, 1998; Measham & Nadeau, 2012; Richman, 1998).

Methods include semi-structured interviews with principals and teachers in the preschools and compulsory schools in the three municipalities, as well as interviews with the refugee parents who have children in these schools. Emphasis in the study is on in-depth research in the cases in question. Background information and policy documents from school authorities in the municipalities will also be explored.

The preliminary findings which are highly relevant to Nordic research with refugee families and schools, indicate that the inclusion of the refugee children and educational practices in the schools have in many ways been successful as well as the partnerships with parents, although a number of challenges and dilemmas have appeared.
Autonomous orthodoxy. The negotiation of career pursuits and family planning of second generation female immigrants enrolled in prestigious education.

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Concerns about the unsuccessful integration of minority migrant populations in Western Europe often take the form of worries about gender inequity. Although gender gaps are narrowing with the second generation, female children of immigrants’ both in Europe and Norway have lower work participation rates and lower labor market returns to educational qualifications than their native majority peers (Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012; A. Heath & Cheung, 2007; A. F. Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008; Hermansen, 2013; Koopmans, 2016; Read & Oselin, 2008). Accordingly, one specific worry is that the highly educated female second generation will be held back by traditional gender norms at the moment of family formation, and thus end up as housewives and homemaking mothers (Brekke & Rogstad, 2011; Kavli & Nadim, 2009; Koopmans, 2016; Nielsen, Rosholm, Smith, & Husted, 2003). Underpinning this concern is a model that depicts a woman’s labor market participation as controlled through the immigrant family, mainly by her parents and her husband.

To enhance our understanding of female second generation occupational decisions, it is therefore crucial to investigate them as intertwined with their marriage decisions. The literature seems to draw on two diverging understandings of the relationship between higher education and family formation in immigrant communities. Either, education is a step towards social mobility and thus also a place where traditional gender norms are challenged (Çelikaksoy, 2016; Kalmijn, 1998). Or, education is seen as an investment to be used within the home – and thus not challenging traditional gender norms (Read & Oselin, 2008). In this article, I argue that this simplistic pitting – of the traditional family control vs. the modern women’s autonomy over own career and family choices – might shroud our understanding of the real-life choices and reflections of daughters of immigrants who are at the threshold of their own occupational and family careers.

I analyze the narratives emerging from 28 in-depth interviews with children of immigrants recently enrolled in prestigious tracks of tertiary education, and show how they combine the conflicting perspectives offered in the literature. The women I have interviewed have notions of pursuing a prestigious career simultaneously as they want to enter a within-group, parent-arranged marriage. The aim of the article is to better understand how these women make sense of these apparently diverging notions of “who they are”. I argue that by drawing on stories that blur the boundaries between romantic and arranged marriages, highly educated daughters of immigrants can maintain somewhat traditional marriage customs simultaneously as they understand themselves as modern, independent career women.

The paper and presentation is assigned to the NERA-network Multi-Cultural Educational Research, as their interests fit best with my research topics.
The complexity of multicultural education: an example of an art lesson

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Research topic
This paper investigates the categorization, positioning and articulations of multiculturalism and culture that take place in teacher instruction and analyzes them in the light of critical multicultural education.

Theoretical framework
In the Finnish national core curriculum from 2014 it is emphasized that the pupil's cultural identity should be appreciated in school. Research also show that pupils do better, if their cultural and linguistic identities are supported in school (Cummins 2015). Multicultural education has been seen as a tool for broadening the image of a homogenous Finland and taking other cultures into account. At the same time there is a risk of exotizing and othering, if pupils from minorities are asked to represent their cultures in essentializing ways (Gorski 2008). The framework of the paper is critical multicultural education, where culture and identity are seen as fluid and referring to several social categories and the unequal distribution of power is in focus (May & Sleeter 2010). The task of the teacher to acknowledge the cultural identity of all pupils without essentializing, and to take power relations into account, becomes complex and challenging. There is a need for research that analyzes practices of multicultural education in the Nordic setting in order to develop and implement ways of teaching which enable and empower pupils.

Methodological design
The data consists of a 17 minutes long video excerpt from an art lesson in grade 6. The material is part of a weeklong video observation in a primary school in the capital region of Finland. The video material is transcribed and analyzed with methods from Conversation Analysis.

Expected findings
The preliminary findings show how it is challenging also for a teacher that is conscious about the complexity of multicultural education to teach in a way that takes the diversity of the pupils into account without othering. Inspired by an article about art education being too monocultural, the teacher gives an assignment where the pupils are to do a picture of their own visual culture. The pupils are encouraged to use their own background, especially if it is another than Finnish, which contributes to the discourse where Finnishness and multiculturalism are counterparts. At the same time, it is emphasized that everybody has their own visual culture, and the local culture gets articulated as something to which everybody can belong. The long and hesitant instruction together with the teacher's own articulation of the assignment about the pupils’ own cultures as being a sensitive issue, shows that multiculturalism has not yet become part of the everyday teaching in the Finnish school.

Relevance to Nordic research
This study shows how the conceptualization of multiculturalism and culture and implementation of multicultural education are issues that every teacher needs to struggle with, and that needs discussion and problematization. There is a need for fluid and complex understandings of culture and identity, insight in the mechanisms of othering and concrete examples of how multicultural education can be implemented and how to make multiculturalism part of the normal school and teaching.
‘Cultural Diversity’ in Teacher Education: Understanding the Workings of “Whiteness” in Institutional Discourses

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Aim
This paper contributes to the understanding of the subtle workings of Whiteness in the Nordic teacher education institutional discourses by pointing at central knowledge-promoting actors’ discursive practices. I compare and discuss the findings of three studies (a critical, interpretative literature review; a policy and curriculum documents analysis; and a teacher educator interview analysis), which form part of my upcoming doctoral thesis. The studies analyse the discursive use of the term ‘cultural diversity’ in three knowledge-promoting domains of teacher education: (1) international research articles; (2) Norwegian national policy and curriculum documents; and (3) Norwegian teacher educators.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework guiding this paper is based on perspectives central to both critical whiteness studies and critical discourse analysis. These perspectives share the aims of detecting and dismantling social hegemonic power relations. However, whilst critical whiteness studies aim at dismantling the social hegemonic power of Whiteness, critical discourse analysis aims at dismantling the hegemony of any social group mainly through the critical analysis of discourses in text. Particularly relevant in this paper are the concepts normalising/neutralising (e.g. Frankenberg, 1993); othering (cf. Said, 2003); binaries; ideology (Van Dijk, 2006); and discursive hierarchy (Goldberg, 1993).

Method
The three studies compared in this paper build on data collected from three different knowledge-promoting domains of teacher education: (1) a critical interpretative literature review that consists of 67 international studies on teacher education (Fylkesnes, forthcoming); (2) an analysis of six national policy and curriculum documents (Fylkesnes, forthcoming); and an analysis of 12 individual interviews with teacher educators (Fylkesnes, Mausethagen, and Nilsen, forthcoming). Even though the data consist of texts collected from three different domains, the strategy for analysing the data was similar: an analytical strategy of three readings was used (inspired by Søreide, 200; Mausethagen & Granlund, 2012).

Findings
The analyses across the three domains showed a consistency in the use of ‘cultural diversity’, but that the three domains produced three different discursive logics. In all three studies ‘cultural diversity’ was primarily related to the term ‘multicultural’ and sometimes used interchangeably or replaced by it. In addition, the terms ‘cultural diversity’ and ‘multicultural’ both referred to terms and descriptions that represented ‘the Other’, mainly in forms of racial and ethnical difference. ‘Cultural diversity’ represented as ‘the Other was found to rest upon an assumed, but not necessarily explicit or visible, presence of Whiteness.

Relevance for Nordic educational research
The relationship between teachers and students’ cultural-, ethnic-, and racial background has been given increased attention in international research lately. Central actors in Nordic education are mainly White, of a middle-class background and they generally identify with most of the majority’s values. This is contrary to minoritised (Adair, 2008) students’ identity experiences. Seen from a social justice perspective, these divergent identity experiences are closely linked to the ‘cultural diversity’ discourses that educational actors promote. It is therefore interesting to explore what Nordic teacher students learn about ‘cultural diversity’ through the discourses they are exposed to during their education.
Pupils’ patterns of communication with peers, during lessons, at a Swedish multicultural lower secondary school - pupils’ communication as a means of learning.

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Purpose
The emphasizing on individualization of the pupil in the learning situation, in national and international curricula, can be regarded as a westernized perspective that might be at the expenses of a more communicative approach on learning (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The increasing migration rate in e.g. the Nordic countries, leads to growing numbers of multicultural schools. This puts great demands on the learning situations and new needs in the local school context. The purpose of this study was to discover and describe patterns of communication during lessons at a municipal multicultural Swedish lower secondary school. The focus was the pupils’ informal conversation during lessons: How do pupils communicate with peers while helping and scaffolding each other? What do pupils communicate about, when helping and scaffolding each other?

Theoretical framework
Learning can be regarded as a fundamental social phenomenon where the individual competence is developed through interaction with others. In these learning processes, the one who masters a proficiency guides and scaffolds the novice (Säljö, 2000/2010). Through communication, people not only show what they know and do not know - they also show their expectations of what other members of the group know and can (Stier, 2004).

Methodological design
In this ethnography study a school was selected where about 65 % of the pupils have a foreign background (both parents born abroad), with relatively few newly arrived pupils (i.e. arrived to Sweden within the last four years). In a class with 26 pupils speaking 14 different native languages (including Swedish) participant observation was carried out, followed by video recording of the pupils - resulting in media files with pupils’ more informal conversations with peers during lessons in Mathematics, Swedish, English, Natural Sciences and Social Studies. Field notes were taken during four months. Towards the end three video cameras and several Dictaphones were used to record the pupils’ communication and the files were later on synchronized. The analyzing level is on a group level. The study was approved by the ethical vetting board in Umeå.

Findings
Some of the pupils’ communicative patterns were: apologizing, confirming, copying, dictating, discussing, explaining, identifying, instructing, interpreting, interrupting, pointing out, posing questions, praising, rejecting, repeating, and questioning. Further analyses might reveal patterns of who are listened to, who are made invisible, who ask and/or respond to the peers’ questions, and who reinforce each other.

Social implications
Revealing communicative patterns between peers in a multicultural class may lead to a broader and deeper understanding on the complexity on how pupils communicate and learn at compulsory school, and might facilitate a more inclusive school. It might have an impact on e.g. teaching methods used in class as well as content design.

References
Roma and Travellers resisting racialization in schools in three Nordic countries

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Discrimination of Roma and Travellers has been reported in the Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian schools. Still, the current Roma, Traveller and education policies tend to problematize Roma and Travellers themselves instead of the school systems. One shared notion in the countries is that current problems occur because the schools are lacking knowledge about the groups. In the policies this knowledge is usually depicted as knowledge about history and culture of Roma and Travellers. Currently there are practitioners who identify as Roma or Travellers themselves and aim to transform the schools. One part of their work is to give knowledge about Roma or Travellers for schools. In this paper I analyse how these practitioners perceive and use the idea of “giving knowledge about Roma and Travellers to schools” as part of the work of transforming the schools.

The paper combines critical theories about race, critical whiteness studies and poststructural theories about power, subject constitution and discourse. A central concept for the paper is racialization which refers to the processes of making and signifying “race” as a social and political category (see e.g. Lentin 2008). The paper is based on interviews with 18 people who identify as Roma or Traveller and work to promote the basic education of Roma and Traveller minorities in Finland, Sweden and Norway.

The workers who are aiming to make a change in the institutions describe “giving knowledge” as a way to go in to the institutions. In their descriptions the knowledge they are providing is a reaction to the prejudiced and racist “knowledge” which already exists in schools. In the paper it is interpreted that Roma and Travellers are racialized in schools by homogenizing and categorizing the groups and connecting negative perceptions to the categories. The interviewees negotiate and find strategies to “give knowledge” in a manner which would challenge and resist racialization. The strategies and knowledge varies between countries and are connected to the minority politics of the nation-states. In the analysis the nuanced and manifold ways of challenging, resisting and negotiating are made visible. It is concluded that even though the current policies and practices are silent about racism and race, the interviewees are challenging racialization and negotiating with the processes of racialization in their work.

This paper contributes to the research on Roma, Travellers and basic education in the Nordic countries from a cross-cultural perspective. Exceptional historical cultural homogeneity is one hegemonic and rarely questioned narrative in the Nordic countries. The Nordic welfare state model is repeatedly argued of being threatened by a new heterogeneity of population due to the intensified migration from non-European countries in the past few decades. Schools are characterised as encountering a new situation of diversity and scholars and administrators are calling for new practices. The paper makes the historical heterogeneity of the schools visible and analyses the Nordic discussions and silences of discrimination and racism in schools.

Bridging the gap with supplementary schooling - Parents and children’s voices on identity, school and community

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1. Research topic/aim
Our area of interest is supplementary schools, often organized by parents, diaspora groups and religious communities, offering extra support in mother tongue, majority language, mathematics and other subjects. Having previously interviewed parents on their reasons for using supplementary schools, and exploring what Yosso (2005) called “community cultural wealth”, we wish here to present research exploring participants’ experiences with supplementary schools from these two perspectives. The pupils: There has been limited research on children with minority identities in early childhood education and primary school (Østberg 2003), therefore a focus on pupils understanding and experience of supplementary schools, and their identity as pupils. The parents: Looking further at the parents’ involvement in their children’s education and school success (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Bringing these two strands together, the researchers will discuss how supplementary schools and community knowledge, if understood as a form of “social capital”, can be useful for home school cooperation.

2. Theoretical framework
Inspired by a critical multicultural and postcolonial approaches (Banks, 2009, May & Sleeter 2010), with a focus on community knowledge and social capital (Yosso 2005). As far as interviewing pupils about identity, we look to concepts of superdiversity (Vortovec, 2007) and intersectionality (Berg m.fl. 2010).

3. Methodological design
This is a qualitative study, using semi - structured interviews. Interviewing parents on their reasons for using supplementary schools at several Saturday schools in Oslo plus interviews with pupils who use such supplementary schools. We interview in schools organized through religious organisations and those catering for one mother tongue.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
Present why parents organize, finance and use supplementary school. Giving preservice teacher more knowledge to understand what parents know and do needs, to help their children succeed in school, and making for better cooperation between parent and teachers.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
Researching community knowledge on education breaks boundaries between knowledge areas and actors. By interviewing parents and children on supplementary schools, we are promoting knowledge of user involvement in school achievement out with mainstream schooling. Knowledge of the role of supplementary education for minority parents is important, allowing a better understanding of how parents support their children’s education.

References:
Addressing culturally responsive assessment in European Schools

Nortvedt, Guri A.¹, Gloppen, Silje.¹, Skedsmo, Guri.¹, Wiese, Eline.¹, Brown, Martin.², Burns, Denise.², McNamara, Gerry.², O’Hara, Joe.², Altrichter, Herbert.³, Fellner, Magdalena.³, Helm, Christoph.³, Herzog-Punzenberger, Barbara.³, Nayir, Funda⁴ & Taneri, Oya⁴

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The purpose of this paper presentation is to discuss what culturally responsive assessment (CRA) of students with migration backgrounds might entail and what affordances and challenges teachers might face when implementing CRA in the classroom. Across the world, migration has resulted in more diverse classrooms and more complex tasks for teachers. An achievement gap between migrant and majority students has been observed across Europe (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2015), indicating that migrant children do not have the same possibilities to succeed in school as other students. Moreover, migrant students might have very different educational backgrounds; while some have attended formal schooling in one or more countries, others might have primarily experienced informal schooling. Still, OECD (2015) found that students with similar background succeed very differently in different educational systems, indicating that what happens in school matters.

The purpose of classroom assessment is to elicit evidence to support student learning (Black & Wiliam, 2012). As such, assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. In assessment situations, students should be allowed to express themselves and draw on previous knowledge, in addition to that learned in school. What might be viewed as a valid assessment or a valid response to an assessment might differ among cultural settings (Klenowski, 2009). Teachers, therefore, need to develop a wide variety of assessment strategies and become sensitive to students’ diverse cultural ways of expressing themselves (Klenowski, 2009; OECD, 2015).

The present study is an Erasmus+ study, carried out by partner institutions in Austria, Ireland, Norway and Turkey. The study consists of a literature review on culturally responsive assessment and migrant students and an online questionnaire administered to 200 head teachers in each partner country. The questionnaire investigates school policies for the assessment of migrant students and the challenges schools face. In addition, case studies of assessment practices in each country are conducted through interviews with head teachers, teachers, students and parents. The aim is to explore how these different stakeholders understand CRA and their experiences and beliefs related to assessment.

The presentation will discuss emerging themes across the three data sources regarding assessment formats, fairness, the intersection of culture and assessment, the cultural dimensions of assessment and the affordances and challenges teachers and schools face when implementing CRA. Challenges regarding linguistic and culture aspects and their link to fairness will be the main focus. We argue that this research has high relevance to the Nordic educational research community as all European countries are experiencing more diverse classrooms and consequently must ensure equitable assessment practices within schools.

References
The Coastal Community as Context for Culture-Based Science Pedagogy

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The notion of the localized curriculum and community-based learning strategies involves capitalizing on the “funds of knowledge” already existing in the place. By harnessing its potential, we get the most out of community by enhancing, improving and progressing the local knowledge of the people and utilizing this knowledge to create a meaningful science teaching and learning in school. This qualitative-quantitative study was conceived to develop materials and strategies for secondary science teachers in the application of knowledge, skills and approach in teaching science using the coastal community as context. Guided by the theoretical perspective of social constructivism, action ethnography was employed. Qualitative research techniques such as observations, interviews, community immersion, and focus group discussion were used. Data were generated through cultural memory banking and by developing memory bank charts. Quantitative data were derived from researcher-made tests to determine the levels of knowledge of secondary science teachers. Gaps were identified and a custom designed instructional material was developed to address the gaps and predicaments in the teaching and learning situation of the schools located in a coastal community. A seminar-workshop was conducted as was participated by high school science teachers. The outputs of the seminar were processed and integrated into the learning material. Moreover, a try-out of the learning material was made. Two classes were utilized to compare the pretest, posttest achievement scores of the students. Results revealed that classes who utilized the culture-context-community-based approach performed better. Findings of this study revealed that tapping into the “funds of knowledge” that were present within the communities prove to be a valuable resource for teachers. We may feel presumptuous that the people from the coastal communities have rich repositories of accumulated knowledge; and the researcher conducted ethnographic exploration with the purpose of uncovering local knowledge bases. To a certain extent, static ideas were enriched by profuse narratives and lessons from the people of the coastal community. This community-based knowledge is an indispensable resource for use in science and also across content areas of the curriculum.

The study also developed two important theoretical contributions. First a model on how to create culturally relevant community-based learning through: (a) mining local funds of knowledge from the community, (b) constructing cultural memory bank, (c) developing a contextual-learning strategy for coastal communities, (d) developing a tailor-fitted instructional material for coastal communities and (d) teaching culture-based, and context-based science in schools. The second contribution is the Theory of Community Learning Exchange Valorization. This theory attempts to conglomerate conceptions and notions about the “mining” of the community funds of knowledge and the way this knowledge can be “valorized” and be “given back” to the community.

Amarillo, Donna B. & Buenvenida, Harold O.¹

¹Capiz State University

This mixed-method study explored the local knowledge of the community regarding the practices on disaster preparedness before, during, and after disasters, assessing the needs to be addressed to improve disaster preparedness in a coastal community, designing a community-based learning material to enhance disaster preparedness in a local community, and determining if the developed community-based learning materials contributed to the learners and community’s knowledge regarding disaster and resiliency.

Using the ethnographic tools such as key informant interviews, observations, and focus group discussions, the researcher explored and utilized community local knowledge and science concepts as bases and context in the development of a community-based learning material. Findings of the study revealed that: the coastal community possess a wealth of knowledge regarding DRR on typhoons; there are certain needs of the community to be addressed such as the need for relevant DRR learning materials that can be used in school and community, and the need to enhance skills in coping after disasters; a community–based learning material that was developed was effective to address the needs in the knowledge regarding disasters.

The study also generated a model on how to create a community-based learning material utilizing local knowledge and science concepts focusing on the following major activities, namely: drawing funds of knowledge from the community; developing a community-based learning material; identifying culturally relevant science concepts in disaster risk reduction; and teaching culturally relevant disaster risk reduction concepts in school and community.
Dance as Literacy? Highlighting Embodied Modes of Meaning in Basic Education

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This poster presents an approach to expanding multiliteracies by introducing dance as an embodied mode of meaning in basic education. A pedagogy of multiliteracies emphasizes that education should comprise linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial modes of meaning to address the multiplicity of communication channels and the increasing emergence of linguistic and cultural diversity in an increasingly globalized world (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; The New London Group, 1996, 2000). Still, schools continue to favour and value traditional literacies, which has been criticized among literacy scholars (Gee, 2004; Lam, 2006), and gestural modes of meaning receive little attention in literacy education (Jusslin, 2017).

Dance as a form of expression can expand multiliteracies, bringing gestural modes of meaning to the surface in literacy education. Dance as an art form is an established method of learning. However, dance as literacy is an understudied area in the Nordic countries as well as internationally (see e.g. Dils, 2007), being more widespread in research in dance education than in educational research. Dance as literacy is unknown for students and teachers, but also dance teachers, indicating a need to clarify how dance can be understood as literacy in basic education.

To investigate how dance can be understood and developed as literacy in basic education, an exploratory case study (Yin, 2009) is conducted on a dance residency in grade 5 in a school in Finland. The dance residency, conducted in the fall of 2018, is understood as a situated practice (The New London Group, 1996), including a dance teacher who teaches the students in several school subjects through dance. Data will consist of video recordings, interviews with students and teachers and field notes. Prior to the dance residency, a pilot study is conducted to evaluate the research design. The results are expected to clarify how dance can be understood as literacy in basic education and contribute to further develop a theory of multiliteracies.

References:
A study by interview on how new arrivals learn Swedish, seen from the student perspective

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The aim of the study is to increase the knowledge of how newly arrived students learn; by drawing forward how the students themselves think about their studies and the teachers’ pedagogic strategies. Starting from this purpose we investigate in which different ways students have learnt Swedish, which different strategies they use to understand a text and which factors which are meaningful in their learning process. The students’ viewpoints are key. They share their thoughts about how they learn and how a good educator teaches.

The study is anchored in a sociocultural and mutual view on development and learning, with the central concept as the proximal development zone, scaffolding and mediated tools. The starting point is also Jim Cummins language model for classroom interaction. In the study there are six newly arrived students that have been taught in Swedish schools for at least two years. Data collection was by qualitative interviews with newly arrived students. These interviews were video recorded.

The results highlight the teacher’s importance for the students’ learning; equally the importance of the use of several languages in the teaching, translanguaging, comes forward as a central concept. The students help each other by discussing and digitally referencing words and concepts in their different languages. English can also have a function as a transfer point between languages.

The students use several different methods where speaking, reading and writing work together. They use digital tools such as apps, computers, smartphones, and learn different strategies to tackle texts with understanding. One conclusion is that when the mother tongue and the second language are used in different language domains the students knowledge of language gets woven together and has a parallel development.
Multiliteracy practices promoting information literacy in health education

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1. Research topic/aim
The Finnish National Core Curriculum, in force since 2016, addresses the recent declining tendency in adolescents’ reading motivation and skills by introducing the transversal competence of multiliteracy. Besides multimodality of texts, multiliteracy emphasises social literacy practices. Adhered to traditional instruction, some teachers may find implementing multiliteracy in practice challenging.

Multiliteracy involves information literacy stressing critical evaluation of information and sources. In ever-changing online environments, it is difficult to know what to believe and who to trust in e.g. health information. Specifically, adolescents may feel like a chameleon, changing colour when dealing with information from various sources.

This study addresses these challenges by examining how multiliteracy is implemented in health education and what information sources adolescents believe and utilise in their schoolwork.

2. Theoretical framework
Our study takes a sociocultural perspective on information literacy when employing the concept of multiliteracy. Multiliteracy aims to develop meaningfulness of schoolwork and enhance learners’ skills in critical thinking and collaborative learning and their ability to interpret, produce and evaluate divergent texts (FNBE 2014). These elements are involved in the concept of new literacies, referring to e.g. participation, production, and shared authority (Gee 2010). Literacies are understood as a social meaning-making practice helping learners to make sense of complex information.

People’s understanding is based on own experiences or on what they are told. However, we do not believe everything we hear. We tend to assess the trustworthiness of information sources, that is, cognitive authority, referring to expertise, reputation and credibility (Wilson 1983).

Collaborative knowledge-building, combining information seeking and production of a joint artifact, is a common learning task to enhance adolescents’ information literacy and practices. Such settings afford opportunities to learn to seek, evaluate and use information, whilst to introduce multiliteracy into classroom curriculum.

To examine multiliteracy in health education, we ask:
1. How did students implement information literacy practices in their joint knowledge building?
2. What or whom did students consider their cognitive authorities regarding health information?

3. Methodological design
Collaborative knowledge projects were implemented in health education lessons in three classes (Grades 8-9). The mixed-method data were collected using video observation, interviews with students, and a set of questionnaires. This poster presents the analysis focusing on collaborative literacy practices.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
According to preliminary findings, the informants’ evaluation of information sources was superficial and joint meaning making of health information barely occurred. Furthermore, students typically regarded their parents and professionals, e.g. doctors and school nurse, as their cognitive authorities in the context of health. The interviewees claimed their peers not to influence their health-related attitudes.
5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
The field, current in Nordic countries, needs more research to promote successful implementation of multiliteracy and related information literacy in practice.

References


Scaffolding Literacy Development

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Research topic/Aim: The study investigates a way of using Information and Communication Technology to enhance literacy development. The study investigates the development of children’s literacy skills, when they for some months write texts on a computer with auditory feedback from speech synthesis. The device is used as a scaffold for writing in interaction with a teacher in a one-to-one situation, and the interaction between the teacher and the child also mostly consists of scaffolding writing. The study is a case study with four children, all boys.

Theoretical framework: The theoretical framework is the concept of scaffolding (Bruner 1986, Stone 1998, Yelland and Masters 2007) as a description of the interaction between the child and the teacher, and also as a description of the child’s use of speech synthesis as an aide in his writing. The concept of repair (Martin 2004) is used to describe how the teacher and the child work together when problems occur during the writing. Phonological awareness and letter knowledge are prerequisites for literacy development (Lundberg 2000, Scarborough 1998) in the earliest stages, and the writing process is analyzed as planning, translating, reviewing and revising (Berninger 2009, Hayes & Flower 1980).

Methodology/Research design: The study is a multiple case study (Yin 1994, 2009) with four cases. The chief method for collecting data is participant observation. The material consists of field notes, videotapes, a log of the children’s use of the keyboard, and the produced text. The researcher, who acted as the teacher, met the children in their school weekly, and the children wrote words, short sentences and stories on a computer with auditory feedback. The children decided what they wanted to write, and they wrote in Swedish, their mother tongue. The speech synthesis pronounced what they wrote: letters and their sounds, parts of words, words, sentences and stories. When the children listened to the auditory feedback, they could revise their writings. The children were chosen by their class teacher because they, according to their teachers, needed extra training in reading and writing.

Expected conclusions/Findings: Both positive and negative examples of scaffolding were found. Sometimes the teacher gave hints to the child quite nicely in accordance with the theory of scaffolding. Sometimes the teacher helped too much, and the child didn’t have the opportunity to listen to auditory feedback and make revisions, and sometimes the teacher left the child alone to struggle with too difficult tasks. The patterns of scaffolding will be analyzed.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research: Digital competence is mentioned as a useful area of knowledge in recent curriculums in the Nordic countries. The study examines in detail how children write texts in a Nordic language, Swedish, with feedback from speech synthesis, and how children can use digital equipment to make progress in their literacy development.

Teacher’s Role as a Trustee in the Construction of Cognitive Authorities

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1. Research topic/aim
The aim of this study is to examine cognitive authorities in health education in schools from the perspective of multiliteracy/new literacies. Multiliteracy/new literacy research is vibrant but the approach of this study is among the first. The aim is to increase understanding of the teacher’s role as a trustee, who guides a student to make choices between information sources and cognitive authorities (Jessen & Jørgensen, 2012) in the health education settings. Despite the influence of peers and media is strong, trustees still have an essential role in giving directions for the adolescents in assessing cognitive authorities.

2. Theoretical framework
In the contemporary society, manifold information is easily accessible. People evaluate the reliability of information for example based on the author and the publisher (Rieh 2005) which in turn have an effect to our thinking. Indeed, cognitive authorities (Wilson, 1983) influence our thinking, because we sense them trustworthy and believable. A young person typically considers a teacher as a trustee, especially when choosing credible sources of information. Therefore, teachers’ knowledge of information seeking and literacy skills are essential (Pettinghill 2006), but constantly changing multimodal media environments require expertise to seek, interpret and understand information. The recently introduced Finnish National Core Curriculum (2014) for basic education includes multiliteracy as one of its pervasive learning focuses. Multiliteracy refers to the ability to explicate, produce and evaluate different texts. (FNBE 2014.)

3. Methodological design
This sociocultural case study examines how students and teachers as potential trustees together construct cognitive authorities during collaborative working. The analysis method is Nexus Analysis that is utilized as an encompassing methodological strategy, complemented by other analysis methods (Scollon & Scollon 2004). Data will be collected by interviewing health education teachers together with observing health education lessons. Additionally, a virtual teacher network will be created.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
Preliminary results indicate that students discussed about the credibility of the information sources and quality of the content very little if not at all. However, the teacher’s role from the perspective of the study at this point needs clarification.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
The results are applicable in all Nordic countries because the teacher’s role in evaluating information sources and cognitive authorities is the same and multiliteracies/new literacies is a focus of Nordic research.

References
You can choose English or Mandarin - Initial assessment of newly arrived pupils in Swedish schools

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This study is a part of an ongoing project about assessment of newly arrived pupils in Swedish schools. For this presentation we want to focus on the interaction in the first discussion in an initial-assessment process between the teacher at the admission office and a newly arrived pupil, with a focus on the pupil’s language resources and language use. The overall question we aim to investigate is: What happens in the interaction during this first discussion with a newly arrived pupil? The focus for this part of the study is the discussion about the pupil’s choice for mother tongue instruction (English or Mandarin).

All newly arrived children at the age between 7 and 15 years old, must be offered a place at a Swedish elementary school. In order to determine the appropriate school and grade for the pupil, an initial assessment is required. Through this initial assessment, the aim is to establish what pre-existing knowledge, skills, school experiences and language background the newly arrived pupil has. This involves a three-step process, conducted by a teacher, using diagnostic assessment materials created by the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket, 2016). The first step is an introductory discussion with the pupil about his/her school background, interests, expectations and language use.

This study involves an analysis of a video-recording of one such introductory discussion between a 12-year-old pupil, ‘Lee’, and his teacher. Lee is literate in both Mandarin and English and both languages are used at home, so he can choose either of his languages for Mother Tongue Instruction at school. According to Swedish law, all school children who speaks another language than Swedish should get the opportunity to develop and speak their first language. The caretaker can apply for mother tongue instructions at school. The analysis focuses on the part of the discussion regarding Lee’s language experience and what he considers to be his mother tongue. For the analysis, theories of institutional conversations (Linell, 2011) have been used. Lee considers English to be his dominant language and identifies himself with English, despite using both Mandarin and English on a daily basis. The teacher remind Lee that it is of importance that he uses all his languages even though he prefers English now. It might be that Lee knows that English is more useful and common compared to Mandarin in a Swedish context and that English is related to higher prestige. In this presentation, we will discuss the interaction between the teacher and Lee as well as highlight issues concerning language choice and identity. The results have relevance for teacher education with a specific focus on the reception of newly arrived pupils in elementary school.

References

Students’ perception of a science text: a study on the interrelation of vocabulary and text comprehension

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Aim
The study aims at investigating the meaning of texts as resources for learning in science education at secondary school. Here this means focus on the interrelation of knowledge in vocabulary, and ability to comprehend a science text, in a multilingual school setting at grade nine. The study is a part of a larger-scale project, Development of Scientific Literacy (2014-2017).

Theoretical framework
Even if vocabulary strength predicts the speed and security with which students learn the meanings of unfamiliar words, the students’ knowledge of words grows less through any process of inferring their meanings, one by one, based on the sentences in which they arise, than as a product of learning more generally about the contexts in which they arise (Axelsson, 2002). Consequently, students need to read lots of complex texts – texts that offer them new language, new knowledge and new modes of thoughts. As Hirsch puts it, reading deficit is integrally tied to knowledge deficit (Hirsch, 2011).

Design
A quantitative approach for the vocabulary test has been used, and a qualitative for evaluating the students’ text response. Hypothetically, bottom up-readers were considered to have a well-developed vocabulary without being strong readers (of the text as a whole), while top down-readers were regarded not to have a very well developed vocabulary but instead good understanding of the text. This opened for an analysis of the correlation between developed vocabulary and text movability, considering the categories text based movability, associative text movability and interactive text movability.

A test using google forms, was used for the data. It consisted of a text of 630 words from a textbook in natural sciences, that students from two groups started by reading. Two parts with questions were included, one part testing text movability and one testing vocabulary knowledge. Two versions of the test were available. In one of them the text movability questions were preceding the vocabulary test and in the other the order was reversed. The two groups of students were given one test version each.

Findings
Several groups of students possessing different abilities were found. The four largest groups consisted of 1) students who were successful in text comprehension and vocabulary, 2) students who weren’t successful in either, 3) students who were successful in text comprehension but not vocabulary and finally 4) students who were successful in vocabulary but not in text comprehension.

Relevance
Students in secondary school are expected to possess knowledge in literacy achieved from primary school, that enable them to understand texts from a variety of domains – a knowledge they might not have. Therefore, it is important to increase knowledge about how texts are being approached and understood in science, by students in secondary school.

References:

Making Distinctions and Contrasts: Visual literacy practices in early childhood education and care

Aarsand, Pål
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Research topic
The present study discusses how children learn to use digital tools in early childhood education and care (ECEC). In Norwegian preschools it is not expected that children know how to read and write, despite of that children participate in several literacy activities where they have to handle signs and symbols. The present paper focuses on how children participate in teacher led visual literacy activities and how they ‘learn to see’ in a certain way (e.g. Goodwin 1996).

Theoretical framework
To study how children learn to see, I will use the notion guided participation (Rogoff 2003). The scope of guided participation goes beyond interaction as intended instruction and includes participation in guided activities through the use of tools and involvement with institutions. Guided participation as a notion directs attention to how learning is the outcome of being part of particular practices, here media literacy practices in ECEC, and where adults and peers through instructions, accounts and stances display social and cultural references for how to deal with signs and symbols.

Methodological design
The study is based on video recordings from three Norwegian preschools using two video cameras simultaneously. The first camera followed one of the children while the second one followed one of the preschool teachers. The camera was never on the same child/preschool teacher two days in a row. The main idea was to capture the everyday life of children and staff in ECEC. The children were between 3 and 5 years old. All three preschools had a digital media profile, which also was the reason why they where recruited in the first place.

The study takes a non-media-centric approach, meaning that children’s media activities are considered alongside other social activities rather than treated as isolated (Pink & Mackley 2013). The non-media-centric approach underlines that the main interest is social and cultural process where children use, or learn to use digital tools, not the tools as such.

Conclusion/findings
Preliminary findings show that in school preparing activities, staffs gives the children different tasks that they have to solve and that are related to learning to see in particular ways. The use of mobile technologies like smartphones and tablets made it possible for children to participate in these visual literacy practices on their own terms. In contrast, it could be seen how the use of Smartboard was structured as classroom activity where the children participated on the adult’s terms.

Relevance
In the Nordic debate on children and learning, digital tools and digital literacy are reappearing in various forms. More knowledge is needed on how these tools actually are used in ECEC and what kind of competence children may learn.

References
Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction vs. Classroom Activities. An Empirical Study of Language Arts Classrooms

Magnusson, Camilla G.
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Research aim
The aim of the present study is to investigate how naturally-occurring Reading Comprehension Strategies Instruction (RCSI) unfolds in the lower secondary classroom; by examining 1) to what extent teachers engage in explicit RCSI, and 2) whether the instruction is more in line with facilitating reading activities rather than teaching strategies. It focuses in particular on instruction that may deepen the students’ understanding of how, why and when to use strategies (Duke et al., 2011).

Theoretical perspectives
The study is informed by prevalent theories of strategies and strategies instruction. A strategy can be defined as an intentional mental action during reading (Shanahan et al. 2010); they are plans readers use flexibly and adaptively (Duffy & Roehler, 1987). According to Shanahan et al. (2010) strategies are not (a) instructional activities, nor are they (b) exercises, when these lack instruction on how to reason during reading.

Method
This study has used observation of video recordings collected in 46 Norwegian language arts classrooms at 45 different schools across Norway, in the school year 2014/15. Four consecutive lessons were recorded from each class (n=180). The videos were coded using the Protocol for Language Arts Teaching Observation (Grossmann, 2015) which consists of 12 coding categories rated on a scale from 1 – 4. A particularly relevant category for this study is Strategy Use and Instruction. All the lessons that scored 2, 3 or 4 on this element, and contained reading strategies specifically, have been analyzed further for this study.

Findings
The analysis showed that few teachers engage in explicit RCSI in the observed lessons. Out of 180 lessons, only seven contain RCSI on an explicit level. It is a trend across lessons that the tasks the students are faced with often remains LA activities, with no focus on the transferability of the underlying strategic thinking. However, the analysis reveals that often small changes in the instructions would potentially make it more in line with theory of explicit RCSI.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The study provides insightful perspectives on how teachers can change their practice in accordance to existing scientific evidence on how to teach strategies. This can be claimed to have been an understudied area in the Nordic context.

References
The Role of Literary Texts in Lower Secondary School Language Arts Lessons

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This study investigates use of literary texts in language arts(LA) lessons across 46 lower-secondary Norwegian classrooms. We examined what students read, sources of texts, and functions of texts in instruction.

Theoretical framework

Students develop as readers by reading a variety of texts for multiple purposes (e.g Duke&Pearson, 2008). Studies have indicated the importance of instruction that provides students with opportunities to discuss texts to build a deeper understanding of them (Applebee, 2003; Nystrand, 2006; Wilkinson&Son 2011; Langer 2011).

Methods

The present study investigates the use of literary texts in 180 video-recorded LA lessons across 46 lower-secondary classrooms in Norway. All lessons were coded for the use of literary texts in the instruction, using the socio-cultural PLATO-manual(Grossman, 2015), to assess to what degree students engage in discourse and activities that are grounded in literary texts. Further analyses investigate the role of texts in instruction. Nuances in coding and analyses will be shown in the presentation itself.

Findings

Results indicate that a majority of the lessons do not contain instruction that systematically probes students’ active use of literature. In over 60% of the instruction in lessons students read fiction, the texts play a rather narrow role. References to the text, when they occur, focus on recall of specific details.

Our material also offers detailed insight into how teachers provide instructional activities or opportunity for discussion that require students to actively use texts. These lessons contain extensive literary work and a discourse that could engage students to build deeper understandings of texts. A commonality across these lessons is that texts are actively used in the process of talking about their content, and form and content are seen as interrelated.

We found three dominant instructional practices related to literary texts: silent reading, genre instruction and literary classroom discussions. In these three distinct practices, the texts either has a rather unclear role during silent reading, a very defined role as a model text or example in genre/writing instruction, or is used as grounds for literary conversations and analyses.

The variety of texts was rather low. Most texts students read are from the textbook, strongly emphasizing pre-1990 male writers. Students scarcely read texts by foreign writers and there are no texts by Sami writers.

Relevance

In addition to highlighting some serious challenges concerning the role of literary texts in lower secondary schools, we provide insight into high-quality reading instruction via systematic mapping of what happens in lessons where such instruction occurs. Both findings are highly relevant to the educational field, for researchers and practitioners alike.

Selected references

Framing Education: Comics Literacy in Educational Practice

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This paper presents and discusses the findings of the dissertation study Framing Education: Doing Comics Literacy in the Classroom (Wallner, 2017). Interest in comics as Swedish school materials has risen in the last few years, and the publication of comics for children and adolescents has also increased. Meanwhile, research around new literacies has taken a deeper interest in combinations of image and text, and research on comics as a literacy material is growing, especially as part of school practices. With comics’ rise in popularity and their qualities as examples of new literacies, this points to the relevance of exploring how meaning making with comics is done in schools. The purpose of this study is to contribute knowledge on how locally situated literacy practices are done, practices in which pupils and teachers make meaning with comics. Thus, the ongoing process of literacy is studied, rather than participants’ reflections through interviews or surveys. The study combines literacy and comics studies, utilizing a discursive psychology perspective to investigate aspects of literacy not as individual, inner workings, but as part of participants’ social constructions, in line with the New Literacy Studies paradigm. To study this, video recordings have been made in one primary and one secondary school, in two different Swedish cities. In total, 77 students and 6 teachers are part of the study that encompasses 36 hours of video recordings. With this perspective, and this material, it is possible to investigate literary concepts such as narrative, and participants’ construction of story elements, through the way in which these aspects are utilized by participants to construct social action – what participants do with their utterances in the ongoing classroom talk. The results of the study show constructions of a comics literacy, where participants engage with both visual and textual aspects of the material and negotiate focalization of narrative perspective and construction of narrative structure as well as narrative devices such as speech and thought bubbles. Unlike previous theory on comics literacy (e.g. Hammond, 2009; Pustz, 1999) the results of this study emphasizes this as a dual literacy form, wherein the combination of image and text becomes essential for participants’ constructions of text. Furthermore, meaning making of comics literacy also includes the construction of discourses around comics as a specific type of story telling, either for material or literary reasons. This allows comics to be constructed as simple reading or complex reading; as children’s reading or as reading unsuitable for children. This can be either content or language based constructions, and often relates to participants’ previous experiences with comics. The paper discusses how participants construct comics as classroom literature, and provides insight into how interaction around comics enables participants to construct and negotiate discourses around what comics literacy is and what it enables, as well as how to talk about, create, and read comics.
Symposium A and B are a joint collaboration between Network 13 and 15
(Part A)

Contributor 1
Digital literacy – policy and practices in Norway 2001-2016

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Schooling is a specific practice of learning in context, and it is structured in scheduled lectures and conducted in designated spaces in which agents use specific tools for educational purposes. Over the past two decades, digital technology has become an important tool in many lower and upper secondary schools in the Nordic countries. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, school activities are still structured spatially and temporally in particular ways (Lemke, 2000; Rajala, 2016). As Matusov (2015) says, ‘The teacher and the students are usually present simultaneously in the ontological time-space of their classroom’. In these classrooms, students are supposed to acquire and develop digital literacy.

To understand how students use digital tools to learn, alternative approaches to digital literacy have been offered by a wide range of research projects (Elf, Hanghøj, Skaar, & Erixon, 2015; Hatlevik & Thronsdøen, 2015; Sefton-Green, Nixon, & Erstad, 2009), which have built upon a wide range of methodologies, including surveys and tests, which are designed to measure the use of technology and each student’s ‘level’ of digital literacy; and case studies and ethnographic work in the classroom, which provide us with rich accounts of how digital technology is incorporated into literacy practices during social interaction with various subjects.

To increase understanding of how digital technology is used and of how digital literacy is conceptualized and analyzed, this paper provides an overview of Norwegian studies over 15 years (2001–2016). As pointed out in the call for papers for this symposium, in Norwegian studies, we can assume two approaches to digital literacy: 1) an autonomous framing of digital literacy and 2) an understanding of literacy as a social practice. By presenting both the main findings of national surveys on digital literacy and the findings of key studies on literacy practices in the classroom, this paper aims to answer the following questions: How is digital literacy defined and operationalised in these surveys and studies? And what have we learned during the last 15 years? This paper contributes by prompting discussion of these questions as part of this symposium and by that highlighting the implications of 1:1 computing in lower and upper secondary schools.

References
Contributor 2

Digital literacies – a changing, or disappearing, concept?

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The definition of literacy has changed, both historically and in relation to educational contexts. Before the 1970s, the term literacy was predominantly used in relation to adult, non-formal education, which offered illiterate adults basic skills in reading and writing (e.g. Lankshear & Knobel, 2008; Street, 2009). An expansion of the concept of literacy was in the late 20th century largely argued for based on a perception of literacy as social practice (e.g. Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Street, 1998) but also in relation to aspects of multiplicity in contemporary societies (e.g. Cope & Kalantzis, 2000) and a multimodal perspective on texts (e.g. Jewitt & Kress, 2004). Common to these different arguments for expanding the notion of literacy and what it means to be able to read and write, is that they focus on how meaning is made in a diverse and rapidly changing society. The concept of literacy has also been used in relation to practices that involve the use of digital technology. In this approach, a ‘new’ mind-set, which is considered to be more collaborative and participatory than the conventional one, is in focus and questions around how technology may facilitate changes in practice is explored (Lankshear & Knobel, 2008).

When the concept of digital literacy emerges around the turn of the century it is related to ‘new’ technology at that time, such as the internet. Gilster (1997) identifies four digital literacy competences; assembling knowledge, evaluating information, searching the internet and navigating hypertext. The literacy competences he suggests differ from earlier conceptions of literacy in that mastering the digital technology is highlighted, whilst aspects relating to understanding and making meaning are downplayed.

Based on this short retrospective passage, we argue that the shift in concepts needs to be taken into consideration in both research and policymaking. Literacy refers to meaning making and the understanding of texts and has been expanded to include digital and multimodal texts. Competence on the other hand tends to refer to wider issues of the digitalization of society and education. Recent changes in Swedish national curricula will be discussed in the presentation to exemplify to what extent and how they relate to the concept of digital literacy and competence.


Contributor 3
Digital literacies in Early Childhood Education; e-reading and empathy

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This presentation arose out of a shared concern about how to explore and understand what happens when young children read fiction on digital tablets. The aim of the presentation is to illustrate how the understanding of the relation between e-reading and empathy changes when transiting theoretically and methodologically from a social psychological thinking, as suggested by Suzanne Keen (2007), to a new materialist and post-human thinking, inspired by the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987).

The fact that electronic books (e-books), with its combinations of sound, images and alphabetic texts, create different possibilities of making meaning of the text is nothing new (cf Mangen, 2016), but that they may create opportunities to promote empathy and democratic relations is rarely explored. When exploring the link between reading fiction and empathy, research often refer to when a reader is emotionally transported into a story, that is, an examination of cognitive processes related to the interaction between the reader and the text (Koopman, 2015; Keen, 2007). This presentation, however, offers still another theoretical and methodological perspective considering not only the interrelation between the text (i.e. the plot, the characters and the settings) and the reader but also materially and technology in understanding the effects of e-reading activities (i.e. the digital screen, the plot and the student). When exploring the analyses, it becomes evident that the understanding of what data may be changes when moving from one theoretical and methodological field to another.

The data collection that is explored for this study consist of video recordings of six-year-olds digital reading on IPads. The data illustrates how the young students collectively e-read the literary text through images, alphabetic letters and listening to the digital read-aloud voice, as well as how they share reactions, glimpses and feelings with one another. It is here argued that in order to take children’s ways of becoming readers in contemporary digital classroom seriously it is important to explore and understand how the reader is constituted in the interplay between materiality, text and human and explore what these interactions may create – as in potential processes of empathy and democratic relations.

In sum, depending on which questions we pose, what theoretical and methodological underpinnings we take, we come to see and understand children’s ways of becoming e-readers differently.

Keywords
E-book, reading, empathy, social social psychological perspective, posthuman perspective

References
Contributor 4

Digital resources in diverse classrooms – the need of combining digital technology with functional and critical literacy

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Through the use of various digital resources, it is crucial that education support student’s subject- and literacy learning in integrated ways (Cummins, 2001; Schmidt & Skoog, 2016). Since digital literacies, compared with printed literacies, bring about other ways of producing and using texts in terms of multimodality and hybridity across time and space, this challenge the conditions for in what ways teaching and learning is carried out in classrooms (Kress & Selander, 2011; Walsh, 2008). In Sweden, new knowledge demands regarding digital competence will be implemented, among other things with regards to source criticism. To understand who has produced a text and with what purpose, and how to evaluate this information, are part of fundamental critical approaches, which includes source criticism (Janks, 2010). Drawing on a larger classroom study, this paper focuses on teachers and students use of online and digital resources during 24 lessons in two Grade six classrooms in the subject areas of Laws and Right and Information and Commercials. Our focus is on in what ways the digital resources and their content are introduced and drawn upon, and which approaches of source criticism that are integrated. We ask:

• What digital resources are included?
• In what ways are these resources introduced and used?
• What approaches of source criticism emerge?
• Do any differences emerge when comparing digital and printed resources?

Drawing on video recordings and retrospective interviews with teachers and students, the data has been analysed in relation to the above aim and questions. The analysis reveals the multifaceted possibilities of digital resources, such as web sites, video clips, online educational portals and so on. The analysis makes it clear that interaction and dialogue in relation to the digital resources tend to be overlooked, when compared with the printed resources. Further, the result sheds light on the challenges regarding source criticism. In both subject areas, norms and values are present, but not deepened in relation to the subject content. We argue, that in order to compare and evaluate digital and online information, and to create knowledge, students need to be supported in the beginning of and throughout the learning process (Alexander, 2008; Schmidt & Skoog, 2016). In addition, we argue that critical reflections must be connected to subject specific content in relation to diversity and equality, and articulated and practiced through teachers’ and students’ own talk (Alexander, 2008; Schmidt & Skoog, 2017).

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Symposium – Part B

Contributor 1
Digital literacy - transforming policy to practice

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This presentation focuses on the challenging relationship between (national and local) policy discourses regarding digital literacy in school and teachers’ intentions for design and setting aiming for digital literacy development. Furthermore, I will draw attention to how design-orientated notions and concepts can be used as methodological tools for analysis.

All pupils, regardless backgrounds and skills, are entitled equal education. One of the initial overarching goals of investing in digital tools in schools was to decrease digital disparity and provide all pupils civic competence and equal citizenship. The compensatory role of schools was emphasised by the National Agency for Education (Skolverket, 2014, 2015) as an important factor in guaranteeing a cohesive, open and democratic society. The Schools Inspectorate’s 2012 investigation criticised Swedish schools for not fulfilling their democratic task stipulated in the Education Act.

The aim of the study related to this presentation was to contribute knowledge about how preschool class-teachers and primary school-teachers designed and set learning milieus and learning situations by using digital tools in purpose to afford all children, including children in need of special support, literacy-development. The study drew on perspectives from three domains: designs for learning, digital learning environments and special needs education.

The study was an ethnographically inspired case-study based on observations and interviews at one school in Sweden. Six teachers, one resource pedagogue and one literacy-developer participated in the study. The analysis of the data material was based on design-oriented theories. Within the field, design, set, learning and meaning making are used as central concepts, but with different meanings. A challenge was to design a useful conceptual operationalization that defined the concepts in the study.

One of the study’s outcomes was the visualization of how the national policy and the local political visions either made affordances or hindrances for digital literacy-education. All informants in the study appeared to be strongly motivated to use digital tools for the sake of the children in need of special support. From a special educational perspective this is to be seen as a relational and democratic approach, an intention to close the gaps. The unequal allocation of digital tools, however, resulted in failure to fulfil the schools mandate of providing equitable education. The studied school did not manage to compensate for the differences between different pupils’ circumstances to the extent required.

The analysis shows that the school’s inadequate fulfilment to provide equal education was two-fold: on the one hand there were differences between the preschool class and the lower primary classes, on the other a failure to compensate for differences between pupils’ home circumstances and the preschool class.

A gap between policy and practice was visualised. The school was unable to fulfil its compensatory role and thereby failed guaranteeing democratic education for all children. This is a challenging issue for further Nordic educational research.
References

ICT in the classroom: the importance of exploring "naturally occurring" technology use in digitally rich environments.

Blikstad-Balas, Marte
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There is ample research on literacy practices in technology rich environments in the Nordic countries, especially drawing on New Literacy Studies (Blikstad-Balas, 2012; Michelsen, 2015; Sørvik & Mork, 2015), and these have contributed with important insight into new ways of using technology. However, as emphasized in the call for the symposium «Digital literacies in schools», literacy researchers have to a large extent chosen to focus on the situated literacy events that occur in digitally rich classrooms. This is in itself not problematic, but there is a need to study what roles digital technology has in classrooms that are not sampled because they fit the label «digitally rich». Further, many of the studies looking into ICT in the classroom tend to sample participants who work with particular apps or programs (Dolonen & Kluge, 2014; Silseth, 2012; Vasbø, Silseth, & Erstad, 2013). To get a broader picture of how digital literacies are situated in contemporary classrooms, we need studies that have been sampled on other criteria, which focus on so called “naturally occurring instruction” (Hassan et al., 2005), as opposed to interventions or purposefully sampled “deviant cases” (Flyvbjerg, 2007). Further, the fields of ICT and literacy in education would benefit from larger data sets that enable comparison between classrooms.

Drawing on a large data set from the Linking Instruction and Student Achievement study (LISA), I have investigated what use of ICT that can be identified across 180 video recorded language arts lessons from 46 different 8th grade classrooms. In LISA, we recorded 4 consecutive lessons in each classroom. The sample includes a demographic and geographic spread, as well as various levels of student achievement. Consent was provided by parents, students, and teachers.

The reason why this study is of particular interest to the proposed symposium, is that it has compared teacher practices across 180 different lessons with naturally occurring instruction that was not sampled to study “digitally rich classrooms”. Rather, this study enables new insight into the diversity of literacy practices have an opportunity to engage in. A key finding is that, in stark contrast to small scale case studies (including my own), teachers in these 46 classrooms do not to a large extent use technology. Most of the students writing is done by hand, and the by far most frequent uses identified were teachers showing PowerPoints. Few teachers talked about technology and the access to 1:1 varied greatly. The main contribution from this large scale study to the debate on literacy and ICT, concerns the divergence between findings in studied that are most interested in exploring the frontrunners of ICT in the classroom, and studies like this one, where ICT is almost absent in a majority of the lessons.
Multimodal literacy in the digitalized foreign language classroom

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The aim of this paper is to discuss multimodal literacy in the digitalized foreign language classroom by presenting results from a study conducted among foreign language students (in Danish and English) in the upper classes in compulsory schools in Iceland.

Theoretical framework
Today, more than ever before, attention is being given to the role of the media, the internet and new literacies as they relate to research and practice in foreign language classrooms. Modern foreign language teachers must be able to read and create a range of paper-based and online texts (newspapers, pamphlets, websites, books, e-books, and so on), participate in and create virtual settings (classrooms, Facebook, Elluminate, blogs, wikis etc.) that use interactive and dynamic Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 tools, and critically analyze multimodal texts that integrate visual, musical, dramatic, digital and new literacies (Miller, 2007). In response to these needs, 21st century literacy and language classroom practice and research have become focused on multimodal literacies and ways to re-conceptualize and re-envision what constitutes literacy.

As articulated among others in the works of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), and Farias et. all. (2011), multimodal communication is comprised of multiple “modes” or communicative forms (i.e., digital, spatial, visual, musical, etc.) within various sign systems that carry meanings recognized and understood a social collective. In multimodal theory, Jewitt and Kress (2003) identify four aspects that comprise one’s representation of meaning: materiality, framing, design, and production, all of which come into play when texts are constructed.

Research design
The research is based on interviews with language teachers, observation, video recordings and a collection of results produced by students.

Expected findings
The results indicate that teachers who lack skills or experience digital technologies are not like the students who often struggle to incorporate IT technologies into their products – instead, the teachers try to avoid what they are not good at. The results also indicate that students are more willing to integrate free sources such as You Tube, Wikis and Wikipedia into their work. The findings also indicate that in those cases where the learning and teaching is conducted as a multimodal literacies instruction enables more students to enter into academic thinking/reflection, than uni-dimensional forms of literacy instruction. Finally, the findings suggest that multimodal literacy instruction seems to reach out to those students who do not conform to the traditional institutionalized academic learning styles.

References
Interplaying resources. Emergent literacy practices in connected classrooms in Finland and Sweden

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The increased digitalization of classrooms, leading to changing literacy practices, challenge not only teachers and students but also researchers who want to conceptualize teaching and learning processes. In these processes new digital literacies interplay with already established print based literacies. From the researchers’ point of view this calls for a need for rethinking research methods in order to understand and capture emerging literacy practices in connected classrooms. The aim for this presentation is two folded: 1) to discuss the use of digital resources in recently connected classrooms 2) to examine how we methodologically can study the interplay between different resources in relation, the meaning of digital literacies as a concept. Theoretically, we frame this discussion departing from the field of New Literacies (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011) and the concepts ‘new technological stuff’ and ‘new ethos stuff’. This means that we highlight aspects that relate to changed conditions for multimodality and digital resources (technological stuff) as well as the changed possibilities that this brings for co-producing, sharing and distributing texts in a participatory culture (ethos stuff) (Jenkins, 2008).

In our analysis we use video ethnographic data from two larger corpuses collected for the projects Textmötten (Finland) and Connected Classrooms (Sweden) (Olin-Scheller, Sahlström & Tanner, forthcoming). Data consists of recordings of upper secondary school students’ literacy activities, focusing face-to-face interaction, use of digital as well as analogue technologies, where smartphone use has been screen mirrored. All in all, the material consists of 163 hours of video recordings (the Swedish material about 50 hours, the Finnish material 113 hours) from lessons in upper secondary school classrooms.

Through this method we have been able to capture and analyze, from a student perspective, the multifaceted visuality of how different resources interplay in digital literacy practices in classrooms. Results show that embodied and material aspects play a vital part in the development of new literacies as the students respond to teacher instructions and try to integrate aspects of new technological as well as new ethos stuff. Developing a participatory culture becomes a challenge in the connected classroom both in relation to the technological potential and in relation to the possibilities for teacher-student interaction, since the student activities that take place through digital resources often become invisible for the teacher. Methodologically, with an interest in the interplay between different resources, the digitally rich classroom call for expanded video recordings, that catch digital literacies and print based literacies, from both the students’ and the teacher’s perspective.

Referenser


Is Gert Biesta a philosopher of Bildung?

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My question is whether Gert Biesta is a philosopher of Bildung? The answer to the question is, as in many other cases, a “both yes and no”.
I want to argue my case by pointing out two factors: First, I argue that Biesta's philosophy is based on a denial of the concept of Bildung, and that he, by the very nature of this fact, cannot, of course, be taken into account for a Bildung-based point of view. This conclusion is based on Biesta's roots in the post-structuralist tradition's problems with enlightenment and humanism, approaches that normally defines the Bildung. This denial is transferred to the structure of Biesta's main categories, namely qualification, socialization and subjectification and their respective overlapping areas: The theoretical tendency is to understand qualification and socialization as separated from processes of subjectification. This famous triple-structure, therefore, rejects the concept of formation and its connection to social processes in its own peculiar way.

The nature of these philosophical connections and language games is evident in Biesta's early work, but is also maintained in his recent articles and books. Thus, there is a fundamental division between Biesta's post-structuralist starting point and his hopes for human sciences and philosophy. This division is partly rooted in the post-structuralist tradition itself and therefore also in different versions of its use, something which Biesta's work is an example of.
However, secondly, this does not mean that Biesta is in favour of instrumentalism and learning ideology, not at all, indeed on the contrary. Biesta is one of those who most radically criticize constructivist concepts of learning and its corresponding managerialism. This is evident from the 2004 article "Against Learning," the points of which are repeated in many books and articles until today. This critique is based on profound and sincere readings of a vast amount of philosophical literature that is very much connected to Bildung understood in a broad sense.

The question is how this “both yes and no”-structure ends up? I will argue that Biesta finds himself in an almost ontological turn, which, however, cannot be fully expressed because of the poststructuralist influence that tends to undermine ontological questions.
These are the two aspects and their connections, a 'both yes and no'-structure, I want to examine in my presentation.
I would also like briefly to discuss what consequences this “both yes and no”-structure have for education. One consequence is the effect on Biesta’s reading of Hannah Arendt. Biesta focuses on Arendt’s concept of action, while Arendt’s cultural philosophy, for example, as this is reflected in her educational philosophical essay "The Crisis in Education", is diminished.

Another consequence is that the “both yes and no”-structure appeals widely. This is certainly the case in Denmark where both cultural conservatives and left-wingers, not least from the grundtvigian tradition, find comfort in Biesta's ideas.
But there is also a risk that the isolated concepts of subjectification and “uniqueness” can be used and applied by a particular branch of poststructuralists who speaks for a competitive state with opportunism and labour as guiding principles of education. However, in relation to the latter risk, there are many barbs in Biesta's position, for example the clear influence of Levinas and, last but not least, from Søren Kierkegaard which will hamper such theoretical and political assimilation.

Finally, I will draw the entire structure into a model showing the various ontological constraints and possibilities in Biesta's work.
Two meanings of "being competent"

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Since the beginning of the millennium several theorists and policy movements have introduced the notion of competence to the educational debate. It has been argued that notions e.g. “knowledge” or “Bildung” have failed as central tools to capture the kind of educational processes that today’s and our future societies need.

In the Nordic context Illeris (2013) has developed the most prominent analysis of the notion of competence. He points out that competence is neither about factual knowledge or certain skills. Competence rather refers to the overarching possibilities to act appropriately in a certain situation (2013 p. 32).

One weakness of the notion of competence, though, lies in its different meanings in different linguistic (the Continental and the English-speaking) contexts. Cedefop (2009) e.g. argues that “competence” is a problematic term to use in international policy-agreements.

Still, different national curriculum in Scandinavia started to use the notion of competence. Often it is used to describe generic competences, e.g. in Higher education curriculum and policy documents or in the Finnish curriculum for primary schools (1-9) (Utbildningsstyrelsen 2014). On the other side, the term competence is also used as a collection of specific learning outcomes, like e.g. in the Finnish VET-system that in 2015 changed its basic organizational units from time-measured credits to competence-units.

In this paper, I develop a further critique of competence over and above the mentioned linguistic problem. Starting from Wittgenstein’s distinction between the transitive and intransitive usage of certain notions (1958), I describe that “being competent” as a transitive notion is referring to certain concrete abilities that someone has achieved. “She is a (formally) competent plumber” or “You are lacking certain competences until you can graduate”. The intransitive notion of being competent, “you are really competent!” though, refers to no certain ability, but rather values someone’s overall ability as a person or as a professional.

The possibility to use the notion of being competent in these two ways confuses the discussions in educational theory, policy and practice. As an expression of value, “being competent” can hardly be criticized by anyone as a shared aim to strive for, both in theory, policy and practice. In this way, competence seems to offer a useful starting point for agreements between theory and practice. The problematic step, though, lies in the shift from the intransitive to the transitive meaning of competence, i.e. from a value-judgement to a factual expression of what competence precisely is, how it could be operationalized in concrete educational curricula and settings, and how it could be guaranteed with appropriate methods of measurements.

There is a risk that the qualitative value-expression (intransitive usage) is undermined the measurable usage (transitive) when theory and policy use the same notion for both meanings.

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Presence and meaning-making

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Research topic/aim
The paper explores the concept of presence. We argue that presence is a fundamental, yet under-examined aspect of meaning making. We present two educational settings in which notions of the body and presence are highlighted.

Theoretical framework
The meaning of presence has received little attention in education research. In the research area of CSCW from the 1990s and onwards, technological possibilities led to research into ways of achieving as much presence as possible across distances. However, not much attention has been given to the co-constitution of participants’ presence, including teachers and learners. Presence can be seen as having at least two different meanings. One is being physically present in a situation. Our first case study explores how, in a museum education setting, the use of a Virtual Reality technology opened up questions of what is physical presence.

Another meaning of presence is being at home in oneself. Here, presence is a quality of being – mind and body are experienced as one. For example, studies show that some use walking to solve intellectual problems. How to be truly present is a further level of challenge; both in the sense of how to know, or describe, when we are truly present, and how to strengthen the capacity to do so. Our second case explores the process of giving a talk.

Methodological design
We are comparing two studies which from different perspectives deal with presence in different educational contexts. In the museum, an experimental exhibition invites pairs of participants to explore architectural spaces together using Virtual Reality technology with one wearing a head-set and the other viewing a screen.

The teaching case is from an auto-ethnography of fear among academic researcher-teachers.

Expected conclusions/findings
Museum visitors are able to make meaning through turn taking and guiding each other. These pairs may be physically co-located while having dramatically different perceptual experiences, thus challenging simple notions of co-location.

When presenting or teaching, multiple layers of bodily and mind presence can manifest simultaneously when giving an introduction to a course or a talk. The meanings of presence in the sense of a quality of being are opened up for exploration, where meaning can emerge in the situation through a continuous interplay of bodily and mind resources.

These cases exemplify benefits of taking an embodied approach to teaching and learning. The view of body and mind as co constitutive enables us to open new questions for exploration. Here, we have explored two views of presence, showing that both are non trivial. Our understanding of educational settings can be enriched by paying attention to the body and treating the body and mind as unified.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The research helps open up for the Nordic countries, often seen as leaders in educational technology, a new and emerging research into embodied experiences of teaching and learning. Educational implications include the more careful design of teacher support and of learning environments, such as distance learning.
Beyond the boundaries of the classroom: Interpersonal relationships in the transformation from (edu)room to (edu)roam

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Research topic and aim
In the 21st century, the economies and technologies of countries in Western society have increasingly become knowledge- and information-based. Great value has been placed on education in order to enable these countries to compete on the global market. This therefore requires more people with higher levels of education. One starting point for this agenda is effective educational systems, which in turn requires places for teaching and learning, often located in special buildings that consist of classrooms of different shapes and functions. Not all education, however, takes place within the ordinary physical classroom. In an attempt to make education more accessible, with the ultimate goal being to rise to competitiveness in the contemporary global marketplace, formal education nowadays takes place more often beyond the physical classroom, as flexible online or web-based courses. In these cases, the horizon of the classroom is unlimited: the boundaries of the room become infinite. The aim of this paper is to conceptualise ways in which the horizons of the classroom are extended through flexible online or web-based courses, and to explore the materiality of digital, virtual classrooms and interpersonal relationships within them.

Theoretical framework and research design
We apply different perspectives to analyse interpersonal relationships when educational places – that is, classrooms – are transformed from physical spaces into Web spaces. Our analysis is based on the philosophies of Martin Buber, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Alfred Schutz. Buber’s theory supports the exploration of interpersonal relationships, while Merleau-Ponty’s life-world approach, with the addition of experienced social reality suggested by Schutz, supports a re-imagination of educational places through an ontological discussion of what a classroom is and can be.

Expected findings/conclusions
We illuminate and theorise interpersonal relationships in terms of being cared for, confirmed by, and connected to others as dimensions of significance for teaching and learning, and for the health and well-being of teachers and students. By moving beyond the unknown and uncertain, we explore the transformation of the classroom: from (edu)room to (edu)roam.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Flexible online or Web-based courses that create opportunities for students in remote areas or whose lifestyle does not fit with physically attending classes are of relevance to Nordic educational research.

References
Educational Possibilities: Testimony and Emotions

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In the paper presentation at NERA I intend to present a developed part of my PhD thesis, Det omöjliga vittnandet: om vittnesmålets pedagogiska möjligheter (Eskaton, 2017); a thesis on the educational possibilities of testimony and witnessing.

In the thesis I investigate what testimonies and the act of witnessing can do in relation to education. More specifically, I investigate what kind of educational possibilities there are in witnessing and testimony, in relation to teaching as well as outside schools. I do this by focusing three different aspects, namely representation, subjectivity and emotion. Three aspects that relate to the phenomenon of testimony – but also have bearing on the daily life of teaching. In the paper presentation at NERA I will focus on one of these aspects, namely on emotions.

Educational research shows how the use of testimony in teaching can carry on opportunities for students to create various teaching related positive values, such as a historical consciousness or an ethical approach to the world and other people, or how being exposed to various testimonies could bring about feelings and emotions – or even crises. These emotions or crises can be the starting point towards dealing with historical traumas, and through that be the basis for knowledge of history, including testimonies of those different from oneself and/or from other parts of the world. Testimonies carry the idea of being singular and to be “true” stories, this is why students and pupils exposed to testimonies are also considered of value when working with historical trauma and attempting to bring consciousness and personal ethical reflection.

For example, Felman and Laub (1991) write how the encountering with the literary testimonies may involve a learning situation where students who are exposed to testimonies become emotionally involved, and by that, the students can be taught. Felman and Laub examine the relationship between students’ crises and pedagogy, and consider the emotions and personal crisis as an opportunity for learning. It is by being deeply affected by testimony that the students can learn something.

In the thesis I develop a critique of the idea that emotions and personal crisis are possible ways for teaching and for learning to develop moral compasses or as ways to work towards social justice. Through a critic of emotions, mainly through Ahmed (2004) and Todd (2003), I argue that emotions are cultural practices, not psychological states, and are through that relational. These emotional and relational practices can also function to bring borders (as between “we and them”) and through that are not able to bring pedagogical possibilities. From this light, I develop the argument into two different movements. The first movement is about what listening has to offer, and the other concerns opacity in relation to transparency, based on Glissant (1997) and Zembylas (2012, 2015). I here argue that the students’ opacity must be preserved for a teaching that does not want to exploit pupils. Through these two movements, listening and opacity, I formulate the educational possibilities that exist in the ambivalence.
Teaching discourse analysis as a critical thinking tool in history and social studies education?

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Critical thinking has been endorsed as a way to enhance education of democracy (Holma, 2015), and is part of the curricula of many Nordic countries, such as Finland, particularly regarding history and social studies education. Finnish students have been shown to lack skills needed for critical interpretation of information, statistics and graphs conveyed by the media (Ouakrim-Soivio & Kuusela, 2012). History and social studies education, it is suggested, needs to focus more on critical thinking (Van den Berg, 2007; Rautiainen, 2006; Virta, 2005; Johansson, 2014). In the presentation, I present three dilemmas regarding the teaching of critical thinking. I call the first one a theoretical dilemma: how is it possible to gain knowledge about the world while simultaneously learning to criticize this knowledge? The second dilemma I propose is of a political nature: if learning to think critically is considered as not merely a skill detached from the surrounding society, are we willing to encourage critical thinking? From a Norwegian perspective, Børhaug (2014) suggests that much of the critical thinking advocated for in social studies is selective, not directed towards for instance national power institutions. Finally, I present a third dilemma which I call practical: are we able? Studies show that critical thinking is not self-evident among educators. Many academics such as historians (Wineburg & McGrew, 2017) tend to be easily manipulated to believe in what they read online. In Finland, the highest school testing authority admitted in 2017 to have used the website Breitbart as a source in their test without checking what it stood for (HS.fi 2017). As a response to these dilemmas, I argue for a less authoritative and consensual teaching of social sciences. Today, critical thinking is often understood as learning which authority to trust, such as a book or a website. I suggest a different approach to knowledge in schools. For instance, information about a spider’s anatomy is probably trustworthy whether it is presented in a textbook or on a website, since there are hardly any ideological interests behind that particular information. Researching the events of a civil war, however, means having to approach both textbook texts and online texts with precaution, since there are clearly different ideological interests that want to portray their version of the truth as objective. Students should learn to consider historical knowledge as ideological, which technically means teaching history as a form of discourse analysis (Lozic, 2011; Saada, 2014) of their history textbooks and other media. I argue that this method, that would rethink the idea of social science knowledge, could be developed for social science teaching in general, even in basic education.

References


Teaching is Attention Formation

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Pay attention! What is the educational significance of these words? The uttering of the phrase does not necessarily have to be seen as the teacher’s attempt to reach inattentive students. It can also be seen as an invitation to students to take their place in and to engage with the world (see Lewin, 2014). As such, the phrase is more of a pointing towards the world rather than towards the students (Mollenhauer, 2014). As a form of pointing out, the phrase does not have to be uttered; it can also be enacted through the actions carried out by the teacher (Ergas, 2015) or through the teaching material the teacher provides (Masschelein & Simons, 2013). This paper offers a pedagogical-philosophical discussion of the educational significance of attention. The point of departure is a relational understanding of the practice of teaching and its relation to the forming of (attentive) subjectivity.

When teaching is approached as a relational practice of attention formation, rather than as a practice dependent on the individual attention of the students, it can be understood as a practice that calls a unique and irreplaceable subject into being. As such, it also makes room for this subject to respond to the summons of the surrounding world and to strive against the materiality of that very same world (Rytzler, 2017). This event is closely related to the educationally constitutive principles of the summons to self-activity and Bildsamkeit (Benner, 2014). By interpreting these principles politically/aesthetically, through Rancière’s (1991, 1999, 2005) notions of intellectual emancipation and partage du sensible, they become suited to depict a pluralistic notion and ethical enactment of the teaching event (Rytzler, 2017). While the event of intellectual emancipation, although constituted relationally, mainly addresses a unique attentive subject, the notion of le partage du sensible draws attention to the larger and shared context in which this event takes place.

As educational institutions all over the world have become shaped by a techno-political rationale that premiers accountability and measurability (see, e.g., Pierce, 2013; Biesta, 2009), there seems to be lesser room for teaching to be a lived practice that emerges through the becoming of unique relations and unique situations (Säfström, 2011) and through which attention becomes an active element in educational activities (Cornelissen, 2010). In this climate, the concerns for (students’ lack of) attention tend to point toward (mostly medical) interventions that do not interfere with the expected learning outcomes of the curriculum or the time-frame given to reach those outcomes (Lardizabal, 2012; Purdie, Hattie & Carroll, 2002).

In the paper, I suggest that a pedagogical (and didactical) reclaiming of attention is fruitful, both in bridging the gap between educational philosophy and educational psychology and in providing a much needed anti-dote to the techno-political boundaries of the educational institutions and practices of today.
The epistemology of academic freedom and the constitutive knowledge practices of higher education

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**Research topic/aim**
The topic is the epistemology of academic freedom related to some constitutive knowledge practices of higher education, and initiation of students into responsible knowledge practices. First, I argue that the epistemology of academic freedom closely relates to specific knowledge practices in higher education. Two out of these are critical thinking & information literacy – which again relates to academic writing and deliberative communication. Academic freedom for the researchers of academia is, basically, the freedom of expression. According to John Stuart Mill, complete liberty of contradicting and disproving an opinion is the condition that justifies anybody in assuming the truth of the opinion. Thus, it is vital, as a student of higher education, to learn how to exercise this liberty, and to learn how a belief can and cannot be justified. Second, I argue that, and how, initiation of students into responsible knowledge practices demand an informed stand on the concept of knowledge. This also means that an understanding of what knowledge is, are vital to the Academic Bildung of the students.

**Theoretical framework**
Theory of liberty (Mill), theory of critical thinking (Siegel), theory of academic Bildung (Kant, Solberg & Hansen)

**Methodology/research design**
Conceptual analysis

**Expected conclusions/findings**
If we can assume that production of new knowledge is the leitmotif of the university – then we should look into the constitutive knowledge practices of the academy, and ask ourselves whether these are responsible, and also, how we initiate students into these practices. I look into some of the more significant formative knowledge practices of academia, critical thinking (Siegel 1988), information literacy (Løkse, Låg, Solberg, Andreassen, Stensersen 2017) and deliberative communication (Englund 2000, 2007), all possible ways into student autonomy and authenticity. I argue that none of these practices makes sense without a solid notion of knowledge, that is, some form of realist or non-sceptical notion of knowledge. I further argue that there is a dependency between these practices and epistemic values such as truthfulness. This may imply that certain non-realist views upon knowledge and truth may be incompatible with for instance critical thinking, where we take critical thinking to be examination and evaluation of reasons. (Reasons as relevant “truth-makers”, or as giving “aletic” value.) I connect these epistemic practices and values to Academic Bildung as a regulative idea, and as the goal of the formation of students in higher education (Fossland, Mathiasen & Solberg 2015). Academic Bildung cover both independence and personal engagement, autonomy and authenticity. It points to the courage to challenge, the ability for resistance, and the capacity to create. I discuss the mentioned knowledge practices and the ideal of Academic Bildung, and relate this to the traditional ideal of academic freedom.

The expected conclusion is that the notion of academic freedom, as well as the mentioned vital knowledge practices of academia, presuppose a substantial concept of knowledge, and truth as a regulative idea.

**Relevance for Nordic educational research**
A possible relevance can be greater conceptual clarity
Self Assessment as Critical Analysis

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In my presentation, I shall discuss the current practice of student self-assessment, which is widespread in Norwegian schools. I shall focus on what I consider dubious aspects of self-assessment, with particular emphasis on the ethical dimension.

Self-assessment is defined in various ways, e.g. self-evaluation, self-appraisal, self-testing, self-monitoring and self-reflection. From an early age, students are encouraged to reflect upon and assess their own performance against given goals and measures, using both retrospection and introspection as the drive towards self-assessment continues unabated. Along with the shifting focus in educational contexts from teaching to learning, the ability to self-assess is commonly referred to as the cornerstone of learner autonomy. It is regarded as key to the overarching ideal of lifelong learning. While the management by objectives and continuous testing has been exposed to critical investigation, there seems to be less interest among researchers in self-assessment. Critique of the latter seems primarily to come from parents, and lately i.e. from the Norwegian psychiatrists Stein Førde og Trond H. Diset, who warn that the Norwegian school system is increasingly making children ill. They draw particular attention to the extensive use of learning goals and self-evaluation (Alver & Aass Kristensen, 2017). Bleakley (2000) points out how self-assessment is often taken for granted as ‘a good thing’ and therefore its implied theories of knowledge remains uninvestigated. Boud (1995) recognizes how a deeper reflection on self-assessment involves getting to grips with a range of power issues, and how self-assessment can take on varied guises and be used to many different ends.

To assess oneself (i.e. against specific goals and criteria) involves counterfactual (or modal) thinking, namely, the cognitive capacity to hypothesize about how things might have been or should be. The assumption that a situation or event could have resulted in multiple possible outcomes implies assumptions about the “self”, causality, freedom and choice. Moreover, it also results in certain assumptions about agency (Manum, 2017). In the light of philosophical theories of action and theories of counterfactual thinking, I argue that the current practice of self-assessment in Norwegian schools risks leading to the cultivation of a distorted, superficial and instrumental kind of counterfactual thinking. I argue that this may result in shallow perceptions about agency and responsibility, and failure to discover and challenge dominating power structures.

References:


How do we judge what works?

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Evidence-based practice (EBP), also known as the “what works agenda”, has met with much criticism in recent years but is nevertheless a force to be reckoned with – in the political realm, in research, and in educational practice. Advocates state emphatically that education research not only can address “what works” questions but must do so. To be preoccupied by what works is to be preoccupied with effectiveness. In this presentation I propose to discuss what it means to claim that something works. My main hypothesis is that this is much more complicated than generally assumed. I shall substantiate my hypothesis by teasing out and examining various considerations that can and should enter into judgments that something works.

A brief background is necessary. EBP is practical and causal in nature and involves the use of the best available evidence to bring about desirable outcomes (or prevent undesirable ones). Roughly, we implement an intervention and we get a certain result. There is a causal relation between intervention (practice) and result, and EBP says that this practice should be guided by evidence of how well it works, how effective it is. The evidence can in principle consist of different “things”, including personal experience, but EBP orthodoxy defines “best evidence” as quantitative evidence emanating from RCT studies. There is much that can be said about RCTs; suffice it here to mention two issues: First, although the use of RCTs is much problematized, their use is justified because what one wants evidence for is a causal connection. RCTs control for confounders and allow us to distinguish between correlations and causal claims. Second, the logic of RCTs has big implications for effectiveness judgments.

Here is the problem for EBP: Effectiveness is a complex multidimensional concept containing causal, normative and conceptual dimensions, and can by no means be read directly off RCT evidence. To say that something works is a judgment and I shall in my presentation look at six different dimensions that all enter into effectiveness judgments. First, the degree of agreement between desired and actual outcomes. If this is sufficiently high, we may judge that our intervention works. But how high is that? Second, the relation between intervention and outcome; the degree of effect. Effect size falls under this dimension. How big must it be? Third, the target. How we define the outcome, how widely or narrowly we define it, is crucial to effectiveness judgments. Fourth, temporality. How long does an effect have to linger for us to judge that the intervention works? Fifth, the scope. Which population does our causal claim hold for? 10% of school children? 50%? All of them? Sixth, the generality problem, which is closely connected to the logic of RCTs. RCTs show you the size of the effect for a certain study population, but tell you nothing about the frequency with which the intervention produces its effect. Thus, I conclude, judging what works is a highly complex affair.
On how to perceive and present the form of a phenomenon

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This paper examines how the logic of cultural science could be used to further the understanding of teaching and include the teacher’s voice in pedagogical fields of knowledge. The paper deals with theory of cultural science and methodological challenges in our research efforts to investigate teaching as a cultural phenomenon.

Applying Ernst Cassirer’s logic of cultural science, we explore cultural phenomenon and questions of perception and form from zur Logik der Kulturwissenschaften (1994). Cassirer’s form is based on the Greek concept of eidos. He turns it into a question of the meaning or essence of a cultural phenomenon. «Was sie [die Kulturwissenschaft] erkennen will, ist die Totalität der Formen, in denen sich menschliche Leben [als Kultur] vollzieht” (Cassirer, 1994 p. 76). This metaphysical reflection extends Cassirer’s logic of cultural science beyond both naturalism and constructivism. In cultural science, the perception must be directed towards the form or the essence of the cultural phenomenon. «Denn diese letztere [Kulturwisssenscaft] kann den Formbegriff nicht auslöschen, ohne sich damit selbst aufzugeben.» (Cassirer, 1994 p. 90).

To operationalize this theory, we observe teachers trying to perceive the essence of teaching employing our identities as previous teachers ourselves. Cassirer uses logic to argue that perception begins as a holistic understanding of a cultural phenomenon. The researcher, therefore, is a cultivated person and already an integral part of what is to be observed. To determine our findings, we present teachers’ knowledge through writing, drawing and painting, and give the teacher the possibility to comment on these findings. We use basic pedagogical theory to analyze the findings. All three symbolic forms aim to convey to different centers in the brain (Porges, 2011), stimulate the rational, ethical and aesthetic aspects of human being. Gadamer (2003) shows how humanistic research is connected to artistry and Cassirer stats that “Thought presses beyond the sphere of language; [...]” (Cassirer in Lofts, 2000 p. 163). In this paper, we will show how our method could be a broader road to perceive and acknowledge the form of teaching.

We will argue that this understanding of cultural science could bring in some important perspectives on science and turn the scientific activity closer to “[...] welche Erkenntnisart es ist, der wir unser Wissen vom Menschen, als dem Träger und Schöpfer der Kultur, zu verdanken haben” (Cassirer, 1994 p. 82). Through interdisciplinary research, we reflect on the concept of cultural science, by using Cassirer theory to present the essence of teaching.

Sources:


Generalist teacher education music courses – embedded in expectations of relevance

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The aim of this project is to understand how expectations of relevance in education (Fossum, 2017) interact with the valuation of unlike types of knowledge and teaching contents by different actors in generalist teacher education music courses. Relevance is used as a quality criterion for the evaluation of educational programs and courses, and it is used as a buzzword in strategic plans for professional education institutions like mine (HiOA, 2017). However, the notion of relevance is seldom defined, whether in these strategic documents or elsewhere. A flattened conception of relevance, understood as “instant relevance” of educational contents and activities, seems to get about in professional teacher education. The same do utilitarian influenced concepts of relevance, where both educational programs and research are expected to “meet the needs of the employment market”. A radical student-centered, dialogic approach to education (Fossum, 2015) seems to reinforce this tendency to a flattened understanding of relevance in education.

The project employs relevance theory (Kecskés, 2009; Schütz, 1962 [1945], 1970 [1951; Sperber & Wilson, 1995], perspectives deriving from Bakhtin’s dialogism (Bakhtin, 1984; Børtnes, 1999; Dysthe, 1999, 2013), as well as perspectives from music education and philosophy of music education to discuss the intersection of these currents of thought in professional music teacher education.

This is a philosophical investigation which is characterized by certain criteria or “symptoms of the philosophical” that are expressed through four action fields: “Philosophy clarifies its terms, exposes and evaluates underlying assumptions, relates its parts as a systemized theory that connects with other ideas and systems of thought, and addresses questions that are characteristically philosophical” (Jorgensen, 1992, s. 91).

This paper builds on earlier works of mine (Fossum, 2015, 2017) and is thematically relevant to the overall theme of this conference. The development of the new Norwegian “integrated” Master Program teacher education calls for reflection on such issues as those of this paper.
Symposium
Skam: Nordic perspectives on the challenge of ethical-political education today

Contributor 1
Skam, Shame and Bildung

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In what ways do the Norwegian web-based TV series Skam (Shame) depict the link between the many faces of individual, social and cultural phenomena of ‘shame’ and the formative processes of ‘self-cultivation’ (Bildung)? Do we trust this depiction? Does the web-based series signify a new type of public education (Volksbildung)? If so, may the series help to re-think Bildung for contemporary societies? I here explore these questions through a semiotic reading of the fourth season.

Skam portrays the daily lives of High School students at the affluent West of Oslo. The main characters are five girls, “the losers of the school”. To represent the youth’s own stories, the production of the series was based on hours-long individual interviews with the target audience. A new web-based episode was published daily and the characters’ fictional Facebook conversations and Instagram photos were displayed while airing. The fourth season follows the character Sana and focuses on Islamic religion, forbidden love and cyberbullying. Iman Meskini (19) – the actress who played the character – admits that she is now a role model for many Muslim girls.

In my semiotic reading of clips from Sana’s daily life I draw on contemporary political theories and philosophies of shame, Bildung and the relationship between the two. At the first and initial level of interpretation I focus on the multiple meanings of Sana’s headscarf in relation to the many faces and ambiguities of shame. As the root of the noun ‘shame’ (shäm) denotes the parts of the body that modesty requires to be concealed, we may assume that Sana’s vailing may signify ambiguous feelings or states of shame, or ways of being shamed through values embedded in the Western or Islamic culture. But is it necessarily so?

At the next level, I focus on how Sana stages herself through the non-color black: Sana’s black clothing, black lipstick and her motto “black is my happy color” seem to carry multiple meanings. As the Greek word for ‘shame’ - ‘aischyne’ - links shame to the aesthetics, Sana’s black may signify a darkness that simultaneously obscures and discloses shame and shaming. Black indicates a void, but also a multiplicity: Sana’s black staging may thus be read as signs of her ethical political formation in terms of both personal and cultural stasis and maturation.

At the third analytic level, however, I explore the potential message and import of a speech: In the very last episode Sana throws a party to celebrate Eid al-Fitr (the breaking of the Muslim fast). Arriving at the party, her friends greet her Eid Mubārak and give a speech: “Dear Sana, this speech is to you ... because what you invite us to today overturns US presidents tomorrow”. This personal speech touches on urgent ethical-political issues and sums up the plot of the fourth season. But it may also signify an ambition of the creators to ‘educate’ their target audience. Thus, we may again ask to what degree the series help to re-think Bildung for contemporary societies? Does the web-based series signify a new type of public education (Volksbildung)?
Contributor 2

Fragile visions of the social: Learning from 'Skam' and 'Faust'

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In the paper I read the popular Norwegian youth series ‘Skam’ against the background of Anne Imhof’s performance piece ‘Faust’ which won the Golden Lion at the 2017 Venice Biennale for the German Pavilion. Both works have been lauded as acute analyses of contemporary social reality. As expressions of today’s youth experience of social relations under the conditions of late capitalism, we can ask when and how ‘we’ is shaped respectively, which place it takes in relation to an all-pervasive individualism, and when the diagnosis of a dystopian present starts to propel the articulation of a utopian vision of the future.

The Norwegian teenage series 'Skam' follows one character in each season. However, the individual perspectives, exploring e.g. the specific challenges of Muslim or LGBTQIA students, are not just transgressed through becoming representative for the struggles of a respective minority group. The teenagers’ "affective dissonance" (Hemmings 2012) with mainstream school culture and their points of "snap" (Ahmed 2017) become openings for the formation of new communities and forms of belonging. The students' longing for and dependency on supportive friendships and a social role in a group of peers that exceeds instrumental relations shows "social freedom" (Honneth 2017) as a precondition for the flourishing and the exercise of personal liberties for each and every individual character. Ultimately painting a picture of an educational utopia, partly informed by the social democratic tradition in the Northern countries, the individual differences of the students find a legitimate place in a model of cosmopolitan solidarity and conviviality (Mohanty 2008), or suggest the need for re-imagining "educational commons" (Means et al. 2017).

In ‘Faust’, moments of resistance and utopia appear in much smaller gestures. The performers, for the most part of the piece isolated in their respective individual scripts, relate to each other solely in terms of different power dynamics, thus confronting "the brutality of our time with a hard realism" (Pfeffer in Smolik 2017). Only interrupted in rare moments of short improvisation, a small gesture or gaze appearing to search for something more, more human, in the connection with the co-performers or the audience, all forms of resistance, difference and deviation, e.g. the androgynous, queer or gender neutral look of the performers, are shown as already having become fashionable and consumable. Here, it is mostly the form of performance itself which promises an (at least temporary) escape from reification with its insistence on the importance and presence of the live body as well as on an art form that intends to resist its own commodification, thus becoming an increasingly popular platform for utopian thinking. (Dolan 2005; Munoz 2009). For a contemporary conception of ethic-political education, both 'Skam' and 'Faust' suggest that we need a renewed politicized and social understanding of Bildung, which leaves the traditional individualistic premise behind and makes serious effort to spell out the relational conditions of self-cultivation.
Contributor 3
Absences

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Two aspects of the tv-series ‘Skam’ (Shame) are conspicuous. Many have pointed out the absence of grownups and parental guidance in Skam/Shame. Parents are either completely absent for no obvious reason, absent because of work, or absent because of mental illness - with the exception of the parents of Sana, the Muslim girl. Teachers are usually just a voice or the picture is framed from the neck down. The highly eccentric school doctor/nurse is the only grownup who seems to be relevant, whose advice the young women seek and trust. The high school girls and boys seem to guide each other through moral and emotional conflicts and the absence of grownups is not thematized as a problem in itself. Grownups are not someone you fight in a classical teenage-rebellion with a view to gain independence; grownups seem to be rather irrelevant.

Another aspect is equally conspicuous: political questions do not seem to be of central importance. Rather, the internal relations in the group and in particular love relations are at the center of most conversations. Everything revolves around the group.

What does this lack of parental guidance and teacher authority signify, how can this lack of – in psychoanalytical terms – lack of transference be interpreted? And how can we interpret this apparent lack of political interest? Is it restricted to the logic of the tv-series or is it significant as far as the present day conditions of authority, education and political situation are concerned.

Who is in the position of the Other for these young women and men? What are the conditions of transference/authority today? These issues will be discussed with a theoretical outset in Freudo-Lacanian psychoanalysis.
Contributor 4
On Becoming and Caterine Malabou’s ‘Voir Venir’

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Isak: “It’s kind of a cliché, but ... you never know who’s going to be dead tomorrow. And if you believe in Allah, Jesus or the theory of evolution or parallel universes, there’s ... there’s only one thing we all know for certain.”

Eva: “What’s that?”

Isak: “That life is ... now.”

This exchange between long-time friends Isak and Eva marks the conclusion of the third season of SKAM. The season explores Isak’s coming out as a homosexual by engaging in a romantic relationship with Even, who suffers from bipolar disorder. The season shows the development of their loving but protean relationship.

In my paper, I suggest that the contention that life is now is both metaphysical and ontological. Metaphysical, because it is a statement or attempt to describe the characteristics of something, in the sense which Heidegger develops in his ‘What is Metaphysics?’ Metaphysics is here not perceived as a specific questioning of certain concepts only, but the very core questioning that thrown-ness ensures: We can never escape the fundamental questioning of what the world is and isn’t. Existence in this sense, the is in “life is now” then becomes both a statement about what appears to Isak, as well as a statement about an aspect of life’s ontological constitution: its situatedness in time.

If we develop this notion further, we discern three simultaneous temporal aspects of the statement. It seems immediate, prospective, and retrospective in nature. Immediate, because it is now; it is the now which we intuitively and continually experience. Prospective, because the is in “life is now” suggests a continuity and permanence of an aspect of life; its now-ness to come. Retrospective, because its foundation is empirical – it is an inductive assumption based on the observation that “everybody knows it [because it has always, to followers of every creed, been true]”.

This tempo-plurality of this question, in turn, reminds us of the fundamental metaphysical nature of education as the deliverer of what is to come. But what happens if we flip the question and ask: Was I ever going to become who I am? This question reveals a philosophical issue: The ontology of the form, here understood as the individual, and the development thereof.

To explore this issue, I read the contemporary French philosopher Catherine Malabou’s concept voir venir, “to see (what is) coming”. This concept is the culmination and expression of Malabou’s view on time as it is expressed in her first book, The Future of Hegel (1996, English translation 2005). In this work, Malabou establishes the concept plasticity, which she later will pronounce the motor scheme of our time, the concept to replace Derrida’s writing, the concept most capable of expressing the thinking of our time: our Zeitgeist (Malabou, Plasticity at the dusk of writing).
How Can We Understand the Concept of Teaching at The Leisure Time Centers?

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Research topic/aim  
This presentation focuses on the understanding of teaching in Swedish leisure time centers. According to a new chapter in the National Agency for Education, “teaching” is given a broader meaning in the leisure time centers than at school, and the practitioners need to define the concept of teaching in this context. Traditionally, the word teaching is not used in the leisure time centers in the same way as in school. The leisure time-teachers have described their teaching as “working with children’s learning and development” or “developing children’s skills”. Since there are no specific leisure time education didactic models, there is a great need to identify, describe and problematize what teaching can be like in this context. A previous traditional focus on care and recreation is expected to be transformed into a goal-oriented (teaching) activity and replaces a previous activity-driven content.

Theoretical framework  
Theoretically, relationships are the basis for all educational work. Skills and abilities develop in relationships and the interaction between teacher and children is important for the development of children both socially, cognitively and emotionally. Creating a mutually active and engaging environment is the only way teachers can teach according to Dewey (1916/2008). In such environment, the ideal of education and democracy is shaped.

Methodological design  
The methodological approach is ethnographic, focusing on how leisure-time teachers work with a project called Lego Town during five weeks. The aim of the project is to build a city where children can develop ideas, solve problems and turn them into action. Data consists of observations, movies, field notes and conversations with children and educators. This analysis is based on Kroksmark’s (2008) definition of teaching as intentional, intersubjective and interactive. The data are derived from one leisure-time centers, involving four leisure-time teachers and 100 children of 9-11 years.

Expected Conclusions /findings  
The preliminary analysis shows that the didactic approach in the project can be viewed from three different dimensions: teaching, environment and play. Partly the didactic in the project is similar to school teaching as opposed to the traditional leisure-time center approach, where environmental and play dimensions have an important role.

Relevance to Nordic educational research  
It is interesting to investigate the leisure-time centers in a Nordic perspective in order to exchange experiences. Important issues to discuss are both the teaching content of and possible didactics in the large groups of children in the Swedish leisure time centers today.
The leisure-time centre in the new curriculum

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Umeå University

The aim of this study is to explore the process of introducing a revised curriculum for the Swedish leisure-time centres (which was introduced 2016); to analyse the process of formulating the added curriculum text, how leisure-time centre teachers interpret and re-contextualise the text in their practice, and how formulation-, interpretation-, and realization processes relate to and affect each other: RQ1; What issues and areas have been the subject of discussion during the formulation and referral process? RQ2; How do leisure-time centre teachers, headmasters and civil servants interpret the new curriculum text? RQ3; To what extent and if so, how does the revised curriculum affect the everyday practice in the leisure-time centres?

The theoretical framework builds on concepts of policy enactment. A policy text is not simply implemented into practice. It has to be translated from text in to action in the practice, and this process is related to the history and context of the practice and the resources that are available. Local actors have to navigate and reinterpret among different policies and other requirements and demands. They are not only implementers of policies, but can actively take part in the process to put the policy into practice (Ball, 2012).

This paper focuses on results from the first research question. The analysis is based on documents from the Swedish National Agency for Education and includes responses from the referral process where different interest groups, like municipalities, teacher unions, universities, researchers in the field and leisure-time centre teachers, had the opportunity to send in their views on the draft of the text. The documents also comprise texts from the reference group that worked with the development of the curriculum text. The documents comprise 320 pages in total. The method used for this part of the study is a text analysis of the documents where different themes will be identified further on in the process.

Preliminary findings show that the term ‘teaching’ causes most comments and discussions. The majority of the comments are negative towards the use of teaching for describing leisure-time centres’ learning environments. There is a concern that the use of this term will make the practice in leisure-time centres become more school-like, and this is not perceived as something positive. They mean that the term excludes important parts of the leisure-time centres core mission; the caring and the situational and spontaneous learning.

The results from this study are of relevance for the NERA conference since there are both similarities and differences between the Nordic countries in how school-aged childcare is organized and governed.

References

Teacher in leisure-time centre - a profession in constant change

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Research topic/aim
Teachers in leisure-time centre as a profession can in Sweden be traced to the late 1800s. Characteristic of the profession is that during these more than 100 years it always has been in a motion within the framework of various social and educational institutions and activities. This is the background to the fact that a number of studies have been interested of teachers in leisure-time centre as a profession (Andersson, 2013; Haglund, 2004; Hansen, 1999). At the heart of these studies, there is an interest of the content and knowledge fields of the profession, but also the professions relation to other categories of teachers. A result that appears in these studies is that teachers in leisure-time centre have difficulties to formulating the professions knowledge fields and ontological models, which according to Brante (2014) is required to clarify the profession's own logic. The purpose of the present study is to investigate the knowledge fields and ontological models within the profession of teachers in leisure-time centre between year 1880 and 2017. The following research questions are addressed:

Which knowledge fields are clarified within the profession between year 1880 and 2017?
Which ontological models are developed within the profession between year 1880 and 2017?

Theoretical framework
The study is based on Brantes (2014) theory of professions and the concept of ontological model has a prominent role in the analysis. An ontological model denotes a set of organized elements and relationships for the purpose of capturing the professions reality. The model is the basic building block on which the professions’ own theories rest and the model control the perception of reality.

Methodological design
The method is a discourse analytical reading (Fairclough, 2010) of policy documents, historical texts and previous research in order to identify and describe the ontological models within the profession between year 1880 and 2017.

Expected conclusions
A preliminary analysis shows that the profession has been in constant change and has developed five different ontological models between year 1880 and 2017. The ontological models are the Working cottage (1887-1940); the afternoon home (1940-1960); the free-standing leisure-time centre (1960-1985); the Integrated leisure-time centre (1985-2008) and the Didactic leisure-time centre (2008-). Relevance to Nordic educational research
The study contributes to clarifying and strengthening the profession's knowledge field and ontological models, and the analysis will have a strong relevance to both teacher education and for active teachers in the profession of leisure-time centre.

References
Youth, normality and belonging. How young people construct and understand youth, identity and normality in their local environments

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Research topic/Aim:
This presentation is based on qualitative research concerning young people’s place and activity constructions in the tension between everyday life perspectives and structural, societal imperatives. In our research, we are interested in examining how young people in 8th grade experience, define and construct youth, identity, normality and a sense of belonging in their local environments.

Theoretical framework:
With inspiration from relational sociology and Richard Jenkins’s understanding of classifications, social identity and the categorization of others (Jenkins, 2006; Bourdieu 1999, 2004), we ask: How do young people understand and construct their everyday lives and cultural practices when away from adult supervision? What role do such unstructured socializing play for young people’s communities and sense of belonging? Which of the young people’s communities are by the young people themselves regarded as legitimate and why? How do young people construct meaning and a sense of belonging in a contingent late modern society? The classic distinction between the normal and the outsiders, by Howard Becker (Becker, 2013) is used in our analysis to initially shed a light on and ultimately come closer to an understanding of the young people’s constructions of norms and their understanding of mutual solidarity through symbolic demarcations.

Methodology/research design:
With relational sociology as our theoretical starting point (Bourdieu, 2004; Börjesson, 2009; Prieur, 2002) we picked out as informants three different classes of eight-graders in a mid-sized Danish provincial town. This project makes use of a qualitative mixed-methods approach (Brinkmann, 2012), with the empirical data collection falling into three phases:
Phase 1: We conduct researcher-initiated workshops using socio-matrix-inspired (Beum & Brundage 1950) cartographical mappings of the young people’s every-day whereabouts (Anvik & Gustavsen 2012). Phase 2: On a basis of inductive analyses of the data material gathered from the workshops we carry out interview guides for use in focus group interviews (Halkier, 2016) – also conducted in phase 2. In Phase 3, the walking interviews, we follow the informants in smaller groups out into their local environments to witness how the young people spend their leisure time taking in use and negotiating meaning of their local spaces and places.

Expected conclusions/Findings:
With the young people trying to define selves and creating identity markers, our analyses makes it clear, that the young people group themselves according to their local milieus and often in opposition to other groupings. Typically, this means groups of young people from other surrounding neighbourhoods with different socio-economic conditions. The question of whether to commence in smoking and consummation of alcohol becomes important markers, which illustrate the different youth groupings’ internal distancing and positioning themselves in opposition to each other. In that sense, a notion of belonging emerges within the groups, and is intensified through the young peoples’ use of social media such as My Stories on Snapchat. The idea of individualisation, which by many a sociologist is considered one of the late modernity’s most significant characteristics of the norm- and tradition free youth, appear to be a bit simplified in the light of this research, as the young informants of our project seem to identify themselves according to norms and understandings.
occurring in the nearest of their local environments. Our analyses help to show, that what could be deemed a normal youth life varies greatly from school district to school district. Even though the physical distance between the youth groupings is only a few kilometres, the symbolic distance should rather be measured in light years.

**Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:** The understanding of young people’s take on youth, normality and sense of belonging, will shed light on important issues regarding socializing practices and formal/informal learning processes among young people in contemporary Nordic societies.

**References:**
Rethinking leisure-time pedagogy across youth club and school from a youth perspective

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Research topic/aim:
Our research concerns Danish leisure-time pedagogy. More precisely, the part of leisure-time pedagogy, that takes place after school in youth clubs for young people aged 14-18 years. This branch of leisure-time pedagogy is under pressure after a school reform, followed by falling memberships. Research question: In which ways can this branch of leisure-time pedagogy rethink content as well as organization to make youth clubs attractive and meaningful arenas, from a youth perspective?

Furthermore, the youth clubs are challenged by reduced opening hours and an increased number of working hours in the secondary school. These changes force the leisure-time pedagogues to prove their identity across youth club and school. Research question: In which ways can the leisure time pedagogy become an important part of the school, representing a leisure time pedagogy based on a youth perspective?

The above-mentioned challenges, calls for a renewed leisure-time profile and identity. An identity, that builds bridges across school arenas and youth clubs, based on a youth perspective. Leisure-time pedagogy represents and offers an important arena of socialization in young peoples every-day life, cultivating participation, motivation, democracy and community. Our central research question in the project is: In which ways can the leisure time pedagogy be rethought and renewed as an attractive, meaningful and bridge building concept, across leisure-time and school, on the basis of a youth perspective?

Theoretical framework:
Our theoretical framework consists of youth research, research into leisure-time pedagogy and research into youth clubs (Larsen, 2015; Schultz & Østergaard, 2015; Bruselius-Jensen & Sørensen, 2017; BUPL, 2016).

Methodological design:
Our methodological design is based on action research. Rethinking and renewing leisure-time pedagogy across school and youth club, on the basis of a youth perspective, calls for innovative, co-productive methods (Hulgaard & Nielsen, 2015; Duus, 2014; Madsen, 2012). These methods imply co-production with the young people, leisure time pedagogues, teachers and external partners. We focus on intervention, process orientation and a cyclic research design, where we facilitate processes, interact and research together the participants.

Expected findings:
Based on youth perspectives, innovation and co-productive processes, we expect our research (carried out 2018-2019) to offer perspectives on how to rethink leisure-time pedagogy across youth club and school.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
Knowledge and perspectives concerning leisure-time pedagogy in a time characterized by breaches, challenges, that calls for rethinking and not least bridge building between leisure-time, youth club and school.

References:
Children’s experience of non-supervised situations in leisure-times centers.

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In Sweden nearly a half million children are served by leisure-time centers. This means that nearly all children between the ages 6-9 participate in leisure-time center activities. The activities take place in various rooms and locations in school environments, and so, often with the attendance of leisure-time teachers, but, at times, situations take place where children are left without adult attendance. For example when playing football out in the schoolyard, building with blocks in separate rooms indoors, or changing clothes in dressing rooms before sport activities. Previous research has shown that some children tend to feel insecure and uncomfortable without adults around during their time in leisure-time centers (Hvitfeldt Stanek, 2015).

The aim of this study is to explore these non-supervised situations from children’s perspectives. The research questions are: which possibilities and/or limitations are attached to these particular situations when it comes to social practice and cultural competencies? Which prerequisites does the non-supervised situations promote for children’s identity work and their opportunities to develop social relations? Which arrangements can be implemented to make the children feel more secure and comfortable during their stay in the leisure-times centers?

The study is based on data from a leisure-time center located in small municipal on the West Coast of Sweden. The center serves 40 children from 6 to 9 years of age. The children were asked to walk the environment and take photographs of the places that they defined as non-supervised places (Rasmussen, 2014). Afterwards, in order to capture the narratives of the children (Johansson 2003; Klerfelt & Haglund, 2011), the photographs were discussed by the children in focus group interviews. Which are the thoughts and emotions linked to the places photographed?

In this study we define the leisure-time centers and its environment as a social space with a variety of rooms, nooks and areas where social meetings occur (Rönnlund 2013). The concept of space and place (Massey, 2005) is used as well as the theory of production of space by Henri Lefebvres (1991). Lefebvres main focus is on the city, but his theories might as well apply to leisure-time centers and school environments. The social space is produced in a dialectical triad, namely the perceived space, the concieved space and the lived space (ibid.). How the leisure-time center is designed tells us something about social norms and expectations on how children should be, and act. The design regulates children’s behavior and, in a longer perspective, it also regulates which experiences and which emotions that are linked to different places and situations in the leisure-time center.

The result of this study will be relevant for Leisure-times centers in Nordic countries.

References
Science in leisure time center – opportunities and difficulties

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Research topic/aim: The aim of this presentation is to discuss preliminary findings from an ongoing research project on science education in leisure time centers (LTC). The focus is on the communicative practices of science education in LTC: How do teachers, pupils and artefacts interact in creating science practices in LTC? We are also interested in how these practices may change depending on if the pupils have learning disabilities or not, and what this may say about differences in learning opportunities in learning science at LTC?

Theoretical framework: The theoretic framework of the study is based on a theory of materiality and semiotic, mainly Actor–network theory (ANT) (Latour, 2005). According to this approach there is no difference in the ability of technology, humans or non-humans to act (Latour, 2005, Law, 2004). Although ANT is often called theory, it does not answer questions about "why" or "how" a network occurs, but rather analyzes relations between actants in a network. That’s why we also use Foucault’s (2008) theories of discourses to understand how scientific discourses are constructed in a network, in this context LTC.

Methodological design: The study is based on ethnographic fieldwork and data was collected in year 2017 in three different kind of LTC in Sweden: an “ordinary” LTC, an outdoor-LTC and a LTC for children in needs of special support. The research design is inspired manly by Latour (2005) and ANT and the data production consist of video based observations and field notices. Ethical considerations throughout the research process have been taken into account.

Expected conclusions/findings: Preliminary findings show that pupils in ordinary LTC cooperate a lot with each other when they are communicating science. They talk, ask questions and come up with hypotheses. In contrast, pupils in LTC for children in needs of special support experience science individually or with their teachers, not with other pupils, and repetition of learning activities is common. Another difference is that LTC for children in needs of special support use images, concrete material, sign, their bodies and senses instead of spoken language which is more common among pupils in ordinary LTC. In both types of LTC it was primarily the teachers who initiated and controlled the science activities.

Relevance to Nordic educational research: As a complement to school LTC should contribute to the development of pupils’ skills and abilities in the field of sciences. For example we do know how teaching in science is organized in school and also that science traditionally had a strong emphasis on the conceptual. But we actually do not know what science in LTC could be, how it is constructed by teacher or pupils or how it is expressed in the daily work in the LTC.

References:
Leisure-time centre or service centre?

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The main purpose of this paper is to present the result of my thesis Leisure-time centre or service centre? – An ethnographic study of leisure-time centres in three socioeconomically diverse areas (Andishmand, 2017). According to the Education Act: 'education provided in each school form and in the leisure-time centre should be equivalent, regardless of where in the country it is provided' (SFS, 2010:800, p. 8). Over the past fifteen years the ability of leisure-time centres (henceforth LtC) to compensate for children's different abilities and needs, backgrounds and living conditions has been reduced through decreasing resources and larger groups of children. In the presentation I will particularly pay attention to the the variety of local and school-specific factors and how the actors, in different ways, produce and reproduce structures through day to day routines and daily social encounters.

The theoretical point of departure originates in a social constructionist perspective (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Theoretically, the study is influenced by Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration, which holds that focus is directed to the context and actors interactions in that context. One basic premise of this theory is that the production and reproduction of social institutions can be related to everyday routinization and daily social encounters. Central to the theory of structuration is the idea that structures cannot exist without human agency and that structures provides opportunities for as well as constraints on social action.

The study is based on ethnographic fieldwork in three schools, over the course of one semester respectively. The schools are situated in diverse geographic and socioeconomic areas, as earlier research shows that there are significant differences concerning quality and equity within the Swedish LtCs. Of special interest in the study are the schools' specific conditions, the local circumstances, such as the geographic location, area and the schools' histories and intake.

The empirical findings show that the social changes and developments taking place during the last three decades are noticeable in all three LtCs in different ways. Housing segregation, where certain groups are excluded as a result of social position and economic resources, together with free school choice have consequences for the social practices in LtCs, as the groups become increasingly homogeneous based on the children's ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The social practices in the LtCs appear to be a result of local rules, norms and conditions rather than the policy documents.

This research show how social changes and developments taking place during the last three decades impact educational opportunities within the LtCs. To date, little research has been conducted in Sweden considering this area.

References

https://www.skolverket.se/publikationer?id=3767.
Playing board games at leisure-time centres: Prominent discourses and significant subject positions

Haglund, Björn & Peterson, Louise

University of Gothenburg

Research topic/aim
Board games are traditionally seen as an important part of Swedish leisure-time centre activities (Johansson, 1984; Saar, Löfdahl and Hjalmarsson, 2012; Svensson, 1981) but research concerning this activity is sparse. This study aims at filling a part of that void through a web survey that focuses on staffs’ use of board games at school-age educare centres. To be more precise the presentation aims at 1) discussing why staff at leisure-time centres use board games within the activity and to 2) discuss what identities or subject positions they use when playing board games together with children.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical point of departure emanates from critical discourse analysis (CDA), which focuses on how language, in the form of discourses, contributes to the constitution of the world (Fairclough, 2003). These discourses are often competing since different people have different and alternative ways of representing the world. Fairclough (2010) describes these often competing discourses as the order of discourse. The order of discourse should, therefore, be seen as the totality of the different discursive practices and the relationships between them. Fairclough (2010) also argues that positions within different practices should be seen as pre-given ‘slots’ in which people have to act. CDA is used to find out what subject positions, what ‘slots’, the staff use when they play.

Methodological design
The data is based on a web survey where Facebook group members in a closed community directed to discussions concerning work at leisure-time centres and the professional role of leisure-time pedagogues where asked to participate. Sixty-six Facebook members participated in the inquiry, 55 of whom completed the survey. The questionnaire included both closed ended questions, which were followed up with contingency questions, and open-ended questions.

Expected conclusions/findings
The results reveal four prominent discourses and three different subject positions while playing board games. The results show that both the informants’ discourses regarding their reasons for using board games and the positions the staff settled into while playing board games mostly drew from a social pedagogical arena. However, features that emphasize traditional school related content are also evident.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
This presentation is relevant to Nordic educational research since board games often are seen as an important part of Swedish leisure-time centre culture, a culture which in many aspects are the same in all the Nordic countries, and also should be seen as a neglected area of inquiry.

References


NETWORK 18

FAMILIES, INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITIES IN EDUCATION
Influential factors on children’s reading and writing development: The perspective of parents

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In Sweden, several studies on children’s reading and writing development have been conducted. These studies seldom incorporate a parental perspective. Therefore, there is limited knowledge about either how parents view their children’s reading and writing development, or which factors parents consider to be of importance when their children are about to learn to read and write. The aim of this study was to describe influential factors on children’s reading and writing development from the perspective of parents. In the study, we make use of retrospective life-history oriented interviews with 27 parents (n=22 mothers; n=5 fathers) of preschoolers that were conducted as part of a research project entitled Borderlands, bridges and rites of passage – understanding children’s learning journeys from preschool to school. In these interviews, the parents described their children, their children’s learning environments, their children’s educational transitions, and their own cooperation with staff in preschool and preschool class. They also described factors that can be interpreted as being influential on their children’s reading and writing development. Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological model for human development and the PPCT-model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) were adopted as a theoretical and analytical framework. Extracts about children’s reading and writing development were obtained from the interviews and analysed by way of a thematic analysis technique (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This comprised five phases: a familiarisation with extracts; a coding of extracts; a search for themes within extracts; a review of themes; and a naming of themes. The analysis generated nine themes which reflect factors that, according to parents, influenced their children’s reading and writing development: (1) Children’s (dis)abilities and engagement. (2) Genetics and parents (dis)abilities. (3) More able siblings and peers. (4) Involved parents and grandparents. (5) Teacher-initiated reading and writing activities in preschool and preschool class. (6) Social climate in preschool and preschool class. (7) Free play and child-initiated reading and writing activities. (8) Toys and books. (9) Extra support provisions and stimulation. The results of the study are preliminary and cannot be generalised in terms of other parents, children or contexts. In the study, the themes were related to the notions of person (biosystem), proximal processes, context (e.g., microsystem) and time (chronosystem) in the bioecological model and the PPCT-model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). The study has relevance on Nordic educational research because it gives examples of factors that, according to parents, can influence children’s reading and writing development.

References

Intersection of disability and migration: Perceptions of immigrant families

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This study is as part of a dissertation research which tackles the overrepresentation of immigrants in special education referrals in Austria. The aim of this paper it to show how the oppression of being an immigrant can interact with the stress of having a disabled kid, and what magnifies this oppression and stress among immigrant families.

Regardless of its level, disability does not affect only disabled kids but it has an effect on the whole family and, apart from the objective burden there can be subjective burden such as stress, embarrassment, depression, hatred, guilt or shame experienced by the family (Ravindranadan & Raju, 2007). On the other hand, as Goldberg (2002) suggests, accessing to general education holds a critical role in the integration of immigrant groups and academic achievement is seen as an indicator for the level of integration. Hence being referred to special education may create stress among the immigrant families as a result of the distrust in the effectiveness of special educational services, especially when they feel discriminated against by facing oppression and asymmetric power relationships.

The research site was Vienna, Austria where pupils with migration background have a higher risk to be referred to special education (Luciak & Biewer, 2011). The data collection was done through intensive interviews with immigrant parents whose kids are schooled either in special education schools or in a mainstream school with a simplified curriculum to follow. Data collection is conducted in several home visits where mother, father or both parents were available. The data were analyzed with an inductive logic rather than imposing codes and categories to the data. Larger categories, in other words domains, (Spradley, 1980) were looked for rather than smaller units such as codes or categories and the explanatory quotes of the participants were also used as validation.

The findings of the study are discussed by focusing on the overall perceptions of the participants as well as by considering the background of the families such as socio-economic status, age, generation. Preliminary findings showed that feelings of helplessness and discrimination are common and special education facilities are viewed as detention, hindrance from integration or disgrace for the family whereas the main source of stress is the invincibility of the school authorities. On the other hand, the relevance of immigrant overrepresentation in special education referrals in Nordic countries and the research about that matter will be compared and contrasted with the Austrian context.

References
Polish migrant parents on their experiences with Norwegian ECEC and primary schools

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This paper aims to reconstruct Polish migrant children experiences on transition to the Norwegian ECECs, build on democratic traditions that value children’s participation and play. The research material comprises over 10 narrative interviews with Polish children aged 3-11 who are/were attending the Norwegian ECEC. The reconstructed stories are analyzed with use of the Bourdieuan theoretical toolkit that allows to interpret “belonging to a children group” and “participation in play” as the highest stakes (illusio) for the migrant children in the Norwegian ECECs. However, a certain level of language and other social skills (cultural and social capital) is required in order to reach the illusio. Some of the ECEC practices, reconstructed in children’s stories, were supportive in “equiping” them in the necessary capitals. The other type of practices, based on the “the language comes on its’ own”-attitude, led to insecurity, anxiety and lack of belonging to the children group and the ECEC. The results contribute on the level of theory and that of practice by showing examples og good practices, but also by questioning the routines of maintaining pure respect for the cultural identity of the newcomer child, and by showing importance of language and belonging in order to benefit from a good Nordic childhood.
School-family Collaboration Makes Differences on Cultural Capital: Based on a Case Study of 6 Migrant Families

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Abstract: Since Bourdieu presented the concept of cultural capital in 1960s, it has received widespread attention in education area. A lot of researches used this concept to explore differences among the levels of performance and achievement of children belonging to different social classes, which successfully explain how the family and social structure influence individuals. Those researches found the problem and put forward evidences to affirm it while few focused on how to make differences on individual cultural capital. In this article, the authors have been engaged in research how the school-family cooperation influences the migrant families who are regarded as low social status groups and lack of cultural capitals in Shanghai (a big city in China). The authors drew upon cultural capital framework to bring a longitudinal and empirical study on 6 families. Through interviewing and observing how they engaged in school and how those experiences influence the families, we concluded three findings. First, cultural capital in “family field” can be activated and added through cooperation. Second, cooperation creates “new fields” for cultural capital to transmit and transform. Third, cooperation presents a practice model to renewal cultural capital in every fields. This research provides a dynamic view to redefine the cultural capital and reminds us to rethink what can education do under the background that social status reproduction and solidification have become a universal believes.

Keywords: cultural capital; migrants; family-school collaboration

References:
“The lottery”: Challenges that parents of children with ASD experience in cooperation with school and professional services

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Cooperation in education is considered to be important by many researchers (e.g. Epstein 2011) and the cooperation between home, school, and professionals is considered important in relation to children with special educational needs. It can be an essential factor in the successful implementation of inclusive school practices. Raising and educating children with ASD can be particularly demanding (e.g. Meadan, Hale & Ebata 2010, Hayers & Watson 2012). In recent years the number of children diagnosed with ASD (autistic spectrum disorder) in Iceland has increased, as in other countries (Sæmundsen 2014).

This paper presents a small scale study on the parents of children with ASD in the capital area of Iceland. The purpose of the study is to examine the parents’ experiences of cooperation with school and professional services.

Semi-structured interviews were taken with 6 parents of children with ASD. Participants were obtained by purposeful sampling, most of them through a parents’ support group. All the children attended or had attended regular schools in normal classes. The interviews were analysed according to thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006) and Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner 1979).

Children with ASD are a diverse group, both in regard to severity of educational needs and their manifestations. The early findings show that children with prominent needs or symptoms are usually diagnosed early in life and, as a result, professionals from the State diagnostic and counselling centre provide advice and support to the children’s schools (most often preschool) and their families, thus promoting cooperation between professionals, school, and family. When children’s needs are less obvious they tend to be diagnosed much later in life, even as late as in early teens. The time before the child is diagnosed can be difficult. The child shows unexplainable behavioural difficulties at home and in school which is particularly stressful for the families. It can depend on individual teachers as to how well the child’s needs are accommodated. One parent described it as “the lottery”. In extreme cases a vicious cycle can develop between the child and the teacher and cooperation of parents and teacher is limited. This affects the well-being of both the child and its family in a negative way.

Access to professionals is often insufficient due to lack of funding and waiting lists are far too long. In addition, cooperation between different professional services such as the health system and social services is inadequate.

Relevance to Nordic educational research: Findings stress the importance of teachers’ basic knowledge of ASD and how to accommodate children with those educational needs in order to benefit the child and foster good mutual understanding and cooperation between schools and families.

Keywords: Cooperation, parents, school, special services, children with autistic spectrum disorders
Parents, both mothers and fathers, play an important role in fostering their children’s general growth and well-being (Bornstein, 2002). It is urgent that we continuously look for the best ways to bring up children and to support parents (Bornstein, 2002). This makes it essential to understand parents’ vision of their role and their experience of being a parent. One way is to explore parents’ pedagogical vision: their values, goals and practices and using our understanding of it as a base in working with them.

Although good and involved fathers are seen important for children’s well-being (Lamb, 2010a), less attention has been paid to fathers as caregivers than to mothers (Lamb, 2010b). The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of fathers’ pedagogical vision—their values, goals, and practices.

The study’s theoretical framework uses both social constructivism (e.g., Gergen, 2001) and an ecological perspective in the spirit of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system theory (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 2000). In addition, Ádalbjarnardóttir’s model (e.g., 2010) of teachers and principals’ pedagogical vision was used to add to our understanding of fathers’ pedagogical vision.

The research question that guided the study on fathers’ pedagogical vision was: What characterizes the fathers’ pedagogical vision on parenting and child-rearing (values, goals, and practices)? The participants were 23 fathers of children aged 13 and 16. Their pedagogical vision was explored using qualitative methods for both data collection (interviews) and data analysis (phenomenological approach).

A close analysis of the fathers’ values, goals, and practices showed that there are three over-arching themes that are highly visible in the fathers’ vision and throughout their perceived relationships with their children: Love and care; freedom (freedom of action, autonomy, and independence) and; security and boundaries. In the proposed presentation these themes will be discussed within each of the three issues: fathers’ values, their goals, and practices.

The findings should be a valuable contribution to research on fatherhood and fathers’ pedagogical vision and therefore relevant to Nordic educational research. In addition, the findings should be useful for policy makers in parent education and informative for administrators and other professionals in this area.

References
Mothers’ attitudes towards the home–school relationship in Icelandic compulsory schools

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Research topic/aim:
To explore the relationship between education, marital status and mothers' attitudes towards home–school cooperation and their satisfaction with teaching and the support their children receive at school.

Theoretical frameworks: Research in Iceland has shown that parents and school professionals agree that working together is essential for children’s education but relationships between parents and teachers are sometimes stressful (Jónsdóttir & Björnsdóttir, 2012). Parents with more formal education are more likely to participate in home–school cooperation and more likely to agree that parental support in education is important (Bæck, 2009). Jónsdóttir, Björnsdóttir and Bæck (2017) have shown that parents’ marital status and educational level explain some of the variability in parents’ opinions, and that single mothers seem to experience more difficulties than do other groups. The single mothers often had less formal education and were more likely to report that their child needs special support at school.

Methodology:
Parents in 20 compulsory schools participated in a survey about their children’s experience at school and their communication and cooperation with the schools their children attend. Questionnaires were sent to the parents of 5,195 students in the 20 schools. Completed questionnaires were obtained from 3,481 parents. In this presentation, the focus will be on the answers provided by mothers (n = 2,078).

Findings:
The findings of the present research indicate that family–school relationships need to be more responsive to diversity among student groups and more sensitive to students’ social backgrounds. About 57% of mothers who had no formal education after compulsory school were totally or very satisfied with the school their child attends, but this was true for 50% of mothers with a university education. For children living with both biological parents, 51% of mothers were totally or very satisfied with the school their child attends, but only 45% of single mothers responded in the same way. Single mothers were more likely to say that their child had special needs than mothers who lived with a partner. Moreover, compared to mothers who live with a partner, single mothers were more likely to state that their child did not receive the support that he or she needs because of his or her special needs.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:
The tradition of the home–school relationship is strong in Nordic countries, where there has also been a great emphasis on equity in education. Nordic countries have been proud of their achievements regarding gender equality. This study looks at mothers and how education and marital status affects home–school relationships.

References:
Parents' perceptions on home-school cooperation and their children's schooling

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As earlier research has suggested (e.g. Baeck 2010; Epstein & Sanders 2000; Evans 2013), parents’ involvement in their children’s schooling benefits the child’s learning outcomes as well as their social and emotional development and wellbeing at school. In Finland, equality is considered a central value in the educational system. However, children attend schools with different socio-economic backgrounds as well as in diverse geographical spaces. In recent years, there is an increasing concern whether our educational system is that equal, after all. Educational equality has become a central focus of educational research. Among these is the question, for example, of spatial inequalities in education (e.g. Siekkinen 2017). Furthermore, in relation to spatiality, especially rurality has been viewed in relation to educational outcomes (e.g. Baeck 2015) and rural schools’ closures as experienced by local people (Autti & Hyry-Beihammer 2014).

The present study is part of the project “RUR-ED Spatial Inequalities and Spatial Justice in Education”, which focus is on how space affects educational inequalities. One of the aims is to investigate how families’ and students’ cultural resources encounter the social practices of schools, and whether disconnection between these two could cause spatial inequalities in education. The data for the project is collected in Norwegian, Finnish and Canadian schools in rural areas among teachers, parents and students. In Finland, the interviews were conducted in two northern municipalities, and in this presentation, we focus on interviews conducted among parents of secondary and upper secondary school students.

Our presentation has two aims. First, we are interested in rural parents’ general attitudes towards their children’s schooling. The focus is on how parents view the role of education in their children’s lives. Furthermore, we will explore the educational responsibilities between home and school as discussed by parents living in rural areas. Second, we will concentrate on home-school cooperation from the parents’ perspective. In relation to this, we will ask to what extent rural parents cooperate with the school and how their view their own role in the cooperation.

References


Beginning from the Exhibition: Challenges, Possibilities, and Development of the New Semester’s life in One Chinese School-- the new evaluation model of quality education

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Research topic

In January 2017, a schools-family collaboration research project piloted by the “Life and Practice” Education Research Center of East China Normal University, along with Save The Children (STC), took the Longhutang Experimental School of Xinbei District, Changzhou city, China as the research base and launched a school-wide holiday life reform research at the beginning of the semester. In September 2017, Longhutang Experimental School launched the “Exhibition and Evaluation Meeting of the Summer Vacation Homework” to assess students’ achievements in their summer vacation homework.

Based on the new evaluation model of quality education, some questions are worthy of in-depth thinking and research, such as what are the influences of the evaluation on social interaction, potential cultivation and cognitive ability of students? what are the advantages and characteristics of the innovative evaluation model for education achievement, which can be of great reference significance to other schools and countries? what are the values and challenges for the research of education?

Theoretical Framework

This study is one project of the New Basic Education Project (NBEP) in China which has contributed to China’s reform in promoting the construction of campus culture and the development of students. The purpose of educational evaluation lies in further reflection and innovation on the education reform (Li, Y., & Li, J. 2015).

This study is also based on the Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which was proposed by Howard Gardner, a famous American psychological development scientist. The theory emphasizes the diversification of the evaluation that based on the students’ activities (Howard Gardner, Shen, Z., 2008).

Methodological Design

This study was conducted during the process of the “exhibition and evaluation meeting” of the Longhutang Experimental School, using questionnaires, personal interviews, and participatory observation of education research methods.

Expected Conclusions

1. The positive attitude of students to participating in the exhibition and the active communication between students and parents, teachers, schoolmates and community members in public occasions.
2. Role effectiveness and evaluation feedback from parents, teachers and community members are necessary.
3. The improvement of students’ cognitive ability has been achieved.
4. The new evaluation methods and multiple democratic evaluations can be developed.
5. The development of campus culture and the promotion of the education evaluation system reform have been strengthened.

Discussion

First, the activity of “exhibition and evaluation meeting” is a highly individualized evaluation method of education quality. It breaks the boundaries of the traditional models for education achievement evaluation.

Second, this study attempts to comprehensively analyze the activities of “exhibition and evaluation meeting” from the perspectives of pedagogy, psychological cognition and social development.
Finally, the “exhibition and evaluation meeting” has an immeasurable reference value to the reform of education quality evaluation in China and other countries.

References
Prepare teachers with the competencies needed for home-school cooperation – a literature review

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Previous research reveals the importance of teachers’ attitudes and initiatives in the work of home school collaboration (Erikson, 2009). It is also argued that there are barriers to home-school cooperation due to shortcomings in teachers’ invitations to families and strategies for involving parents in education (Hasey, 2005). These indicate a correlation between teachers’ competencies and the outcomes of home-school cooperation. This paper aims to provide a literature review on teachers’ competencies demanded for implementing and improving home-school cooperation, to identify the knowledge gaps in this field, and to discuss the policy and practical implications for teacher preparation. The research questions are: a) What teachers’ competencies are regarded as crucial for cooperating with parents? B) Do teachers have the competencies needed for home-school cooperation? C) How teacher education prepares teachers in accordance with these demands? 23 educational research articles published during the last 10 years (2007-2017) are selected through a systematical search of scholarly peer-reviewed full texts (Eriksson Barajas, Forsberg & Wensström, 2013) on two online databases “Academic Search Elite” and “Education Resources Information Center” (ERIC), as well as a thematically higher relevant research journal International Journal about Parents in Education. The articles are analyzed by using qualitative data analysis computer software Nvivo. The analysis of data is based on the conceptual model of “overlapping spheres” of influence of family, school and community by Epstein (2010), and teachers’ collective and individual competencies necessary for parental involvement identified by Westergård (2013). The preliminary results support the assumption of teacher competences that imply a wider and systemic view of teacher professionalism on multiple levels – the individual, the school, the local community, and professional networks (OECD, 2009). Within the framework of relational, communication and context competence (Westergård, 2013), teachers’ competencies such as teacher leadership, capacity to change, positive and trust relationships with parents, interpersonal capacity, digital competence, reflectiveness and culturally sensitiveness are highlighted. The results also show a general picture of deficiencies in teachers’ competencies related to cooperation with parents. These results indicate the need of improving teacher education with more attention to the topic and the manner in which this topic is being addressed in the program. Moreover, home-school cooperation should not be isolated subject in teacher training but should be embedded in general conceptions about teaching and learning and teacher identity throughout teacher training program. This literature review is expected to deal with the knowledge gaps within the research field in the Nordic context.

References
Challenges in home-school cooperation – Finnish teacher-students’ views

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Research topic
Previous research has shown that home-school cooperation is beneficial for children’s learning and development as well as children’s social functioning and it assists in addressing problem behaviours (e.g. Wilder 2014). Although the benefits of the cooperation are noted by research, there are challenges to cooperation (e.g. Hornby & Rafaele 2011). Among the identified factors are different beliefs of what is included in parental involvement or cooperation (ibid.). Teachers are powerful actors in parental involvement with a power and position to either enhance involvement or discourage it (Bæck 2010.) The focus in the presentation is on the views of teacher-students who are in the process of becoming professionals. We seek to answer the question: What kind of challenges the interviewed teacher-students see for home-school cooperation?

Theoretical framework
Professionals, such as teachers, endorse various kinds of beliefs concerning home-school cooperation originating partly from their training, contacts with their colleagues and partly from their cultural belief systems (see e.g. Huijbregts, & al.2008). These beliefs play a role in teachers’ activities (e.g. Skott 2015)

Methodological design
The data were collected in three focus group, qualitative thematic interviews of twelve Finnish teacher-students. The topics to be discussed in the interviews were based partly on Epstein’s model (e.g. Epstein & al 2009) and partly the new Finnish national curriculum. The data was analysed qualitatively by first coding the data into categories, then searching for reappearing themes, similarities as well as differences and finally looking for connections between the themes (see e.g. Braun & Clarke 2006)

Expected conclusions
We expect that clarifying the teacher-students’ views on the barriers to home-school cooperation will help to develop teacher education.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
As already shown in previous research, home-school cooperation in general is beneficial and finding ways to enhance it is important for Nordic educational research.

References

Bæck, U.-D. K. 2010. ‘We are the professionals’: a study of teachers’ views on parental involvement in school. British Journal of Sociology of Education, 31(3) DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01425691003700565


Teacher competencies and home-school relationship

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Research topic/aim: This study explores differences in teachers’ opinions on home-school relations in compulsory schools, and discusses how teachers’ competencies can be enhanced in this matter.

Theoretical frameworks: Research in Iceland has shown that teachers in compulsory schools spend a lot of time on cooperating with parents, the majority spends 2-4 hours per week on that (Jónsdóttir & Björnsdóttir, 2012). The young teachers found cooperation to be more difficult than the elder ones did (Jónsdóttir & Björnsdóttir, 2014). A Norwegian study showed that relating with parents can sometimes be difficult, demanding and stressful, seen from teachers’ point of view, and can therefore affect teachers understanding and experiences of their own profession (Bæck, 2015). Another Norwegian study on parent-teacher relations revealed a need for competence-building activities at various levels in schools (Westergård, 2013). An increased pressure of accountability during last twenty years, has resulted in teachers feeling caught in a pincer movement between parents on one side and bureaucrats on the other, according to Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), and they call for a development of teachers’ professional capital.

Methodology/research design:
Schools personnel in 20 compulsory schools participated in a survey about their opinions and practice at school, including opinions on home-school relationship and parent-teacher cooperation. There were 860 school personnel who were asked to participate; including teachers, school leaders, social educators, and teacher aids. In all 823 school personnel answered at least one of four questionnaires and of these 312 were supervisory teachers.

Expected conclusions/Findings:
Findings show a difference in teachers’ opinions of whether parent-teacher cooperation is difficult or easy. Age was influential; of teachers older than 50 years, 27% said that cooperation was very easy. On the other hand, of teachers 29 years old and younger, not one said that cooperation was very easy. These findings will be related to background factors like gender, and school characteristics like team-teaching; to inform a discussion about how teachers’ confidence and their competencies in parent-teacher cooperation can be supported.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:
The Nordic countries all face challenges in recruiting student-teachers and many experienced teachers are leaving the profession. One of the reasons often mentioned is increasing pressure in home-school relationship, at the same time as good relationship is highly valued by parents and school personnel. Therefore, we share interest in exploring the barriers in home-school cooperation.

References:
Preparing the transition to secondary school – the school perspective

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Research topic
This presentation takes part in a PhD study, which aims at investigating the execution and experience of transitioning in to secondary school from the perspectives of the parents, the school, and the pupils in a Norwegian 8th grade class. The presentation’s objective is to elaborate on what the teachers and the school management emphasize to make sure that the pupils experience a positive transition, and what expectations they have to the parents and the pupils during this process.

Theoretical framework and methodological design
The study builds on a sociocultural perspective on learning, which emphasizes the interaction between human mental processes and its surroundings (Vygotsky, 1978). The project uses a qualitative research design, with case study as an approach, where the phenomena is explored in a real-life, contemporary bounded system over time (Creswell, 1998). The empirical material consist of observations, student texts, documents, interviews and logs gathered from pupils, parents, teachers and the school leadership. Data is analyzed by using the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Expected findings
The following main category is preliminary defined to describe what the school and its teachers emphasize in the preliminary phase of the transition to secondary school: «Safety through predictability and overview».
Three subcategories define the main category:
- “Respectful transfer of relevant student information”
- “Composition of well-functioning student groups”
- “Making contact, be available and calming parents and pupils”

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Having a good experience of the transition to secondary school can prevent early dropout (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2011), but Norwegian pupils may experience this transition as complex (Kvalsund, 2000). Literature studies show that the transition has gained little attention internationally and especially nationally (Norway). Research-based knowledge is required to fill this gap, and a complementarity of new multi-method and qualitative research can be an asset in this field (Hanewald, 2013; Tilleczek & Ferguson, 2007). The aim of this presentation is to contribute to strengthen this knowledge.

References:
http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2013v38n1.7

Pre-service teachers' spontaneous peer-group reflection

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This case study examined three beginning PSTs’ spontaneous reflection during their first teaching practicum. During this BA-level practicum the PSTs planned, implemented, and evaluated their own as well their peers’ teaching and thought their future teaching actions in face-to-face peer-group mentoring discussions. In these discussions PSTs viewed their own and their peers’ practicum lessons from the video. Peer-group mentoring discussions were PST-initiated without prescribed topics.

Earlier studies suggest that PSTs’ reflection benefits from structured facilitation of PSTs practicum experiences. This study uses Dewey’s (1933) theory about reflection as spontaneous, common thinking, which is free from formal and authoritative rules. Spontaneous reflection originates from practical experiences during which person has felt dissonance, enabling person to create new understanding of experience. While reflecting person jumps beyond observed events to make inferences, suppositions, and hypotheses or to give suggestions, ideas for further actions. However, reflection should occur not only after a teaching experience, but also during the process of teaching (Schön, 1991). An onward looking attitude in thinking the experience broadens it and leads into new knowledge and ability to make change in further actions. Reflection process should lead the person into change through one’s experiences lived in the practice. Importantly learning takes place in social interaction between individuals while sharing their practical experiences (Dewey, 1933).

This qualitative case study (Stake, 1995) involved three PSTs and a TMR in the PSTs’ first teaching practicum. Following Miles and Huberman’s (1994) description, the case is the process of group members’ communal reflection in the context of peer-group mentoring discussions during the teaching practicum.

The PSTs showed an increasing ability to observe what happens while teaching. They created new understanding about teaching, learning and knowledge from the context. PSTs used their new knowledge to develop their ability to transform their teaching according students’ actions and learning. Video technology helped PSTs to make observations in quickly changing situations in the classroom. Each pre-service teacher went through an individual developmental process in learning to reflect. Learning to become a reflective practitioner can start early despite the PSTs having little knowledge about the practices and theories of learning.

Creating reflective practitioners is generally an aim in teacher education. This study examined spontaneous reflection in the Finnish research-based teacher education. Spontaneous reflection furthers the development of reflective practitioners and may contribute to a research-based approach in teachers’ work. Sharing thoughts with peer learners with regularity enables to see experiences from several points of views while moving flexibly in the reflection process. Collaboration with others develops future teachers’ ability to co-operate instead of working solo.


Student teachers in Iceland, background, drop-out and study time

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Aims:
In Iceland, as in the other Nordic countries, the recruitment of teachers in compulsory schools has been a matter of concern (The Nordic Council, 2010). While in the next 15-20 years big cohorts of teachers hit retirement age, fewer students are entering teacher education programs and statistics reveal high drop-out rates and long study time. The situation calls for further studies to seek explanations and possible solutions. The poster will present a study of student teachers enrolled in teacher education in Iceland in 2017. In this first phase, we focus on seeking an explanation for drop-outs and long study time. We look at teacher students’ backgrounds, the form of study (e.g., on-campus, online, or a blend of both forms), and how much paid work and what kind of work they are doing during their enrolment.

Theoretical framework:
We relate to previously conducted research on recruitment in Nordic countries and use the historic review of application patterns and reforms of teacher training in the period 1970–2009, provided in a 2010 report as a reference (Nordic Council, 2010).

Since half of the student population is enrolled as online learners or select a blend of online and face-to-face courses, we look at theories and research literature on distance and online learning. We apply a cultural-historical approach for examining the experience of online students and identify problems and hindrances they need to overcome to be able to continue their studies while participating in the labour market.

Methodological design:
The reported analysis is part of a study that examines student teacher background, preferences, and attitudes. The data was collected in Nordic countries, but this analysis uses only the data from the University of Iceland (n = 272). The survey was online and students were asked to participate when attending class. Links to the surveys were also distributed through Facebook pages and emails. The majority of the questions were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, with ‘four’ as a neutral value; most of the concepts were measured with 2-3 single items. The survey also included questions about students’ background and how much they worked.

Expected conclusions/findings:
About 85% of participants were women. 49% of participants were on-campus students, 33% were in distance education, and 18% were in a mixed program of on-campus and distance education. Around 69% of on-campus students and 71% of distance students had a paid job. Of the on-campus students that had a paid job, 74% worked 20 hours a week or less, but the same was true for 12% of the distance education students. Almost 47% of the distance education students worked 36 hours or more per week. Considering this situation among the student teachers in 2017, the design of the teacher education programs in Iceland needs to be reconsidered.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
The Nordic countries all face challenges in recruiting student teachers.

References:
Newly qualified teachers’ understanding of research-based teacher education in Finland and Norway

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This comparative study aims to examine newly qualified teachers’ (NQTs) understanding of research-based teacher education practices in Finland and Norway. Internationally, two different approaches to the design of initial teacher education (ITE) have emerged: (1) strengthen the dominant university based system; (2) promote a greater deregulation with shorter teacher training routes mainly taking place in schools (Zeichner, 2014). The former has been the prevailing strategy in Finland for more than 40 years and will be the prevailing approach in Norway too, according to the latest teacher education reform. The study poses the following research question:

What understanding and perception of research-based teacher education is prevalent in the Finnish and Norwegian sites under examination?

ITE in Finland aims to educate pedagogically thinking, autonomous, responsible and reflective professional teachers, who can base their teaching on research principles and successfully combine it with the profession’s practical challenges (Krokfors et al. 2011; Tirri, 2014). In Norway, from 2017 onwards, ITE will be taught as research- and development-based (R&D-based) programmes at Master’s level. The reform resembles research-based teacher education in Finland (cf. Afdal, 2012).

The theory of practice architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008) is employed to make explicit how particular kinds of practice arrangements or practice architectures prefigure distinctively different purposes, understanding and manifestations of research-based teacher education in Finland and Norway.

The present study is part of a longitudinal and comparative research project between Åbo Akademi University and UiT, which commenced in 2015. ITE at Åbo Akademi University is represented by a well-established teacher education (Aspfors & Eklund, 2015) and, at UiT, by a pioneering effort – a Master’s level programme that was piloted in 2010 (cf. Jakhelln, Bjørndal & Stølen, 2016). Consequently, a comparative analysis of the two teacher educational programs is relevant.

Shortly after submitting their Master’s thesis 18 NQTs were interviewed in Finland in 2016 and 24 in Norway in 2016 and 2017. In the first order analysis, separate qualitative content analyses were made in relation to each site and specific themes and categories were identified. In the second order analysis, we will compare the thematic data and seek to reveal an implicit understanding of the practice embedded in the teacher education’s practice architecture in the two countries (cf. Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008; Pennanen, Bristol, Wilkinson, Heikkinen, 2015).

The results show that NQTs in Finland gain a solid basis for their future teacher profession as well as experience legitimacy and high status in society. Their education encourages them to grow into innovative and professional teachers prepared to meet the trust and autonomy given to them by society. In Norway, the NQTs emphasize the value of an education that supports the development of a development-oriented perspective on teaching, as well as an analytical approach to the classroom and the school as an organisation.

Our research contributes to a deeper dialogue concerning the development of research-based teacher education. Based on a comparative approach we will reflect on further development of research-based teacher education in a Nordic context.
Scientifically ground and didactically sound? Preschool staff’s views of the concept scientific ground

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The backdrop of this study is the statement from the Swedish Education Act concerning all education to be based on a scientific ground. As the preschool is seen as the first step in the education system in Sweden, preschools are to deliver education based on a scientific ground. From a political stance, this action was guided by an ambition towards increased equality and quality of the preschools. It is however unclear how the concept of scientific ground is interpreted by preschool staff and how they implement a scientific ground in preschool education. This study is thus motivated by the following research questions:

Which concurrent understandings of scientific ground are described by preschool teachers?

How is scientific ground made visible in the preschool practice according to the staff?

The theoretical framework is guided by bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), in which the reciprocity between different system levels is recognized e.g. how a concept is understood and implemented within the preschool context by the preschool staff.

Qualitative semistructured interviews were conducted with 40 preschool staff from one municipality in Sweden. The participants were either preschool teachers or child minders and their work experience ranged from less than a year to more than forty years. The interviews focused on the participants understanding and thoughts of the concept of scientific ground and examples derived from their practice concerning the use of scientific ground. All steps in the research process were conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines proposed by the Swedish Research Council (2017). The interviews were analyzed.

The first tentative analysis have identified coexisting understandings of the concept of scientific ground. For example, viewing the curriculum for preschool as the scientific ground. Preschool staff described scientific ground as working in accordance with the goals of the preschool curriculum. They explained it as if there existed an alignment between the curriculum and the preschool practise, this was understood as scientific ground. Another coexisting understanding is how research base is seen as a way of being able to describe not only what is done in the preschools, but more importantly why it is done. A third understanding contained subject education as the scientific ground in preschool. The staff described this as for example using mathematical concepts with the children, they provided a scientific base for the children’s learning.

The research bares relevance for Nordic education research by addressing the overall question of how research can be used in practice and how research base is communicated. Further, implications to preschool teacher education programmes is discussed.
Constructing teacher education programs: crossing boundaries in pursuit of integration

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This paper examines how teacher educators approach the design of integrated, five-year teacher education programs (TEPS). These programs combine disciplinary, pedagogical and didactical knowledge with school based education in a single learning trajectory. Consequently, student teachers attend lessons at multiple departments/faculties, in addition to their practicum. This way of organising TEPS is challenging because the programs involve a range of actors, knowledge domains and organisational sites and processes. The analysis examines how teacher educators work across these boundaries to address epistemic, pedagogical and organisational challenges associated with program design. Norway represents an interesting case because the integrated TEPS for secondary school are currently undergoing reform, and therefore provide an opportunity for examining program (re-)design ‘in the making’.

The analysis is based on data collected from four TEPS in Norway (lektorprogrammer 8-13). The institutions represent geographical and institutional diversity, allowing for the investigation of design processes in varied empirical settings. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 4-5 informants at each institution, who subsequently submitted participant logs for six months. The informants represent key areas of TEPS (disciplinary knowledge, pedagogy, subject didactics and the practicum), who had particular responsibilities related to program design and development. National policy documents were also analysed to examine how national frameworks were being operationalised at the local level.

The analytical approach is based on cultural historical theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Hedegaard, 2008). The focus of analysis is how teacher educators negotiate the multiple demands that emerge in program design, and how program design is shaped by organisational, epistemic and pedagogical dynamics. The data is currently undergoing analysis. Initial findings indicate that program design is significantly shaped by organisational factors, and that pedagogical concerns are sometimes subsumed to organisational constraints. Further, the complexity of organisational processes and sites can complicate decision making processes. Third, different models for program organisation have consequences for the degree of ownership experienced by different stakeholders. Finally, considerable epistemic boundary crossing was necessary to pursue program integration.

The paper contributes to existing research by i) examining academic development at the program level, and ii) by analytically foregrounding teacher educators’ work. Teacher educators’ work remains under researched and under theorised (Hermansen, submitted; Ulvik & Smith, 2016). There is also little empirical research on how teacher educators approach program organisation as the object of developmental work, as opposed to specific elements of TEPS such as the practicum, individual courses, or cross cutting themes (e.g. student assessment, data use or the use of ICT).

References
“What’s in it for me?” Students’ motivation, professional development and their perceptions of the relevance of the Norwegian teacher education program (Lektorutdanning) after the curricular changes

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This study explores students’ motivation and professional development during their last semester of teacher education with an extensive practice period, and before continuing on to their master thesis. The aim of the study is to investigate whether the implementation of the new curriculum (first adopted in the autumn 2017) has affected students’ perceptions of the teacher education program as well as their motivation to become teachers.

The new curriculum calls among other things for a longer teaching practice period in schools. At our institution this has resulted in the students going directly into teaching practice at the beginning of their 7th and last semester of teacher education. This has also resulted in a very compact schedule for their on-campus education which has necessitated large changes in the teaching given. We will therefore report on students perceptions of the relevance of their on-campus education and their teaching practice (in the schools) during their 7th semester.

The ongoing study is based on two surveys handed out to the all the 190 students in the study program. These surveys were distributed midway (October 2017) and at the end of the semester (end of November 2017).

Two different questionnaires were developed. The first questionnaire comprises approximately 30 questions (open-ended and multiple choice) tapping into the students’ motivation to enroll in the study program (Lektorutdanning), their satisfaction with subject didactics and general education courses, and the perceived relevance of the two teaching practice periods in schools. The second questionnaire comprises 20 questions about the overall perception of relevance, the students’ perception of how well they feel prepared for their future teaching, and whether the students’ overall motivation to become teachers has been affected.

The study is still ongoing and the expected findings we wish to present are the connections between the study variables which will be analyzed using simple correlation, confirmatory factor analysis and simple linear regression. The analysis aims to investigate the students’ perceptions of various elements of the study program, and especially whether the changes due to the implementation of the curriculum covary with the students’ overall satisfaction and their motivation to work as teachers.

The results will be discussed in terms of students’ motivation and developing teacher professionalism.

We assume that the ensuing results of the current study will be of great relevance for teacher education in the Nordic countries and for the ongoing development of teacher education programs in the light of current and future challenges.

Provisional reference list:


One teacher’s use of questions as scaffolding tool in reading and writing instruction

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Within the subject of language arts, there is a considerable amount of research on teacher questions in whole class teaching, especially on questions related to pupils’ reading of literature. Fewer studies, however, have investigated teachers’ questions in one-to-one situations with pupils in reading and writing instruction the first years of schooling.

Questions can be a scaffolding tool in teaching (Van de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen, 2010), and in this study we want to investigate what kind of questions the teacher asks, and how these questions can work as scaffolding in pupils’ reading and writing. Theoretically the study is anchored in scaffolding theory (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976), that further can be linked to sociocultural theory and the notion that students learn through interaction in different activities.

We have studied one primary school teacher’s questions during pupils’ individual seat work in Norwegian language arts. This teacher was selected from a total of six teachers, as she used several strategies and approaches when the pupils asked for help. As we analyze the questions of one teacher, the study can be seen as a case-study. In this regard, we would like to use the results as examples of how a teacher can scaffold through questions. The questions have been extracted from video recordings (a total of 2 hours and 22 minutes), and the analyses are done based on Myhill’s categorization of questions (Myhill, 2006). Here we separate between two analytical dimensions; the form of the questions and the function of the questions.

According to the form of the questions, the results show that the teacher – not surprisingly – asked most closed questions. More interesting are the analyses of the function of the teacher’s questions. These functions are closely linked to the teaching context and the classroom activities. We find that the teacher asked different kinds of questions in the different school activities. When the pupils were doing silent reading, the teacher often asked questions categorized as practising skills and developing vocabulary. When writing stories, the teacher asked questions that are building on thinking. When solving tasks about grammar and orthography, the questions were often categorized as factual elicitation. This shows a teacher that is adapting her teaching and questioning to the instructional context and classroom activities. The results are interesting in a Nordic context as research shows that teachers’ use of questions are quite similar between the Nordic countries.

References
Teaching early learning in mathematics—qualitative study on student teachers’ experiences with the Storyline approach

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Creating the best possible early learning environment for mathematics in primary school is a challenge affected by many factors. The professional teacher must have knowledge of subject didactics, in addition to mathematics itself, and possess general didactic competence (see Midtsundstad, 2010) to effectively promote early learning in mathematics (Fauskanger, 2017). Effective mathematic teaching in primary school requires different approaches to learning. Accordingly, the Storyline approach takes into account students’ prerequisites and experiences and is based on the principles of adaptive education, active learning and partnership (Eik, 1999). This study investigates how primary-school student teachers experience Storyline as a cross-disciplinary method to develop mathematical competence for future mathematics teaching in primary school.

The qualitative study assumes the social constructivist view of reality as the result of practice and interaction and knowledge as situated and socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). This view of knowledge presumes that the experiences we do in and around the world create meaning. The sample comprises 44 first-year primary-school student teachers at a medium-sized university college in south-eastern Norway. Seven focus interviews were conducted (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015), and the transcripts were analysed and coded line by line following Corbin and Strauss’ (2015) constant comparative method. Two self-administered online questionnaires were conducted immediately before and after Storyline using the survey program SurveyXact. The study meets the ethical guidelines for qualitative research in all the stages of the process (Silverman, 2011).

Based on preliminary analyses, student teachers seem to identify three major ways in which using Storyline in early learning develops mathematical competence. First, the cross-curriculum method facilitates deep, lasting learning as pupils approach a theme from different subjects. Secondly, students learn from each other through the student activities and collaborative learning at the core of Storyline. Third, the problem-solving activities using mathematics in new, untraditional ways foster curiosity and creativity. Overall, the students teachers’ experience Storyline to be beneficial for developing mathematical competence necessary for their professional practice as primary-school mathematics teachers.

References


Facilitating creative and cross-curriculum learning in teacher education through The Storyline Approach

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Being able to facilitate creative, cooperative and cross-curriculum learning is a necessary competency for our future teachers (Kunnskapsdepartement, 2017; Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2014; NOU, 2015). The Storyline Approach provides for a framework in which teachers can facilitate learning that supports these elements. Framed by Dewey’s (1980) concept of experience and Schön’s (1983) theory of professional reflection, this study explores how 104 first-year Norwegian student teachers experience the aesthetic dimensions of a so-called Meta-Storyline, and to what degree they report the experience as relevant for them as future teachers. The Meta-Storyline used in this study required students to take on fictional roles as teachers-in-team, where developing a Storyline for their imaginary class was part of the story. Based on two on-line self-reported surveys (cf. Bryman, 2016) and six in-depth focus interviews (cf. Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015), the analysis of this study reveals that a majority of the student teachers experienced the aesthetic dimensions within the Meta-Storyline as positive. In addition, this experience was significant when reporting relevancy for implementing a Storyline in the future. For these students, Storyline appears to have provided them with a means to connect theory (teacher education) and practice (future profession). However, not all students experienced the Meta-Storyline positively, and these voices must also be taken seriously. Their experiences raise some questions about how Storyline can be used within teacher education.

Four factors relating to timing, cooperation, type of storyline, and personal preferences are identified as important when considering a Storyline projects as part of the curriculum in teacher education. In order to equip new teachers with the didactic competency for the school of the future, further research that focuses on creative, cooperative, and cross-curriculum approaches such as The Storyline Approach is needed in Teacher Education.

Referanser


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Case-based Teacher Education

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1. Research topic
Teacher education is criticized for being fragmented (Darling-Hammond 2012; Grossman and Hammerness 2009). A common criticism among student teachers is the gap between practice teaching (knowing how) and the university coursework (knowing that) (Korthagen 2010, Kvernbekk, 2012). In the teacher education programmes described in this study, two different ways of practicing case-methodology were introduced:
A) Post graduate course. Case methodology: Different cases (written) related to the main topics of the course.
B) Integrated programme, 1 year course (1st semester). Case methodology: Student teachers writing their personal cases.
The research questions are:
What do the two groups of students understand as the main purposes of working with cases?
If and in so case how can case-based teacher education contribute to close the perceived gap between practice teaching and the university coursework?

2. Theoretical framework
Case-based teaching may be a possible way to bring together theoretical knowledge and knowledge of teaching (Gravett et al., 2016). Furthermore, cases can serve as ‘emotional hooks’ that make student teachers engaged and motivated (Spicer et al, 2014), and able to see themselves as teachers (Merseth, 1996). Thereby they get a nuanced understanding of what it means to be a teacher (Gravett et al., 2016) and become aware of different perspectives which are crucial for teachers’ critical thinking (Harrington, 1995).

3. Methodological design
The study is based on focus-group interviews with students from the two different groups. In focus groups the diverse points of view may, through interaction, yield more than the sum of the individual points of view. The method is especially suited to examine experiences, attitudes and beliefs (Barbour and Kitzinger 1999).

4. Expected conclusions/findings
We expect to find differences between the two groups as to how they understand the purposes of working with cases, but also common traits that can give insights on the value of case-based teacher education.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
The integration of theoretical knowledge and knowledge of teaching is a common challenge in teacher education, and our findings will hopefully be of interest in our neighbouring countries.

6. Literature
Spicer, J.O. et al. (2014). The Value of Case-Based Teaching Vignettes in Clinical Microbiology Rounds, American Journal of Clinical Pathology, 141 (3).
Becoming a teacher - How teacher education supports the development of teacher identity

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Becoming a teacher

- How teacher education supports the development of teacher identity

The aim of the study is to further explore how teacher students experience their education, especially when it comes to the question of developing a “teacher identity”. How does teacher education support teacher students in their struggle to detect a “teacher identity”?

Theoretical framework

The teacher competencies established among the degree objectives of the teacher education programme in Sweden include as key requirements the ability to show self-awareness and empathy. It also includes the ability to identify ones need for further knowledge in order to develop the skills in teaching and working in an educational setting. These abilities are part of a professional teacher identity, and the teacher education program should provide students a starting point for developing such an approach to the teacher profession. Studies show that such development cannot be taken for granted. Teacher students have very tentative sense of their teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas 2009). Therefore we have asked students in our teacher education programme how they conceive the concept of teacher identity. What does it mean to develop a teacher identity? How do teacher students describe their own development towards a teacher identity? The study deals with theory of professional identity and teacher identity (Alsup 2008).

Methodological design

The material consists of 24 interviews with teacher students in different stages of their education. In our study we used the semi-structured interviews for its combination of structure and flexibility (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014). We use qualitative content analysis (Shreier 2012) and we have defined our results through a narrative description.

Expected findings

Preliminary results indicate that the students describe four different ways of being, or becoming, a teacher. Potentially, we also expect to be able to pinpoint teacher students’ expectations on teacher education at different times of the education (beginning, intermediate, advanced level).

Relevance to Nordic educational research

This study might be of interest to other teacher educators in the Nordic countries, since there might be similarities in the education systems in all Nordic countries. Teacher education is a key issue in society, in Sweden as well as in other Nordic countries.

References


The development of school-based teacher educators’ professional identity

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Teachers’ professional identities have been studied extensively, but we still have little knowledge about the development of a professional identity amongst school-based teacher educators (Izadinia, 2014). Those teachers who also take on the role of teacher educators in teacher preparation is increasingly acknowledged (Bullough, 2005). Professional identity explains how people compare and differentiate themselves from other professional groups (Adams, Hean, Sturgis, & Clark, 2006). A professional identity evolves over time, developing professional practices, behaviours and values that characterize the profession (Schein, 1978). Several studies show that developing a teacher educator identity is central to becoming a committed teacher educator (Bullough, 2005; Timmerman, 2009). One probable reason for the lack of studies on this subject is that knowledge concerning the processes that influence the development of school-based teacher educators’ professional identity is not sufficiently elaborated. Thus, despite the increasing recognition of the importance of school teachers in the process of mentoring student teachers undergoing practical training, there exists a lack of research exploring the various factors that reinforce school-based teacher educators’ development of a teacher educator identity (Izadinia, 2014). In the Nordic context, and in times of teacher education reform, there is a clear need for studies examining on the role of school-based teacher educators (Young & MacPhail, 2016). Furthermore, those studies that have been conducted are mainly of a qualitative nature.

The main purpose of this study is to develop a theoretical framework that specifies key areas and variables associated with the development of a teacher educator identity. The present model consists of three main areas; 1) School support climate, 2) Teachers’ individual beliefs about their role as teacher educators, which includes mentoring self-efficacy and role clarity, and 3) organizational processes at the higher education institutions in question. The study adopts a quantitative approach using a questionnaire survey among a sample of Norwegian school-based teacher educators (N=320), partnered with two universities. The results of the descriptive analysis show significant correlations between all main variables in the study. The results of the regression analysis show that variables in the study explain 51 % of the variance in teacher educator identity, with school support, mentoring self-efficacy and cooperation with the HE-institution emerging as the strongest predictors.

References
Looking backwards: narrative reflection in writing an autobiographical metatext in teacher education

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1. Research topic/aim
This case study is an exploration on utilizing autobiographic writing and narrative inquiry as a basis for personal and professional development in teacher education (praktisk pedagogisk utdanning) at Høgskolen i Østfold. The paper focus on narrative reflection in students metatexts about ‘looking backwards’ in their own portfolio after one year in the teacher education program. The research question is: How may a reflective narrative meta-text as part of portfolio-work, enhance the student teachers’ personal and professional development?

2. Theoretical framework
In the narrative meta-text the students explore and reflect on their narrative writings retrospectively. They apply evidence from their personal and professional history before and during teacher education to their understandings of their current selves and identities as teachers. The metatext is an example of re-creating a previous version of yourself. When recycled into the students current teaching style and reflections on classroom practices, the interpretation gives a renewed story or a re-storying about themselves as a teacher that both refigure the past and create purpose in the future. The metatext represent a vehicle for looking back and the assumption is that looking backwards may play an integral role in constructing a personal and professional teacher self. Narrative here represents the study of how humans make meaning of experience by endlessly telling and retelling stories about themselves. The theoretical inspiration is from narrative theory, narrative inquiry and research on portfolio in teacher education.

3. Methodological design
The methodology selected is self-study in teacher education practices which is a systematic research methodology that attempts to examine and improve (one’s own) professional practice. Data collection methods included an autoethnographic review of the student teachers’ portfolio. In analyzing the portfolio I utilize the hermeneutical circle (in terms of part-whole relations) (Gadamer) and reflexive inquiry (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009).

4. Expected conclusion/findings
I will give some excerpts of how the students shape narrative reflections and makes explicit and/or implicit references to development of becoming a teacher. A key assumption underpinning the study is that valuable insights into the development of student teachers can be gained by examining their own memories and beliefs. The narrative approach makes transparent and active the ways in which a personal/professional past is linked to a personal/professional future for students preparing to be teachers. It will be argued that narratives and portfolio to teaching and learning can foster better reflective practice and support the student teachers’ self-understanding and social construction of knowledge.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
The purpose with this autobiographic and narrative approach is to link the students’ experiences from life and teacher education with becoming a teacher. Utilizing auto-ethnographic/biographic writing and narrative inquiry in teacher education may have much potential for such articulation of self-awareness and reflexivity to enrich teacher education practices.
The quality of teaching in Nordic schools

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This presentation addresses some fundamental issues related to the quality of teaching and learning in Nordic schools. It argues that in order to provide sustainable and feasible improvement of student learning, key elements of teaching effectiveness need to be identified, verbalized and highlighted in order to build a comprehensive and systematic knowledge base for professional development. In the study presented, evidence from over 100 video-taped lessons in Swedish secondary school is used to suggest some of the potentially critical dimensions of teaching quality. The presentation also addresses some methodological issues in the scientific pursuit of discovering the relationship between teaching and learning.

The study is part of the project Linking Instruction and Student Achievement (Klette et al., 2017) and represents a large-scaled ambition to combine several different measures in order to investigate and locate the classroom practices with comparatively larger impact on students’ learning. From previous research, it is widely recognized that effective teaching encompasses a number of different features, including the patterns of interaction in the classroom (Nystrand, 1997), the systematic use of setting goals and evaluating progress (Hattie, 2009), the cognitive level of instruction and assignments (Newman et al., 1998) etc. While no single study may account for all the relevant properties, this study is based on the ambition to capture, as distinctly as possible, a range of potentially critical variables and investigate the extent to which they correlate with measures of learning outcomes.

In the study, student achievement data in mathematics and reading is combined with data from classroom video observations and student questionnaires. In the first round of data collection, 108 lessons in Swedish and mathematics were video-taped and coded using the Protocol for Language Arts Teaching Observation (PLATO) (Grossman, 2015). Student achievement over one school year was measured using standardized tests in reading and mathematics. Finally, students responded to a questionnaire targeting different components of classroom teaching.

The study is expected to make a relevant contribution to the knowledge about the key elements of teaching quality and about the methodological constraints when investigating teaching quality. In cooperation with the Norwegian LISA research group, the ambition of the study is also to examine differences and similarities of teachers’ instruction in Sweden, Norway, and Finland, as well as to identify the differential impact that various instructional strategies might have in the different countries.

References:


The performative dimension of grades in students' stories about their teachers

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In this paper I address social and performative dimensions of grading practices in school. The aim of the paper is to contribute knowledge about the performative dimension in teachers grading practices through an analysis of pupil’s stories about how their teachers talk and act in conjunction with grading the pupils for the first time.

Theoretically the study rests on theories of performativity (Ball, 2006) as a technology and a way of governance based on assessments and comparisons as a menace for control and change. Performances are viewed as a measure of output, or productivity and quality. Performative acts – such as grading students – are considered to be opportunities for inspection and promotion involving elements of obedience as well as resistance. The performative dimension refers to issues of students’ anxiousness to learn what counts when being graded and to teachers as responsible for delivering good results.

A positioning analysis (Bamberg, 1997) is conducted to demonstrate how the teachers appear in the students’ accounts and how the students through their storytelling position themselves in relation to their teachers. Thereby, I will illuminate the performative dimension of what it means for the students to get graded. Data is selected from a project where 298 students (12 years old) have been interviewed in groups (no. 2-5) about their experiences of getting grades and sitting national tests. In this paper I use data from four interviews in four schools and focus on sequences where students talk in qualitatively different ways about their teachers.

Findings: The different cases presented in the paper illustrate how the performative dimension of grading is expressed in the students’ stories. It becomes clear that grades and teachers grading practices are not only a matter of collecting and assessing students’ achievements or evaluating the quality and reporting the results.

The performative pressure, the demands to show one’s best side, rests on teachers as well as students and takes shape in various ways in the meeting between students and their teachers. The analysis of the findings illuminates how the pressure sometimes seems to drive a wedge between teachers and students, how teachers and students sometimes join forces to share the pressure, but also how students place responsibility for the assessments on their teachers.

I argue that Nordic discussions regarding issues of equivalence in teachers grading practices and about grades as an indicator of quality in school needs to be complemented with a perspective that address how actors in school handle the pressure to perform and visualize results in terms of numbers. Very few Nordic studies about grading and teachers take a pupil’s perspective.

References

What characterizes classroom discourse in Norwegian and Finnish-Swedish secondary mathematics classrooms?

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**Research aim**
Learning mathematics is today viewed as a social activity enabled by interaction among students, their peers, and teachers. Researchers argue that mathematics should be learnt in classroom communities where students share their thoughts and justify their reasoning, and thus are active participants in the classroom discourse (Kieran et al., 2001). The aim of this study is to investigate what characterizes classroom discourse during whole class instruction sessions in a sample of Norwegian and Finnish-Swedish mathematics classrooms.

**Theoretical framework**
Classroom discourse is in this study broken into two sub-elements: “Opportunity for student talk” and “Uptake of student ideas”. Opportunity for student talk is based on the assumption that providing opportunities for students to reflect their own thinking and on the reasoning of others is an important aspect of mathematics discourse (Hiebert & Grouws, 2007). Uptake of student ideas refer to how teachers respond to student ideas (Nystrand et al., 1998); brief or no respond, or building on student ideas.

**Methodological design**
Video-recordings were gathered from eight secondary classrooms in both contexts, observed during three-four sequential lessons in 2014-2016, where teachers taught similar content. They represent schools from socioeconomically different areas located inside and outside Oslo and Helsinki. We utilized elements from the standardized observation protocol PLATO (Grossman, 2015), modified for mathematics teaching (Cohen, 2015), to code instruction. Each lesson is divided into 15-minute segments, and we identified segments coded as “mostly whole class instruction” (more than 7 ½ of 15 minutes).

**Findings**
Mathematics instruction in the Helsinki context appears as highly individual learning processes, since individual seatwork dominated and when whole class instruction occurred it was rarely characterized by students’ extended opportunity to participate. In contrast, the frequent use of whole class instruction in the Oslo sample suggests an emphasis on learning as a community. However, this learning community is also dominated by brief teacher responses to student ideas and little opportunity for student engagement in extended mathematics talk.

**Relevance to Nordic educational research**
This study contributes to the body of research looking into student and teacher talk in mathematics classroom. While these Nordic contexts often are compared in educational matters, they constitute socio-cultural and historical differences possibly mirrored in classroom activities. Thus this study can enrich our understanding of how classroom discourse is enacted in different contexts and future research can expand on how contexts are framing instruction.

**References**


Problematizing placement in teacher education

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This presentation is within the field of educational sciences, and reports the starting point of my PhD project.

The teacher’s education programmes in Sweden have substantial periods of placement. My focus is on placement in high school and upper secondary. Around the millennium the concept of internship (praktik) was replaced by placement (verksamhetsförlagd utbildning/VFU). From then on there seems to be significant uncertainty about the definition. The first part of my project investigates how to understand the concept of placement. What does the concept include – and what are the concept’s political, social and educational implications?

The second part of the project deals with how varying conceptualisations of placement affects the processes of professional development in which supervisors and students are involved during periods of placement. The project’s aim is to try to better understand what happens in these processes when an unclearly defined concept is mandated.

Since the research project investigates concepts, language, processes, power/conflict, discourse and practice within a complex institutional framework, the theoretical approach is multidisciplinary. The theoretical framework consists primarily of post structural theory (discourse theory) and social constructionism. Among theoretical contributors are Koselleck and Skinner on concepts and conceptualisation, Foucault as well as Laclau and Mouffe on discourse and discourse theory, and Geertz on the power/conflict analysis.

Concerning methodological design, the initial concept/conceptual analysis involves discourse analysis and discourse theory. The empirical parts will involve qualitative interviews along with observation (to get hold of aspects of work skill development and reflexive processes). I might also go for a few longitudinal field studies, following students and their supervisors in action. As mentioned, the ambition is to understand the concept of placement, and to describe processes of work skill development (professionalism). A guess is that it will be possible to identify and explain the complexity – and main variables – of the concept of placement. Regarding processes of professional development (professionalization), I expect to describe what these processes are about and how they are carried out by students and supervisors.

Swedish research on processes of professional development (professionalism) in placement is limited. My project relates to research by (among others) Nordänger and Lindqvist (2012) on the professional awareness and language; Hegender (2010) on the interaction between academy and profession; and Jedemark (2015) on transfer of knowledge between educational contexts. The difference in my project is on one hand the aim to critically discuss and problematize the concept of placement, and on the other the interest in describing and understand complex ongoing processes (“the how”) of teacher professionalization.

**References**


Expanding student teachers’ understanding of diversity in Norwegian classrooms

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In this paper our aim is to explore how Norwegian student teachers understand diversity when in their practice placements in schools. A key question in the contemporary educational debate is how teachers can effectively include and motivate all students in the learning environment in schools. Research findings show that teachers are important actors in creating good school environment and students’ sense of belonging and inclusion in order to prevent school drop-out (Anderman, 2003; Christle, Jolivette & Nelson, 2007; Frostad et. al 2015). Furthermore, we see in latest PISA results that students’ sense of being different and not belonging is increasing and between 12 and 20% of students in the Nordic countries claim that they feel different, lonely and excluded in school (Kjærnsli & Rohatgi, 2016).

In this paper we pose the following research question: “What kind of diversity competence do student teachers bring to their practice placements and how can their diversity competence be further developed?”


Our intention is to explore three cohorts of student teachers (approx. 600 participants) and their answers to their first obligatory semester assignment. We look at what kind of diversity understanding they represent when they describe a particular group of students - usually a class, where they had their practice placements. Our preliminary findings indicate that student teachers’ understanding of diversity is expressed through description such as “homogeneous”/“heterogeneous” referring to diversity in ethnic backgrounds and “strong”/“weak” when referring to individual performance in school. We claim that diversity is recreated, negotiated and situated within each classroom context, and thus inscribed in the social relations between students and between teachers and students.

Moreover, we argue that relational competence and diversity competence is intertwined and situated within the classroom context. Therefore we recognise the need to widen student teachers’ understanding of diversity as a part of their relational competence targeted in teacher education programmes. This in order to create and foster inclusive learning environments within the Nordic countries as well as within the wider global community where diversity and multiplicity is a part of everyday life.

References:


A triangular in service training

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**Background:** The Norwegian framework for teacher education (2010 and 2016) serves to both provide a pathway for professional qualification, and lay a foundation for coming teachers to meet challenges in an interdisciplinary society. Our longitudinal research (2012-2014) arranged at the Teacher Training Department at Oslo and Akershus University College, we followed a group of students through all their practicum periods in the four year teacher training program. The student teacher has to look upon her- or himself as an important figure in contributing to develop democratic attitudes in the pupils. Through practice in their teacher education, the teacher students question their own practice and debate challenges from their everyday life as a teacher. In this research, the complementing work with the students is in cooperation with teacher educators from the University College, and in-service teachers, with a key focus on the framework in their in-service teaching practice.

The aim of the study was to investigate how student`s in-service teaching practice can be better organized to meet the goals and challenges from The Norwegian framework for teacher education (2010 and 2016).

As a base for our theoretical work we have used Wenger`s (1998) theory of «community of practice» and Cochran-Smith`s (2012) theory of «the third space». Both of them have a focus on learning from reflection and from each other. Cochran-Smith describes the coming teachers as strong to meet new realities of now a day. Both of them stimulate reciprocal work and equality as a base for preparation for the future. The Norwegian researchers Lillejord and Børte (2014) describes the gap between reality and ideas in order to increase awareness for teacher students during their in-service training.

**Methods:** Our data is based on six semi-structured interviews, and one focus group interview with six student teachers situated at the Oslo and Akershus University College. The data was analyzed using inductive content analysis.

**Results:** The analysis revealed five categories that influence student teachers` pedagogical insight, and preparation for the future through in-service teaching practice. These five categories were: Reflection plenaries on regular basis, the understanding of the relationship between theory and practice, teacher educators as mentors, different competences, and an asymmetry in the mentoring process.

**Conclusions:** To optimize pedagogical insight and preparation for a robuste teacher through in-service teaching practice, our results emphasize the need to ensure quality throughout in-service teacher training, and clear guidelines for teacher educators. In particular, our sample of student teachers sought greater supervision, and focus from teacher educators on the relationship between theory and practice, via use of reflection plenaries, and equal partnership with their teacher educators.

**Relevance to Nordic educational research:** the Swedish teacher education has started in service training for students in only one school. The comparative relevance is transferable.

**Literature:**
Nasjonale retningslinjer for grunnskolelærerutdanningen 1-7.
Improving mentoring and supervision through extended boundary crossing in a tripartite collaboration in initial teacher education

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Bridging learning between practical placement in school and university courses is a recurring problem in teacher education studies (Ellis & McNicholl 2015). A core element in ITE at UiT The arctic university of Norway is an action research (AR) project, which, ideally, is carried out in a tripartite cooperation involving: teacher students (a practicum group of three), a school mentor and a university supervisor. However, traditionally, the students alternate between school and university while the supervisors at the university and the mentors in school largely avoid boundary crossing. Our assumption is that neither the capacity of the practicum teachers nor the university teachers is fully utilised when the students mainly do the boundary crossing. In the current study, the aim is to examine how mentoring and supervision can improve through extended boundary crossing between the two arenas.

‘Boundary work’ is a premise when school and university collaborate on teacher education (Zeichner, Payne, and Brayko 2015). Boundaries can be understood as ‘...social constructions which define who is included and excluded from interactions and which knowledge or meaning system is considered relevant in those interactions’ (Edwards 2010, 43). To give an example, student teachers might encounter different pedagogical values in their university courses and in school. Moreover, ‘boundaries can also be defined as socio-cultural differences leading to discontinuity in action and interaction’ (Akkerman and Bakker 2011, 133). How to establish continuity in action despite sociocultural differences is of great interest in ITE.

In the Nordic tradition of AR, school development is ensured by democratic dialogues, in which new knowledge about the practice is collectively created (Rönnerman et al. 2015). This tradition is an argument for the tripartite cooperation in the students’ AR project. Particularly, mentoring, focusing on both practical skills (actions) and knowledge development (learning) is a driving force in AR processes (Rönnerman 2007).

As a part of the ITE student’s requirement to write a third-year thesis based on empirical data from an AR intervention carried out in the practicum period, an intervention involving a tripartite extended boundary crossing was initiated. The aim was to explore possibilities and constraints in mentoring and supervising teacher students’ AR projects in relation to action in practice and thesis writing. The university supervisor engaged in the students’ intervention and mentoring conversations at school, and similarly, the mentor contributed to the supervision at the university. The conversations, nine in total, were observed, taped and transcribed by another researcher. Then, the transcriptions were analysed through qualitative content analyses and specific themes and categories identified.

All parties put a great amount of effort and commitment into the tripartite collaboration. Mentoring conversations across the two arenas contributed to an extended understanding of research for the mentor, and, for the supervisor, to an extended experience based understanding of the value of practicum for the students’ learning.

As of 2017, ITE in Norway is taught at Masters’ level (MA). Our research adds to the knowledge of the design of research-based programmes of study and to mentoring in such programmes.
A fabricated assessment in teacher students’ internship

Henriksson, Kristina

Research topic/aim
To assess teacher students’ internship with criteria for qualified teachers’ knowledge and performances, a supervisor from the university visits the school-mentor and the student at the school-placement. The visit includes an observation of one lesson and a post-observation conversation. During this conversation, the supervisor is supposed to assess and examine the student’s knowledge and performance on the basis of all information gathered at the observation and the conversation.

In the latest Swedish evaluation (UKÄ, 2015) of Teacher Education the post-observation conversation has been emphasized as an important tool for assessment, since these conversations are the way to ensure the quality of the assessment of the internship. The underlying is to make assessments for the purpose of both controlling and learning.

The government has made a request to enhance the quality of the assessment of Internships. Hence, the research question is: how does the school-visit with the post-observation conversations enable the supervisors to get qualified information and make assessments of student teacher’s knowledge and performance?

Theoretical framework
The institutional and professional framing connected with social framing under during the conversations is likely to influence the assessment at the school-visit. To understand this influence, the chosen theoretical framework in this study is Goffman’s theory on human interaction and the concept of framing together with professional theory and new institutional theory.

Methodological design
The study is a case study. The case is the school-visit with focus on the post-observation conversation. Data includes five video-recorded post-observation conversations and ten individual interviews with the teachers about their conversations.

Expected findings
The results suggested that there was a confused and reduced possibility both for the supervisor to gather information and assess, and for the school mentor to share their judgment as well as for the student to do a self-evaluation. It seems to be a frame-conflict between the institutional framing and the professional framing which affects the social framing in how the participants need to shapes their performances. It becomes become more like a play, a kind of fabricated assessment, which seems to minimize the possibility to get a communicative and transparent assessment. The conclusion is that the post-observation conversation in school-based practice is not a straightforward information activity to secure the quality of student teachers’ knowledge and performance.

Relevance to Nordic Educational Research
This study highlights what can influence assessment of internship of Teacher Education. The procedure, that’s a supervisor from the university who visits the school-mentor and the student at the school-placement, are similar in Nordic Teacher Educations. In order to exchange experiences among Nordic researchers it would be interesting to further investigate assessment in the internship of Teacher education in a Nordic perspective.

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Transformative Agency in Teacher Education: Fostering Professional Digital Competence

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This paper presentation investigates how student teachers in a five-year master’s program react to a major program intervention and potentially expand their professionalism and practices as a result. For the student teachers the intervention entails developing professional digital competence (PDC) by following three mandatory modules in a digitized learning environment, CANVAS, where they meet tasks, assignments, research, and challenges for practice. The aim of the paper is partly to examine how student teachers can develop and demonstrate transformative agency; partly to contribute to a methodology of studying transformative agency. The rationale is found in the fact that teachers are no longer mere executors of educational policies, curricula and syllabi, but increasingly engaged in designs of learning environments and learning trajectories. One reason is found in the abundance of available learning resources, in this present case digital resources.

The conceptual framework and theoretical perspective draw on Vygotskian and neo-Vygotskian principles of double stimulation and transformative agency (Sannino, 2014; Vygotsky, 1978). The intervention represents stimulus 1, a situation posing challenges and a possible responses ranging from resistance and criticism to constructive ideas and practical commitment to expansion of professional repertoire. These responses are intimately linked to student teachers’ use and appropriation of a series of stimulus 2; material (e.g. digital technologies), linguistic (e.g. concepts), symbolic (e.g. multimodality), and social (e.g. types of interaction and collaboration).

The principle of double stimulation is operationalized in the research design as we partly analyze three focus group interviews with student teachers (totaling N=11 and approx. 5 hours transcribed), partly digital traces found in CANVAS in the form of responses to tasks, comments to peers, and discussions. We identify a series of challenging situations (S1) and how student teachers draw on available cultural resources (S2) in order to break out of the situation and go beyond current perceptions of teaching or even expand on their practices (Vestøl & Lund, 2017). Discursive manifestations of transformative agency serve as empirical carriers of this phenomenon.

The study reveals how students respond to a major intervention, how transformative agency is expressed and enacted and how this can be cultivated and enhanced, and what kinds of cultural resources are mobilized and how in order to expand teaching and learning repertoires.

Current trends in Nordic educational research pertain to professional digital competence, student active learning, and what counts as quality. This study is highly relevant for these trends.

References:
Challenges concerning time scales in video studies

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1. Research topic/aim
The use of video-recordings as a data source in qualitative research presents challenges when it comes to selecting an appropriate time scale. Here, we discuss the implications of selecting time scales in regards to the interpretations and conclusions of a classroom event. The analyses draw on data from a large-scale video study of six ninth-grade math, science and reading classrooms in Norway.

2. Theoretical framework
Video data is rich and multi-layered, and deciding which events to analyse is crucial. There are pitfalls relating to both the use of overly reduced units of analysis as well as of holistic units of analysis (Lefstein et al. 2015). Blikstad-Balas (2016) highlights three main challenges involved in analysing shorter time segments of video data: issues regarding (1) contextualization, (2) magnification and (3) representation. By analysing only fragments of the data material, we run the risk of amplifying or magnifying events that are not representative for either the participants or the context we are trying to explore. Conversely, by analysing small portions of a data set, it might prove difficult to provide readers with sufficient evidence to evaluate whether conclusions are plausible.

3. Methodological design
Our data includes video-recordings of three science lessons from one of the recorded classrooms. We examine how five students (15-year olds) prepared for and performed an oral presentation. The first analysis, Time Scale 1, focuses exclusively on the students’ oral presentations, while the second analysis, Time Scale 2, includes the students’ oral presentations as well as the preparation phase. We compare the results of these two analyses.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
According to the first time scale, only two of the students can be described as excellent speakers who manage to demonstrate involvement, enthusiasm and engagement throughout their presentations. However, when we use a longer time scale, we find that these two students engaged in little participation in the preparation phase of the oral presentation. However, when we use a longer time scale, we find that these two students engaged in little participation in the preparation phase of the oral presentation.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
Video analysis has become an important tool for educational researchers studying phenomena that take place in classrooms. The length of a time segment can have a major impact on the possible results and findings of a study. Classroom videos are multi-layered and rich, and deciding which aspects of the video to investigate is a crucial task. The selection of phenomena to be studied and how best to study them via video are determined by the research questions being investigated, their theoretical foundations and the units/time scales of analysis.

The results of the analysis of all the three lessons reveal the importance of observing group work and indicate that teachers must assess the work process and provide ‘to-the-point’ feedback (Klette 2003, Svenkerud 2013) on the level and extent of student cooperation and participation.
Democracy education in ECE – a step forward by linking preschool teacher education, research and preschool practice

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In a pilot-project at Karlstad University in Sweden, links between the preschool teacher education program, research on democracy education in Early Childhood Education and some local practicum preschools are outlined. Democracy education is one of the primary goals in preschool education and perhaps the most important preparation for life. It is a complex assignment that requires both theoretical understanding and experience from practice. The aim is to develop content and models to connect an increased scientific ground and proven experience concerning issues on democracy education in ECE. Our research questions are:
• What challenges do teacher students face about democracy education in practice?
• What experiences and knowledge about democracy education are expressed at present and in teacher students visions about future teaching situations.

The project is grounded in a theoretical understanding of “teacher agency” in which temporal aspects of experiences are central. Within this view, the experiences developed in the past and developing experiences during their teacher education are important in the present, at the same time as the present is important to enable a vision of how to act in a future situation in their teaching. In addition, analytical tools from theories on democracy in education are used in analyses. The idea is that the students follow the regular planned structure for the preschool teacher program. In addition to ordinary practicum periods, these students have increased access to their practicum sites, given the opportunity to directly investigate issues that arise over the course of education, discuss with local teacher trainers and with supervisors at the university. Further, in weekly 1-hour meetings during 3 ½ years, throughout the students entire teacher education, through meetings and visits during their practicum periods, researchers and a group of students highlight issues about democracy education and the way it is intertwined in everyday topics in ECE. In this way, these students are given a specific experience of democracy education that hopefully make them especially skilled teachers in this topic.

Our very preliminary findings show how teacher students use their own and others’ experiences of being a preschool child, being teachers or parents in discussions on how to act in different hypothetical or real situations. When transforming their experiences into a didactic agenda we have noticed both novice moralizing as more advanced teaching visions.

Research and exchanges on how to develop forms to enable closer links between research and teacher education programs on democracy education is of high relevance in all Nordic countries. We consider this a topic in need of constant reflection in a time of rapid societal changes where anti-democratic movements are growing.
School-based change agents in university-school partnerships

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We aim to examine the potential knowledge mobilization by key actors in schools within a university-school partnership in teacher education. Work carried out by teachers that operate as change agents will be explored to

1) Reveal their actions in schools and the resources they employ in their work within the partnership and
2) Explore their motive orientations

We assume a cultural-historical understanding of institutional practices, in which motives that shape actions, and the continuous dialectic between personal and institutional motives as practices are considered important and taken forward (Edwards 2010). Professional learning is understood as developing agency by “learning dialectic between person and practice or culture, where individual and collective shape each other and where the professional knowledge and values embedded in practices are important” (Edwards 2017, p. 2). The design is qualitative, semi-structured interviews with open ended questions were carried out allowing three purposely selected teachers to give personal accounts of engagement in the university-school partnership.

The Data Protection Official for Research in Norway is informed, participants signed standard consent forms and data were anonymized (Creswell 2014).

Findings

1. Change agents define their main objective as developing future teachers. They strategically involve colleagues in activities relating to student teachers, choosing mentors with care and picking out persons believed to figure as pioneers in R&D-work in the university–school collaboration. Regarding R&D-activities, the agents differ slightly. One is explicit about personal interest in research and its importance for the profession, and has developed strategies to engage staff in discussions about research and practices. The others are clear about the objective of engaging staff in knowledge resources from university, but not explicit about strategies to promote research-informed practices.

2. The change agents have invested personal commitment in their engagement and regard access to knowledge resources at the university as valuable professionally and personally. They take interest in teacher education and research, considered beneficial to careers. They value contact with students and consider mentoring competence important for the profession. They see potential in engaging staff with knowledge resources from university to promote professional development. They are intent on optimizing benefits of the access to these kinds of resources. However, collective engagement in resources from the university is not necessarily an integral part of the daily routines of the schools. Opinions among staff may vary regarding the relevance in engaging in the resources. Thus, they have an incremental approach to the knowledge flow and mobilization in the staff.

Findings are relevant to those working with partnership models. Light is shed on institutional conditions of schools in university-school partnerships, as well as the potential knowledge mobilization resulting from the partnerships in teacher education and continued professional development in schools.

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Researching with teachers

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Research topic/Aim: Collaborative research: The purpose of this paper is to discuss methodological approaches to conducting research with teachers into their practices. A specific goal is to discuss developmental research and challenges facing the researchers as well as opportunities for learning about teacher practices.

Theoretical frameworks: The discussion will focus on results drawn from a developmental research where seven primary school teachers and a teacher educator collaboratively inquired into mathematics teaching and learning in their practices (Goos, 2004). The aim was to build a co-learning partnership between teachers and a researcher in order to support classroom inquiry (Jaworski, 2006).

Methodology/research design: The methodology of developmental research (Freudenthal, 1991; Gravemeijer, 1994) and the ‘developmental research cycle’ (Goodchild, 2008) guided the cyclic process of the research. During the three years of the research process two interconnected cycles of research and development that model a dialectical evolution of both theory and practice guided the research process.

Data was collected of video recording from 17 workshops where the teachers worked with a teacher educator at looking into their way of teaching mathematics, audio recordings from interviews, notes from classroom observations and copies of students work. The analysis started at the outset of the study as the outcomes of each step of the study guided the further steps taken. A more fine-grained analysis was carried out after the study finished with the purpose of getting a deeper insight into the learning process that emerged during the study.

Expected conclusions/Findings: The challenges of carrying out a research where local theories are tried out in practice, analysed and adjusted, feeding back to the research cycle that in turn guides the developmental cycle will be discussed. The hindrances on the way to inquiring into own teaching will be highlighted as well as the potentials that arise when teachers and researchers collaboratively work at researching their practices.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research: There is a growing interest and a need for researchers to collaborate with teachers in schools in researching into their practices.

References
Self-study of teacher educators developing learning communities with practicing teachers

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This is a self-study of two teacher educators exploring how they can establish a learning community that allows practicing teachers to construct their identities as research-focused practitioners. In this paper, the main focus is on how the first author works on creating a research community of nine teachers on three school levels and how she expands her research leadership by reaching out to the second author, an experienced self-study researcher.

A gap between research and teaching practice has long been identified claiming that research doesn’t inform practice adequately and that teachers in their busy and messy world of teaching cannot manage research (Loughran, 2002). However, teachers have expert knowledge of their practice and can bring important insights, knowledge, and perspectives to the educational discourse as teacher researchers. Teacher-researchers collect data from their practice in order to better understand it and the impact on their students, empowering themselves as professionals in the process (Cochran-Smith, & Lytle, 1999). Such learning can be supported in a community of practice, as situated learning that takes place in the same context in which it is applied (Lave & Wenger, 1996). This understanding is in line with self-study of educational practices where professionals in collaboration with others conduct research on their own teaching in order to develop it.

This research builds on self-study methodology with the two researchers as the resource and the topic of the research. This dual position enables us an ontological transformation of ourselves and of our practice, something we achieve by collectively reflecting upon the challenges and tensions appearing in the project (Samaras Guðjónsdóttir, McMurrer & Dalmau, 2012). Data sources consist of a research journal, transcripts from research group meetings, e-mail and research group’s online communication. Data collection and analysis was ongoing and cyclical.

Early on the main researcher decided she needed an outsider, a critical friend, to discuss and reflect on the challenges she met. That turned into collaborative self-study and a development of research environment for teacher researchers. Preliminary findings suggest how the two researchers developed their work relationship moving from critical friends to becoming research partners. This study has relevance for Nordic educational research as it provides insight into the development of self-study in teacher education and how teacher educators and teacher researchers develop a research partnership in a Nordic context.

References
Linking educational goals and pedagogical interventions in teacher collaboration

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Aim
While teamwork has become a commonplace organizational arrangement in many schools, we know that this does not linearly translate into educational innovation and professional growth. In fact, rarely does teacher collaboration go beyond the practices of normalizing, story-sharing or help-seeking and extends to questioning established routines and experimenting with new conceptions of teaching and learning (e.g. Horn & Little, 2010).
Motivated by this concern, this study focuses on epistemic practices that are meant to engage in such in-depth collaboration: co-design and co-analysis of educational situations. Drawing on data collected in two widespread environments for collaboration – in-house professional development sessions and team meetings, the study examines what specific epistemic approaches afford opportunities for in-depth engagement, in particular, around developing educational goals and linking them to pedagogical actions and arrangements.

Design and theoretical framework
The study draws on extended observations (70h) of a 6th grade-level teacher team at weekly meetings and plenary sessions, supplemented with interviews and artifacts (protocols, handouts). Data collection ran over 2016-2017 at a school located in a culturally diverse district of a larger Norwegian city.
Analysis draws on Biesta’s (2015) notion of educational practice as fundamentally teleological (constituted by purposes). In practice, this implies that “decisions about educational actions and arrangements always have to be taken with an eye on the desirability of what such actions and arrangements are supposed to bring about.” This suggests a perspective on teachers’ epistemic practices as essentially teleological; and analysis addresses a question of how teachers engage with “educational ends and means”, that is, how they engage with educational goals and link them to pedagogical actions and arrangements.

Findings
The data presents two episodes: Lesson Study session and Case Analysis meeting with school counselor. While central to both are epistemic practices of co-design and co-analysis of educational situations, these practices unfold in markedly different trajectories. Whereas in the Case Analysis episode the focus was on defining problem at hand, and pedagogical actions and arrangements were functional to formulated goals; in Lesson Study episode, deliberation of goals remained peripheral and poorly linked to pedagogical actions and arrangements (ambitious curricular goals were swiftly re-routed to familiar socio-pedagogical goals; and conversation jumped right into the creative phase of pedagogical design).
However, in both episodes, two distinct epistemic approaches afforded meaningful engagement with the learning goals and link them to pedagogical activities were contextualization – locating the problem in the bigger knowledge circuits and problems of practice, and problematization (deliberate exercise of doubt and dissent).

Relevance to Nordic educational research
This paper responds to a growing interest among researchers and policymakers in how teachers use opportunities to collaborate and whether and how investments in teachers’ time together outside the classroom can yield instructional improvement and innovation.

References
Professional border territory negotiations between teachers and social pedagogues – a case study

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In response to a growing teacher shortage in most Nordic countries, and calls to “let teachers be teachers”, other professional groups with varying backgrounds and training are being introduced in schools. This measure is expected to let teachers focus primarily on core tasks, for example teaching and grading, and leave more peripheral tasks to members of other professional groups. In everyday practices, such changes in their professional work environment entails, to some extent, professional boundary negotiations. This paper examines such negotiations in a case study, in order to trace some emerging professional boundaries and potential boundary crossings between teachers and so called social pedagogues.

Professions provide important services to the society based on discretionary work that requires university based training and licensing (e.g. Evetts, 2009). In Sweden, focus has been placed on formal grading as the most apparent task over which only teachers have jurisdiction, which is also in line with an increased focus on accountability in schools (Englund & Solbrekke, 2015). Professional action in education has been analysed using the concept of professional territory, which consists of the school staff’s conceived task perception, the social transaction and the appropriated physical space where interaction takes place (Grannäs & Frelin, 2017).

A case study was conducted in a newly built primary school (grades F-6). The staff teams consisted of three teachers and one social pedagogue responsible for around 90 students. The social pedagogues had occupational training although not a university degree. Three school visits and four interviews with two primary teachers and two social pedagogues were conducted. For this paper, interviews with a teacher and a social pedagogue working in the same team were analysed with attention to instances of negotiation and blurred boundaries, here conceptualized as professional border territories.

Preliminary results: In the first year in operation of the school, the teachers and social pedagogues have had to negotiate continuously, as situations have emerged in the professional territory. This regards for example the matter of who should “check in” the students in the department in the morning. The time and place just before classes start can thus be viewed as one professional border territory. Another such territory is during seat work, when the social pedagogue tried to steer clear of helping students with their work and tend to matters of order. A third is during emergent conflicts, where the person who was present first, either the teacher or the social pedagogue, attended to the matter even if this was the social pedagogue’s task.

When new professional groups enter schools their potential contribution to the educational environment, along with the risks that may ensue for educational relationships, need investigation.

References:


Teachers’ experiences and perceptions on spatial inequalities in education

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Findings of many studies worldwide demonstrate that students attending rural schools perform less well than their urban counterparts (e.g. Hardré & Hennessey 2010; Kryst, Kotok & Bodovski 2015). In Finland, however, most of the variance in performance is seen within schools rather than between schools, showing that rural and urban schools in Finland have similar achievement levels and students are not selected by academic ability. Even though the impact of socio-economic status on the risk of low performance is lower than the OECD average, since 2000, however, the impact of socio-economic background has increased in Finland. Students' background and gender matter: boys and students with immigrant background have a higher risk of lower performance (OECD 2013).

Research project RUR-ED (Spatial Inequalities and Spatial Justice in Education) studies how space impacts educational inequalities - the overall objective of the project is to investigate whether there is a disconnect between the processes and practices of schooling and rural individuals’ social and cultural resources, that can explain differences in learning outcomes between rural and urban students. One task of RUR-ED project is to investigate whether teachers’ perceptions of their work vary between rural and urban settings. The project data is collected in Norway, Finland and Canada. Qualitative interviews with teachers are conducted in all of these countries at selected case study sites. In our presentation, we focus on the Finnish interview data collected among secondary and upper secondary school teachers in two rural municipalities in northern Finland. We investigate 1) whether teachers’ perceptions of their work vary between rural and urban settings and 2) whether teachers are conscious of spatial issues in education, and if so, incorporate this in any way in their teaching.

Attitudes towards spatial inequalities in education seem to vary between teachers. Teachers' work as such is not considered very different in rural and urban areas; the differences that were mentioned were long distances, different physical and social environments, small number of pupils and its positive effects on learning situations and learning outcomes. Some teachers acknowledge the importance of the local community and bring local content into the classroom. Some have recently started to pay more attention to local community partly because of the new curriculum that emphasizes the importance of local content. They view that local contents in teaching connect school activities to wider local activities and promote the wellbeing of students. RUR-ED is managed by UiT with collaboration partners from University of Oulu, Acadia University and University of Tasmania.

References


Tablet-mediated Video Observations  Bridging Sites of Learning in Teacher Education

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The study presented here aimed to provide support, through tablets used for video-taping teaching practice of teacher students, for guidance and formative feedback activities during placement period. Research (Hill & Grossman, 2013) shows that the challenges involved in organizing productive guidance and feedback in teacher education (in Norway and elsewhere) are both of practical and substantive nature. The reality of these challenges becomes very concrete when the students are physically separated from the institutionalized campus environment, their peer students and the academic teaching staff.

We adopt a perspective to learning that views materials—the tablets and the videos—as meaning making resources (Säljö, 2010). Accordingly, materials or technology form integral part of thinking and doing and not, as often is implied, as ‘mediating’ between learners and the world. Rather, learners orient towards materials, which organize the participants’ perceptions and actions. The project study was conducted in a Teacher Education Program from a large Norwegian university. The 15 participating students were in their teaching practice period, worked in pairs or in groups (with ‘practice buddies’) and observed each other’s teaching. The students were equipped with tablets they used to film each other’s teaching activities. The films were saved on a secured server and could be accessed online. The students’ buddy(ies), the academic adviser and the school mentor could provide feedback using a text editor, besides the face-to-face regular mentoring sessions in school. We interviewed students and one mentor and we collected the written feedback and analyzed the data was using thematic analysis (Braun, & Clarke, 2006).

The students perceive the tables as an ideal tool, since they are portable and easy to use. Here, materiality becomes part of the regular practice, without disturbing the regular routine of the students’ activities. The type of relation established is instrumentality. Ultimately, the video is supporting a deeper and closer engagement with the teaching techniques, wherein theoretical and practical knowledge about teaching (how to use learning aids, how to lead a classroom conversation, etc.) is being activated. The type of relation established here is one of mutual reinforcement, where (the digital) materiality becomes part of an ecology that includes knowledge, action, reflection, planned new action. The teachers, too, appreciated the epistemic potential of the digital materiality to support establishing cognitive trails and to enhance the capability to register and analyze momentary actions.

This study contributes knowledge to field of teacher education in the Nordic countries and in general about how digital tools are intertwined and can serve a more ‘connected’ learning process for the teacher students.

References
The Unprofessional Teacher and the Pedagogy of the Danish Folk High Schools

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Research topic
“Professions are vocations defined by a solid knowledge base, preferably scientific knowledge. The conception of professions implies, that only those who have acquired this knowledge base through the professional education are allowed to practice within the field of the profession” (Weicher & Laursen, 2003, p. 9). The conception of professions implies the ambition to develop standards and criteria in order to evaluate the quality of the profession (Dale, 1998). Finally, the conception implies professional identities or ideals, describing how the professional should act (Bayer & Brinkkjær, 2003). However, a look at Danish folk high school teachers reveal a particular feature: Only 20% of Danish folk high school teachers have a teacher education (FFD, 2009). In addition, there is no specific scientific knowledge base for folk high school pedagogy, and there is defined professional ideal. In light of the conception of professions, folk high school teachers can hardly be defined as professionals. What are they then – unprofessional?

Danish folk high schools enjoy a high degree of freedom: The freedom to define their own subjects without regard to a curriculum or exams. The freedom to decide their own value-base. Finally, the freedom to hire teachers without regard to their educational background or previous experience. All, while still being financially support by the Danish state.

Where the transition to a professional thinking in many contexts has led to a discussion of increased accountability and a consequent loss of responsibility (Biesta, 2011), the situation is quite different at the folk high schools. The extended freedom means that there is hardly any accountability. Instead, the teachers have a great deal of responsibility in defining their own practices in relation to how they understand the individual schools’ value-base and the main of the folk high schools: “life enlightenment, people’s enlightenment and democratic education” (Act on Folk High Schools, 2013)

Theory and Methodology
Based on a general framework of teacher agency as an ecological concept (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2015), the paper present an empirical study of the lived experiences and sense making (Friesen, Henriksson & Sævi, 2012; van Manen 1997) of Danish folk high school teachers.

Findings
The aim of the paper is to shed light on some of the elements that play a particular role for the pedagogical practice in a value-based form of school with extensive freedom, a main open to interpretation, and a pedagogy that is both personal, indirect, impure and strongly connected to the concept of Bildung.

Relevance to NERA
For more than 175 years, the Nordic folk high schools have provided an approach to schooling define by freedom. As such, the folk high schools can be seen as the antagonism of most other contemporary approaches to education. However, only few studies have examined the folk high schools from a contemporary perspective (primarily in a Swedish context, e.g. Gustavsson, 2009; Paldanius, 2014). Thus, the work of folk high school teachers remain more or less unknown – both from a research point of view and in relation to other pedagogical practices.
Vocational teachers’ continuing professional development for industry currency

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Research topic/aim
Vocational education and training (VET) in Sweden was included in extensive school reforms in the beginning of this decade. However, VET teachers were not particularly involved in the reforms. E.g., they have an exemption concerning the demand on a teaching degree and formal legitimisation. VET teachers have also been relatively invisible in initiatives concerning teachers’ continuing professional development (CPD) in relation to teaching subjects. Extensive measures have been taken in subjects like Swedish and Maths, but initiatives targeting vocational subjects have been more limited. Therefore, a research project was initiated to explore if and how VET teachers manage in their CPD concerning vocational knowledge – i.e., to keep industry currency of the competence from their initial occupation. Our paper summarizes main findings from this project.

Theoretical framework
Theoretically, the project primarily drew on a situated perspective on learning, identity, and boundary relations and processes (e.g. Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015).

Methodological design
The study had three parts: 1. Analyses of data on participation in one national initiative that was actually taken, giving vocational schools better opportunities to let VET teachers up-date their subject knowledge, e.g. through practicum in a work place. 2. A survey among VET teachers, where 886 teachers responded to questions on participation in or doing of potential CPD activities related to their initial occupation. 3. Interviews with 30 teachers from different VET programmes, to get deeper knowledge and understanding concerning their CPD for industry currency.

Conclusions/findings
The findings show that 10% of all VET teachers had participated in the national initiative during its two first years. One important factor for participation was the local context, influencing relations to work life and teachers’ opportunities to keep and develop networks in industry. The most common activities among those included in the survey were reading vocation-related texts, study visits in work places, and work with students’ work-place learning. The survey also showed that teachers with longer experience from their initial occupation were closer to the occupational practice and more likely to still do work in that occupation, parallel to teacher work, while teachers with longer teaching experience were less likely to do this.

The interview study showed the value of varying boundary processes. Teachers’ boundary-crossings were important for CPD opportunities, and particularly activities that were part of their daily work as teachers. Boundary encounters like work with students’ work-place learning, doing study visits with students, students’ participation in skills competitions, and participation in other industry arrangements offered CPD opportunities and valuable networks. Networks in industry were also important for brokering of knowledge, with guests from industry giving currency of VET but also opportunities for teachers to learn. Finally, reconstruction of work-life practices in the school practice provided learning opportunities for teachers as well as students.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
VET teachers are neither in focus in policy nor in research, which means that there is lack of knowledge on this group and that new studies like in the present project are valuable.
**Systematic quality assurance – a demand at odds with the everyday complexity of teachers’ work?**

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1. Research topic
In this paper, we present findings from an ongoing research and development program (FoU-program) concerning schools’ work with newly arrived students. The core of the project are three groups from two schools, made up mostly of teachers but also school counselors, study guides and principals, who work with us as researchers to identify areas in need of development. According to the Swedish national curriculum (Skolverket, 2011), it is the responsibility of all school staff to participate in systematic quality assurance as a means of school development. Projects like the one described above are one way of doing that. The topic of this paper is to examine and analyze the conditions for working with development within the everyday complexity of teachers’ work.

2. Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework consists of the concept communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). In everyday life, we take part in communities of practice, and within these communities we in turn affect the practice to a varying degree. Within a community of practice, an individual’s participation can be understood as a shift from being a peripheral actor in the outer edge of a community to, over time, becoming an increasingly central actor who increasingly masters the community of practice. In the process, there is a dimension of being able to identify with and considering yourself as part of the community (Wenger, 1998).

3. Methodological design
The method consists of observations by us, discussions with teachers and other school staff during visits to their schools, as well as documentation by the participating staff themselves.

4. Expected findings/conclusions
Systematic quality assurance takes place in the midst of a virtual maelstrom of activities, conflicts and unforeseen events that pull on the attention of the staff. So far within this project, 5 teachers have left the schools, with new ones being employed. Three out four participating principals have been replaced. At every visit, at least one teacher or principal is called away to welcome an unexpected new student – or several. Several of the staff have had to leave meetings to deal with student related matters. It seems to us that working with systematic quality assurance presents a difficulty for teachers and other school staff. On one hand, it can be difficult to become a central actor in such ever-shifting communities of practice. On the other hand, working with such complex communities of practice leads to developing other skills – but those skills are not always recognized and are difficult to convert into strategies and plans.

5. Relevance for Nordic educational research
This paper is relevant to Nordic educational research in that it makes a contribution to the research field of newly arrived students, as well as contributes to analysis of conditions for teachers’ work.

6. References

Boundary work in coping with distressful teacher education situations

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Student teachers report a variety of situations as distressful during teacher education. The situations relate to day-to-day stress of teacher work and emphasize the potentially exhaustive experience of being a practicing teacher in the future. The aim of the study was to investigate student teachers’ experiences of coping in distressful teacher education situations in relation to teacher identity development. Symbolic interactionism was adopted as a theoretical framework since it focuses on the participants’ the empirical world and perspectives as vital in understanding social processes. We used a constructivist grounded theory (GT) design because GT has been developed to examine and conceptualize interaction, meaning and social processes. GT tools were used as flexible guidelines in a non-linear fashion and with a constructivist epistemology. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 25 student teachers studying their last year of teacher education (7 males and 18 females, 22–56 years old, M = 28). The student teachers studied to be eligible to teach grades 4-6 or 7-9 in Swedish compulsory school at six universities in Sweden.

Establishing the boundaries of future work was the participants’ main concern. According to our findings, student teachers’ emerging identity development focused on the boundaries of their coming profession. In doing so, student teachers thought that using the boundaries would alleviate the distress of potentially exhaustive day-to-day teacher work. Student teachers discussed an uncertainty as to what the boundaries of working as teacher included, and several core processes influenced the teacher identity development when establishing these boundaries in relation to what responsibilities they discussed a teacher should have. These processes included (a) protective demarcations and (b) enacted classroom management.

The protective demarcations focused on how student teachers established boundaries between work and private life. This included having strategies about not brooding, taking problems home, or “adopting a child”. Enacted classroom management involved being a teacher that would be able to have order in the classroom, and the fears of not being able to. Student teachers needed to establish their own classroom management skills to explore and develop their own boundaries in classroom management. In experiencing classroom management as student teachers, they often reported that there was a tension in feeling obligated to adjust to the supporting teacher. These processes influenced the emerging teacher identity. The processes connected to the boundary work between the positions of being a student teacher and a soon to be practicing teacher, and influenced emerging teacher identity. Establishing boundaries was seen as coping with knowing how to handle distressful situations and with fear of a potentially exhaustive future practice.

The reported research is relevant to Nordic Educational Research since it addresses student teachers’ identity development and coping with distressful situations in teacher education. We hope this might be of use in the discussion about student teachers’ attrition and novice teachers choosing to quit the occupation.
Expectations and fears: Newly Qualified Teachers on the threshold of entering the teaching profession

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Abundant research points at the transition from campus to school being quite challenging for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) as their knowledge of, and experience in, dealing with the complexity of the real life teaching profession is limited (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014; Emstad, 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016). Nevertheless, NQTs are full of enthusiasm at the prospect of starting work in school even though they are aware of the concept of practice shock. This longitudinal research looks into how NQTs perceive their ability to cope (perceived teacher self-efficacy; Bandura, 1993 and 1994; Hatlevik, 2017; Tschannen-Moran & Chen, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) in three stages: 1) Before they start working in schools, 2) towards the end of their first semester as novice teachers and 3) as their first year of teaching comes to an end. In the first interview they were asked what they look forward to first of all, what they fear the most, and finally to rate their ability to cope (on a scale from 1-10) in their first semester.

The data is collected from 8 individual interviews with NQTs, 4 male and 4 female. The interviews were conducted on campus in the spring of 2017. At the time of the interview they had finished their exams and all but 2 had landed jobs for the coming school year. We used a semi-structured interview guide consisting of three main topics: motivation for becoming a teacher, expectations and fears: what they looked forward to and what they thought of as especially challenging as novice teachers, and finally what they considered their strengths and areas of growth as teachers. The interviews were transcribed and then analyzed employing a thematic method of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Among our findings from this first stage was the unison and enthusiastic expectations expressed by the NQTs of getting to know their pupils. All our 8 NQTs expressed how they especially looked forward to building relationships with the pupils and that their biggest fear was that they should fail in building such relationships and thereby miss out on detecting pupils in special need of help. We also found that the NQTs were worried about how to structure themselves and their time in order to fulfill their professional duties. Banduras concept of self-efficacy points to how mastering a situation leads to the expectation of furthermastery – which is a recipe for success (Bandura 1993 and 1994). Experiencing mastery in challenging situations is therefore of crucial importance for NQTs perceived self-efficacy and thereby their ability to cope with complexities of the teacher profession.

These findings have relevance to Nordic educational research by contributing knowledge of situations and circumstances that invoke expectations and fears for NQTs – knowledge that has a twofold relevance: it informs mentors about situations and circumstances that novice teachers find particularly challenging, and it informs teacher education programs curricula on the balance of theoretical and atheoretical knowledge.
Continuity and Transition of School-based Initial Teacher Education and the Induction Period at Schools in England

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Research topic/aim:
This paper attempts to examine the continuity and transition of initial teacher education (ITE) and the induction period for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) through analysing the ITE curriculum and the induction programmes in England. To more smoothly and properly connect from ITE to the actual teaching profession is an important stage of early career development of a teacher’s professional career for student teachers and NQTs.

In recent years, the government gives outstanding schools the role of leading teacher education and professional development of teachers in England. School-based teacher education has played a significant role for the advancement of teacher education. The statutory induction is the essential bridge between ITE and a career in teaching at schools. The personalised programme supports the NQTs in demonstrating that their performance against the relevant teachers’ standards is satisfactory by the end of the induction period and equip them with the tools to be an effective teacher. The major changes currently occurring within school-based teacher education have yet to be examined qualitatively in regards to the aspects, factors and process of continual trajectory to support and encourage student teachers and NQTs’ learning and professional development.

Theoretical framework:
In order to approach the purpose, a part of the theoretical framework in the case studies of the school-based programme of Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at universities developed by Furlong, J. et al (1988) is referred as a means for analysing the curriculum. The framework is based upon four different levels of training: (a) direct practice; (b) indirect practice; (c) practical principles; (d) disciplinary theory.

Methodological design:
This paper is primarily examined by use of various data triangulation, such as policy documents and curriculum analysis, and qualitative interviews data. To understand the process of professional development through experiencing each element of theory and practice in both ITE curriculum and induction programme, the approach of the above framework is employed in this paper. Then semi-structured interviews with several student teachers and NQTs during the academic year 2017/2018 is planned to offer in March 2018.

Expected conclusions/findings:
The expected findings from this research will support the importance of designing contiguous and consistent teacher education curriculums to encourage the development of student teachers and NQTs’ professional attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills as teachers. The findings also will present how to draw elements and integrations of theory and practice in the structured curriculums.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
This paper will contribute to the discussions of how to create reflective teacher education curriculums and training programmes at schools in order to support early career professional learning and development in both university-based and school-based training. Considering the experiences and issues of postgraduate school-based ITE and the induction year at schools in England show promise for some implementations not only in Nordic countries as the same European countries but also in countries around the global.

Reference:
Relational competence in teacher education

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Research Aim and Background

This paper presents an ongoing research project aiming to develop both a research-based terminology as well as a practical approach to develop the concept of relational competence in Danish teacher education. The current practical part of Danish teacher education operates with three framing learning goals for students: Didactics, classroom leadership and relational work. Especially the latter, relational work, lacks in-depth description and definition in order to become a tangible concept based on which teacher students’ professional qualifications can be developed.

Theoretical Framework

The project is theoretically based on a body of research on teacher-student relationships and their crucial role for both students’ development and learning, as well as for teachers’ well-being and experience of everyday school life (Grams, 2014; Grams & Jurowetzki, 2015; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Klinge, 2016; Klusmann et al. 2008). In order to frame the development of relational work, we will apply the concept of relational competence as described by Louise Klinge (2016).

Methodological Design

The project is located at UCC, Danmark, and applies an action research approach. In the first phase (autumn 2017 - spring 2018), collaboration is established with teaching staff in teacher education. The existing body of research is presented and discussed in order to develop a shared and applicable terminology together. In the second phase (spring 2018-spring 2019), the developed terminology will be transformed into templates for self- and group-reflection to be used via video self-recording of students’ teaching practice with the software IRIS. This phase will be followed up by observations and focus groups.

Relevance and expected findings

Recent studies (Böwadt et al, 2017) show that “relational work with children” is one of the main drivers for students to choose teacher education but also to make teachers leave the profession when relational conditions at work are challenged. In times of increasing expectations towards teachers and their performance, a professional training of relational competence in teacher education is called for. This project deals with the development of such.

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The (trans)formation of teacher-student relationship in policy and its possible complications for teacher education

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Research topic/aim
International and national educational research has shown that a positive teacher-student relationship is essential for both students' social and academic achievement. In one of the most central policy documents in the latest reform of the Swedish teacher education, A sustainable teacher education (SOU 2008:109), the relationship between the teacher and the student was pointed out as the most important aspect of teachers' work. Social relationships and social competence was, among other competences, emphasized in the most recent teacher education reform, 2011. Therefore, 'social relationships' is one of the eight prioritized content areas which constitute core educational science, which is common to all the diploma degrees in Swedish teacher education.

The presentation is part of my compilation thesis. The purpose of this paper is to examine the teacher-student relationship in policy documents, which are related to the latest reforms of Swedish teacher education. How is the teacher-student relationship described and how does these relational discourses change over time? What is the present relational discourse in policy text of Swedish teacher education and what implications can the distinguished relational discourse(s) in policy have for teacher education? The aim of the study is to deepen our understanding of the relational discourses that (trans)form the teacher-student relationship in policy documents, but also to contribute to the contemporary discussion about the complexity of policy texts and the enactment of policies.

Theoretical and methodological framework
Policies are compromises and change meanings in the process at different stages, where diverse interpretations of policies becomes “interpretations of interpretations (Ball, 1993, p. 11). The texts claims truths about the world and reality. Even so, policy change what we do and what we are (Ball, 2015), accordingly of different policy discourses.

In this study, the data consists of policy documents, processed by different political governments and actors. All the documents relate to the latest reforms of the Swedish teacher education. These policy texts form the starting point for the qualitative text analysis in this study: the reading, the identifying of relevant conceptions - the findings of the relational discourses. The findings will be analyzed theoretically, and implications for teacher education will be discussed.

Expected conclusions/findings and relevance
The preliminary findings show that the relational discourse have changed over time in due to the changes and challenges in society. Parallel discourses exist side by side, discourses that both constrain and enable the (trans)formation of the important teacher-student relationship. And is it possible, that these relational discourses, found in a Swedish educational context, could be found within other Nordic Teacher educations?

References
On the purpose of education - a qualitative study with teachers of Norwegian as a subject case

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The aim of this paper is to analyze how teachers of Norwegian as a subject in Norwegian Upper Secondary School constitute their self-understanding and educational projects, and how the teachers perceive their conditions for working in accordance with these. Furthermore, the paper discusses how the Norwegian teachers’ self-understanding and educational projects also contribute to legitimizing certain conceptions of the purpose of education. The paper is therefore an empirical contribution to ongoing discussions of the purpose of education (Biesta 2015).

As a theoretical framework, the paper uses Biesta’s three domains of educational purpose, namely qualification, socialization, and subjectification (Biesta 2009, 2015), in addition to a hermeneutic perspective emphasizing actors as self-interpreting (Taylor 1971) and historically grounded in specific traditions and languages (Gadamer 2010).

The paper is grounded in a qualitative research design based on research interviews and discourse analysis. Ten teachers of Norwegian as a subject teaching in Upper Secondary schools were interviewed using individual semi-structured interviews. The participants were selected with the aim of variation in gender, age, experience, and central or rural location. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed using methods from Gee’s discourse analysis, focusing on enactments and establishments of identities and practices (Gee 2014).

Preliminary findings of the paper suggest that the teachers constitute a self-understanding mainly as either rhetoricians, with a project for socializing and empowering students in the contemporary knowledge society, or as existentialists with a project for promoting student self-knowledge and formation, primarily through literature, while concepts such as ‘cultural heritage’ or ‘the Norwegian’ plays a more complex role in the discourses of both type of teachers. The analysis further shows how the teachers negotiate between conditions set by current educational political reforms emphasizing accountability, measurable results and labor market integration, and historically inherited conceptions and traditions in their school subject.

The paper is relevant to the field of Nordic educational research because it highlights teachers’ experiences and perspectives on the purpose of education in a time when most of the Nordic countries have seen changes stemming from educational reform and an increasing globalization of educational policies.

References:
Symposium – Part A
Ideals, politics and cultures of teacher education and the teaching profession

This double symposium will combine comparative, educational, sociological and historical approaches to the study and analysis of Nordic teachers, in primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. This cross-disciplinary approach serves to better understand the current ambiguous trends of professionalization versus de-professionalization and academisation versus “what works” by situating these in a broader context of cultural and political history. The papers thus explore the disciplinary boundaries between comparative education, political and cultural history, sociology of professions and didactics/educational studies.

The purpose of and rationale behind the symposium is thus to deepen our understanding of the ambiguities of teacher roles, teacher education and teacher professionalism through a cross-disciplinary approach. The field is not new but often studies have focussed on each approach in isolation, not combining the practical view from within (didactic, ethical, life-history or educational studies) with the views from outside (sociological, historical or political studies) – and the view from abroad (international comparative studies).

As examples of the view from within the symposium deals with external accountability policies and their impact on professional ethics as experienced by teachers as well as life histories of teachers as used in mapping teacher ideals, beliefs and agency. The view from outside includes analysis of teacher education reforms, knowledge forms in teacher education and the problematic of teacher professionalism. And finally the comparative view from abroad includes cultural teacher-recruitment patterns, comparison between teacher and clergy professions and intra-Nordic political and cultural differences.

Central common areas of attention are transformations from welfare- to “NPM-” states, from status as state civil servants to local employment (communalization) and from separate teachers schools or seminaries to university based teacher education. A contemporary and historical attention thus brings these papers under the same umbrella.
In this paper, we examine the teacher education policies of two Nordic countries, Sweden and Finland. The two countries are in many ways similar welfare societies, but have still made very different decisions considering their teacher education policies. The focus of this article is upon how the traditions and goals of teacher education, and especially the vision of the ideal teacher, have changed from the 1960s until today. In Finland, the period can be described as gradual scientification of teacher education. The image of the ideal teacher has also transformed according to a research-based agenda in which the teacher is expected to conduct minor-scale research in his own classroom.

Until the 1980s, a progressivist orientation reigned in Sweden, where the teachers, the teacher education and the teacher students were seen as instruments and tools for the reformation of not only the school but also the entire society. Thus, the ideal teacher should be aware of and interested in the school reform and its underlying ideology. Since the 1980s, Social democratic and center-right governments have represented different orientations regarding the goals of the educational system and teacher education, center-right government emphasizing subject knowledge at the expense of progressivism. Since the early 1990s, each new government has launched a new teacher education reforms, alternately emphasizing progressivism (Social democratic governments) or subject knowledge (center-right governments).

The differences between the two countries were in part caused by unexpected synergies between various reforms and societal developments, but also by deeper differences in pedagogical traditions, for example regarding the relationship between the teacher and the state.
Contributor 2

Comparative Education and the Life History Approach to Teacher Ideals, Beliefs and Agency – Small stories in a larger context?

Eikeland, Helen¹ & Larsen, Jesper Eckhardt¹

¹University of Agder

This presentation will investigate and maybe transcend the boundaries between macro and micro level investigations of teachers – i.e. between policies and persons. One aim is to discuss possibilities and pitfalls of the life history approach to analysing teacher ideals, beliefs and agency. Comparative education often tends to focus on larger contexts of policy transfer and borrowing (e.g. Steiner-Khamsi & Waldow 2012). Questions that arise from crossing the boundaries between histories writ small and large are among others: How can the larger analysis of globalised education politics, of international borrowing and lending and of national implementations in a meaningful way be combined with and/or challenged by the views from the ground level?

Part of the material to be discussed is from a study by Eikeland that investigates how Nepalese teachers perceive their life and work in a context of global initiatives for educational change. The material builds on a life history approach that deals with the problems of structure and agency in which the larger history supplies both contexts in which to locate the teachers’ narratives and the frameworks for interpreting it (Goodson 2011).

The paper will discuss issues that derive from an interest in developing new perspectives for research in teacher cultures, roles, ideals, beliefs: How are these levels (macro/micro) to be combined – if indeed this is a possible and/or fruitful endeavour? What roles do institutions (schools, universities, teacher colleges etc.) play in negotiations of ideals, beliefs and agency? What are the differences between analysing countries in the global South (e.g. Nepal) with the global North (e.g. Nordic countries)?
We compare reforms of higher education in Finland and Sweden from 1965 until today. Our focus is on how the decision making within organizations of higher education have changed, and how these changes are related to changing interpretations of the function of democracy within the university organization as well as of the university’s role in democratic society.

Through our comparative approach, we are able to analyse how international trends, such as the student revolution’s demands for democratic influence in the late 1960s and the marketization of universities through new public management reforms from the 1980s, have had different repercussions in two similar Nordic societies, which nonetheless have political cultures that differs in significant ways.

Both in Finland and Sweden, the university system has during our period of research come under closer political control, and has like other organizations within the public sector since the 1980s been the object of a series of New Public Management (NPM) reforms. In this presentation we will analyse how reforms of higher education have affected the possibilities of different actors (the university teacher profession, students, politicians and other representatives of external interests such as business) to exert influence over important decisions, such as student admissions, professorships and the program of the universities.

Previous research on reforms of higher education, or higher education in general, has generally lacked a comparative perspective. The comparative studies that do exist (e.g Schugurensky 2013, Mir 2013) have had the character of evaluations of contemporary institutions, and have lacked a historical perspective. Our comparative study follows the long development trajectories of Swedish and Finnish university governance from a democracy perspective, analysing the outcomes of international governance trends in two similar countries with distinct national political cultures. Thereby, it will give valuable insights into the hitherto not sufficiently investigated question of how political culture interact with global currents and influences in transforming national interpretations of democratic governance.

In a study of how Finland and Sweden have used school policies in order to build a democratic society, Janne Holmén (2017) found the political cultures of each country to be of crucial importance. The Swedish society-centred interpretation of democracy, where the democratically elected central government is given great power in implementing democratic reforms from above was contrasted to the Finnish political culture, which emphasizes rule of law, limits the direct influence of the political sphere and give civil servants, such as central bureaucrats and teachers, influence and independence. The project will investigate to what extent these differences in political culture can also be discerned in the field of higher education.
Danish and Norwegian primary teacher recruitment - The role of "folk"-institutions ca. 1850 – 1970

Larsen, Jesper Eckhardt
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The recruitment into teacher education of “the man from the plough”, “the woman from the pot” or “the small-town teacher” has had a legendary status in creating a strong affinity between primary school teachers and “the people” (“folket”) in these two Scandinavian countries (see e.g. Kampmann 1991). A main point of this narrative has been to underpin the avoidance of a sociocultural distance between pupils and teachers. This paper is targeted at scrutinizing the sociocultural realities of this legend. The Danish “folk-“ sector of education developed in the decades after 1855 to an encompassing alternative to the “main” state school system. The relation between the “folk” institutions (folkehøjskoler, frie seminarier, friskoler) and the recruitment into state teacher education (stats-seminarier, universities) is to be investigated. In the Norwegian case a connection was established between the “folk” institutions and the “state” institutions at an early stage. The political take-over by the peasant-left in 1884 has been interpreted as leading to a victory of the folk-teacher over the academic teacher (see e.g. Slagstad 2013). The comparison between the two cases can lead to a larger understanding of the ambiguous role of the primary school teachers somewhat between worlds: between folk and elite, and between state and civil society.
The concept of professionalism in and between education policy, the teaching profession and teacher education

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The concept of professionalism is often employed in research as well as normative documents on education policy and teacher work. However, professionalism can be construed with quite different meanings (Ozga & Lawn, 1981). Professionalism can be used by both conservative and progressive positions to address teachers’ work, to request changes or to defend the status quo (Hall, 2004). Consequently, various actors construe the concept of professionalism differently, and it is construed differently over time. Moreover, professionalism can be studied both as a normative value system, that is, a “true” concept deriving from definitional aspects of professions as building upon a scientific knowledge base (Freidson, 2001), and as an ideology (Larson, 1977). Evetts (2003) argues that these two perspectives are both necessary to understand occupational and organisational change within professions, and that they should be combined to enhance understanding about how the balance of normative and ideological elements varies between various actors. Distinguishing between professionalism from above and professionalism from within can assist in doing this work (Evetts, 2003). Professionalization can take place from within if the profession use normative aspects to construct an identity in ways that they can secure and maintain autonomy and discretionary power, while professionalization from above can be employed to convince professionals to perform in ways seen as appropriate and effective. Arguably then, the complex concept of professionalism needs to be located within a specific historical and national context to investigate how it is used for different purposes. Ideas about professionalism and the teacher profession are thus interrelated: if the “quality” of teachers work are questioned, this can result in increased professionalism from above such as competence development and improving teacher education, as well as increased external control. The “Norwegian approach” to develop the education sector emphasize exactly this combination of increasing monitoring of student outcomes on the one side and strengthening the knowledge base for teaching on the other side.

In previous studies, I have analysed and discussed how the concept of professionalism has gained enormous attention in the last two decades in Norway, and how new constructions of teacher professionalism are produced both by the government and from within the teachers’ union from 2000 onwards (Mausethagen & Granlund, 2012; Mausethagen, 2013). However, where the government emphasizes teacher accountability, research-based practice and specialization, the profession highlights research-informed practice, responsibility for educational quality and professional ethics. How the concept has been taken up and is used in teacher education has to a limited extent been investigated, and in this presentation, I will present an analysis of knowledge production in teacher education in combination with a discourse analysis of strategic plans for selected teacher education institutions. The findings indicate that the concept of professionalism is used solely positive and is related to efforts of increasing the status of teacher education and consequently the profession, yet is often being left undefined. Moreover, it is practice relevant, accessible research and subject didactics (mode 2) that is going to “professionalize” teacher education, also making the boundaries to “pedagogikk” less clear.
Contributor 2
The use of educational research within folkeskole teacher preparation

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This study is part of an ongoing project about the use of research-derived knowledge in teacher education in Denmark and Finland. This paper engages with the following research question: is research-derived knowledge – as promoted by the ITE institution - an input to initial teacher preparation in Denmark? Since knowledge derives from multiple sources, only some of these have the potential of including a research-based input (Mincu, 2013, 2015). Moreover, research may both inform and emerge from the practice of teachers. One of the major sources of expert knowledge as research derived is ITE. Academic research and on-site collaborative inquiry processes when clearly informed by such research are both relevant. Conversely, merely localised and situated forms of knowledge through teacher reflection from below are not always to be considered as in line with our more restrictive definition.

There are two main types of professional knowledge: the declarative and the procedural (Révei & Guerriero, 2017). The declarative knowledge can be seen as the “knowing that” of a profession. Thus, for a teacher is fundamental to acknowledge the main research evidence in the education field. The procedural knowledge is assumed to be the “knowing how”. It is highly relevant that teachers engage with research within their teaching context. Finally, educational research in the initial preparation of teachers is as the major instrument to gain research-literate and research-engaged teachers (BERA, 2014).

The focus of this study is on the ITE institutions and their capacity to promote research-derived knowledge to new teachers. The use of educational research in the initial teacher education is analysed in the case of the Danish ITE. In fact, the folkeskole teacher preparation has been strengthened over the recent years by the use of research (Danish Agency for Higher Education, 2015). Thus, the paper aims to explore how future teachers are educated within educational research. For this purpose, we draw upon data gathered from interviews with main actors (student teachers, teacher educators and educational leaders) into two different Danish university colleges. Some preliminary conclusions from this study show a quite large agreement about the importance of using educational research during initial teacher preparation. At the same time, there are many difficulties while considering the area of the procedural knowledge. Thus, the education of the Danish student teachers into research illustrates some complexities.
Contributor 3
The teaching profession and pastoral authority – an analysis of competing definitions of pedagogy in interwar Norway

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In a recent article (in progress), I argue that the history and sociology of professions should bring take more systematic into account what I call the “pastoral” dimension of professional power and authority. Classic sociological theory ascribed to the professions a special capacity to bring transcendent values to secular society. Insofar as this mediation involves the (re-)orientation of clients’ definition of their (life) situation, I conceptualize this phenomenon as the pastoral authority of professions.

This conceptualization brings the attention both to a largely forgotten affinity between the sociology of professions and the sociology of religion, and to the clergy as a possible third ideal-typical model of what a profession is, together with the lawyers and the medical doctors. An obvious example of a profession with a salient pastoral dimension is the elementary-school teacher profession. In Norway and the Nordic countries in general, the common school (allmueskolen) and its teachers were subordinated to the Church and the clergy throughout most of the nineteenth century. However, even after the new elementary school (folkeskole) was emancipated from direct clerical control and teachers embarked on a slow process of “professionalization”, teachers’ training programs, occupational role, cultural status, and pedagogical discourse continued to exhibit a distinctively pastoral quality.

In this paper, I will concentrate on teachers’ and teacher educators’ pedagogical discourses in the interwar period. This was a period where conflicting definitions of pedagogy circulated: Was pedagogy primarily a historical, philosophical, or psychological subject? Was it a theoretical discipline, an interdisciplinary research program, an art, or systematized normative reflection on the ultimate ends of the socialization (oppdragelse/uppfostran) of children? Was the teachers’ mission ultimately to impart knowledge, raise future citizens, or “redeem” the latent resources of each child? A particularly critical question is whether pedagogy was defined as a “technical” discipline, providing efficient means to achieve ultimate ends that were decided from the outside, or if pedagogy was understood as a discourse that could itself define and justify ultimate values. During the interwar period, a psychological-experimental “reform pedagogy” increasingly marginalized more overtly normative and “organicist” pedagogical directions. However, my hypothesis is that it transformed rather than disposed of the discipline’s “pastoral” heritage. In a final part of this paper, I will discuss how this pastoral dimension influenced Norwegian teachers and how it reverberated with the discourses of the coming postwar welfare state.
In 1997, when launching a new curriculum, the Minister of Education wanted to quantify the use of project work at all levels in the compulsory school. When the next curriculum was presented in 2006, it was clearly expressed that it is the professional teachers’ responsibility to choose methods.

Today the discussion about freedom of methods is again raised, now in the trace of evidence based research (Hattie 2013, Nordahl 2015). Is the question full freedom or freedom inside frames? Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) point out the difference between standard as common frames and standardization as detailed instructions. I 2017 the Norwegian teacher educations for primary and secondary school were extended to master level, 5 years. The main arguments were strengthening the research competencies and the professionalism. Should it still be necessary to instruct teachers how to work in their classes? How has the teachers’ autonomy been described in different curricula (1939, 1974, 1987, 1997, 2006)?
Contributor 5
External accountability and professional ethics for teachers – Challenges and possibilities

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The paper will deal with professional ethics for teachers in primary school, based on a qualitative study with focus group interviews of teachers and principals. The purpose of this study was to elucidate some ethical challenges a group of teachers experience in their daily lives connected to management and educational leadership, and discuss how these challenges can be met to ensure the students' learning and development.

The findings suggest that room for teachers' professional practice has been limited by increasing central control. External control of academic results in a few subjects, with pressure from both the national level and the municipal level, seems to move the teachers' attention from the totality of students' development, to a few measurable knowledge-related elements. Teacher's professional judgment is given less space and many are experiencing ethical challenges in tension between loyalty to the guidelines from the levels above, and ethics in the face of the individual student. Teachers are largely loyal to the guidelines, but some individuals violate these when they feel that this affects students' learning and development.

The study showed that, in many cases, the principal facilitated ethics workshops for their staff. However, many teachers reported that collective reflection on professional ethics was rare, and that they experienced pressure from management about results. Outcome-indicators often won out over teacher's professional ethical assessment. The critical potential of ethics seemed to be on the losing side of this struggle.
Roundtable
Equal partnership in ECTE: University kindergartens

This is an innovation project in collaboration between three research communities at HiOA – Department of Early Childhood Teacher Education (ECTE), Centre for the Study of Professions and Program for Life Long Learning. Three external partners are included; two city districts / municipalities and one private early childhood institution provider.

The primary aim of the project is to enhance quality in ECTE by developing early childhood institutions as well as educational institution as learning contexts through innovative collaboration across higher education and the field of practice. The sub-projects aim to

• articulate the professional competences of early childhood teachers
• enhance students’ placement learning,
• establish new models and structures for cooperation across professional education and the field of professional practice
• explore and develop education institution and kindergartens
• enhance professional and workplace learning in the institutions
• explore how digital tools can (1) strengthen cooperation in-between the communities and (2) contribute in supervision in student periods

Methodologically the project seeks to combine two related approaches to developmental research: Developmental work research and action research, focusing on dialogue conferences and seminars, observation, focus group talks and summaries of meetings with and within the participating institutions.

In this roundtable-discussion we are addressing some of the current challenges the project is facing. The challenges are all linked to innovation in higher education.

1. Time, competence and meeting points
Experiences from the project are telling us that the participating kindergartens are organised in ways that allows an on-going communication that includes most of the staff members. They also have meeting points including all the staff, and meeting points including only groups of staff. However, time is an issue in early childhood settings and competence amongst the staff. In our higher education institution, time and competence are easier accessible, but internal meeting points are challenging due to structures and resistance. How may sustainable structures be established and maintained within a limited time frame - in order to attain equality between the institutions?

2. Upscaling innovations
Closely linked to point number 1 are issues of upscaling innovations. The innovations performed are linked to action research, involving discussions and dialogue meetings across the institutions involved. Both developmental work research and action research are locally anchored, depending on the context. A significant question when the project is halfway is how to succeed in upscaling the innovations.

3. What works - how does it work
One of the challenges in today’s educational system is the tension between the demands of clear and concise factors of “what works” in today’s educational landscape, and the ambiguity of learning and innovation (Biesta 2014). Innovations performed in local practices can include ambiguity, is it possible to make room for open approaches in upscaling?

The backdrop for these questions will be elaborated through short presentations from the subprojects in order to explore the areas of interest.
Contributor 1
Partnership through reciprocity and equal communities of learning

Furu, Anne
Oslo Metropolitan University

In Early childhood teacher education (ECTE) contexts the term “partnerships” may be understood as different ways of organizing collaboration between the educational institution and placement kindergartens which offer supervised practice. In Norwegian ECTE, 100 days supervised practice is organized during the bachelor program. Partnership is primarily a strategy for structuring, organizing and strengthening teacher education as a professional education.

One of the issues raised as a result of recent research in Norway is the students' perception that a connection between lessons given at the educational institution and mentoring in placement periods is lacking (NOKUT 2010). The same issues have been raised internationally. As a consequence of this criticism, several projects have emerged with the aim of creating a comprehensive and coherent education in which practice is integrated as an equal learning arena.

Traditionally, educational institutions have dominated teacher education. Therefore, placement supervisors quite often do not perceive themselves as teacher educators (Allen et al., 2010). Recent research points out that by making schools an active partners in education it is easier to integrate the schools’ knowledge of new kinds of practice. Thus, partnership may contribute to a better link between theory and practice in the development of teacher education. Zeichner (2010) refers to the development of less hierarchical collaboration models in teacher education as a paradigm shift, and that it is the result of the need to develop new knowledge of practice.

This paper focuses on possibilities and critical factors related to the development of equal partnership between the educational institution and co-operating kindergartens. According to recent research’s emphasis on equality as a significant condition for constructive partnership in teacher education (Chambers & Armour 2012), these two aspects will be specifically illuminated and discussed. The paper will argue for the value of developing a partnership through a long-term innovation project which involves all partners as equal actors. Ongoing developmental processes throughout the project period might function as border crossing between the educational institution and the fields of practice. The processes break down existing power structures expressed through linguistic dichotomies like “at college” and “out in kindergartens”, “we” and “the others”, “professional teacher” and “placement teacher”.

Literature:


The research topic of this presentation is exploration of knowledge exchange across boundaries between students and employees in kindergartens in periods of placement. This topic is derived from one of the research and development activities in the main project “Equal partnership: University kindergartens”, dealing with enhanced learning for students and employees, through innovative learning structures and processes of learning. This research topic also involves sharing and exchange of different kinds of knowledge, as they are intertwined in professional knowledge. Students and employees will often represent different stages and views, as far as knowledge and learning trajectories are concerned. The sub-project focuses particularly on students’ former and new knowledge, knowledge of practitioners and how these different kinds of knowledge and experiences may be contextualized, exchanged and developed in order to create new knowledge between them and add to the collective knowledge at the workplace.

The main research question is: In which ways may exchange and boundary-crossing of knowledge between students and employees contribute to learning? The aim is to enhance quality in education and in placement kindergartens by innovative structures and organization, which may lead to increased collective learning for students and employees alike.

In the process of our exploration of learning across boundaries of user groups, we have identified several challenges. Some of them will be introduced in the roundtable discussion and we welcome comments and further discussion about issues connected to challenges linked to: structures / division of responsibilities that facilitate professional learning.

This is a project based on a socio-cultural view of learning. It relies among others upon studies of work-based learning, collective learning (Raelin 2008) and boundary-crossing (Akkermann and Bakker 2011).

The methodological design of the main project is applied in this sub-project, that is, an approach based on dialogue seminars and action research. In addition, this sub-project draws heavily on group interviews, student seminars, exploration of new assignments, evaluation processes by user groups and notes of reflection.

Findings are continually integrated and they are decisive as they make up the base for further work. One of the findings are formulated as challenges for discussion, se above. Some very important findings at this stage of the project, are:
- the potential for increased collective and professional learning in placement periods
- a new division of responsibilities and influence between supervisors in kindergartens and teachers at the university is needed in order to support enhanced professional learning in placement periods.

The project addresses important issues of collaboration and equal, close partnership between educational institutions, users and stakeholders, which are stressed by the government (MD 2017). In addition, it challenges traditional views asserting the hegemonic position of educational institutions towards the professional field.
References
Contributor 3
The use of participatory conferences and workshops in R&D work

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As an innovation project funded by the Norwegian Research Council, the UBLU-project is inspired by many sources. Concerning working methods two have been singled out: the Norwegian work research tradition based on organizational action research and broad participation among all stakeholders in development projects (e.g. Eikeland, 2012), and by activity theory (CHAT), especially elaborated by the Yrjö Engeström and colleagues (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013). In this presentation (and the follow-up article) we would like to discuss the use of gatherings of stakeholders in different forms, mostly referred to as “dialogue conferences” or “search conferences” in the Norwegian work research tradition, as “change laboratories” in the CHAT tradition, and under other designations in other traditions, e.g. future workshops (fremtidsverksted, Zukunft-Werkstatt) (Jungk & Müllert, 2000), open space techniques (Owen, 1998 & 2008), and even more. Based on gathering different stakeholders, dependent on each other, for creating solutions in dialogue, these approaches are quite fundamentally “cross-boundary” work forms.

Based on a short description of how they are designed and used in the UBLU-project, the presentation will first 1), discuss the general rationale and justification (pro et contra) of measures like these where the usual division of labor between phases in development work is reduced considerably, and secondly 2), describe and compare the four traditions mentioned for significant differences and similarities (overlaps), and three 3) try to analyze and extract general insights at a level which transcends the different traditions somewhat mechanical tendency to “stick to their own recipes”. Most of these “recipes” need phronetic adjustments to specific and concrete challenges, conditions, and possibilities. The challenge, then, is to specify what level of general competence and understanding is needed in order to do this appropriately in each case.

References
Investigating how video influence supervision in early childhood teacher students placement periods

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A common assumption in the field of early childhood is that placement learning is best situated within communities supporting learning (Lave and Wenger), together with a mentor possessing skills and knowledges in professional counselling. The importance of supervision based on critical reflection has been highlighted. The formal supervision in student placement periods is usually based on a written note, consisting of initial thoughts and reflections formulated by the student based on an experience. The text is shared with their placement teacher in advance (Lauvås and Handal 1983). However, a large proportion of the placement teachers report the students are struggling in this preparation and the texts are frequently lacking initial reflections. In order to examine if other forms of preparations can enhance initial reflection, video was introduced as the underlying support of supervision.

To investigate the concepts of reflection, a sociomaterial framework inspired by Latour's (2005) concept of translation is applied. Through a post-orientation to Narrative Research (Tamboukou 2010), reflective talk with groups of students and placement teachers are analysed to explore the concepts initial reflection and knowledge-in-action. Ethical perspectives are discussed with the participants as co-researchers, and anonymity of the empirical material are secured. In discussing the implications of moving from text to video, the presentation highlight reflection as a traveling concept (Bal 2002). Reframing reflection as a bodily concept will imply exploring not-yet-known actions in placement practices, involving knowledges going beyond the traditional idea of reflecting through written texts. This also require activating both theory and practice in various ways.

Keywords: mentoring, reflection, placement, student learning, socio-material

References
The Rise of the Chinese ‘Schooled Society’: Schooling in three generations (1940s-2010s)

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Education, like other aspects of Chinese society, has undergone dramatic transformation since the 1980s. What features characterize this transformation? How is the transformation lived by young people in comparison with earlier generations’ school experience? This study explores these questions through a three-generation comparison drawing on interviews with young people in their last year of upper secondary school, their parents and grandparents in Beijing.

It shows that against the backdrop of transformation in conditions of life over the three generations, for the youngest generation, education, especially higher education, has gained paramount importance. ‘Intensity’, ‘centrality’ and a hegemonic norm of academic excellence characterized the younger generation’s school experience. This contrasts sharply with their grandparents’ talk of lack and irrelevance of education when they were young. This is also a far cry from the experience of their parents: compared with the older generation, schooling and educational success had become much more central to their life chances as well as daily life when this middle generation was young. But their narratives also conveyed a shared sense of casualness, relaxedness and unintentionality around schooling and educational success. Testing into higher education, or even a technical-vocational school (zhongzhuhanen), was an exception rather than a norm.

The findings are interpreted from the perspective of ‘the schooled society’. The changes over the three generations constitute an ‘education/cultural revolution’, evincing the emergence of what Baker (2014) calls ‘the schooled society’ as a global trend. The Chinese schooled society has been intensifying ever since the 1980s with China’s new national project of modernization. But the Chinese case has some unique dynamics and features. The educational intensity is exacerbated by the combined effect of the cultural tradition of education reverence (with education playing a major role in defining the ‘ideal personhood’), the one-child policy and the older generations’ sense of their own cultural and material deprivation when they were young, and the parents’ ambition for a better future for their family through their children’s education. The culture of the schooled society in the Chinese context is also reinforced by the norm of exemplarity which is further reinforced by—and reinforces—the market norm of competitiveness, creating an extreme, and possibly internationally unique, pressure for academic excellence and attainment of higher education.

This study is part of a larger life-history project on three generations of men and women in China and Norway. The youngest Chinese participants were 46 students (25 boys and 21 girls) in their final year of upper secondary school in Beijing who had been contacted through their teachers and had volunteered to be interviewed. They were recruited from a high-academic reputation ‘key school’ and a school of ‘ordinary’ reputation’. These were followed by interviews with the girls’ mothers and maternal grandmothers and with the boys’ fathers and paternal grandfathers.

This generational comparative study cuts across such fields as education, sociology, historical studies, gender studies, youth studies and generational studies, and thus relevant to NERA’s central theme. It will serve as a basis for a comparison with the Norwegian case.
Transition patterns of extended transition, cosmopolitan orientation and ethnic business

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The paper reports from a research project on the trajectories of young immigrants through upper secondary schools in Iceland. The project recruited participants in six upper secondary schools that all offered considerable flexibility in terms of study pace and choice of study tracks. We conducted biographical problem-centred interviews (Witzel and Reiter, 2012) with 22 young immigrants from Eastern Europe, South East Asia and other countries. The interviews were analysed from the perspective of transition as developed by scholars as Furlong et al. (2011), Guðmundsson (2015), Leccardi et al. (2016) Walter et al. (2002) and Walter (2006). Three main pathways of transition were identified among our participants. Firstly, the flexibility of their upper secondary education provided space for an immigrant-specific pathway of extended transition, where the young people kept a slow pace during in the beginning and often concentrated on learning Icelandic and on subjects where they were already strong, often mathematics. When their proficiency in Icelandic increased they speeded up their studies and were able to select subject that involved complicated language. Secondly, for some participants the social isolation was a bigger problem than language obstacles. They took part time jobs where they socialised with other young immigrants and Icelanders who were willing to participate in multi-lingual social contexts. These immigrants also found ways to use in some subject, and they became interested in global matters, and developed a cosmopolitan orientation. Thirdly, some of the participants did not gain solid ground in upper secondary education and took available unskilled jobs. Gradually they drifted towards ethnic business, often in the food sector, which later motivated them to seek education and skills (like Icelandic, English, accounting and cooking) that allowed them to start their own business. Similar patterns can be seen in other countries in the international research literature, but at the same time the pathway of extended transition is in a more specific way linked to the general transition patterns among Icelandic youth.

References:
Concrete educational expectations and abstract career aspirations of immigrant-origin youth in Finland

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Theoretical framework:
According to an extensive body of research, contradictions and paradoxes characterise the schooling of immigrant-origin youth. Immigrant parents and their children are widely reported to hold positive attitudes towards education and high academic aspirations, despite various difficulties that immigrant-origin youth face within the educational system (Salikutluk, 2016; Fernández-Reino, 2016; Tjaden & Hunkler, in press; Kao & Tienda, 1998, for instance).

According to Mickelson (1990), abstract attitudes are based on dominant ideals of education as a pathway to social mobility, whereas concrete attitudes are rooted in ‘the different material realities that people experience’, and are thus by nature class- and race specific (p. 46).

Research topic/aim:
We analyze immigrant-origin youth’s abstract aspirations and concrete expectations concerning education and future employment, and examine their developments during upper secondary education. Drawing on life course approach, we aim to take into account the interrelation of institutional opportunity structures and biographical agency in explaining how the youth’s aspirations and expectations evolve within, as well as shape, their educational trajectories during upper secondary education.

Methodological design:
As a part of a 4-year follow-up study Transition and educational trajectories of immigrant youth (Transit), we pair thematic interviews from 2015 (9th grade, last year of comprehensive education) with follow-up interviews that will be conducted during the winter 2017 (3rd year in upper secondary education). With the qualitative longitudinal data, we are able to analyze the varieties of the youth’s aspirations and expectations, as well as the institutional and biographical factors affecting these developments.

Expected conclusions/findings:
Based on our previous analysis (Kalalahti, Varjo & Jahnukainen, 2017), we expect to find certain mismatch – often related to ethnicity – between the abstract occupational aspirations and the concrete educational expectations. We will elaborate the ways in which the young people have managed this inconsistency during the upper secondary education as a part of their educational life biographies.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
Although immigrant-related paradoxes seem to be a global phenomenon and below-average school performance makes it difficult for these young people to attach to education in Finland like in other Nordic countries, Finnish common and universal comprehensive school seem to fail more often in offering the equality in comprehensive school.

References:
Vocational cultures and professional identities as expressed by Norwegian VET Students and apprentices - Undergoing large scale assessment of vocational competency in the MECVET project

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Research topic/aim:
The topic of this research is how Norwegian VET-students and apprentices develop professional identities and express vocational cultures as measured in a large-scale assessment study of vocational competency in the MECVET-project (Measuring Vocational Competency). The MECVET-project is a feasibility study testing the German COMET-model (Rauner, Heinemann, Maurer, & Haasler, 2011). Measuring and assessing vocational competency is a complex procedure (Baethge et al., 2009).
The research question explored in this article is: How can the development of vocational culture and professional identities among Norwegian VET-students and apprentices be comprised in a large scale assessment of vocational competencies?

Theoretical framework
Perspectives of apprenticeship models for learning, suitable for VET-students and apprentices in epistemological practices in VET (Billett, 2004; Fuller & Unwin, 2003)
The contribution by Billett emphasizing the importance of personal epistemologies in the integration of experiences in learning from education and practice (Billett, 2009).
Vocational student’s identity work in preparation for an early career choice (Hvitved, 2014).

Methodology/research design:
The data consists of three different methods approaches:
1. MECVET test solutions, written by 450 respondents in three different vocations: Electricians, Health Care Workers and Industrial Mechanics. This study draws from data from the context of Norwegian VET, measured at three stages of the vocational education and training: 1. 2nd year students in school-based VET. 2. First year apprentices. 3. Second (and final) year apprentices.
2. Context survey, with a response rate of 95% of the respondents from 1., the MECVET test solutions.
3. Think-back interviews with a small sample of VET-students and apprentices directly after their completion of the MECVET-test solutions.

Expected conclusions/findings:
How competencies evolve throughout the three years of the study: Cultural factors in assessment of vocational competencies. Further the results from the context questionnaire following all respondents in the MECVET-study can provide insight into the cultural factors that influence the development of vocational competency. These perspectives also comprise analysis of how assessment influences the respondent’s views of vocational competency, including development of and views about vocational identities.

References:
(Special) needs, support practices and societal inclusion? Ethnographic analysis on general upper secondary education

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In Finland, after comprehensive school educational paths divide into the dual system of vocational education and general (academic) upper secondary education. Young people with special educational needs or with immigrant backgrounds usually continue their studies in vocational schools instead of general upper secondary education. In addition, the experiences of young people on given educational support and guidance at school are varied (Niemi 2015). This presentation is based on the research project Employability, education and diversities focusing on educational practices, transitions and societal inclusion of young people after comprehensive school. By utilizing multi-sited ethnographic methodology, we have investigated study-related experiences, obstacles and challenges that young people, especially those with immigrant backgrounds or special educational needs, have faced among their studies. We aimed at focusing both on the educational practices and students’ viewpoints at schools and analysing young people’s positions, agency and given support practices. In this presentation, we discuss our preliminary findings considering young people’s positions, need of support and support practices available at general upper secondary education.

Methodologically, the study is multi-sited ethnographic research, contextualized in current education policy. During the spring semester 2017, we conducted ethnographic fieldwork in two institutes of upper secondary education (general and vocational) in Southern Finland. We spent approximately 80 days at schools. In general upper secondary school, the focus was especially on preparatory education, Finnish as a second language studies and on the practices of special needs education and study counselling. We followed the studies of various classes, participated in different meetings and conducted interviews altogether with 60 students and teachers. Our approach is multidisciplinary and we mainly draw on the theorizations developed within sociology of education, youth studies and disability studies. The theoretical ideas with which we operate relates to young people’s positions in education, agency, societal inclusion and educational in/equality.

A stereotyped assumption that general upper secondary studies would be suitable only for students with high academic orientation is challenged by the fact that the students’ backgrounds are diverse and their resources and needs of support significantly vary. Questions around (Finnish) language proficiency have created new kinds of needs for support practices. Yet the Act on general upper secondary education do not oblige schools to arrange support practices nor are general upper secondary schools provided with the same resources of pedagogical support than vocational upper secondary schools. In our presentation, we focus one the contradictions between young people’s study-related experiences, their needs of support and support practices offered at the school.

In spite of the well-known objectives of educational equality in Nordic countries, sociological research has pointed out that social dimensions, such as migrant and socioeconomic backgrounds, disability and gender are still related to positionings of young people in upper secondary education and later in the labour market (see Lappalainen & Lahelma 2016; Gudmundsson, Beach & Vestel 2013). This study aims at producing fresh findings from the field of Finnish upper secondary education at the moment, when the upper secondary education system is going through a big reorganization process.
Reinterpretation of Youth Participation: Longitudinal and International Comparative Study on Youth Policy in Sweden and Japan

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Stockholm University (IIE) Alumni

There is a growing concern about reconstructing youth policy in many parts of the world in reflection to the issue on youth. Especially, in the post industrialized countries such as Sweden and Japan, young people’s participation became one of the prioritized themes of national youth policy. Despite the implementation of youth policy and local practices in regards to youth participation in both of the countries, there is a clear difference in young people’s notion and behavior in participation into society. The paper attempted to answer a question: what is the factor that shapes young people’s different notion on participation?

This qualitative study had investigated modern national youth policy documents in Sweden and Japan with focus on youth participation. Thematic contents analysis was employed as a methodology of this research in order to conduct comparative analysis. To grab context of youth participation in the respective countries, key concepts: youth participation and youth policy as well as historical development of youth policy in each countries were described. Analysis with self-organized framework found that the two countries share several commonalities in youth policy such as rights perspectives, cross sectorial approach, social inclusion of risky young people and promotion of independence. However, policies in reality for participation of young people are implemented differently, which reflects different recognition on youth participation in the contexts of the respective countries.
The individual and the others - a sociological analysis of the tv-series Skam

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The Norwegian tv-series Skam (Shame) has celebrated great triumphs in the Nordic countries and has received cult status among teenagers. One of the reasons probably is that the story about the high school students in Oslo is meaningful to teenagers and operates as a kind of mirror for the viewers. With its intense focus on the interaction between teenagers, the series shares interest with youth studies and sociology, especially with relation to the meaning and importance of the peer-group as a both dangerous and fascinating necessity for the individual in late modernity.

In The Masculine Dominance, Pierre Bourdieu uses the novel To the lighthouse by Virginia Woolf as inspiration for his analysis of gender and power. Bourdieu’s point is that sociology can learn from fiction when it comes to the inner life of individuals, feelings and subjective reactions to objective circumstances. Inspired by Bourdieu’s way of using narrative as case and inspiration for sociological reflection, I will analyze and theorize over certain themes in Skam. My theoretical point of departure will be Thomas Ziehe’s theory of youth culture after the cultural liberation and Erving Goffman’s dramaturgic theory of the individual’s facework in the everyday social life. Also, I use fictional genre-analysis in order to understand the normative aspects of the series.

My main thesis is that Skam deals with the importance of “the others” in young people’s individual identity-work (Ziehe), and that both feelings of exclusion and belonging stems from the way, the individual administrates his or her presentation of the self in the social world (Goffman). The main characters relate to different types of groups, namely what I call “the mob”, “the friend group” and the “intimate group”, which present different possibilities and dangers which generate new kinds of experience and reflection. From a narrative perspective I show that Skam is a Bildung story which combines a problem-based description of experiences towards themes such as exclusion, revenge, seduction, mental illness, love etc. and an optimistic approach towards dealings with such issues in an imperfect world. As in the classical Bildung story the main theme is the confrontation between individual and trans-individual powers, in Skam the trans-individual force is the social life and its norms.

When it comes to conclusions and relevance of my study, I will point out two perspectives. First, in continuation of the way Bourdieu and other sociologists use literature and film as cases for discussion of subjectivity in modernity, Skam can be used as a case-study for micro-sociological studies of identity processes in Scandinavian countries in the late modernity and therefore as an inspiration for studies of motivations and existential problems of young people today. Second, there are obvious didactical perspectives in using Skam as a basis for teachers’ dialogues with students about classroom culture and group processes. With its focus on both sociological and narrative analysis my study is an invitation to use theory and analysis to qualify an already existing student fascination in popular media products such as Skam.

References:
(Multi)culturally constructed Educational Identity

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Research topic/aim:
The educational opportunity structure of the migrant backgrounded girls’ are constructed of several dimensions of family background, gender, education system and society. How the young people themselves experience these factors affects how they form, asses and negotiate their own individual educational identity that is developing along their (educational) biography.

Among the migrant backgrounded students the educational identity intertwines with their bonds to their current home country and their country of origin. Being a migrant can - depending on the assessor – be seen as a multicultural resource or a handicap related to language difficulties. The aim of this presentation is to see how the migrant backgrounded girls construct their educational identities and how the issues of ethnic background and gender intertwine within these constructions.

Theoretical framework:
Our theoretical approach grounds on the identity negotiations and the meanings given to education, especially in the intertwinenment of gender and migrant origin. We understand the educational choices of the young people as a part of “negotiating their identities according to situational contexts” (Yoon 2012, 972). Ari Antikainen et al. (1995, 300) have portrayed how educational identities are typifications of the self, making one’s cultural resources visible. They identified four dimensions of manifestations of identity: social identity, personal identity, self-identity and cultural identity.

Methodological design:
Our data consists of 21 semi-structured interviews of migrant backgrounded girls, made during the last year of comprehensive school. The interviews included questions about the girl’s experiences of their educational path, future plans, racism and social life. The analysis is concentrated on in which ways the educational social-cultural identities and personal-self-identities intertwine with each other, or if they actually contradicts each other.

Expected conclusions/findings:
The study suggests that the educational identities reflect the experienced educational possibilities and variety of learner positions. They are not merely constructed at the school, but especially in interaction with the world outside the school. We expect to find that the identities of immigrant origin youth are partly shaped by their home community and a special gendered ethnic identity.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
Studies from the Nordic contexts (Sweden and Finland, for instance) have highlighted that below-average school performance make it difficult for the migrant-origin young people to attach to education (Jonsson & Rudolphi 2011; Lindblad 2016). There is a need to greater understanding of migrant backgrounded girls’ educational identities, educational aspirations and opportunity structures.

References:
Navigating Identity An identity study based on interviews with upper secondary students in Oslo from different backgrounds

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Navigating Identity
An identity study based on interviews with upper secondary students in Oslo from different backgrounds.

Research topic/aim:
The topic of this research is the concept of identity, and the development of identity in relation to educational, social, and cultural aspects of life. The context of the study is the city of Oslo, which is divided into parts marked by different cultural and socioeconomic conditions. Students from two upper secondary schools in Oslo East and West are interviewed, and thus provide the empirical data. Their experiences of school, education, and diverse life circumstances are analysed to shed light on the concept of identity in current society.

Theoretical framework:
Identity is here understood as continuously developing and flexible, yet relatively fixed as an individual identity. Furthermore, identity is understood as social, and developing in cultural and societal contexts. The theories that form the ground for these perspectives on identity and the self are based in the perspectives of William James (1950[1890]) and George Herbert Mead (1967[1934]). I also draw on the socialization theory of Anton Hoëm (e.g.1982), who sees identity and socialization processes as intertwined. According to scholars like Giddens, Beck, and Bauman, there has been a shift from high modernity into late modernity, post modernity, risk society, or liquid modernity. These conditions impact on people’s lives, self-understanding, and identity construction. Globalising forces and societal factors create fast changes and increased flexibility in our lives. Since the notion of identity is understood to be closely linked to modernity and its’ development, identity can be understood to undergo similar dynamics. Analyses show that additional theoretical perspectives are required to reach a thorough understanding of identity in these processes.

Methodological design:
The study is qualitative, and seeks to understand the course and content of identity processes of 18-19 year old students in upper secondary school. The interviews consider family-related, educational, cultural, and socioeconomic conditions. Data from questionnaires are also made use of in order to provide background information for selection of interviewees.

Expected conclusions/findings:
The empirical data points to different domains of life which constitute the identity and self understanding of the young people. Some aspects stand out in these identity processes, namely experiences of place and places, family and family relations, social class, and school experiences.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
The Nordic countries have resemblances when it comes to religion, the social welfare, the educational systems, and the cultural sphere. Therefore our countries undergo similar changes and challenges in society and school. Social, religious, and cultural background factors do play a role in young people’s lives, their identity development, and self-understanding. An increase in the number of immigrants, and the move of new refugees to the very North of Europe, bring diversity into our schools. The study of identity in current society can benefit from analyses of the meaning and value of education in the lives of young people from diverse backgrounds.
Segregation and the lack of trust in the adult generation – Young people’s views on violence and security in school

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There are no places where youth are at greater risk of being exposed to harassment and violations than at school and on their way to and from school. Threats are relatively common experiences among school students, but some aspects of these mundane and frequent harassments and violations are not taken seriously and are, thus, not reported. The aim of this study is to explore students’ perceptions and experiences of different forms of harassment and violations in lower secondary school. We are interested in students’ narratives on the prevalence and character of harassment and violations, and their strategies for handling their own and other students’ exposure to different forms of harassment and violations. We are in particularly interested in questions on generation, trust and young people’s relation to the school officials, especially the teachers. Theoretically, we are exploring how the students’ narratives connect to general societal and cultural discourses on harassment and violations and social welfare, and especially how the students categorize situations related to harassment and violations, as well as how they seek support and help in precarious situations. Methodologically, the current study designed and constructed as a case study of a suburban lower secondary school in one of Sweden’s major metropolitan areas. This study draws from focus group and individual interviews with students in the ninth grade. The data collected are mainly focus group interviews and individual interviews. During the first phase of focus group interviews, we have examined how young people construct their understandings of harassment and violations, as well as their experiences of how the school officials support harassed and violated students. During the second phase, we have conducted individual interviews with the students. The individual interviews aim is to gain knowledge about specific situations in which students have been exposed to and/or witnessed harassment and violations. The results indicates that the students experience physical as well as verbal violence, quite frequently at the school. However, they show a clear a lack of trust in how the school officials’ handle violent situations at the school. Instead, the students talk about solving the problems within the peer group either in the school or outside the school. Today there is a lack of Nordic research about students’ views and experiences of violence and harassment in school. This study hopes to contribute with new knowledge on how students’ narratives connect to general societal and cultural discourses on harassment and violations and social welfare, as well as how they categorize situations related to violence and abusive acts.
Bullied out of school?

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Research topic:
In this article we follow up Bunting & Moshuus (2017) about dropout in upper secondary school in Norway, seen from the youth’s perspective. The data showed that the reasons for dropping out was complex socially mediated processes from an early age, and a lot of the youths mentioned bullying as one of these factors. In this article we look further into the youths own stories about bullying and dropping out of school.

Theoretical framework:
Most studies view school dropout primarily as a consequence of individual or structural problems that marginalise young people. According to Rumberger (2011), those who drop out are part of a social group of marginalised youth defined by “an array of factors”. Here, we approach schooling from another perspective, inspired by studies like Fine (1991) and Brown and Rodriguez (2009), which emphasise the interactions between the individual student and their surroundings. From this viewpoint, students with aggregated risks are caught up in socially mediated interactions between students and the educational system that reduce the student’s options to stay on and graduate. Our research question is: How do young people’s stories explain bullying in the process of dropping out of school?

Methodological design:
The project use longitudinal method and indirect qualitative approach, following 70 youth from 2013-2023. The interviews are conducted in a way that resemble ethnographic fieldwork collecting an in-depth knowledge of the individual life stories. The method is based on narrative theory and hermeneutics, where every interview is treated as participant observations (Moshuus & Eide, 2016), used when the informants do not share the same context and where these different contexts make up contested ground (Bourgois, 1998). Of the recruited youth from Telemark County in risk positions for workfare measures, one half of the group is at risk of experiencing drop out, while the other half already dropped out of school.

Expected findings:
This article tries to give the stories behind the risk factors for dropout, from the youth’s perspective and through their expressed life-stories. The indirect approach tell us more of their experience of recognition in close relationships, but also in relation to rights and social status.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
In the knowledge society, education is considered as the key to the labour market. In the Nordic countries the educational system has recently assumed a dominating position, where the consequences of dropout are greater and can lead to marginalization.
The school history to women who have exercised violence in adolescence

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Research topic/aim:
This project is a study of how women who have exercised violence in adolescence look at their school history. The violence was, in part, aimed against teachers and other students. The project is elaborated through the following issue:
• How did women who have performed violence in adolescence experienced the school and how did these experiences affect their learning and self-efficacy?
• What relationships had the women with teachers and fellow students, and what impact has these relationships had for their experience of school?

Theoretical framework:
The theoretical foundation of the study is based on social learning theory, an approach that emphasize learning, the individual's cognitive processes of adaptation to and interaction with the social environment. A central term is Bandura's 'self-efficacy'.

The study is also based on an understanding of the girls as prosecutors in their own lives; they are not oppressed by contextual conditions or individual attributes, but they rather create their own reality/perception. Such an understanding of the girls implies that their actions are intentional.

Another approach is derived from the 'theory of resistance'. Some students' problem behaviour is resistance to a school they do not 'belong to' or a school they feel doesn't values them. They show resistance because they don't feel acknowledged, and their situation, experiences and interests are not taken into account.

Methodological design:
The study is a longitudinal study of 13 girls who have exercised violence in adolescence. Ten years ago, when the girls were between 13 and 18 years, depth interviews were conducted (Faldet, 2013). Today these girls are young adults and the desire is to conduct new interviews with the same informants.
It is crucial to get the women's own perspectives and their description of how they now understand their own experiences and their own history in a retro-perspective. The informants' experience of school and class situations where the violence was conducted will be described. This is a phenomenological study, and an inductive and grounded theory-inspired approach.

Expected conclusions/findings:
It is expected that these girls describe the school as difficult. They were not acknowledged, and did not get the help and follow-up they needed from teachers and other staff at school. It is believed that the respondents have had different strategies for self-efficacy. And even if they didn't think violence was the solution, it was a way of handling challenging situations and a difficult period of life. This means that the girls violent behavior was rarely unmotivated, but for them rational.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
The project will contribute with new and important knowledge, as pedagogical and special education research has to little extent devoted space to girls who perform violence or outward behaviour in school. Even in dealing with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, this has not been highlighted as a phenomenon and is therefore an important research field. This project is unique because there are no similar studies from a Norwegian or Nordic context.
Authoritarian teaching and ethical disengagement. Unraveling OECD’s educational Gesture

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Research topic/aim
In this contribution, I attempt to shed a light on OECD’s educational agenda and its main tool, namely PISA (Programme for International Students Assessment). By analysing OECD’s public documents, I argue that PISA is not just an assessment tool, but rather an all-encompassing framework that intends to govern education, schooling, and society worldwide.

Theoretical framework
Theoretically, my project is located in the critique to neo-liberal educational agenda, testing regime and IGOs’ educational role (Connell, 2013; Sellar and Lingard, 2014). OECD’s framework for education, in fact, dovetails with both neo-liberal order and testing regime.

Methodological design
My attempt is a conceptual one. I shall make my point by analysing OECD’s public documents – including publications, webpages, videos, brochures – thus unraveling OECD’s underlying conception of education, teaching, and society.

Expected conclusions/findings
By analysing OECD’s documents, I argue that behind a plain and reassuring language, and an apparent detachment and objectivity, OECD displays a huge, all-encompassing project, which aims to shape what, when and how is to be taught, what, when and how it is to be learned, what the aims and purposes of boys and girls worldwide should be, what parents should care for in bringing up their children and even which desires and aspirations the new generations should nurture. In this sense, I argue that PISA is but another form of authoritarian teaching, authoritarian teaching being understood as any and every educational project which sets aims and purposes of education without giving the possibility to discuss and challenge such aims and purposes (Biesta, 2015). This is so because OECD’s educational order, with its commitment to the “right skills... for better works and better life” (OECD, 2016), sets experience before it occurs.
Within OECD’s educational framework students are conceived of as a kind of recipient for such right skills, skills that, in turn, should conduct the students to a successful life – and such a strong commitment to success as an educational value in itself is one of the problems of OECD’s ethical and educational stance. In this way, OECD narrows down education to a mere reproductive process, thus hemming in teachers’ and students’ ethical and imaginative engagement.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
OECD has established itself as a major actor in current educational landscape, and PISA is an issue of ongoing discussion among researchers, policy makers and civil society worldwide since 2000 – and this is true for Northern Europe, too.

References
“We cannot stand it any longer!” The emergence of teachers’ political subjectivity

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The aim for the paper is to shed light on situations and processes where teachers move from positions as loyal civil servants to political subjects working for political change. It presents how teachers break in into the fabric of the nation, making it possible to imagine new forms of citizenship and belonging.

In order to explore emergences of political subjectivity, we draw on Butler’s notions of: embodied performativity and precariousness as a source for political subjectivity (Butler 2015), and the significance of emotions in political movements (Ahmed 2004/2014). The paper is also informed by Biesta’s (2006, 2010) notion of political subjectification, and the notion of political subjectivity (Reimers and Martinsson 2017). Political subjectivity emerges in situations of dissonance and friction where contradictory norms, tasks and expectations converge producing sentiments of discontent (Mouffe 2013). These affective moments can instigate political actions. The paper explore how Swedish teachers began to act against official policies, on behalf of the interests of their students. The background is changes in Swedish immigration and refugee politics from 2015 and onwards. In the beginning of fall 2015, 150 000 refugees arrived to Sweden. Subsequently, border control was introduced and refugees with no or unclear papers were stopped. During 2016, new policies were developed specifically targeting unaccompanied refugee children, making it possible to deport them when they turned, or were assessed to be over 18. Moving the children from their temporary homes and schools instigated anger and uproar among many teachers, who mobilized in order to protect the interests of their students.

The data for the paper is taken from social and traditional media, and observations and interviews in connection with political manifestations. The focus for the analyses are frictions, between the ethics and assignments connected to the role as teacher, and the demands and emotions emerging from the situation and meetings with the refugee students. The position as loyal teachers makes it impossible for teachers to adhere to official policies and prompts them to act in accord with teacher ethics and vocational demands. Thus, they emerge as political subjects obliged to act in the interests of their students.

The paper shows how entanglements of conflicting norms in schools and in the role of the teacher, as well as the contingent and emotional aspect of teacher-student relations, can create spaces for emergence of political teacher subjects.

References

First-teachers in Mathematics - A study of the implementation and identification of specifically skilled mathematics teachers.

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Research topic/Aim:
This paper takes it point of departure from the reform that allows for career paths for particularly skilled teachers the so-called Career Services for Teachers (CST) reform (Prop. 2012/13:136, 2013). It aims to present results from a survey-study funded by the Institute for Labour Market and Education Policy Evaluation (IFAU) with the title; First-teachers in Mathematics - A study of effects on teaching and the development of mathematics education. First-teachers is a new category of teachers that has been created through this reform. The aim with the study was to identify and compare how different municipalities and schools has organized and implemented first-teachers in mathematics, as well as to analyze what effects this new category of teachers has had on mathematics education. A specific ambition has also been to try to identify which skills a specially qualified math teacher should have to be appointed to the first-teacher in mathematics.

The ambition and purpose of the study are motivated from the idea in the CST-reform that the educational standard should be improved through particularly skilled teachers to a position as first teachers. These first teachers should have the ability to improve student achievement and teaching and spread their expertise to other teachers. This in turn means that the assessment of teacher performance is of central interest in relation to this intention. In other words, the reform rests heavily on the importance of professional skills, while there are no clear definitions regarding what qualities are referred to. To identify and evaluate professional skills has also been proven difficult in research studies (Kane et al., 2011; Strong et al., 2011).

Theoretical frameworks/Methodology/research design:
The purpose and questions of the study were operationalized in two questionnaires, directed to first-teachers and to principals, based on the criteria expressed in policy documents and from the state office’s follow-up of the reform. A theoretical operationalization in relation to the ambition to understand how professionalism was defined and expressed through the introduction of first-teacher in mathematics was also done. Here, the practice based theory of Mathematical Knowledge for Teaching, MKT was used to identify competences that are important for creating good conditions in mathematics education (Hill et al., 2008; Hoover et al., 2014). The data was analysed using the statistic software program SPSS.

Expected conclusions/Findings /Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:
We argue that the text in the CST reform is characterized by the ambiguity that for instance Ball (1993) describe as characteristic in reform texts (Ball, 2006; Ball, 2012). In the CST reform, this ambiguity is associated with the concept of professional skills, which has also been identified in the evaluation of the reforms made by state offices (State Office, 2015, 2016). The ambition with this research is by taking mathematics education as an example contribute in knowledge development of how this kind of reforms is interpreted and implemented in the educational practice and what benefits and constrains this will have for teaching. The results will hopefully be of great relevance for Nordic Educational Research.
From post-nationalist to neo-nationalist universities: language ideologies indexing higher education policy hierarchies

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This presentation discusses the significance of language ideological analysis in understanding Finnish higher education policy development since the 1980s. The article is a meta-analysis of the author’s research in the area since 2012 (Saarinen 2012; 2014; Saarinen & Nikula 2013; Saarinen & Rontu in review; Saarinen & Taalas 2017; Saarinen et al. 2016). Particular focus is on the ways that universities are represented as national on one hand and as international on the other, and on how this frames the development of Finnish higher education from a post-nationalist to a neo-nationalist era. In the presentation, language ideologies are taken as the theoretical frame. Language ideologies (i.e. our views of the position, value and usability of different languages) are linked to wider political realities, which are, in turn, linked back to language use and language practices (Gal & Woolard 1995). Language ideologies are, thus, politically produced and reproduced in language usage.

Internationalisation has made language diversity in universities more visible and linked Finland, somewhat belatedly, to the neo-nationalist developments that have emerged in Western countries in the form of increased focus on the national interests in global developments (Lee 2017). The current political situation in Finland, with the strengthening of populist parties and movements such as the Finns Party creates increased tensions particularly on the position of Swedish; the recent backlash in Finnish higher education against English appears largely motivated by the ideological protection of Finnish rather than of the constitutional bilingualism (Saarinen 2014). In the Finnish context, the neo-nationalist frame acknowledges the effects of globalization on how nations and national interests are construed (Lee 2017) in time of increased international mobility on one hand, and emerging populist and neo-nationalist politics on the other. Here, language becomes proxy for national interests in global economies (see Lee 2017). The relevance of the study goes beyond the Finnish case, as Nordic countries have treated language in different ways and with different consequences in higher education (Saarinen & Taalas 2017).

References:
Saarinen, T. & Rontu, H. (in review) University language policies: How does Finnish constitutional bilingualism meet the needs for internationalization in English?
Recurrent Education: a look at the historical Sweden-OECD Synergetic Agendas

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1. The OECD is acknowledged as a key actor in the worldwide diffusion of educational norms. However, little is known about how educational issues are placed on the OECD’s agenda, before the organization in turn places them on the international agenda.

The paper is part of a larger research that explores agenda-setting and knowledge production within the organization. The OECD’s educational agendas rely on synergetic agendas between the organization and at least one country. This coming together between the OECD and certain countries is termed of “synergetic agendas”, because they are not simply merging agendas, or instances of cooperation between countries and the organization. They reveal deliberate collaborations, which are indispensable for agendas to crystallize within the OECD. In turn, they are also crucial for issues to gain momentum on the domestic level. Synergetic agendas involve in-house and out-of-house concerted efforts.

2. The study concentrates on the synergetic agendas between Swedish domestic actors (Sweden) and the OECD Secretariat (OECD) in the elaboration of the organization’s first education policy, recurrent education (late-1960s–mid-1970s). It draws on agenda setting (Kingdon) and policy change (Zittoun) theories, to examine the flows of ideas, the networks and events that underpinned the emergence and formulation of the OECD recurrent education policy.

3. The main sources are unpublished internal documents, which were written or considered within the working scope of the Educational Committee and the CERI from the early 1960s to the late 1980s: meeting minutes; programmatic and synthesis documents; working documents; and related documents (i.e. documents that were taken into account for the educational activities, but were not produced within that working framework). This is a pioneering study since it provides for the first time a systematic analysis of these OECD internal documents. This analysis is complemented by: thirteen informal interviews (staff and domestic actors); the resolutions of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education; and the individual publications of members of the staff. The qualitative content analysis of the documents followed the education policy sociology perspective (e.g. Ball, Ozga).

4. The study shows how Sweden provided the thinking, the personal and the political legitimacy that allowed the emergence and formulation of the recurrent education policy within the OECD. Sweden constantly opened the policy windows that allowed legitimate developments to take place within the OECD, whereas the OECD supplied the organizational environment that made possible problems and solutions to be constantly coupled. The paper details this joint Swedish-OECD enterprise.

5. This historical example is highly instructive because it shows how countries work with, in and on the OECD in order to develop educational policies that take shape on the domestic scale but that cannot – for whatever reason – be further developed on domestic grounds. In showing that Sweden-OECD synergetic agendas were the cornerstone of the first OECD education policy, the study addresses the educational history of a Nordic country. Furthermore, other examples will be mentioned to suggest that smaller countries can have a crucial impact on the OECD’s activities today, as much as in the past.
What happens with schools when ‘the Inspectorate’ comes?

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Research topic/aim. In the era of New Public Management (NPM), there is no question about the great importance of school inspection in governing schools. The Swedish School Inspectorate has since 2008 focused on detecting failures in relation to the educational legislation, and require measures to be taken from the local school authority. The aim of this study is to illuminate processes and phenomena that occur when schools are under heavy pressure from ‘the Inspectorate’ and how their conducts and actions can be understood.

Theoretical framework. Main themes in the educational reforms in the 1990’s and further are deregulation, decentralization, privatization and freedom of choice (Lundahl, Erixon Arreman, Holm & Lundström, 2013; Rönnberg, 2012) with enhancing foci on goal attainment, legal certainty and control (Runesdotter, 2016). The ethos of the professionals is an expressed idea in public administration, which is challenged by these changes. The assertion that there is a causal relation between school’s deficiencies in relation to the educational legislation and goal attainment for schools and students is a central aspect of the study as well.

Drawing on theories about performativity and judicialization, the institutional logics of the profession, the bureaucracy and the market (Scott, 2013) are used as analytical tools.

Methodological design. Three case studies are tuned from a number of Swedish schools, which were inspected during 2016. These three settings were selected for being sanctioned with a fine for their deficiencies. ‘The Inspectorate’ is since 2015 obliged to use the fine sanction when a school’s “…deficiencies seriously limit the students preconditions to reach the educational goals”, as the Education Act says. The empirical data consist of interviews with principals and local heads of school authorities and politicians in charge. Method used is unstructured interviews.

Expected conclusions/findings. The local school authority needs to handle a rather fragile situation after a fine, and their conduct has a huge impact on school level. Preliminary results show highly varied strategies on school level and both examples when the discretion of the principal is great extended because of the fine, as well as the quite contrary. Further result is about the phenomenon of governing at a distance and highlights difficulties in the division of responsibilities between national and local levels, as well as problems in the hierarchical structure of the school system.

Relevance to Nordic educational research. NPM reforms and enhanced frequency of inspection are global phenomena, not the least in Scandinavia where high trust otherwise has been significant in public administration.

Referenser


Conceptual and methodological fabrication of the global teacher in international large-scale surveys: The case of TALIS 2013

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1. Research topic/aim
This contribution aims to critically examine the construction of assessment framework, survey questionnaires, statistically-driven scales in order to measure teachers’ professional attitudes internationally using Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) as a case. Theoretically, emergence of large-scale studies has been explained as technology of standardization and fabricating political arguments for the construction of effective teachers (Robertson & Sorensen, 2017). The paper’s contribution pertains to conceptual bias in construction of assessment framework and survey questionnaires and validity limitations related to methodological fabrication of TALIS 2013 scales based on limited number of survey items.

2. Theoretical framework
The point of departure for the paper is Robertson and Sorensen (2017) idea of TALIS as a pedagogical device that is used as a technology to gain symbolic power within the field of making teachers of tomorrow. Next, we draw from theoretical framing of curriculum and didaktik pedagogical traditions (Hopmann, 2007) to discuss conceptual bias in TALIS 2013 assessment framework and survey questionnaires.

3. Methodological design
We critically examine TALIS 2013 background documents such as assessment framework, and survey questionnaires to point to ideologically driven construction of a certain model of effective teachers (OECD, 2005). Next, analyze TALIS 2013 construction of scales, such as Teacher Cooperation, Need for Teacher Professional Development, and Teacher Effectiveness for example, to point to validity issues of such constructions that are methodologically- and statistically-driven to increase robustness of results.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
Surprisingly, TALIS 2013 scales do not produce much variance across the countries, as it would be expected considering the wide range of national contexts of countries participating in TALIS 2013. One of our conclusions is that the voices of teachers are not of interest, rather a dissemination of the values in relation to a longstanding reform agenda on teacher effectiveness. Validity is produced by incorporation of experts and education policy makers in the countries and by use of tremendous financial resources in production of large statistical power through sample size. Next, the use of confirmatory fitting index (CFI) is another methodological and statistical tool to further increase the robustness of scales. The paper is an extension of Robertson and Sorensen’s claims about the expansion of the reach of a global standardization reform agenda around teacher effectiveness.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
The studies’ results are relevant for Nordic environment since all five Nordic countries participated in TALIS 2013.

References
Reform of the Finnish student admission policy – and the re-negotiated status of ‘non-traditional’ students

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1. Research topic/aim
This paper studies recent reforms of student admission policy in the Finnish higher education from the perspective of ‘non-traditional’ students. Student admission is an important area of policy and practice for higher education institutions (HEIs) and it has direct consequences for access to higher education. The argument developed here is that, as part of neoliberal policy doctrine, student admission has shifted toward a market-driven logic – both internationally and in respect to national systems in the Nordic countries. Accordingly, students are positioned as ‘consumers’ or ‘customers’, and that changes the relations between HEIs and students. Who are the students that benefit most from these current reforms? And what happens to the egalitarian principles of equal opportunity and widening access? More specifically, we are interested in how the position of a ‘non-traditional’ student is being constructed in the student admission reforms.

2. Theoretical framework
In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the effect of marketization on national systems of student admission in Finland, the idea of ‘policy technologies’ is adopted in this study from Stephen Ball. According to Ball, policy technologies refer to the different kinds of strategies and techniques concerning the exercise of power. They involve the calculated deployment of techniques and artefacts to organize actions and relations. Policy technologies are implemented using certain concrete methods, i.e., policy techniques. Policy techniques refer to all such procedures and tools of administration, steering and management with which governance is carried out in everyday work. Here, policy techniques refer to the institutional arrangements, procedures and methods that are needed in order to implement marketization to student admission.

3. Methodological design
The analysis is based on close reading of selected educational reform and policy texts that deal explicitly with student admissions. Policy documents produced during the ongoing reform are analyzed by using both thematic content analysis and discourse analysis. We analyze what kinds of representations are being made of applicants and how potential applicants are categorized, named and framed. What is the normative student and what is being constructed (by practices of othering) as ‘non-traditional’?

4. Expected conclusions/findings
The Finnish reform is aiming at simplification and standardization of student admission. At the same time the general admission route is more clearly segmented from the specific / alternative pathways (e.g., the Finnish Open University gateway), targeted to ‘non-traditional’ students. The main access path becomes more restrictive and, simultaneously, the ‘normative student’ becomes more narrowly defined. The diversity of the student body is being negotiated in a new way. Furthermore, as government funding in university education is largely dependent on the number of completed degrees, the institutions are under pressure to select students who rapidly make their way through the system. This creates space for marketization and discourses of effectiveness, investment in the self and increasingly commodified relations to higher education.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
The Finnish case share similarities with other Nordic higher education systems, and this study is an interesting starting point for comparison.
Does National European School Policy Co-Produce Global Standards? Exploring performativity of the transnational turn in European school policy

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You can learn much about what becomes global dominant discourse by exploring how a dominant Northern region/nations and their ‘fears of falling behind’ among ‘global knowledge economies’ become a hotbed for producing imaginaries about best practice that affect how global standards in education are construed. These struggles involve globally defining transnational mediators (OECD, EU, IEA, UNESCO and the World Bank), making these dominant ideas fit to travel globally (Robertson, 2016; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

Drawing on (post-)Foucauldian theory and discourse analysis of policy documents and literature, this paper explores how transnational truth regimes were produced in a Northern region that simultaneously produced performative effects that made global impact (Dean, 2007).

From the 1990’s onwards this transnational turn in European national school and education policy took off, and acquired – often misrecognized - performative effects by becoming a co-producer of global standards. ‘Becoming comparable’ became an inevitable requirement. Social technologies are produced like standards, performance indicators, comparative surveys (e.g. PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS), and imaginaries of best practices (Hopmann, 2008; Krejsler et al., 2014). The Open Method of Coordination signifies the master template of this consensus-advancing truth regime where mutual peer pressure, and the fear of excluding oneself from mainstream debate, funding and policy advice ensures adoption of standards (Gornitzka, 2006; Nóvoa & Lawn, 2002).

It is common to observe this transnational turn in European school and education policy with an inward-looking perspective that emphasizes effects on European nations and on European integration. One easily forgets the performative effects of these processes in producing formats that travel (Robertson et al., 2016). The story of the OECD has expanded from a transatlantic collaboration to becoming a forum that countries in the South increasingly aspire to join as a sign of their ‘level of development’. PISA surveys include an increasingly global network of so-called ‘partner countries and economies’. The IEA has succeeded even more in including the South in TIMSS, PIRLS and ICCS, thus contributing to producing a forceful global language of achievement, competition and ranking. The framework, standards and performance indicators of the Bologna Process, which intended to produce a European Higher Education Area, increasingly travel globally (Robertson, 2016). And by doing that they affect discourse and political technologies with northern dominated ideas and solutions, albeit in local translations that differ widely to suit local contexts that matter.

References

Fight for and against time – Education reforms and experiences of time-scarcity

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Research aim
In this paper, we analyse impacts of time-scarcity in the context of educational reforms. Our starting point is the relationship between time and expectations related to change. We focus on how educational reforms are simultaneously both based on and challenged by experiences of time-scarcity.

Theoretical framework
Philosophical and sociological reflections on contemporary societies often describe time as either encapsulated in a bubble resembling Nietszche’s ‘eternal return’, or fluid (Bauman 2006), with no boundaries, sequence or recurrence (Crary 2013). As a resource, however, time is scarce due to its limited availability to supply the unlimited demands of the current life rhythm. When it comes to education, time has been associated with urgency in setting educational reforms, and its scarcity becomes apparent. On the one hand, time-scarcity can be observed as a key force driving education by triggering potentiality and pushing things forward. On the other hand, time-scarcity seems to be a reason that many educational reforms fail: in a flow of constantly changing goals, reforms are often repealed by the following reforms (Sarason 1990; Tyack & Cuban 1995). Educational reforms, therefore, not only remain a question of means and ends, but also concern steering and fighting for and against time (Baecker 2011; Hansen 2016; Luhmann 1997).

Methodological design
Instead of adopting a traditional comparative method based on similar and consistent objects of comparison, we apply the idea of contrasting different cases yet keeping the eye on the functional equivalences in different temporal and social contexts (Van Deth 1998). Our empirical cases are Finland and Brazil. The research data consists of interviews with teachers, principals, researchers and administrators (N=80). We employed qualitative content analysis (see Schreier 2012) to investigate time-scarcity in Finnish and Brazilian educational reforms.

Expected findings and relevance to Nordic educational research
This study contributes to theoretical discussions about time span and time limitations of educational reforms. By contrasting time-scarcity in two very different contexts - Finland and Brazil - the study reveals both global trends and culture-dependent experiences concerning educational governance.

References
Exploring legitimacy of Private Education Policy within the Nordic Model of Education

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This paper examines how international and national perspectives can influence regulations for private education in Nordic education, with the Norwegian Private Education Act as an example. The Norwegian education system is considered as part of the Nordic education model, characterized by the “enhetsskole”, to be understood in English as compulsory and comprehensive school. “Enhetsskolen” is a concept that represents equal possibilities independent of background (social class, ethnicity, language, gender etc.). The study investigates international influence on private education policies in a context where privatization is controversial, due to the principles and objectives of social equality that the Norwegian educational system is built on. The main question guiding the study is: How is policy on private education legitimated within the Nordic model of education?

The Nordic model of education is challenged by the era of globalization and neo-liberalism. This ideology is challenging the concept of “enhetsskole” since neo-liberalism sees education more as a commodity. While Nordic governments are the main providers of education, for-profit and non-profit actors are increasing (Sivesind & Saglie, 2017). International influences on educational policies can be studied by understanding how the policy on private education is legitimated within the Nordic model of education (Waldow, 2013). The analysis of this paper draws on the externalization thesis of Niklas Luhmann to investigate how the policy for private education is legitimized in key policy documents. The study applies a combination of broader document analysis and in depth content analysis in order to examine the Private Education Act and its foundation. Through document analysis relevant policy texts are examined and evaluated (Bowen, 2009). By the use of content analysis of the first 2 chapters of the Private Education Act: “Purpose and scope of the Act (§§ 1-1 - 1-5)” and “Approval with the right to government grants (§§ 2-1 - 2-5)”, the presence, meanings and relationships of words and concepts are analyzed to enable inferences about the messages within the texts. The preliminary findings of the study have shown that the Norwegian Private Education Act tend to use messages produced by international organizations relevant for legitimization of private education as sources rather than similar messages found in Norwegian constitutional sources. However, these findings must be further analyzed and discussed in the light of the fact that the Private Education Act is a tension filled with national political matter in Norway.

References


Profitable practices. Private tutors in public education

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Research topic/aim
One observed change in the Swedish educational landscape is the increased use of private tutoring companies that provide assistance outside education institutions for a monetary fee. In 2007, private tuition became subject to tax deductions and the possibility to make use of private tuition services increased. Some years later there were discussions on whether to abolish tax deduction and representatives from the industry discussed the issues in newspapers articles. However, the possibility to deduct tax was taken away. Yet, several companies overcame the obstacles and are now well established. This article will analyse how this business became taken for granted asking how assemblage of actors come into being and how negotiations happened in this process.

Theoretical framework
This project is informed by actor-network theory (ANT), where the main idea is that facts, thoughts and practices are effects of assemblages of relations between human and/or non-human actors (Latour, 2005). Two notions in the framework are of particular interest: problematisation (Callon, 1986) and obligatory point of passage (OPP) (Gorur, 2015; Hamilton, 2011). The problematisation is interpreted as a moment when actors articulate a problem where actors locate themselves as problem solvers. OPP is seen as a node, an infrastructural point (Hamilton, 2011) where actors align for a certain discourse or practice to happen. The infrastructure creates a node – an OPP – where the flows of initiatives and actions come together which will admit and open up for activities (e.g. private tuition enterprises).

Methodological design
The issues were researched through newspaper articles, interviews and websites. In the articles and on the websites, actors such as policy makers and company owners were heard. The tutors were heard through interviews. The data were analysed with the notions problematisation and OPP.

Expected conclusions/findings
The analysis show that actors create an infrastructural node with an OPP. Following actors are particular interesting: (1) possibilities for tax deduction, (2) possibilities to profit on public funds, (3) school reforms, and (4) machinations of globalised testing. The actors create a node where, for example, a school in crisis, a discourse cheered by e.g. large-scale assessments, make reforms desirable. The companies are in turn nurtured by benefits such as tax deduction. In this node discourses could be exchanged, an OPP is created, a point through which actors become obligatory to each other.

When tax deduction was about to be taken away, several companies put forward a number of problem, problems they stated they could solve. I.e. private tuition companies and their allies inscribe certain problems into education and society, and claim they can solve these problems.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Educational changes concerns not only schooling but also society (Labaree, 2008). This paper shows how the shaping of society also happens outside formal education and with private-market incitement often lacking possibility for accountability. This study confirms that Swedish education becomes a marketplace where governing (Ball, 2009) of education becomes distributed. This article therefore gives insights into the dynamics of the Swedish educational landscape and its consequences.
Edu-preneurs in the welfare state. On how commercial actors make themselves indispensable through defining problems and offering solutions.

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Research topic/aim
According to current debates, Swedish schools are experiencing severe problems: decreasing results in international large-scale assessments, increasing segregation, and not preparing students for job markets. This discourse has enabled an apparatus of commercial actors, ‘edu-preneurs’, offering solutions. This paper explores what happens when governing and practicing of education becomes distributed on commercial actors. The aim is to shed light on how educational policy is moved, translated, and fixed in entanglements of public and private rationalities and what this means for understandings of knowledge, teaching, and learning.

Theoretical framework
We understand this growing apparatus of edu-preneurs as a result of that a shift in the responsibility of Swedish schooling is taking place (Ball, 2009). ‘Statework’, in terms of educational governance, is now carried out through an assemblage of public and private actors. This shift is understood in a historical context of neoliberalism. With Ball’s (2009) words we can call it a ‘recalibration of the state’, through which the organization of public institutions has changed – but also the meanings and practices of schooling as well as possible subjectivities for teachers and students.

Methodological design
Empirically, the paper illuminates what we call the public/private statework through entering three different policy fields: research-based education, digitalization, and entrepreneurship. The data consist of a nethographical mapping of edu-preneurial companies and a close-up analysis of how three companies make themselves up as normalized educational actors.

The analysis employs actor-network theory to explore of how the idea of schooling is constructed on the edu-preneurs’ websites through, formulating problems and solutions and enrolling a range of actors into the governing and practices of education.

Findings and conclusions
The edu-preneurs made up themselves as taken for granted as actors, first, as defining problems: the Swedish school system is in crisis and in need for help. This is done through explicitly relating to a narrative of teaching as outdated, educational research as ‘fuzzy’ and unpractical, and schools distanced from ‘reality’ and the labour market. In the companies’ solution to this problem, they become important actors through talking about structured work, practical solutions, and modern (digital) ways of teaching. They enrol ‘friends’ into the assemblage in the shapes of education superstars, partner companies, technological devices, and policy bodies.

We suggest that the companies translate the idea of schooling and carry with them epistemic implications, as well as a cultivation of desirable subjectivities. Understandings of what is useful ‘research’ as well as ‘important knowledge’ are claimed and limited. Teacher subjectivity is characterized as flexible and effective and the student subjectivity as entrepreneurial. The ideas of what knowledge is, and how teaching and learning should ‘happen’, privilege ‘business-like’ methods.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The Swedish case is interesting in a wider Nordic context since it sheds light on on-going processes in the Nordic countries through which the welfare state is transformed into a market.

References
Evidence based programs as trivializers

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Research Topic
Leaders and professionals are increasingly expected to base themselves on evidence based knowledge, i.e. Vivian Robinson et al. (2009), John Hattie (2009, 2014), and local evidence in school developing processes. One consequence of the expectation has been a quest for and a market for solutions, tools, and methods which could target the problem of translating complex research results into practice (Ottesen, Lund, Grams, Aas, & Prøitz, 2013).

Theoretical framework
Heinz von Foerster distinguishes between trivial and non-trivial machines (Von Foerster & Pörksen, 2003). Inspired by the work of Knudsen & Larsson (2017) my argument is that evidenced based solutions could be observed as trivial machines. Trivial machines resembles Luhmanns concept on technology which is conceived of as a relation between cause and effect that usually is confirmed by scientific knowledge. Technology operates reliably in a way that can be iterated so to it will always produce the same result (Luhmann, 1990). Non-trivial machines resembles the concept of autopoietic machines which, simply put, describes the self-creational character of social systems (Luhmann, 2005).

Methodological design
The empirical point of observation is the solution found in the program Visible Learningplus. The program is developed by Professor John Hattie and the consultancy house Cognition Education (Auckland, NZL). The program operates with the concept of an Impact Coach; a teacher trained to create visible learning in schools. By making use of Niklas Luhmanns social systems theory (Luhmann, 2005, 2007) and the concept on second order observations, I observe how Visible Learningplus observes school organizations and professionals as machines. The analytical strategy points to observations of how the Visible Learningplus couples between input and output, between causals and effects? What is being observed as technical relations and which elements are being coupled by which machines? How does the machine produce other machines and how do these machines affect each other?

Expected conclusions/findings
The Visible Learningplus functions as a trivial machine and produces pictures of organizations and professionals as machines. The teacher attending the Impact Cycle-program transforms into an Impact Coach, becomes a machine which transforms other teachers into new machines, which again produces learning-machines to be their own teachers. As a trivial machine Visible Learningplus do not provide theory to organizations nor to professionals, only technology. If the technology turns out to be malfunctioning, it is not possible to blame the machine but only that, which has been excluded from the technology itself, the ones who operates the machine, the actual living individual as an autopoietic and meaning-constituting subject.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Development programs as Visible Learningplus does not promise directly to produce more and better student outcome, but it comes with a promise of being the requisite for producing sustainable changes and maximizing student learning. In regard to steering this makes the programs attractive. But as far as the world is non-trivial system, the relevance is the lack of answers to the question of which functions such trivializing ‘solutions’ might have.
Developing a methodology for public engagement with critical educational research

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1. Research topic/aim
It can be difficult for researchers to overcome the challenges of putting critically informed educational research to work on issues of public policy. Critical education researchers’ networks of influence tend to be far removed from governmental power, their critiques of the social status quo do not sit comfortably with neoliberal state agendas, and the knowledge they produce often has a lesser exchange value in transaction between research and policy. Critical education researchers work in institutional contexts where researchers are increasingly evaluated on the utility or impact of their work. This competitive environment frames research utilisation, offering limited opportunities for researchers, let alone those who take a critical stance. In this paper we acknowledge the challenges critical researchers face in putting their research to work within the public domain, but we also argue that a refined understanding of ‘public’ and ‘public engagement’ can help critical educational researchers make better decisions towards achieving policy influence.

2. Theoretical framework
A starting point for developing a methodology for public engagement with critical educational research is to better understand the notion of ‘publics’ and the different ways they may be conceptualised. We use Mahony and Stephansen’s (2017) theoretical framework of three conceptualisations of the public in public engagement (bounded, normative and emergent) to conduct a critical analysis of a recent case study.

3. Methodological design
We use the above theoretical framework to critically analyse an in depth, qualitative case study of the recent Respecting Children and Young People project. We systematically use the theory to reflect upon our own experience of conducting public engagement and our attempts at policy influence.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
The sphere that dominates interactions between research and policy is a public sphere regulated by a neoliberal state and social policy saturated with market values of competition (Lubienski, 2006), contractualism (Yeatman, 2002) and accountability (Olssen and Peters, 2005). In this sphere, critical researchers struggle to secure a legitimate position beyond that of critic. While the role of critic is important for highlighting inequalities in a competitive society, it is not wholly satisfying given that we hold knowledge that could address educational inequalities. Through this analysis we recognise alternative ways to conceive of publics that may direct us away from some courses of action, and open up new possibilities for public engagement with critical educational research.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
The context outlined above is not unique to the UK and New Zealand, so issues and solutions discussed in this paper should be of interest to a wider Nordic educational research community that wishes to influence education policy.

References:
Interrupting Youth Support Systems in the Age of Vulnerability

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Concerns over young people and young people’s social exclusion have been a regular topic in both public and political discussion in Finland and in Europe. After recession of 2008 and following mass-unemployment of young people have increased these concerns further. As a solution for both unemployment and social exclusion, short term projects offering education, counselling and training have been developed and provided for young people. These different projects and programmes include short term education programmes, workshops, one-stop-service points, outreach youth work, and different kinds of training, counselling and rehabilitation.

At the same time young people's mental health and especially vulnerability are emerging topics in both national and transnational youth, education, and social policy discussion of young people’s well-being, directing thus the focus from societal shortcoming to that of individual. To meet the present day challenges, policy and professional discourses insist that young people must develop competences of resilience, self-discipline and continuous self-development. As a result, the government responses in several European countries towards young people focus on building individualistic competence related to well-being.

In addition, there has been noteworthy and diverse academic discussion related to the concept of vulnerability in recent years. This theoretical paper contributes to the discussion and focuses on the concept of vulnerability. We examine ways in which its different meanings could be utilised in analysis of relevant policies and practises and ask how ethos of vulnerability is attached to education of not only young people seen ‘at risk’ but to education in general.

We follow some ideas from gender and cultural studies on vulnerability, which are linked to the discussion of the precarious conditions of life in the Western societies. This radical research and political activity is attempting to de-pathologise vulnerability and incorporate it in notions of human rights, tolerant citizenship and social resistance to economic pressures.

The paper is part of Academy of Finland funded research project Interrupting Youth Support Systems in the Age of Vulnerability (CoSupport ) In the project we critically ask what is meant by vulnerability, at risk and ‘youth crisis’ claimed in these policies and practises.
Collegial responses to contrived collegiality. Collaborative CPD as local arena for negotiating external ideals

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A common trait in meta-studies of teachers’ continuing professional development (CPD) is the conclusion that CPD initiatives should be directed to communities of teachers rather than individuals if effects on student learning is to occur (e.g., Desimone, 2009; Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007). However, programs that include collegial forms of CPD have been criticised for that the forms and content have been imposed on teachers from above (Altrichter, 2010; Nuttall, Seddon, & Phan, 2012) and impose insensitive and unproductive measures that risk teacher resistance and ‘alienation’ (Altrichter, 2010, p. 32), although there are also examples of cases where teachers use top-down approaches to collegiality as collaborative arenas for locally meaningful purposes (Datnow, 2011). Such somewhat contradictory accounts of collegial forms of CPD indicate that the specific form and content of teacher collaboration could be more important than collaboration itself. Based on this assertion, this study investigates the function of one form of teacher collaboration within teachers’ CPD – collaborative lesson planning – with regards to how external prescriptions are related to local practice.

Many stakeholders in education are initiating programs that aim to increase teacher collaboration, with references to meta-studies such as those cited in the introduction above. In Sweden, this is most obvious from 2012 when the National Agency for Education initiated a new form of teachers’ CPD with emphasis on “collegial learning”, first in mathematics didactics, then in literacy, followed by an array of similar initiatives in other areas. This study is carried through within one of these recent CPD initiatives, the Literacy Boost (2014-2020), reaching more than 25% of all primary and secondary school teachers in Sweden.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on a governance perspective, in that collegial meetings are understood as a policy tool for enhancing teachers’ enactment of prescribed teaching activities. Specifically, the concepts ‘action proposals’ and ‘legitimation’ are used for investigating how teachers relate external prescriptions to local practice. Action proposals are defined as teachers’ suggestions of how external prescriptions can be enacted in their teaching. Legitimation is, following van Leeuwen (2007, s. 94), defined as “an answer to the spoken or unspoken ‘why’ question – ‘Why should we do this?’ or ‘Why should we do this in this way?’”

Six schools distributed across three municipalities that participated in the Literacy Boost during the 2015/16 academic year were selected for the study. The empirical material consists of audio recordings of 13 CPD meetings that include collaborative lesson planning.

Some tentative results of the study are that teachers that question prescriptions focus on practical problems that enactment may cause, such as time deficit and lack of student interest, rather than on the purpose in terms of student learning. Teachers who suggest non-enactment of prescribed activities receive many suggestions of how they anyhow could enact prescribed activities. It could thus be said that the dialogue during collaborative lesson planning assumes that prescribed activities should be enacted, but not that activities necessarily should enhance student learning.
Gamification and ‘implied competition’ in education

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In recent years, the use of gamification as a motivational technology has become increasingly widespread. The application of game-like features (leaderboards, points, badges etc.) on non-game activities is designed to make routine activities more challenging and consequently more engaging and rewarding.

Such technologies have also been applied to education in order to sustain motivation (Glover 2013). In this paper we examine some examples of gamification in education. However, we want to focus on a specific aspect of gamification in education – that is, how it relates to competition between students.

Competition among students is itself an ancient technology for creating motivation in classrooms (e.g. Durkheim 1977, Lindenhayn 2013). All along, however, competition has simultaneously been viewed with suspicion – as a divisive force which gives rise to a host of moral ‘vices’ – pride and arrogance, jealousy and envy. Nowhere, perhaps, is this more evident than in Nordic pedagogy since the Second World War where competition is routinely repudiated as producing conflict-ridden forms of sociality in which ‘the death of one is the bread of the other’ (Husén 1966).

It is therefore interesting to examine how different uses of game elements in education deal with the problem of competition. Our overall hypothesis is that, in accordance with the pedagogical reticence towards competition, the fostering of competitive relations among students is rarely the objective of gamification. Rather, our contention is that competition works in different ways as a kind of ‘implied competition’, which is rarely explicated as such, and which can easily be dismissed, precisely, by reference to the gamified nature of competition: “It’s just something we’re playing.”

We find this topic worth exploring, also because it transcends the question of gamification in a narrow sense. We argue that gamification of education is itself related to a paradigm of education, which requires, on the one hand, that learning be fun and, on the other hand, that learning be organized in terms of clear and measurable targets, continuous feedback on progress, as well as constant self-tracking and self-optimization. It is therefore no wonder that elements of game design and, by implication, competition can also be found outside of the realm of educational games per se. To illustrate this point, we want to conclude our presentation by discussing how ‘visible learning’ is being implemented as a classroom technology in Danish schools.

References:
Discourses of Employability and Precariousness in European Youth Policies after Lisbon Treaty

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The vicious problem of youth unemployment, lack of education and marginalisation has been a major concern in European Union policies after 2008 financial crises and following recession. To tackle this persistent problem European Union has responded with multiple governing initiatives such as Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative. These policy initiatives seem to take the ideas of young people as inherently in need of training for employability skills, and young people's positions in labour market inherently precarious for granted.

In this article we will ask

a. How these discourses of young people as precarious and unemployable have been emerged and developed in European Union and Finnish Policy documents after Lisbon treaty?

b. What kind of subjectivities are offered to young people in these discourses?

Our method of analysis is a genealogy informed and inspired by the works of Michel Foucault. For data we have chosen to use relevant public policy documents by European Commission, European Council, Finnish Government and Youth Council in Finland from year 2000 to 2017.

We will first show how discourses of precariousness and employability have developed from margins of youth policies to hegemonic discourses through three discursive shifts. Also we will claim that in these policies the alliance of precarity and employability work together in providing young people at least two types of particular kind of subjectivities: the promising ones and the lost causes, where the latter is needed to promote the previous and is thus subjected to longer and deeper interventions in order to mold themselves into 'fitting' part of society.
Choose us, we are so different! Free schools’ self-descriptions and positioning on the Swedish school market

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Since the beginning of the 1990’s, Swedish parents have had the possibility of choosing schools for their children freely by taking publicly funded school vouchers to the chosen school. At the same time free schools started to develop, competing for the pupils and the school vouchers. Even though the free schools are a part of the school system, obligated to follow the same laws and curricula as the public schools, they describe themselves as something else, something “outside the system inside the system”.

The aim of the paper is to identify, analyze and discuss the different strategies of inclusion/exclusion in the educational system that are used in the self-descriptions of the free schools. The paper is theoretically and methodologically informed by Luhmann’s (2002) social theory, which allows to study how social systems (the free schools) describe – and establish – themselves in relation to other systems and society. To describe and analyze the different ways of differentiation, economical theory is used. Porter’s (1980) generic strategies for reaching competitive advantage and Mintzberg’s (1996) strategies for differentiation are used as analytical framework.

The data for the study is based on official information that can be found on the three largest free schools’ websites including introductions, welcoming words, presentation of the staff, teacher recruitment sites, statistics etc etc.

The data is analyzed using semantic-analysis (Andersen 2003) which allows to study and discuss how meaning is made inside social systems and how they construct and relate to their environment.

It will be discussed and compared how the different free schools describe themselves on the one hand as legitimate and worthy parts of the Swedish educational system at the same time as they – for reasons of competition and marketing – differentiate themselves from other players.

The introduction of the free schools have been a major reform in Sweden which impact has not yet been studied intensively. Educational research has had more focus on the marketisation of the school system, than the free schools in their own right. This study is to be understood as a first step in a forthcoming larger study about free schools in Sweden and their impact on the educational system and society.

References

Keywords:
free schools, differentiation, systems theory, Sweden
School choice and parent motivation in a Danish city

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The ‘Folkeskole’ is the Danish public school system at primary and lower secondary level. The organisation and curriculum of the Folkeskole is regulated through national legislation, but schools are managed and funded by municipalities. Folkeskole students are traditionally recruited from the local neighborhood, and each school has its own geographical district decided by the municipality. Over the last decades municipalities have increasingly allowed parents to choose schools across school districts. Also national legislation concerning ‘free school choice’ has been introduced, allowing parents to choose across the borders of municipalities. The consequences of school choice for segregation and inequality among schools and in society at large have been much debated in international educational research. In this paper we look at school choice across school districts in a Danish city, focusing especially on parent motivations and their embedding in social contexts.

We draw on two types of theoretical frameworks. One is empirically based research on school choice, which has tried to identify the most important factors for school choice in different contexts (Bosetti & Pyryt, 2007). Another is conceptualization of rationalities in and consequences of social action developed by critical social theory, for instance Habermas (1984-87).

The empirical study concerns the Danish city of Aalborg. It focuses on school choice within the public school system and on choices made when children start schooling. On the basis of statistical information from the municipal school administration we have identified schools that are often chosen by parents from other schools. For three such schools we have interviewed a number of parents about their motivations for choosing a school outside the local school district. In interpreting the interviews we relate the accounts given by parents to the local social contexts and also draw on other Danish research (Epinion, 2017)

The study is ongoing, but from judging from previous research we expect to find different factors influencing the choice of school. Some of these factors are: practical issues of everyday life such as the distance between home and school; perceptions of the qualities of schools, for instance caring environments vs high-quality subject teaching; perceptions of the composition of students in schools, for instance the share of immigrant children.

School choice is a debated issue in all the Nordic countries and a considerable amount has been or is being done. Currently much research focuses on the impact of private schools on school choice, provoked especially by the case of the Swedish free schools. However, there is also research on marketization and school choice inside the public school system (for instance Kosunen et al, 2016), and we will contribute to this.

References:
Changes in identity, agency and governance in the new English Academies Programme

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1. Research aims
Over the past decade, one of the biggest shifts in compulsory education policy in England has been the move to replace state-run schools by self-governing academies. These are state-funded, but independent of local authority control, headed by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO): part of the neo-liberal agenda, some may say (e.g. Ball, 2013). With the growth of Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), there has been a shift in governance from democratically elected bodies of single schools, to appointed Trust Boards accountable for an expanding number of schools within their ‘MAT’. This research is a doctoral study (currently in the early stages), where I am exploring how key stakeholders are navigating the new policy landscape and the effects on their sense of identity, agency and empowerment. As in other areas of public services in England and globally, the Academies policy is seeing old boundaries between the public and private disrupted, with implications for our views of local democracy. This study, with its focus on the lived experiences of individuals involved, will contribute to the growing body of knowledge of the impact of education policy changes at both the micro and macro level.

2. Theoretical framework
This research adopts a critical social policy approach (e.g. Gunter, 2012; Ball, 2013), using qualitative methods, set within an exploratory, interpretivist paradigm, and is concerned with multiple constructed realities and positions, in aiming to explore the different perspectives and interpretations of the key themes. Bourdieu’s (2003) discussion of the transition from autonomy to subordination to a central power has informed my thinking.

3. Methodological design
Fieldwork is within three case-study sites, all MATs in the North-West of England, each having undergone a relatively recent change in status. Data is collected through one-to-one and group interviews with a range of stakeholders: CEOs, trustees, governors, school staff, parents, and local community figures. A life-history approach is used with CEOs and School Principals (e.g. Clandinin, 2007). Changes and progression in perceptions will be mapped using an ethnographic longitudinal approach, returning to interviewees 12 months later. Key documentation, such as Schemes of Delegation, new school structures and minutes of meetings, are also being studied. Analysis will involve the use of Foucault’s framework of discourse of power, practices and ‘truths’ (Foucault 1991), alongside the tools of social linguistic analysis and critical discourse analysis to explore how meaning is constructed (e.g. Fairclough, 2001).

4. Expected conclusions/findings
In the new system, flexibility and ‘freedom’ are seen as an advantage: MATs are able to buy in tailor-made expertise. Communication between different and new levels of governance is crucial: a comment from one governor: ‘it felt as if we were being done to, rather than with’. A sense of loss of power and a restriction in previously-held freedoms and autonomy amongst some governors in the new ‘second tier’ of governance: ‘we are just observers’; ‘we don’t have a say’. Adjusting to a new identity and changing of boundaries: CEOs, rather than school principals are now ultimately responsible for each school in the MAT.

5. Relevance to Nordic Educational Research
This study will contribute to the growing body of research in the Nordic countries on the implications for the advancement of market-driven ideology in education, with particular reference to school reform, educational leadership, and governance.
References
NETWORK 22

POST APPROACHES TO EDUCATION
How do timetables perform pedagogues?

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Research topic/aim
In 2013/2014 a major reform of the Danish school system took place. A key component of the reform was to institutionalize pedagogues as part of the teaching staff in primary schools. Teaching had hitherto been the sole domain of teachers. The aim of this paper is to explore situated effects of the institutionalization of pedagogues as teaching staff in primary schools, through empirical explorations of the boundary work of timetables. We ask: How do post-reform timetables perform pedagogues?

Theoretical framework
As mundane artifact, timetables seem innocent. They are schedules that let you know when and where something, between someone, happens. In this paper however, we are inspired by post-ANT and Agential Realism, in considering the intra-active and distributed agency of things. This consideration affords a perspective that focuses on the performative matters in and of schools. In this paper we thus explore agencies of timetables, as they perform pedagogues through material-discursive boundary-work (Barad 2007, Mol, 2002).

Methodological design
To explore the performative effects of timetables, we will, inspired by visual anthropology (Pink, 2008) do what we call: “Timetable-fieldwork”, at three different schools. “Timetable-fieldwork” structures educational ethnography around the logic of timetables, and combines participant observation of school-weeks, and interviews with pedagogues, teachers, managers and pupils. The ethnography is structured around the artifact of the pupils’ timetables, and how these produce and distribute practices in time and space. The aim is to explore how timetables afford different performative effects on the becoming of pedagogues as teaching staff in school, through boundary-drawing processes.

The interviews and observations will be read diffractively, in order to manifest co-existing versions of pedagogues that these timetables perform (Mol, 2012, Sauzet, 2015).

Expected conclusions/findings
Through the analysis of the performative effects of timetables, we expect to be able to outline performances of the boundary drawing processes through which pedagogues come to be in schools.

From our “Timetable-fieldwork”, we diffract different versions of pedagogues. Versions of pedagogues between which tensions vibrate. Tensions that emerged alongside the educational reform in Denmark.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
This paper relates to the NERA network 22 on “Post approaches to education”, as it continues and build on the growing Nordic interest in exploring how human-and-nonhuman agencies intra-act in the production and performance of educational realities.

Literature


Affraction – an emerging concept mapping attention in the production of field notes

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The writing of this paper is inspired by what is sometimes labelled as posthuman and/or post qualitative research practices. These are enactments of knowing in being that emerges in the event of doing research itself. In opening new means to integrate thinking and doing it offers opportunities to experiment, because you don’t yet know, into the orbit of research (Taylor & Hughes, 2016). To keep this openness in our thinking we enter the paper with views on/from three different practices; education, research and Western thinking, where the later often restricts our possibilities to reflect on and encounter life (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

By these views we show why it is important to engage further with what sometimes emerge as tricky/problematic/challenging customs of gaze and vision as well as different forces at work in relation to attention. We therefore explore processes and relations playing a part when something strikes attention and thus is made accountable for in research, perhaps as “happening” in classrooms. The aim is to push, pull and discuss our mindset of how field notes are produced. This may prompt productive understandings and in so doing ward off iterative responses to what is seen, what is written and what might lead to new knowledge.

Working with the Deleuzian concept of sense-event (Deleuze, 1990) we seek to map material-semiotic processes of classrooms and discuss how these are produced as observable or not. In one physics classroom (we let) actors and properties appear, connect and emerge together in relation to our attention or “the gaze at work.” To trouble this we use two different events, one to spotlight and “plug in to/with” different emerging concepts and another to further focus the phenomena of attention and action.

The emerging events are shown to “plug in to/with” different concepts as articulation, attraction and affection and the phenomena of gaze/voice as well as visual/sound enrolls in relation to attention. So, exiting the article in possible ways, one is obvious – different but simultaneous forces are at work in producing actions as observable in the classroom involved in research. We argue that these forces are part of material-semiotic relations that cut across theory, method and practice in manifold and entwined ways. In these, as we treat them, non-hierarchical relations of human and non-human elements – a new concept – affraction – emerges in our research. Affraction maps attention as a phenomenon produced by simultaneous, multiple and entangled agentive forces.

We claim that a deeper examination of this concept may support when trying to de-centre (research) investigations from human concerns and positionality. So, the concept of affraction may help in creating a line of continuity between different privileging perspectives and makes material-semiotic processes possible and more straightforward to detect. We emphasize that to expand our view of what we might attend to, see, usually label and hold as fixed images we need to constantly overturn, question and disrupt our terminologies and our differences.

References


Doing ‘animal’ in school, forest and a greenhouse – a multispecies approach

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The presentation is based on an ongoing empirical journey into relations between human children and animals. The question asked is: How do animals matter to children in their everyday lives? The research includes ethnographic observations in two Finnish schools in class, in the forest and in a greenhouse built in a school. The project is driven by an interest on what kinds of notions of ‘the animal’ emerge and are nourished in school practices. Furthermore, the focus is on how children and animals emerge in specific encounters and stories, memories and discussions involving two species.

Theoretical framework
The empirical materials have been read with and through Donna Haraway’s (2016) companion species theory, and her image of theory as “material-semiotic composting, as theory in the mud, as muddle” (Haraway 2016, 32). This theory urges one to find patternings and comakings that enhance collective thinking and movement in multispecies complexity.

Methodological design
The multispecies ethnographic research (Kirksey 2015) proceeds from Finnish primary school classrooms to more informal school spaces. The research seeks to follow and join encounters between human children and non-human animals in a flexible manner. Parts of the data are produced through digital devices and social media platforms by the children themselves. Through the conceptualization of the ethnographic approach as nomadic, emphasis is given on what Braidotti (2002) calls “fluid in-between flows of data, experience and information”. The aim is to create a generative and generous methodology that works non-reductively through attaching layers, enriching, and playing with empirical events in order to avoid fixing the human or non-human participants in representations.

Expected conclusions/findings
The findings include some particularly intense or troubling patternings and comakings of humans and animals in schools. The dominant discourse of the animal is the discourse of natural sciences, but how animals entangle in school practices suggests openings to this. The human-animal relations are shaped and negotiated together with spatial and temporal factors, ethnicity, class and personal and institutional histories.

The presentation explores multispecies entanglements in schools in the fashion Haraway uses storytelling for “collecting, carrying, and telling the stuff of living.” Here, storytelling is used to examine human-animal-relations as participants of school-specific assemblages, gatherings and combinations, including unpredictable and controversial elements.

I will also discuss some concrete challenges related to an open-ended and non-anthropocentric methodology. How to join children and animals in their everyday life and elaborate and resist together normative conceptions across species? How to keep the examination detailed but open?

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The research presented discusses one significant branch within ‘the post approaches in education’, that is, the companion species thinking by Donna Haraway. This approach that pushes the limits of educational thought by the realization that human exceptionalism and bounded individualism are “seriously unthinkable: not available to think with” (Haraway 2016, 30) and in developing ethnographic methodologies towards multispecies approaches. It joins other Nordic researchers in discussing education and social justice as a complex co-achievements and more than human.
Saving a Threatened World: A schizoanalysis of the function of animals in upper secondary Natural Resource Use programmes

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Research topic/aim
This paper analyzes the functions of animals in Swedish upper secondary Natural Resource Use programmes designed to prepare students for future professional work primarily in the animal trade sector, such as pet shops, zoos, and animal research laboratories. The paper focuses on educational practices relating to nature conservation and sustainability, asking how subjectivities are produced through the connection of students and animals in these educational practices, and their implications for education for sustainable development (ESD).

Theoretical framework
Schizoanalysis (Deleuze & Guattari 2009) is a mode of critical inquiry that has an origin in psychoanalysis as well as in Marxism, analysing relations between power and desire as a core part of critical social theory. Schizoanalysis explores the hyperactivity, contradictions and anxieties ceaselessly created around socialisation and subjectivity formation processes, especially under conditions of capitalist expansion, making it particularly interesting for education research. Through schizoanalysis, education is viewed not as a coherent institution, but as a set of machines, devices, and technologies forging together humans, animals and materialities in contested spaces of teaching and learning. The paper analyzes how these machinic dimensions of education organise pedagogical activities while being constantly traversed by shifting and heterogeneous affects and forces of all sorts.

Methodological design
Data collection has been carried out through ethnographic field studies and semi-structured interviews with students and teachers in two upper secondary schools during a total of 83 days. As a “post-qualitative” (Lather & St.Pierre 2013) approach, schizoanalysis has no general guidelines, but is developed in the intersection between a philosophical work (i.e., Deleuze & Guattari 2009) and a specific set of data. An overarching analytic task is to begin to identify education-machines: How do they work? What investments drive them? How do they connect and disconnect? What pedagogical events do they orchestrate? What affects do they mobilize? How do they set forces in motion, redirect flows, or block them? What effects do they produce, and what are their pedagogical, social, ethical, and political implications?

Expected conclusions/findings
Natural Resource Use programmes work with animals as desiring-machines and affective investments to attract applicants. Once students are enrolled, desiring-machines are connected to technical and analytic machines that organize affect-flows and form a professional, self-disciplining “animal caretaker subject”, educated to work in the animal-based economy. With a schizoanalytic approach, ESD emerges as technologies of teaching, rather than a field of subject didactics; and affective feelings between students and animals become components of the animal production system, rather than a “natural” expression of empathy.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
ESD has a long tradition in the Nordic countries, although it could be argued that the roles and situation of animals therein remain to be in-depth theorized outside the trajectory of moral philosophy. An approach from continental philosophy (schizoanalysis) suggests new methodological possibilities for Nordic scholarship on ESD and beyond.

References
Experimenting with norms: participatory engagement in social science education

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In this paper I will present an on-going research project that aims at exploring teaching in social science in a Swedish upper secondary school. The focus is on teaching about norms, identity and categorizations as parts of the syllabus. How can the teaching afford to experiment with and challenge dominating and excluding norms and categorizations? With a sociomaterial approach, the experimenting with norms includes the vital doings of materialities, discourses and affectivity where relations and entanglements of students, teacher, researcher, classroom and content are considered. Working with the theoretical notions of performativity and figurations makes it possible to acknowledge how the complex interweaving of power-relations stabilizes and destabilizes differential boundaries and categories.

To explore a practice within a sociomaterial approach implies to do something and being involved. There is no autonomous researcher observing what is happening in the practice. Research becomes a relational experiment with messy and fluid co-becomings of both researcher, teacher, students and the teaching practice. Therefore, in the project I will work with a research methodology of participatory engagement or collaborative ethnography. For doing this I turn to experimentation and intervention to embrace the distributed and collective matters that the sociomaterial approach offers. This approach situates experimentation into arrangements of relations, interference and involvement where preset goals or standards become difficult to handle. Together with one teacher, students in two classes and non-human participants I will engage in the teaching for six weeks. This means to be part of the planning and preparation of the teaching as well as the actual teaching and its different assignments, writings and discussions.

The analytical ambition is to bring the bodily dimension of the practice into play and to disclose how discourses, materialities and affectivity jointly participate and produce specific versions of norms and categorizations. This raises question about how to encounter issues about gender, heterosexuality, whiteness, functionality without reproducing excluding norms, how to contest power structures producing privileged positions. Furthermore, questions about gender and racial discrimination and how school spaces, environment and organization are part of this.

Working with these issues are difficult and risky – so many black holes and traps to fall into. What will happen within the experimentation in the teaching practice is impossible to predict or to prepare for. Here, the practice become constituted by sociomaterial relations where human intentions and actions alone cannot regulate it. Within collaboration, to articulate shared problems or troubles, slow down and experiment is a possible but risky business. The ambition for the project is to experiment together with the human and non-human actors in order to explore possibilities to challenge (re)productions of norms and categorizations. To continuously ask how to produce movements and tensions with the potential to set boundaries and categorizations into motion.
Alain Badiou and ADHD; the 'Two scene of love' versus neurobehaviorism

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(Neuro)psychiatric diagnoses such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a rapidly growing and globally increasing phenomenon, not least in different educational contexts where ADHD features regularly. Here, children and youths labelled as ADHD are challenging normative claims in terms of nurturing and education, whereas those labelled as ADHD are considered a (future) risk for society to handle. The dominant paradigm regarding ADHD is biomedical, where different levels of attention and activity-impulsivity are perceived as neurobiological dys/functions within the brain best managed by means of an individual diagnosis and instrumental pedagogy. The majority of those labelled as having ADHD encounter a dominant educational model in the form of what is referred to in this article as neurobehaviorism, which is based on onto-epistemological violence. As opposed to this act of violence against being – and against the psychiatrized subject – a less violent educational model is proposed, based on French philosopher Alain Badiou’s ontological examination of being and his concept of love as a truth procedure. In terms of the latter, the focus is on the potential of the encounter as a 'Two scene of love’. Here, the encounter is a place where it is possible to create new truths and subjects, instead of taking the individual diagnosis as an axiom which only leads to individuals having fixed identities codified in a hierarchical order.

Keywords
ADHD, Alain Badiou, Behaviorism, Education, Philosophy, Psychiatrization
A diffractive analysis of fieldnotes

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Research topic
The paper is based on a dissertation which examines processes of differences and distances among students in the everyday life in lower secondary schools. As a part of the dissertation a large empirical fieldwork was conducted. The paper deals with the methodological questions of how to produce fieldwork and analyze field notes in ways that are more open to the affective and spatial dimensions of the everyday life in schools.

Theoretical Framework: The paper is informed by a posthuman and material feminism approach to education, which imply an attention toward the spatial, the material and the affective dimensions of school life and an understanding of educational practices as constellations of human and non-human agencies, forces and events. Following this, the everyday life in school is to be understood as entanglements of bodies, objects and spaces (Taylor & Ivinsson 2013). The ontological starting point of a posthuman thinking opens up to analytically comprehend the students, the teachers, the architecture, the furnitures etc. as forces or drivers of events.

Methodological design
The posthuman thinking offers other ways of understanding, producing and analyzing data than traditional qualitative inquiry. Following the posthumanism thinking that humans and nonhumans are to be understood as forces that overlap and relate to each other simultaneously, Karen Barad (2007) states that the researcher emerges from the co-existence with the world. An implication of this is, that we must, as researcher, take into account that we are not separated from the world but a part of the world we seek to understand. Drawing on this (onto-epistemological) statement the paper will put the concept of diffraction (Barad 2007, 2014) to work in relation to analyzing empirical data of fieldwork as a way of thinking of the empirical data as affective processes and intensities.

Diffraction is a term drawn from the field of physics that refers to the way in which waves (water, sound, light) combine and move. The movements implicate differences as generated from within. The concept of diffraction offers a productive model of thinking due to the idea of the researcher as a part of the world and not just situated in the world.

Findings: The paper outlines a diffractive analytical strategy as a way of analyzing the affective and spatial dimensions of the everyday school life.

References
A complementary research apparatus

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This paper explores pedagogical philosophical issues with a focus on methodological problems. How to construct a research apparatus based on post-humanist perspectives? How do the ontological and epistemological conditions look like such research apparatus? The theorists used are Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, Alain Badiou, Niels Bohr and Karen Barad. The method used is a diffractive reading, where these theorists' texts are read together and through each other.

Philosophers Deleuze and Guattari assume that being is something that is constantly caused by it’s own inner self-differentiation. This will have at least two distinct effects, partly as a movement that makes everything becoming and partly as phenomena created by shaping and producing as differences. Quantum Physics Niels Bohr discovered how man participates and integrates with matter in a physical experiment. With instruments and interpretations, man interferes with and changes what is being studied. He also discovered that some instruments create electrons and photons as particles and destroy the disturbance that discerns the object as a wave. While other instruments make it reverse and create the objects as a wave. It is not entirely possible to observe these at the same time, but there are choices of experiments that determine what you see.

Similarly, a qualitative pedagogical researcher must set up his apparatus to be able to produce knowledge that includes both movement and phenomena. Through a rhythm-optics, the researcher can follow and produce flow and rhythm, by paying attention to the movements of the phenomenon and on atmospheres and moods. Through a differential-optic, the researcher can discover how the phenomenon does to produce differences. How they divide, connect and interfere with other phenomena. In this way, the researcher can produce a complementarity between movement and phenomenon, which in turn leads to a becoming of all phenomena involved, including the researcher himself. A complementary research apparatus can be connected to Karen Barad’s theories on an agentiell cut. The researcher then uses the researcher apparatus to do a scanning of an ongoing process. A design of an ongoing flow that shows how the phenomenon is created in a process of becoming.

Results of the diffractive reading conducted provide the opportunity for continued development of a complementary research apparatus. Such an apparatus can prove to be particularly useful for phenomena that are in the interfaces between nature and culture, human and animal, body and language.

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Researching affects empirically

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Research topic/aim
As way of addressing more affective aspects of organisational lives the overall aim of my PhD project is to generate insight into the entanglement between school leadership, data and affect. Following this aim, the project examines affects and their performative effects, by looking at how data from The Quality Report 2.0 – a Danish quality assurance and evaluation (QAE) program, mobilizes affective spaces (Pors & Staunæs, 2011) that ‘move’ leaders as they interact with and make sense of data from the report. Given this aim the project asks the following research questions: How does data register affectively amongst school leaders? And how does this affective registering act as a constituting force prompting specific forms of leadership and subjectification?

Theoretical framework
The theoretical backdrop underlying this project draws from an emerging field of research attempting to bring studies of governmentality together with the ‘turn to affect’ (Bjerg & Staunæs, 2011). Based on varying conceptualizations of affect, studies from this emerging field, argue that the workings of governance, in part, function via and because of affect (Hunter, 2015; Sellar, 2015; Staunæs & Pors, 2015).

Methodological design: In an attempt to explore affects empirically the project utilizes a frictional methodology that engages with seemingly different outlooks on affect, making it possible to look for and identify both movement and arrest, indeterminacy and determinacy, representations and non-representations (Staunæs & Pors, 2015). Therefore, I explore both indeterminate, trans-personal and pre-conscious bodily expressions of affect as well as subjective, conscious feelings/emotions expressed and fixed in language. This means that I look for affects via empirical exploration of text and language, e.g. policy documents and interviews, and via fieldwork in schools, attuning to the atmospheres and tensions filling the room as leaders interact with data in their everyday praxis.

Expected findings
In overview, I expect this project will contribute with new understandings of how affects come to matter as leaders, mandated by QAE policies, use data as tool for assuring and developing quality as well as a showcase for success (or failure) related to their own leadership. From a Nordic/European perspective research on this issue is important, because in education today QAE systems have become hegemonic, prescribing how quality should be produced and managed (Ozga, Dahler-Larsen, Segerholm, & Simola, 2011). Following this the demand for more data-driven leadership in schools, universities etc. is increasing; and therefore there is a need for more insight into how data registers affectively amongst leaders.

Theme of conference paper
In my conference paper, I focus on my methodological approach to researching affects empirically. In particular, I critically examine how the researcher-body may function as a tool for attuning to affect.
“Intra-visuals” – Experimenting with drawing as a way of doing research

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This paper aims to describe how drawing can be a part of a research method in a posthumanist agential realist (Barad, 2007) approach. Drawing was tried as a means for taking into account the intra-action of teachers, children and different kinds of devices in an early childhood education setting. It is one of many methods that can be used in research (Knight, o.a., 2015). In a previous study, a situation in a Swedish preschool was video-recorded: a group of children and teachers discussing photographs displayed on a wall in order to document and evaluate a previous activity. From the video-recording a set of drawings were made which enabled focusing on different aspects of the video-recorded sequence, as well as on the role of the researcher. The drawings were initially a way of (visually) transcribing the video-recording. However, it became obvious that the drawings participated actively in providing further views on the situation. By making different kinds of drawings: including and excluding dialogue, humans, actions and objects, different ways of understanding the video-sequence arose, which enabled concentrating on the in-between of the situation. Instead of focusing on actors or on spoken words, the drawings enabled focusing on actions between the entities. They actively facilitated focusing on flows between entities, rather than on words or entities themselves. The flows produced a narrative in the situation that, instead of evaluating a previous activity, moved away from what had happened and took new turns, developed into a new story. Thus, in preschool, documentation may function productive, producing narratives that might be used as future possibilities rather than as evaluations. The making of the drawings, in itself, also contributed actively: drawing made it possible to engage further with the video recordings. While making the drawings, parts of my body engaged other than those that engaged in typing or reading. As McNiff (2008, s. 33) puts it: “the use of our hands, bodies, and other senses as well as the activation of dormant dimensions of the mind, may offer ways of solving and re-visioning problems that are simply not possible through descriptive and linear language”. In addition, thinking is often considered as located solely in the brain, but thinking and movements might also be seen as connected (Sheets Johnstone, 2011). Thus, in this study, the drawing activities and the drawings were involved in the production of the analysis.

References
Didactics, learning and leadership in higher education - Understanding Strategy development

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Strategy is seldom discussed in relation to pedagogy. There is little in terms of research aimed at the understanding of students’ ‘learning strategies’ (other than as ‘methods’) or the understanding of ‘leadership strategies’ amongst teachers. The same applies to psychology, where strategy is mainly described in terms of problem solution such as, for instance, heuristics. Whenever a field is so obviously disregarded, the question arises as to why. A great deal is written about strategy (as complex behaviours aiming at a specific goal) in management and leadership literature, but these models do not easily translate into an educational practice. It will be assumed here that leadership dimensions are always present in the practice of teaching. Leadership involves convincing others to follow direction, which at best involves inspiration and persuasion, at worst manipulation. The latter implies ‘covert power practices’ in teaching, which may be one of the reasons why leadership strategies are seldom discussed within education. Didactics (as it is used in Scandinavia and Germany) implies that there is an interrelation between student and teacher. If students are strategic, this by implication has something to do with the strategies ‘lecturers’ and ‘teachers’ produce.

In turning a blind eye to the eld of strategy, however, there will be no discussion or understanding of strategy formation, no concepts and no models of development of strategies. Under such conditions ‘power practices’ are not considered and deconstructed, neither is it possible to consider the positive output of strategy formation. This, however, endangers the development of good ‘leadership practices’ inherent in ‘teaching’.

The didactical triangle (Klafki’s) describes reciprocal relations between students and pedagogues; it also enables a consideration of how the organisation, surrounding environment and technological innovation might impact on this relationship along with the strategies developed for leadership and learning. Strategies are often conscious at the outset, but can eventually become unconscious with time (habits, rituals, etc.). Furthermore, neuropsychological research implies that there are large parts of strategy formation which are based on unconscious ‘hardwired’ processes. Lecturers, teachers and leaders, then, may not always be consciously aware of the strategies they are using, and the same is true of students; however, they affect the interrelation between students and teachers/lecturers as indeed habits and rituals do. Lacan’s didactical discourses will be applied to extend Klafki’s triangle, describing the interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge in the didactic relationship, habits, rituals and performativity as well as performance. Power relations are also considered in Lacan’s theories.

Strategies are developed in response, not only to the interrelation between teachers and students, but also as a direct result of the environment and the organisation in which the didactical relationship between teacher and student plays out. This in turn implies that an organisation’s culture directly impinges on and informs the development of strategies which emerge between students and teachers and will in turn be acted by these strategies. The cultural artifacts of culture involve technology, books, architecture and physical spaces of classrooms, labs, corridors, etc.
Diffractions and entanglements of leadership and leader team roles

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Key words
Powerful leadership moments, diffractions, entanglements, leader team roles, agential realism, of the refrain

Research topic/aim
The complexity of leadership calls for diverse perspectives and different research approaches. The aim of this paper is exploration of encounters and experimentation with new concepts to think with concerning educational leadership and leaders in the process of establishing their roles in a new leader team. Thinking with Deleuze and Guattari’s immanent ontology and Barad’s agential realism, I will explore diffraction apparatuses and entanglements of roles and practices. The research question is: How can agential realism be a powerful force to think leadership productions, diffractions and entanglements?

Theoretical framework
The research is based on thinking, talking and wondering with powerful leadership moments. According to agential realism observing, thinking and theorizing are material practices of intra-acting within and as part of the world. In a deleuzian and baradian view, different tools could be found in for example diffraction analyses and confabulative conversations (Johansson, 2016). Deleuze and Guattari promotes the vitality of the thought, possibilities, vibrations and fabulations of what is and what could become. Their discussions of the refrain as a territorial assemblage will be an entrance to analyze production of leader team roles. From chaos and complexity, Milieus and rhythms are born, and every Milieu is vibratory. Thinking as experiments, lines of flight, events and happenings open up for new understandings, changes and opportunities. In leadership production human and non-human factors all matter and are all entangled. Agential is experimenting rather than representing, and the agential realism is ever changing (Barad 2007).

Methodological/research design
I am leading a project with a group of researchers shadowing leaders and leader teams in Early Childhood Centers. Shadowing is an abductive method, making it possible to get closer to all the unexpected events during the day, including the leaders’ wonderings, productions and decisions. The shadowing is supplemented with field notes and confabulative conversations, with attention to researcher’s participating and productions. The empirical material is analyzed as a kind of event map of glowing events, becomings and turning points.

Expected conclusions/findings
Powerful moments and encounters can tell us something about leadership productions and development of leader team roles. During my close shadowing, the leaders can air the immediate thoughts about what happens, we can share wonderings and confabulate with events and encounters, also about ethical practice, vibrating in how we deal with emergencies, doubt and insecurity.

Relevance for Nordic Educational research
The project is a close approach exploring methods to investigate leadership and capture entanglements, complexity and moments of powerful leadership. Assemblages of leader team roles will be understood in the context of the refrain, and hopefully generating new understanding.
References
Care as an organizational and material practice

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Caring relationships between children and educators in ECEC centers become in an array of entanglements with spaces, materials and the organization of time. An exclusively dyadic understanding of care is insufficient in the material, institutional, pedagogic and professional environment of ECEC. While I acknowledge the centrality and fundamental place of dyadic care, and do not intend to underplay its value, in this paper I look further into how professional care is performed in ECEC, beyond the dyad. From an organizational perspective, care also involves the ways ECEC educators shape and are shaped by the material environment and the organization of time and place.

This paper reports on an ethnographic study of material and organizational professional care practices in a high functioning full-day early childhood education and care center for children under three years in Norway. Drawing on Tronto & Fisher’s feminist care ethics and a posthumanist perspective, the study’s aim was to gain knowledge about how early childhood educators perform care as a professional practice beyond the dyad. The paper explores care through the lens of a disruption in daily activities, when the installation of new flooring in the center produced changes in the otherwise highly functioning caring environment. Changes in the availability of materials and the organization of space and time are analyzed using Malabou’s concept of plasticity. The effects of the agentic force of material changes on the caring practices of the center, despite the already strong and established dyadic relationships between the children and educators, are discussed. This paper is intended to contribute to the re-conceptualization of care in ECEC as a cooperative, intra-active process involving social, material and organizational practices. Rather than a responsive mode of being specifically toward individual children, it is a responsive mode of shaping and being shaped by the material, temporal, social and organizational environment.
A feminist new materialist experiment in reconfiguring diversity and difference through children’s media

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Background and aim
In post-multicultural societies contemporary global equity issues, relating to gender, sexuality, refugee issues, bi/multilingualism, economic disadvantage and Indigeneity have particular relevance and significance to early years education. Children’s access to certain knowledges, often deemed inappropriate for children by adults, has been at the core of many controversies in children’s early education. This is particularly the case in terms of the censorship associated with children’s access to what has been broadly viewed as ‘difficult knowledge’ – bodies of knowledge pertaining to sexuality, death, war, poverty, and violence, for example. In some western countries, the discourse of childhood innocence has been a powerful mediator/regulator of children’s access to knowledge and has limited ideas about the extent to which children can be considered active citizens in sense-making of their everyday lives (Robinson, 2013). However, it is now more widely accepted that children are competent, knowing beings - in and of the world, readily taking up, processing and challenging messages about a raft of uncomfortable and inequitable realities, from global warming, to sexism, to racial intolerance, to class prejudice (Osgood et al., 2016). This view of children and childhood requires that approaches to pedagogy, policy and practice around diversity and difference in early childhood education attend to children as knowers and doers in the world (Osgood, 2012; Robinson & Jones Diaz, 2016). Whilst there are long traditions within early childhood education globally (e.g. the Anti-bias movement) and localised practices within early childhood settings, that seek to advance children’s understandings of diversity and difference, adults generally continue to feel uncomfortable addressing such issues. A notable exception though is children’s media where real world issues are deftly addressed. The aim of this paper is to reconfigure diversity and difference in early childhood education by attending to children’s news media and children’s material-discursive-semiotic relations with media accounts of life in the post-anthropocene.

Theory and methodology
Working within a feminist new materialist framework the paper attend to a material-discursive exploration of children’s entanglements with difficult knowledges as they play out through media accounts. We explore the political machinations at play in media intended for children in UK and Norway, with a particular concern to explore what gets silenced and/or framed in particularly narrow ways, and how children take up and reconfigure contemporary global issues associated with diversity, difference and social justice as (re-)presented in children’s media. Significantly, we are interested in how children’s media gives ‘shape and a voice to earth’ (Richterich & Parikka, 2015, p. 215) in the post-anthropocene.

Expected conclusions/Relevance to Nordic educational research
The paper traces the ways in which real world issues, that directly impact upon children’s lives and the sense they make of the world, is addressed in children’s media in UK and Norway. It also experiments with what worlds this might produce and so open up more generative possibilities to understand difficult knowledges as they are encountered, and reworked by children in EC contexts.
Materializations of Difference in a Mechanical School Workshop: Posthumanism and the problem of knowledge and human subjectivity

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This presentation will discuss the formation of boundaries between vocational and academic knowledge in a posthumanist perspective. Whereas dominant culturalist and discursive approaches tend to singularize and circumscribe such differences, a posthumanist perspective may offer alternative ways of locating and delineating boundaries. What impact for educational research do the multiple, novel configurations of various forms of human and non-human agency have? Modern schooling is perhaps the principal institution in naturalizing concepts of personhood, including the nature of intelligence, thinking, and skills. Education is vital in disciplining young people into text-oriented modes of apprehending the world. I consider vocational education as a felicitous starting point for exploring alternative ontologies of education, given its broad range of assemblages of materials, tools, skills and sensory engagements. My empirical point of departure is an ethnographic field study in a mechanical school workshop, were I followed three classes of students over a school year. The field of vocational education is typically constituted by ways of knowing growing out of practices of “making” (Ingold) rather than interpretation and reading. Although considering materiality as immanent to human practices, I am also critical of ANT/STS (Latour and others) and its notion of a flat symmetry between subjects and objects. I argue that educational researchers need a solid theory of the distinct capacities of human beings. A recent turn to ontology and materiality in educational studies (e.g. Leander, Sørensen, Fenwick, Nespor) similarly is at risk of seeing learning subjects merely as effects of assemblages.

In the paper I also argue that a posthumanist approach may push us to take practice more seriously (e.g. Thrift), bringing in movement and speed, rhythms and vibrations, affects and intensities into the descriptions of vocational learning and knowledge practices. To Ingold, there is similarly an ontological difference between material objects (as analyzed by most material culture scholars) and materials. This distinction is also central to my critique of studies of vocational learning for not fully recognizing the materiality, the generativity, and physicality of the practices. The practices of making, the welder or blacksmith who rhythmically follows the forces and flows of materials cannot be reduced to culture as “text”. Reparation and maintenance are about handling and overcoming the perishable nature of things, increase wear resistance by lubricating, and so forth. The vocational students are wearing gloves, shoes, glasses, masks and helmets to protect themselves from heat, sparks, sharp edges, noise, weld flashes, etc. These technologies extend ordinary human capacities to deal with dangerous things. Although mechanics is a field of expertise founded on Descartes and Newton, the workshop is filled with affects (pleasure, frustration, anxiety, boredom), sensations (touch, smell, skilled vision and hearing) and unpredictable outcomes.

I believe a posthumanist perspective on vocational knowledge practices will increase our understanding of some particularities of vocational education and its didactic possibilities.
Symposium
Inter- and transdisciplinarity beyond boundaries, bridges, gaps and reciprocity: transgressive posthumanist encounters

The problem and aim of this symposium
Instead of stating that the problem in contemporary educational and social science research is that our methodologies are too conventional and that we might do better without what we refer to as method (St. Pierre, 2011), the papers in this symposium are written based on a previous claim that the problem is rather that our methodologies are not differentiated and differentiating enough (Lenz Taguchi, 2017). In the papers for this session, we will discuss reconfigured ways of engaging with empirical work in the field of what is often referred to as either inter- or transdisciplinary research, and thus involving two or more established disciplines: such as pedagogy, early childhood education, literacy didactics, cognitive psychology/neuroscience, linguistics, and developmental sciences. The papers, however, all have in common an onto-epistemological and methodological stance that makes differentiation the simultaneous aim and action of knowledge-production. This stance is often referred to as pivotal to a Deleuzian transcendental empiricism (Deleuze, 1994), and is also claimed as a new materialisms (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2014) and posthumanisms (Braidotti, 2013; Colebrook, 2014b) hallmark. One way of making further differentiation an aim and methodology of educational research is engaging with other disciplinary forms of knowledge-productions on a specific and common problem of concern on a particular plane of thinking and have them work together: side by side, as well as more actively connect, form relations and intra-act (Barad 2007).

In different manners, the four papers will show how it is possible to – in different ways – put to work more rather than fewer methodologies, as well as putting to work new inventive and experimenting research from within what we would claim to be conventional social science research. The papers will argue in what way their respective work constitutes – or not – an inter- or transdisciplinary research that goes beyond disciplinary boundaries, bridges, gaps and ideas of collaboration and reciprocity “as-usual”. Moreover, the papers are all concerned with the important concern of ethics: research ethics and research as an ethical concern in itself. Based on the above claim, we understand our respective papers as operating – more or less – as what can be understood in terms of transgressive posthumanist encounters.

References
Lenz Taguchi, Hillevi (2017). “This is not a photograph of a fetus”: a feminist reconfiguration of the concept of posthumanism as the ultrasoundfetusimage, in Qualitative Inquiry, 23(9) 699–710.
The Digital Maps Metaphor as translational device: moving between and beyond disciplines

Frankenberg, Sofia
Stockholm University, Child and Youth Studies

Research problem and aim
This paper takes point of departure in critique that emerged within the field of early childhood education with regards to the ethical soundness of using neurological and behavioural testing of children as part of an inter- and transdisciplinary randomized controlled intervention study in Swedish preschool. Inter- and transdisciplinary research is based on the idea of working together across disciplinary boundaries and gaps and within the field of educational neuroscience this has been an explicit aim (Fischer, Daniel, Immordino-Yang, Stern, Battro and Koizumi, 2007). However, introducing plurality at the level of research design has proven difficult and there are numerous transdisciplinary projects that have failed to move between paradigms and taken for granted epistemologies and ontologies (Fitzgerald and Callard, 2015). Metaphors may be developed intentionally and used as translational devices (Kendall-Taylor et al. 2013) and the question is if a new metaphor could help to move beyond the constraints of transdisciplinary research? The aim of this paper is to suggest the Digital Maps Metaphor (DMM) as a research tool with the intent to overcome some of the challenges potentially inherent in research projects involving multiple aims, objectives, knowledge claims, methodologies and ethics.

Theory and method
Based in the understanding of metaphors as embodied concepts (Lakoff and Johnson 1980/2002) the DMM is used as an analogy of how researchers working in inter- and transdisciplinary teams need to develop strategies to move beyond boundaries, bridges and gaps by zooming in and out of specific disciplinary maps when assessing the rationales and ethical soundness of particular research agendas and methodologies. In order to illustrate the function and use of the DMM the method of structural mapping (Gentner et al 2008) is applied in order to create three maps representing different research agendas within the project: the childhood maps, the critical and micro-political map and the developmentalist map.

Expected conclusions/findings
The structural mapping using the DMM brings forth a number of contradictions, which if unrecognised, might compromise the production of important findings for the benefit of children’s learning and development. Potentials for new emergent understandings, facilitated by the DMM as translational device are suggested of relevance to both Nordic educational research and in other contexts.

References
Contributor 2
What might the double-edged sword of brain-body-in-culture interaction, underpinning an intervention-study, imply for research and educational practices?

Taguchi, Hillevi Lenz
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Research problem and aim
This paper is based on the experiences from an educational neuroscientific RCT intervention-study in early childhood education, engaging multiple epistemologies and methodologies. The paper’s research-problem concerns the fact that brain plasticity constitutes a doubled-edged-sword (Neville et.al. 2013), here construed as “brain-body-in-culture” interaction (Schmitz, 2016). Ontologically, this refers to a conception of reality, emerging as effects of interactions between interacting phenomena ‘belonging’ to various disciplines with porous or overlapping boundaries. These phenomena self-differentiate in their interactions. The aim is to understand what the double-edged sword of brain-body-in-culture interaction, underpinning this intervention study implies, both for the research practices and the everyday educational practices in this differentiating process.

A multi-, inter- and trans-theoretical framework
The neuro-feminist concept of brain-body-in-culture (Schmitz, 2016) has emerged from a 30 year old research problem in biological and gender studies, on how to transgress the sex-gender binary. It has evolved as a parallel to the discussion on how nature-nurture is to be construed as intrinsically entangled and co-constituted (Fischer, 2011). Thus, the child’s development and learning is understood in terms of a naturculture ‘coactive emergence’ (Marscolo & Fischer, 2015). Importantly, development, does not proceed in a linear stage like progression, but is nonetheless structured or directional, as it exhibits both order and variability. However, what is perceived as order and systematic development is nevertheless always an emergent product of social and environmental interactions that can never be fully foretold.

Methodology and expected findings and relevance
Methodologically, this paper performs a cartography mapping exercise (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). It maps the production of knowledge in the various research practices and their overlappings. The main finding suggests that research-practices and every day education practices interact, overlap and selfdifferentiate as a consequence of this RCT study. This has transformative consequences, both for the researchers and for the involved children and teachers. This is partly due to the formulated shared matter of concern, as well as a multi-disciplinary research-ethics targeting relations and interactions in a way that does not make children and teacher an object of study, but rather the RCT research itself.

References
Transformations with children in an RCT-study

Bodén, Linnea
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Research topic/aim
The focus for this paper is an empirical engagement together with six five year olds. The aim is explore how the collaboration with the children became a transforming and differentiating practice that challenged boundaries between different methodologies, different ontological and epistemological practices. But also the boundary work that I, as a “qualitative researcher”, had been (re)producing.

Theoretical framework and methodological design
My postdoctoral project is part of a RCT-study that works with multiple methodologies; qualitative and quantitative. When I started the project my entrance was very much that of a qualitative researcher. As this symposium highlights, posthumanist theorizing have sometimes emphasised that educational research should avoid qualitative methodologies, as they reproduce humanistic ideas and ideals (St. Pierre 2016). However, this was not the main problem in my work with the children. By putting to work a research apparatus that exclusively worked with the epistemological practices of qualitative methodologies, I did not only construct new boundaries within the interdisciplinary RCT-project. More crucial, the interviews and the observations I did, did not seem to engage (with) the ones who the research concerned: the children. Even if some of the practices the children met in the RCT-study seemed unfamiliar or even strange to me, the EEG-scanning of brainwaves excited the children. In an attempt to engage with a difficult (primarily for me) “matter of concern which is formulated in collaboration with the agents that this problem concerns” (Lenz Taguchi 2017, p. 706) the children and I decided to explore the EEG and the hats they were wearing during the scanning. These theoretical and methodological practices are outlined in the paper.

Conclusions and relevance
In entanglements with science methodologies like EEG-scans and aesthetic preschool practices, some of the qualitative methodologies I thought would be put to work transformed as we constructed new hats from tinsel, gauze bandage, pipe cleansers and so on. At the same time, it became a creative transformation of the quantitative methodologies, as the hats became play, laughter, concentration, and pride. The methodologies selfdifferentiated – became different in themselves (see further Lenz Taguchi 2017; Colebrook 2014). It became a doing of the children’s perspective on research and a doing of the research assets they previously only could borrow. Thus, of relevance for the theme of the conference, the paper highlights how inter- or transdisciplinarity is not only a theoretical entanglement of different knowledge fields, but can be produced in the very practice of empirical engagements, that in turn might transform far more than the disciplines.

References
The researcher-as-method: producing a transmethodology in the encounter between neuroscience and early childhood education

Aronsson, Lena
Stockholm University, Child and Youth Studies

Research aim
The study presented here, started with an invitation from preschool practitioners to a researcher, addressing the issue of what neuroscience might have to offer their early childhood educational practices. Based on matters of concern that was common but not the same, researcher and practitioners made agreements on how to collaboratively explore what the encounter with neuroscientific knowledge might do to the everyday practices in preschool and the theories underpinning these practices. This presentation will focus on the methodological implications of letting mutuality and shared matter of concern be the prime base for conducting the study (Stengers, 2008).

Theoretical and methodological design
Studies within the educational neuroscience research field often claims to have a transdisciplinary approach. This entails not only collaborations traversing disciplinary boundaries and mutual use of theoretical concepts, but also an actual multi-epistemologicality due to using the same theories in several disciplines. In addition, transdisciplinarity, is characterized by collaborations with practitioners. With a posthumanist situating, the relations between the research, the human collaborators, and the material-discursive site can be perceived as ontologically flattened. Thereby, relations, rather than the related, will be producing knowledge, theories, practices, and concepts; within, across, and/or beyond disciplines. During nine months' fieldwork in preschool, the teachers and the researcher performed collaborative intervention exercises, in the sense of staging encounters between different epistemologies. The staged encounters between neuroscience and preschool did not include neuroscientists themselves, instead scientific articles, books, research excerpts, and field notes from preschool practices took part in the collaborative exercises. By transposing from a neuroscience key through the negotiated procedures of the collaboration site, to the early childhood education key, the researcher could adapt the comprehensibility of the neuroscientific examples.

Expected conclusions and relevance
The findings highlighted in this presentation concern the methodological problem of reciprocal collaboration and asymmetrical power relations between researcher and participants. The starting point was taken in an agreement on mutual engagement, albeit with different driving forces for the research problem and the didactic issues. This stance foregrounded trust and dependency, but also the ethics in being supportive to someone else's aims and interests. Collaboration was not only attuned to a common problem, but also to not making the problem entirely joint. With the researcher as a transposition movement (Braidotti, 2006) between different disciplines and epistemologies non-linear and rhizomatic connections could be made. Designing research projects in close collaboration with those that the issues concern is crucial when intending to knowledge production that connects theory and practice. This study provides examples of how scientific research questions can collaborate with the pedagogical and didactic questions important for the preschool teachers. With the researcher as the method for creating the study's epistemological encounters, this study is producing a transmethodology besides possible transdisciplinary results.

References
Symposium
Boundaries and bridges in-between political management and post-approaches to Early Childhood Pedagogy

Early childhood pedagogy has changed significantly, both academically and politically, in the last few decades. The shifts concern the position of pedagogy as a subject in different areas of knowledge in kindergarten teacher education, on the development of the subject content in kindergartens in order to meet the requirements to curb social inequality and to work for the 'school-ready' child, and in the goals and expectations to how a professional early childhood teacher might perform. Pedagogy is in many senses a preserver of traditions, while at the same time a challenger of the pedagogical 'taken-for-granted truths'. Political structures are striving at putting clear answers to what pedagogy in early childhood is, whilst large groups of practitioners and researchers are striving to underline doubt and uncertainty.

Philosopher Hannah Arendt uses the metaphor web of life, when encouraging us to think about 'what we really do when we’re active' (Arendt, 1996, p. 26). As a group of researchers within early childhood education in Oslo, we see opportunities in what’s becoming rather in what is already known and established. Getting pedagogy to ‘work’ in productive ways in education and professionalism is also about weaving alternative and critical threads into Arendt’s ideas about the web of life as an activity. As such we want to disrupt the political structures, which seemingly are weaving early childhood education and care into ‘more of the same’ pedagogical discourses.

This symposium contribute in discussing the tensions emerging when challenging boundaries between the demands of clear and concise answers to ‘what works’ and appears to be ‘effective’ in today’s political and educational landscape, and the ambiguity in early childhood pedagogy. Ambiguity and uncertainty are suggested as alternatives in an increasingly complex society, in which pedagogy and the field of education are woven into when different voices are raised.

Through collaborative explorations a group of pedagogues have written about early childhood pedagogy as knowledge, as practice, as experience and as critique in post-approaches to education. Ambiguity and uncertainty are suggested as alternatives in an increasingly complex society, in which pedagogy and the field of education are woven into when different voices are raised. The voices in this symposium are emerging from different post-approaches when weaving a web of activity. Through actualizing a minor language in early childhood education, the discourse of professional language is challenged with concepts and thinking with Deleuze and Guattari. The intermingling in-between different disciplines is addressed and discussed as pedagogical entanglements (Barad 2007) Further pedagogical moments are investigated in order to address response-ability (Haraway 1993) and matter of concern (Latour 2004). Interweaving in these presentations are photographies as multilayered shots of the world, not representing but rather trying out new methods not knowing the result. In creating a cartographic mapping the authors of the symposium highlight some of the weaving in a web of acting, thinking and doing in early childhood. To broaden the perspectives professor Jayne Osgood is included as a discussant and international weaver of trends and thoughts.
Contributor 1

Actualising a minor language: Tracing, connecting and rupturing professional language in early childhood education and care

Bjelkerud, Agnes Westgaard & Halmrast, Gudrun S.

In this presentation we seek to derail the current discussions in Norwegian kindergarten research and the considerations on what professional languages in kindergarten might be. To derail something might create thoughts about leading someone or something astray and potentially creating dangerous situations. A pronounced desire for such an action may be followed by the question - why do we want to do that? What effects are we hoping for when doing this?

This presentation draws on a research project based on two focus group interviews with 8 Norwegian kindergarten (ECEC) teachers. The early phase of the project developed through a curiosity towards ongoing discussions in the Norwegian field of ECEC on what professional language and terminology in kindergarten can be and how the use of language can help strengthen the kindergarten teacher profession. However, whilst transcribing and categorising the research material, we ended up at square one of what research already had told us about this subject. We walked the same paths and entered familiar rails.

These familiar routes troubled us. Seeking to force our research positionings into other localities and to create other understandings than those familiar to us, we began actualizing Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari’s (1987, 1994a, 1994b) vital philosophy. By putting concepts such as desire, stutter and minor to work with the research material from the interviews, we were offered an entrance to empirical experimentation; to trace, connect, derail, and force stutterness into our thoughts and dataencounters.

In this presentation we will present some of these derailments. As researchers, we seek to explore how the childhood teachers’ different utterances in research material are related to, interfere with and challenge our ideas about what the language of the kindergarten can be and what features the language may have in the field of practice.

Literature
Contributor 2

Pedagogical entanglements – transcending boundaries in education and (re)search

Myhre, Cecilie Ottersland & Myrvold, Hanne Berit

As pedagogues and university teachers in early childhood education we have to balance in between and amongst different disciplinary traditions and influences. Hence, we collaborate, challenge professional territories and exceed boundaries while intermingling with other professional disciplines in both education and (re)search. As teachers and (re)searchers we are influenced by material and post-human theories that allow for complexity, ambiguity, multiplicity and difference to emerge. Our «teaching-learning-research-methodology» forms complex relationships and entanglements among objects, theories, concepts, discourses, teaching, learning, living, practices and so on. Thinking with Koro-Ljungberg (2016) we note that these entanglements are always enacted differently every time we carry out (re)search or teaching activities.

In our presentation we emphasize two pedagogical events of experimentation, referred to as «Dollheadtransformations» and «Silent/silenced classroom». We explore how materials, disruptions and affect (Massumi, 1995; 2015) might produce new knowledge and learning both in and amongst human organisms in class. As (re)searchers influenced by an onto-eticho-epistemological philosophy (Barad, 2007), we are less preoccupied with detecting «true» knowledge, while more interested in yet unrevealed possibilities, transformations and what might become (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). In our presentation, we re-turn (to) (Barad, 2014) and explore diffractions and effects of what happens when humans, concepts, «dollheads» and «silence(s)» clash. What is put in motion, and what might be produced?

Literature
Contributor 3
Re-thinking (non)pedagogical moments through Speculative Fabulations and/or String Figures

Lafton, Tove

Haraway (1993) introduced cyborg as human-information-machine-multispecies organisms for the research world. In constructing cyborg, she connects human and non-human into an apparatus that involves technology, information, knowledge and ideas being interwoven with people. According to Haraway, the cyborg must be understood as something presenting truth and speculative fabulations at the same time. In the spaces between the real and the fabulous found in Haraway’s SF I enter early childhood pedagogy.

Earlier there has been a call for situating early childhood centres as places for ethical thinking and practice (Dahlberg and Moss 2005). A story from early childhood life is constructing the threshold into SF. The story is producing sticky knots challenging what ethical practice production is emerging when adults, children and materiality meet in the briefest of moments. Haraway (1993) is challenging us to open ourselves up to thinking with SF figures and complexity. In this presentation cyborg become the pedagogical moment where multiple actors are involved, but the boundaries between them are not clearly defined. The ethical considerations are connecting to Donna Haraway’s notion of response-ability as always experienced in the company of significant others. It’s responsiveness to a happening cannot always be seen, but is always present (Blaise, Hamm and Iorio 2017).

If the teacher is always and already entangled with several layers of complexity in the everyday experiences in the classroom, then how can (s)he critically re-act on practices? Reading the story with Haraways SFs (speculative fabulations and string figures) calls the early childhood teacher into re-writing the story, when the reading actualizes the connection with the more-than-human world in pedagogical practices. Knowing then become not about seeing the “matter of facts” (Latour 2004), but rather become a matter of intra-acting (Barad 2007) within a conceptual shift to the “matters of concern” (Latour 2004).

Through Latour’s (2005) encouraging of looking into what teachers are paying attention to and how they are paying attention in their everyday work with children, the story is rewritten through addressing what is at stake when “pressing enter” in speculative figurations. In order for early childhood teachers to move from focusing primarily on matters of fact in their observations towards thinking with matters of concern, a shift in both positions, gazes and tools is required.

Literature
Contributor 4
Posthuman/new-material theories and ‘critical thinking’ bridges/boundaries?
/Experimenting with photography

Otterstad, Ann Merete & Fajersson, Karin E.

This presentation interest is create a cartographic mapping (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012) to investigate critique and critical thinking in the field of early childhood. A critical-thinking-project has been with me for years, creating disturbances, worries and wonder. Although ‘critical perspectives’ are written into official early childhood documents and framework plans, it seems that leakages in the territory is transforming criticalities into invisible ghostly shadows. I do not have a systematic research project; I draw on speculation and other researchers pointing to some of the same challenges as my worries (Straume, 2016; Reinertsen, 2016). Today early childhood education and care are under pressure, both pedagogically and politically. How might critical ideas come to the surface? What toolbox are working? Or maybe not? Through a mapping of different theories/philosophical concepts, I hope to re-configure critique more than thinking of critique as illuming something lacking. Finding MacLure (2013) and Massumi (2008, 2010)[1] inspiring, they are both seeking critique as multiplicities. My presentation will discuss the influence of critique and critical thinking together with posthuman/new-material theories (Braidotti, 2013; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). How might affirmative critique open for reconceptualising critical thinking in early childhood education and care?

I’m a researcher and also a photographer. Some of my photographic work will now be published in a book about early childhood education. My pictures in the book are not meant as illustrations, more like ‘cracks’ that tell their own stories and can be read in multiple ways. When I make the pictures they contain my stories, my associations. When I photograph and edit I am experimenting. To experiment is to try new actions, methods and combinations. To experiment is to not know what the result will be. To experiment is an open-ended process that explores what is new and what is coming into being rather than anything already experienced and known (Parr, 2005). Deleuze and Guattari describes the creativity of artists’ work as ‘percepts’ – independent aggregates of sensation that live beyond their creators. The inspiration for art is given by sensations. (Deleuze and Guattari (1994).

Haptic engagement is close range and hands on. It is the entanglement of a mindful body at work with materials and with the land, ‘sewing itself in’ to the textures of the world along the pathways of sensory involvement. (Ingold, 2011, p. 252).

Literature

VULNERABLE CHILDREN'S INVOLVEMENT AS ACTIVE AGENTS IN FAMILY THERAPY AND NETWORK-MEETINGS BY USE OF VIDEO STORIES

Koch, Anette Boye¹ & Brandt, Erika Zimmer¹
1 VIA University College, Denmark

Family therapy is offered to vulnerable children and their families in situations where professionals have concerns about their wellbeing and development. The therapy may have form of dialogue, exercises and network-meetings with participation of teachers, pedagogues, social workers etc. Therapists often operate with base in an understanding of the children as objects, and tend to encourage adult reflections rather than include the children as active agents with use of participatory methods. The aim of the research is to develop new knowledge of how to involve children in therapy and network meetings by use of digital tools in co-operation between children, therapists, and those teachers and pedagogues, who use child-centred pedagogical methods when they support children in their every day educational setting.

The research refer to modern childhood sociology that considers children as active participants and worthy of social study in their own right, but also call upon a tradition of child-centred pedagogical practice in Denmark that has evolved from theories and educational methods dating back more than 100 years, e.g. inspired by Montessori (1917), to whom a vital teaching tools was to closely observe and acknowledge the child, recognize his or hers intentions and support natural unfolding and agency.

The follow-research is inspired by ethnography, we use participant observation (Spradley 1980), interviews and informal dialogue (Hammersley & Atkinson 2007) and perform narrative workshops with professionals with inspiration from Action Research (Nielsen & Nielsen 2010). 10 children (7-18 years) who show signs of lack of wellbeing at school are selected together with their families and offered family therapy. 5 therapists and pedagogues are introduced to project ‘my video’ by attending a course in media education and subsequently apply their new knowledge in therapy by encouraging children to produce videos of their everyday lives in cooperation with parents, teachers and pedagogues from school. Children’s videos form the basis for every therapeutic activity as well as network meetings. Parallel to therapy the therapists meet in ongoing workshops in order to reflect upon and exchange experiences and initiatives.

Ethnographic observations are carried out by a researcher, who participates in therapy activities, network meetings, as in ongoing workshops with therapists. Qualitative focus group interviews are performed with each family and child after completion of therapy in order to evaluate their experiences of children’s participation, influence and wellbeing.

Children’s perspectives on their participation in family therapy are still to be investigated, as the data generation is scheduled to start in January 2018.

The research aim to combine different views and ways to approach children in a Nordic educational culture, which on one hand has a long tradition of child-centered pedagogy, but on the other hand may encounter children in exposed positions as vulnerable objects, whom adult professionals have to protect rather than empower. The study expect to explore possibilities and challenge some of the boundaries, breaches and bridges between professionals from different disciplines in order to offer new opportunities for children to participate in their own lives, also when things are difficult.
Coping strategies and resilience in upper secondary school

Haugan, Jan Arvid  
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Research topic/aim:  
The main topic is dropout from upper secondary school, and the research aim is to scrutinize the student`s perceptions of both themselves, and their social and academic environment. This paper will illuminate what affects the student`s intentions to quit school and especially emphasize how coping strategies as a factor may influence their resilience towards dropping out.

Theoretical framework:  
The research is anchored in an ecological theoretical understanding of dropout as a process that culminates in students quitting school (Rumberger, 2011). From this perspective, both individual and institutional factors affect the decision. Individual aspects are associated with the student`s behaviours, emotions and cognitions. Institutional aspects are situated in three major contexts – families, schools and communities, and the several key features within them: composition, structure, resources and practices. In sum, this implies variables such as e.g. background information, self-worth, emotional and behavioural problems, friendships, motivation, goal structure, social support, loneliness, future orientation etc. These are all appraised as possible protective- and/or risk-factors that are crucial to gain insight about, in order to understand the dropout-process.

Methodological design:  
A longitudinal mixed method design was used to investigate students in upper secondary school, level 2. This cohort will be followed through their upper secondary school participation, and the data that will be presented in this paper originates from a quantitative survey collected in the spring of 2017 (2122 students from 13 different upper secondary schools, 1063 females (50,1%) and 1059 males (49,9%), 78,9% response rate in total). In addition, the paper will discuss data from group interviews with a total of 84 students (41 women, 43 men) from the same cohort. These students attended seven different upper secondary schools at three distinct vocational courses (Healthcare, childhood and youth development (25 students); Service and transport (23 students); Technical and industrial production (35 students)).

Expected findings:  
By comparing the quantitative and qualitative data, I will expect to find factors that creates both stress and well-being among adolescents. In addition, and most important in this paper, I will present findings on what strategies the students are using to cope with this stress and their perceived challenges. In further research, these findings will be used to analyse whether there are systematic connections between coping strategies and those who actually remain or quit school within the same cohort.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:  
Understanding the dropout-process is critical for informing efforts to address this educational problem. Dropping out of school has consequences for both the national socio-economics and, most importantly, the dropouts themselves. Dropouts face gloomy economic futures as they are the least educated workers in the labour market and thus have the poorest job prospects compared to more educated workers. Furthermore, research indicate that dropouts also have poorer mental and physical health and, as a result, have a more difficult and shorter life span compared persons with more education.

References:  
Towards dialogic and self-regulated learning in technology-enhanced open plan schools

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University of Jyväskylä

Contemporary views on learning highlight the urgent need for renewal of pedagogic interactions, especially approaches that foster student dialogue and collaboration. The new Finnish Curriculum for basic education (POPS 2014), issued in 2016, emphasizes learner-centred approaches e.g., inquiry based, technology-enhanced and project based learning. In accordance with these curricular changes, Finland is undergoing school redesign projects replacing traditional walled-in classrooms and rows of desks for more flexible, informal and multimodal open plan designs. This far there is, however, scant micro-level research on classroom dialogues in ill-defined learning environments, such as open plan schools where the space and materials do not systematically provide a pre-defined structure. Furthermore, there is a lack of research on how teachers can implement relevant practices to afford effective learning in classroom environments which require much self-regulation from the individual and shared regulation from the group.

This paper presents the preliminary findings of the elements that foster dialogic and self-regulated learning in technology-enhanced open plan schools. The overall idea of the ongoing research project is to provide novel insights of applying the conceptual propositions of sociocultural and self-regulation theories to understanding classroom dialogues in technology-enhanced open plan primary school environments. The study is conducted in two recently opened open plan schools and one open plan classroom that are amongst the first ones in Finland. The data comprise videotaped and transcribed interaction, ethnographic memos by the researcher, and teacher and student interviews. The video data analyses will combine and apply multimodal Conversation analysis (e.g. Sidnell & Stivers, 2012) and discourse analysis for the analysis of the details of the learning interaction processes.

The presentation is based on the results of the first sub-study in which the aim is to analyse how do teachers offer direct scaffolding (e.g. interactional, at the moment level) and indirect scaffolding (e.g. environmental scripts) to facilitate students’ learning dialogues, self-regulation and co-regulation/socially shared regulated learning. In addition, the presentation illustrates the resources of the learning environment and technology that children draw on in their dialogues as they work together in learning tasks.

References:
Connecting practice, theory and policy: The place of the practicum in Social Pedagogy in Iceland

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University of Iceland

The focus of this paper is to describe and discuss the effect of an ongoing professional development model that connects theory, practice and policy in the final year of study within the Social Pedagogy program in Iceland. The model ties together two theoretical classroom courses and a practicum placement and is centered round the students practice based developmental projects, collaboration and reflection as well as the mentoring relationship of all stakeholders. The impetus for the research based development of the presented model is to increase the students competence in their work settings following graduation, especially in the light of the recent challenges facing SPs in Iceland, such as the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Independent Living ideology and the transfer of disability services from the state to the municipalities. The education of social pedagogues (SPs) in Iceland has been at the university level since 1998 and is now located within the Division of Education at the University of Iceland. The SPs’ professional education, role and perspectives have developed in line with the paradigm change rooted in the CRPD that replaces the medical understanding by the social relational understanding of disability. The social understanding considers persons with disabilities as subjects of rights but not as objects of charity as the medical understanding does. The SPs’ professional theory and expertise in Iceland today is rooted in the human rights approach manifested in the CRPD and the social-relational understanding of disability. This is clearly reflected in their newly revised “Ethical protocol and ethical standard where it is highlighted that their professional aim is to promote disabled people’s full participation in an inclusive society. Recent Icelandic research shows that one of the major challenges facing novice social educators today is the discrepancy between policy ideals, SPs’ professional education and the reality they face within their diverse work settings.

These findings indicate that this mismatch is embedded in in the medical view of disability and historic systemic thinking within the service provisions. The overall aim of the action research study presented here as mentioned above is to enhance and support the students’ ability to transfer what they have learned into practice as well as to explore how the improved practice can strengthen theoretical learning and transfer. This aim is implemented with the help of the aforementioned professional development model, which is under constant scrutiny. The introduced data is derived from half open interviews with novice social pedagogues, mentors at the practicum placement and professional learning logs. The five principles of Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) are used in analysing and interpreting the data. Findings underline the importance of enhancing the learning environment and support structures as well as widening the perspective of professional education in line with the challenges that novice social pedagogues are faced with when they enter their working field.
Symposium – Part A
How to research in the area of asylum seekers and refugees?

Miller Tanja
UCN

In the last decades and especially during the last few years the Nordic countries have seen a big rise in the numbers of newly arrived asylum seekers and refugees. A huge amount of people from very different backgrounds and many with horrible experiences of escaping their home countries and travelling though dangerous routes have come to look for new homes and safer home countries. Both the numbers and the complexity of the situations of the asylum seekers and refugees have increased. (Thingstrup, Aagerup, & Sørensen, 2016). The Nordic countries have reacted to this situation in different ways but common to their reactions has been a rise in nationalist demands and actions in order to have new rules and restrictions for arrival and approval of residence applications of the asylum seekers. The countries also have different kind of integration policies and procedures. The general attitudes are not in favor of the new comers, and for example Denmark has a rightminded government that hasn’t given a high priority for the improvement of the life conditions of the asylum seekers and refugees in the society. Nevertheless, there are many different organisations, groups of people and professionals on different fields like in social services, education and health care working hard to improve the everyday life of asylum seekers and refugees. This symposium looks at and discusses research in this area, research in the asylum seekers’ reception centres and other settings where asylum seekers and refugees live and struggle for their right to a decent life.

The symposium is looking for possibilities for research to strengthen the voice of the asylum seekers and refugees of all ages – children, adults and elderly. There will be a focus on research methodology in order to put light on various ways of creating valid research data by involving asylum seekers and refugees in the data production and also analysis and thus seeking for the first person’s perspective in research (Dreier, 2011). There are specific challenges in participatory methodology on this field including for example language barriers, fear for authorities, traumatising experiences, different forms of identity crisis and general uncertainty in life. There is a long and strong tradition in the field for investigating traumatized refugees and how to support and help people in this situation, but there is much less research about pressures experienced by asylum seekers and refugees regarding their socio-economic situation and their experiences of exile (Vitus, 2010).

The symposium consists of five presentations: two from Finland and three from Denmark. The symposium has specific value for the Nordic social pedagogical discussion, because it opens up a view to a growing research field and provides opportunities for the exchange of experiences and knowledge about relevant research methodologies and theoretical questions.
Contributor 1
Acts of citizenship in reception centre

Rapo, Päivikki
University College of Northern Denmark -UCN-

Aim of the master's thesis is to study the citizenship of adult asylum seekers living their everyday life in reception centre. I apply Engin F. Isin's term "acts of citizenship" to examine how asylum seekers act as citizens in margin of Finnish society. Thesis answers to following questions: 1. How do asylum seekers act as citizens in reception centre? and 2. What are the boundary conditions for acting as citizens in reception centre? Methodological approach of the study is ethnography.

Modern nation-states have regulated membership of society in terms of one principal category - national citizenship (Benhabib 2004, 1). However, state boundaries have changed through globalization and migration. This rigid regulation does not reach the real, stretching and fragmented boundaries of political communities. Instead, it has led to new forms of citizenship appearing in the margins of societies. One example of those forms is margizens, involving asylum seekers and undocumented people (Castles & Davidson 2000, 95-96). The thesis hypothesis argues that living in a margin as asylum seeker does not necessarily mean being passive non-citizen, but also active contesting and redefining citizenship through acts of citizenship (Isin & Nielsen 2008, 2-3).

Ethnography as research methodology allowed dense description and seeing differently in studied community (see Skeggs 1997). I collected data in a reception centre in Eastern Finland in April 2017. My roles on the field were both researcher and volunteer, and I visited the reception centre for 17 days. I was using participatory observing and semi-structured interviews as data collecting methods. The data includes 50 pages notes from the field, three interviews of asylum seekers and two interviews of employees, and also a few written documents which I got from the employees.

Preliminary results show that citizenship was acted at least by studying, working, internships, parenting, neighbourhood help, environmental relations and social relationships. These were supported by employees, local villagers, university students, volunteers and other actors organizing activities for asylum seekers. Difficulties to act as citizen were caused at least by lack of privacy, losing hope, uncertainty about the future and loneliness. The physical facilities of the reception centre restricted women’s opportunities to participate.

The study offers chances for comparisons between Finnish and other Nordic reception systems. It also opens discussions for more participatory and inclusive upbringing of citizens in post-modern societies.

References:
Contributor 2
“Life on hold?” – A research project on agency and belonging of asylum seekers

Nivala, Elina1 & Ryynänen, Sanna1
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In my presentation I will look into a research project called “Life on hold? Agency and belonging of asylum seekers living in reception centres”. It is an interdisciplinary research project that applies an intersectional perspective to explore and better understand life and experiences of asylum seekers who live in reception centres. The theoretical framework of the research is built upon the concepts of agency and belonging that are developed as social pedagogical constructs. The research is still in its early stages but based on a literature review, the reception centres are understood to be specific places and spaces for experiencing and negotiating agency and belonging. Life of asylum seekers in reception centres is characterised by uncertain and indefinite waiting, which may cause feelings of exclusion and not having control over one’s life. Asylum seekers live in-between two societies, being no longer self-evidently members of their society of origin but not yet members of the surrounding society. This liminal state of life has effects on the forms, preconditions and possibilities that agency and belonging of asylum seekers have in reception centres. The research project aims at unveiling these with a mixed method approach, utilising multi-sited institutional ethnography in selected reception centres in Finland, participatory theatre as part of the ethnographic fieldwork, and a survey directed to a wider range of reception centres, to their inhabitants and personnel.

In my presentation, I will address the theoretical framework and the qualitative methodology of the project, namely institutional ethnography and participatory theatre. Institutional ethnography (IE) takes into account the experiences of those active in institutional processes, in case of reception centres both asylum seekers living in the centres and the personnel, as well as the regulatory dimensions of institutions. A specific interest on how people’s lives come to be dominated and shaped by forces outside of them and their purposes makes the approach especially suitable for studying reception centres as well as other institutional(ised) accommodation settings that come to holistically determine the everyday life of their inhabitants. As a part of ethnography in the reception centres, participatory theatre, especially the approach of Forum Theatre developed by Augusto Boal, is applied as research methodology. It is understood as a methodology that offers different epistemology to that involved in more traditional research methods, providing a possibility of embodiment of the narratives as well as a new kind of reciprocity between researchers and participants.

The research has specific value in the field of social pedagogy in the Nordic countries, because it develops both a theoretical and a methodological framework that offer the researchers doing research with people in vulnerable situations concrete concepts and tools to support the active participation of these people both in the research and in their lives and the society more generally. Thus this kind of an approach is very suitable for social pedagogical research.
Contributor 3
How do asylum-seekers experience a sense of meaningfulness in their everyday life in asylum-centres?

Ørnenose, Anna¹, Løkkegård, Lene² & Leleur, Lis¹

¹University College of Northen Denmark -UCN-

The overall aim for the research project is to investigate asylum seekers experiences in Denmark during their stay in asylum centres and how the stay and waiting time can be empowered by improving everyday life and the sense of meaningfulness. We want to learn more about the professional’s attitudes and approach to the asylum seekers and the task in the Asylum Centres.

The main research question is:
How can development in praxis with focus on administration and housing, children’s outcome of education and schooling, healthcare services, language education and spare time activities contribute to support learning and meaningfulness with the residents and the professionals?

Our specific topic is everyday life and our concrete research question is:
How do asylum-seekers experience a sense of meaningfulness in their everyday life in asylum-centres?

Theoretical framework:
The main theoretical foundation and framework is in everyday life sociology (Jacobsen & Kristiansen, 2014) (Dreier, 2011) and inspiration from learning theory (Wenger, 2004) and constructions of identity (Tønnesvang & Olesen, 2012)

Methodological design:
The study is a case study with a phenomenological approach (Jacobsen, Tanggaard, & Brinkmann, 2012) (Lewin, 1946) and partly planed as an action research (Duus & Husted, 2012). The new knowledge is based on interview with 1) professionals 2) grown up residents 3) children without parents 4) management. The study also includes analysis of documents and a state of the art in the field.

Expected conclusions / findings:
We expect that the asylum-seekers ability to construct meaning in their everyday life is challenged. We also expect that the asylum-seekers sense of meaningfulness is close related to the quality of relationships to family, other asylum seekers as well as social workers. Last, we expect to find gender differences in participating in social communities and activities in the center.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
All the Nordic countries have challenges with providing asylum seekers with safe, warm and appropriate education. We have an intention of writing a handbook to professionals in asylum centres with basic knowledge about how to meet and develop human being in a refugee situation. In the order to do that we have to know more about the asylum seekers and their own understanding of their possibilities in their concrete situation.

References:
Tønnesvang J.; Ovesen M.S. (2012) Psykologisk ilt i pædagogisk og organisatorisk arbejde Forlaget Klim
Symposium – Part B
How to research in the area of asylum seekers and refugees?

Contributor 1
Creating a sense of meaning in connection to school attendance of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

Klarsgaard, Nadia & Drevsholt, Kasper
University College of Northern Denmark -UCN-

This small-scale action research project explores unaccompanied asylum-seeking children's experiences with the educational system in the period of the procedure of granting asylum. The project is part of a larger research project with the overall aim to investigate asylum seekers' experiences in Denmark during their stay in asylum centres and how the stay and waiting time can be empowered by improving everyday life and the sense of meaningfulness. Together with a group of initially 7 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children we have looked closer at the barriers to learning and how to respond to the different circumstances that contribute to lack of motivation and poor school attendance.

Theoretical framework:
The main theoretical foundation and framework is in everyday life sociology (Jacobsen & Kristiansen, 2014) (Dreier, 2011) and inspiration from learning theory (Wenger, 2004) and participation in decisions making and community (Hart, 1992; Schwart, 2014).

Methodological design:
The project is carried out as an action research project leaning on the tradition of the Danish-German school of critical psychology (Jartoft, 1996; Mørck, 2006). Through practice research and the first-person perspectives (Holzkamp, 1983) of the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, we examine the conduct of everyday life emphasizing the societal, political, social and spatial processes that contributes to the lack of meaningfulness the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children experience towards their school attendance in Denmark.

Expected conclusions/findings:
The preliminary findings suggest that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have an enormous motivation towards learning and integration. However numerous factors have a negative impact on the school attendance. Societal, political, social and spatial processes seem to give the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children the sense of being trapped in time and space, a sensation that estrange the meaningfulness of everyday life and school attendance. The unaccompanied asylum-seeking children emphasize concepts like fellowship and solidarity and the relationship to teachers, social educators and school friends seems to be of the utmost importance.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
All the Nordic countries have challenges with providing asylum seekers with safe, warm and appropriate education to our asylum seekers. In our group we have dream about writing a handbook to professionals in asylum centres with basic knowledge about how to meet human being in a refugee situation and in the order to do that we have to know more about the asylum seekers themselves.

References:
How asylum seekers have inadequate, or even lacking, knowledge of their options available for them through the Danish Healthcare System

Cohen, Malene

University College of Northern Denmark -UCN-

The overall aim for the research project is to investigate asylum seekers' experiences in Denmark during their stay in asylum centres and how the stay and waiting time can be empowered by improving everyday life and the sense of meaningfulness. We want to learn more about the professional's attitudes and approach to the asylum seekers and the task in the Asylum Centres.

The research question:
How can development in praxis with focus on administration and housing, children's outcome of education and schooling, healthcare services, language education and spare time activities contribute to support learning and meaningfulness with the residents and the professionals? The RQ is more specified for each area.

Theoretical framework:
The main theoretical foundation and framework is in everyday life sociology (Jacobsen & Kristiansen, 2014) (Dreier, 2011) and inspiration from learning theory (Wenger, 2004) and participation in decisions making and community (Hart, 1992) (Schwart, 2014).

Methodological design:
The study is a case study with a phenomenological approach (Jacobsen, Tanggaard, & Brinkmann, 2012) (Lewin, 1946) and partly planed as an action research (Duus & Mia Husted, 2012). The new knowledge is based on interview with 1) professionals 2) residents grown up 3) residents children without parents 4) management. Besides this analysis of document and of course state of the art in the fiend.

Expected conclusions/findings:
It is expected that this paper will present how asylum seekers have inadequate, or even lacking, knowledge of their options available for them through the Danish Healthcare System, and this can result in inequality concerning psychological and physiological health issues. It's also expected to present how the health professionals struggle to treat the asylum seekers, within the Danish law. Furthermore, it is expected that analysis of the qualitative data, will give insight concerning how asylum-seeking parents experience and view on their everyday life as a family living in an asylum centre and how these conditions influence their family life, and if, or how, they see this has an impact on their experienced health.
The paper will also present how midwifery students, despite language difficulties and cultural differences, where able to meet asylum seeking children, teenagers, women and pregnant women, and teach them about reproductive health using a health-promoting and educating approach.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
All the Nordic countries have challenges with providing asylum seekers with safe, warm and appropriate education to our asylum seekers. We have dream about writing a handbook to professionals in asylum centres with basic knowledge about how to meet human being in a refugee situation and in the order to do that we have to know more about the asylum seekers themselves.

References:
Contributor 3

Everyday-life and becoming of among families with temporary asylum in Denmark

Dræbel, Tania
University College of Northern Denmark - UCN -

Research, which examines how families with temporary asylum establish an everyday-life in a Danish context, is limited and so are studies on families’ experience of their collaborations with professionals. Inspired by a sociological phenomenological approach, the project examines how families with temporary asylum experience and establish everyday lives; which interruptions and turning points constitute families experience of becoming? How do their collaborations with professionals make sense in their attempts to establish an everyday-life in Denmark? How do families experience the role of these collaborations as improving their possibilities of participation in the community?

Theoretical framework:
A phenomenological sociology of families’ attempts to establish an everyday-life in temporary asylum
Inspired by phenomenological sociology, the project conceives families’ becoming as a phenomenon comprising the experience of interruptions of everyday life’s “taken-for-granted world of social facts” (Schütz 1975). Sociological approaches to everyday-life share an interest in examining the forms of knowledge and sense-making in which humans engage and draw upon in their everyday lives, in their routine actions and social exchanges (Jakobsen and Kristiansen 2014).

Everyday life comprises: Everyday life is characterised by incorporated habits, routines and dispositions, which are often unarticulated, go unnoticed and are taken for granted (Schütz 1975: 21-27; 81-82). The concept of “natural attitude” refers to the idea that underlies our understanding of what constitutes our world’s social facts and the objects, which constitute our world. In everyday life, humans rely on their “natural attitude”, this unquestioned and unquestionable common sense, in order to interpret and grasp the relevant aspects of reality (Ritzer and Goodman 2003). Anchored in a socially and culturally accumulated stock of knowledge, humans draw on their “natural attitude” when recreating everyday life and its “taken-for-granted world of social facts” (Schütz 1975: 9; 80-81). When the “natural attitude” is bracketed, humans orient themselves in a new social world. By examining families’ everyday lives, its “taken-for-granted world” of unarticulated and unnoticed social facts, it is possible to appreciate the routines through which families attempt to (re)establish everyday life’s order and the concomitant processes of becoming a family in a Danish context.

Methodological design:
The methodological approach is inspired by Amedeo Giorgi and his directions to the production of detailed description of everyday-life phenomena as they are experienced and ascribed meaning to (Giorgi 1975). The project analyses the patterns of families’ experiences of everyday-life interruptions families’ statements and everyday-life situations in order to see the variations.

Expected conclusions/findings: The project contributes with knowledge about how to strengthen community participaction of families with temporary asylum and what matters to ensure that families’ everyday-lives are meaningful. In a social resilience perspective, the project contributes with knowledge about turning points in the families’ becoming and the role, which professionals may take on in this process of becoming.

Relevance to Nordic educational research: The project contributes with knowledge to develop the practices of professionals working with families with temporary asylum who attempt to establish meaningful everyday lives in a Danish context.
Roundtable

Sensitive research – how to research in cooperation with extreme vulnerable people – No pode quitar el highlight

Mats Högström
Malmo university

In the tradition of participative action research (PAR) one cornerstone is the involvement of the research objects and another cornerstone is action. In PAR reflection and community is very fundamental. In PAR the researcher has a very different role. The researcher is interested in conceiving the world from the research objects point of view. The construction of knowledge is done together with people who often are in very vulnerable positions. Research designs that come with PAR put special demands on research ethics, procedures and sensitiveness. Delicate questions about how to encounter and approach the life world of client groups are very central. It is to a high degree a matter of power balance between the researcher and the researched.

PAR is well in tune with social pedagogical issues. Paolo Freire’s work (especially Pedagogy of the oppressed, 1970) are often referred to as a good example of the power in seeing the world from the burdened point of view. Dialogue, empowering practice and self-help measures are typical social pedagogical actions in the tradition of Freire.

In the field of social pedagogical praxis the aim is to support people in very vulnerable positions in different life spans. The target group is very wide: homeless people, asylum seekers, alcohol- and drug abusers, the elderly, children and youth, persons with disabilities and so on. The purpose of the roundtable session is to rise a discussion about how to involve even very vulnerable groups of citizens in research and social pedagogical praxis.

In this round-table, there will be presentations from Sweden, Poland and two from Denmark (one with data collection in Greenland). The examples of research have different target groups in focus: people with learning disabilities, women prostitute, LGBT persons (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender), and children in residential care. Diverse issues will be discussed such as researcher’s experiences during the data collection – recruiting participants, networking and interviewing. Questions of ethics of research, role conflict or questions of confidentiality are in focus. Other important issues are the power dynamics in participation and non-participation related to clients’ social roles and social positions and social inclusion.

The presentations give a variety of research designs: biographical experiences of women and LGBT persons; interviews and participatory observation; investigations of collaborative structures; ethnographical fieldwork; and future workshop inspired co-creation
Contributor 1
Sensitive collaborations in social pedagogy inquiry
Rosner, Irena Dychawy

Research topics:
Along with the rapid development of decentralisation of social care institutions, wide ranging social reforms have been taking place that aimed to fight against societal exclusion of disabled populations such as people with developmental and following learning disabilities. The deinstitutionalisation movement placed many individuals with disabilities into community residential settings, although, they comprise a relatively small proportion of the population to be successful in supported employment. Following these reforms of decentralisation and ideology of social inclusion, social pedagogy within social work has to develop its practice and research implementation to new collaborative ways of operation.

Theoretical framework:
Individuals interact with the environment in a complex way. Service planning and provision must incorporate a system approach in meeting the needs of individuals with learning disabilities. A system approach notes the characteristics and constrains of each level of a system, for example individuals, groups, institutions and societies, and the interrelations between the systems. To understand how social workers deal with new challenges, it is stressed the importance of examination of how the social care staff and their clients form sense of themselves in relation to ways of occupying their roles as client and helper and power dynamics in participation and non-participation related to clients’ social roles and social positions that matter to them. An emerging line of participatory action research (PAR) in the last years, mends to some extend the shortage of research in this area.

Methodological design:
The present study follows the PAR line of research conducted in daily activities centres for people with developmental and learning disabilities. The general aim of the inquiry is to identify, understand and interpret the sense that socio-ecological context and social pedagogy concerns of integration into mainstream community form complex and fluid collaborative structure, resulting in both opportunities and constrains on learning.

The findings show that all involved stakeholders such as clients, their significant others, staff and community actors need to shift their traditional identities regarding their supporting role identity and collaborative approaches in order to develop change. Their collaborative models have to include their role change from traditional formative ones as giving social care in particular situations to be more progressive and comprising socio-pedagogical perspectives of inclusion and empowerment when managing collaboration in power-laden meanings in everyday situations.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
Theoretically, this research deepens our understanding of the role that social care communities of practice play due to the effects on a care receivers’ lifeworld and their dependence on help with alternative forms of participation which are a great source of personal identity formation. It is concluded that socio-pedagogical concerns may be an important source of support to construct a client centred sense of practice, increase mutual engagement and in-between forms of collaboration. Inclusion of daily activities centres to municipally located workplaces need to be seen as a significant form of lifelong learning and societally connected participation for people having learning disabilities.
Contributor 2

“My dream, when I grow up, is to have my own house and a snowmobile”

Mortensen, Anni

Topic and Objectives:
In Greenland there is a positive development, but some homes are characterized by weak resources in relation to weak employment, low levels of education, poor housing and low income. The social challenges are reflected in the relatively large number of children and young people who are placed outside the home. 8-10% of the children’s publication is placed outside the home primarily on a day-to-day basis (SFI 2011), (Ejrnæs, Hansen et.al. 2011). The average employment time of day care institutions fluctuates between 1 and 6 years. Staff turnover is generally quite high, and a constant deficit of skilled many residential institution can be detected with unskilled staff without formal qualifications, which makes them eligible for ”different qualifications” (Skatte- og Velfærdskommissionen, 2011).

The purpose of this study is to identify the challenges and the strengths of employees, children and young people, managers, employees and administrations, which relate to the task.

Methodology:
The methodological outset of the paper is critical realism (Archer, 1998; Bhaskar, 1979; Bhaskar, 1989; Bhaskar, 1997). The notion of the stratified reality, multi causality in open systems and the intransitive and transitive dimensions of knowledge is a methodological compass regarding theoretical and methodical applications.

Research Design and Data Sources:
The study is constituted by a case study based on qualitative research design. The qualitative data is based on ethnographical fieldwork in six residential institutions for children in Greenland. Theoretical the study is inspired by everyday life sociology (Jacobsen & Kristiansen, 2014) The roundtable paper has a focus on how to involve vulnerable children in the research and the ethical high standards and regards that must be taken into account (Müller, Hussain, Elm Larsen, Hansen, Kenneth Hansen, Ejrnæs, 2015).

Findings:
The paper will present findings that elaborate the notion of best practice in residential institution for children in Greenland from the children’s perspective. One of the most interesting finding captures the fact that best practice or well-being is very must depending on local culture and life living conditions in general. Regarding involving children in research we have experience that the interaction with this target group must build on trust, respect and in some way care. We will present and wants to discuss different settings and way of conducting dialogs.

References:
Dimensions of socially sensitive research on the example of the prostitution and LGBT research

Lalak, Danuta & Ostaszewska, Aneta

Research topic/aim:
The presentation is focused on socially sensitive research, in particular, on potential difficulties for the researcher. Socially sensitive research poses various problems and questions. “Sensitivity” affects almost every stage of the research process: from the beginning – formulating the research problem, through the process of collecting data to the potential application of findings. The problems take different forms – may be methodological, technical, as well as political, ethical or legal. The aim of this presentation is to analyze two particular cases of socially sensitive research: biographical experiences of women prostitutes (1) and LGBT persons (2). Special emphasis will be put on the researcher’s experiences and his/her attitude during the data collection process - recruiting participants, networking and conducting interviews.

Theoretical framework:
Research can be defined as “sensitive” if they refer to the issues considered to be a social taboo, for instance, the issues of death and dying, sexuality and risky behavior as well as illegal activities (Sieber and Stanley, 1988; Renzetti and Lee, 1993). There are many social phenomena that may be considered as “sensitive”, which is not so much about privacy but causes a variety of emotions among participants of the research, researchers and the general public. The socially sensitive research has often potential effects on the personal life, both of the researcher and the research participants (Lee, 1993).

Methodological design:
The empirical data for the presentation is based on the experiences of student- researchers and their interviews conducted during the seminar “Biographical Studies on the Family” in year 2016/2017 at Institute of Social Prevention and Resocialisation at University of Warsaw.

Expected conclusions/findings:
Three key issues are addressed: ethics questions of research (i.e. payment for interview, limits of research), role conflict (research responsibility and loyalty to the participant; researcher as a witness) and questions of confidentiality (protecting the privacy rights).

Relevance to Nordic educational research:
A roundtable discussion will help to understand the potential difficulties in doing socially sensitive research and identify ways of dealing with the questions raised by sensitive research in different Nordic countries.

References:
http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.43.1.49
In my presentation, I draw on the experiences from two projects on the lives of young people in vulnerable positions: One based on ethnographic fieldwork; the other on future workshop inspired co-creation. Though the methodological approaches in the two projects differed quite a lot from each other, some similar ethical and epistemological issues arose, among others about social bonding/building intimate social relationship through the research process, and about initiating new reflections and ways of acting. In my presentation, I will present and discuss these issues, relating them to the questions suggested by the organisers of the Round table: How to introduce and how to make sure that ethical questions are addressed in a proper way? How to raise the voice of not verbal and speaking groups? How to validate research analyzes by feedback process?
Roundtable
Social pedagogy at schools:

Elina Nivala
University of Eastern Finland

This Roundtable session will focus on questions concerning the roles that social pedagogy has and could have at schools. Traditionally social pedagogical work has been seen as pedagogical work outside of schools and family. This is at least partly due to the influential definition of social pedagogy by a German theorist, Gertrud Bäumer, who introduced social pedagogy in a German handbook for pedagogy in 1929 as “a third field of education which is neither family nor school”. Compared to formal education at schools social pedagogy has often been characterised as nonformal education, support for informal learning etc. During the past decades this traditional understanding of social pedagogy has, however, been challenged, and schools have become an interesting and important arena for social pedagogical work.

The understanding of social pedagogy and of social pedagogical working fields differs between different countries, and this is also the case when looking at the role of social pedagogy at schools. In this roundtable discussion we are going to look more closely at four examples of how social pedagogy is practiced and understood at schools and what kind of possibilities and challenges can be found for social pedagogy in the school context in different Nordic countries. The first example comes from Iceland, where social pedagogy carries a long history within the mainstream education system. The presentation shows an increasing demand for the services of social pedagogues within inclusive schools but also a shared concern about their unclear role, professional marginalization and lack of a shared vision. The second example comes from Norway where social pedagogy has had an important role at schools ensuring the inclusion of all pupils but where this role has been challenged by a more problem centred, medicalized and diagnostic mindset in social education. The presentation asks, what is social pedagogy actually for in the school context: is it working to prevent social injustice and marginalisation or is it controlling individuals by measurement and diagnosis. The third example comes from Sweden where a new kind of method is developed for empathy training at schools and this can be seen as a model for social pedagogical work at schools. The fourth example comes from Finland where social pedagogy is seen as a multi-professional field and where there are many different professionals working with a social pedagogical orientation at schools. The presentation looks at possibilities for social pedagogical thinking in the work of school social workers and teachers – thinking rooted at the social pedagogical concepts like agency, participation and community.

This roundtable discussion has specific value in the field of social pedagogy in the Nordic countries, because it supports the dialogue between different traditions and understandings of social pedagogy and promotes mutual learning and development on this field. There is also an intention to start a dialogue with other disciplines working in the school context and this roundtable is working as a first step in this process, a step that helps us in the field of social pedagogy to understand what we are talking about when we look at the role of social pedagogy at schools.
Contributor 1
Social pedagogues in inclusive schools in Iceland: Contributing role and professional thinking

Jóhannsdóttir, Vilborg
University of Iceland

The profession of social pedagogues (SPs) in Iceland provides services for a diverse group of people, particularly disabled people of all ages within a variety of community settings with inclusive and rights-based relational practices as their primary professional responsibility. SPs have been part of the primary school professional community in Iceland since the 1974 law on compulsory education opened up the schools for disabled children.

The Salamanca statement (1994) which states that ordinary schools should be for all children led to an increasing demand for the services of SPs within mainstream schools. The term inclusive education was introduced into legal texts in Iceland in 2008 and has since then been a statutory policy in Icelandic primary schools. A new external audit of the European Agency on Inclusive Schooling in Iceland (2017) indicates a lack of consensus between understandings of inclusive education within education policy and what it currently means in practice, highlighting the gap between inclusive education ideology and actual practice.

The study presented here indicates that nearly 50% of practising SPs work with children and youth within schools and leisure in Iceland. There is ever increasing demand for SPs professional services in inclusive schools in Iceland where they are hired to support diverse groups of students, especially those with high support needs in academic and social settings. However, there is a lack of research focusing on the essence of their sought after contribution within the inclusive schools and it is to be noted that the SPs professional perspectives were lacking in the aforementioned audit. Furthermore, research on how their professional expertise is acknowledged and valued within the professional community of inclusive schools is needed. The overall aim of the study presented here is therefore to explore, describe and interpret the views and understandings of SPs about the social pedagogue as a contributing actor within inclusive schools in Iceland. For that purpose we utilised the five principles of Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) to help us to look deeper into our findings to better understand the contradicting forces that the SPs experience. The data is derived from two main sources; a half-open questionnaire and focus group interviews. The questionnaire was sent to the members of the Association of Social Educators in Iceland (N= 789; response rate 59.31%). This was followed up by three focus-group interviews.

When analysing the findings through the lens of CHAT we found the most serious contradictions to be the discrepancy between policy ideals, the SPs’ professional values and the reality SPs face within inclusive schools. We argue that the profession of SPs can provide a knowledge base, grounded in the human rights relational approach, which makes them valuable contributors to the expansive learning actions that are needed for further development of relational and collective practices within inclusive schools. Furthermore that it is important to acknowledge and utilise the lived professional experiences of SPs as part of a transformative and collective change effort in accordance with policy ideals.
Contributor 2
What social pedagogy is for? The social pedagogy between measurement, quality assurance, testing and relations work at school

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In Norway social pedagogy is in a situation where the main task is no longer to provide and ensure inclusion for all children in school system, but more to distinguish between the children who can be motivated and those who have problems with it. In addition, social education is provided with the task of specializing in distinction and developing ways and methods to maximize inclusion and minimize exclusion by addressing different groups of human beings - those that can be included and those at risk of being excluded.

Furthermore, we are witnessing psychiatricization of ways of looking at the lives and problems of children in school. Brinkmann calls the development of a psychiatricization of social education. The medical approach is much more commonly seen in social pedagogical discussion about evidence, where social education researchers is based on studies that were originally developed in the field of medical education and transfer them to social education. When this medical approach is transferred to social education, illusion arises that social pedagogy is a kind of "substance" that can stimulate development and learning of the "problem child". This thinking can reduces problems to what can be measured and the problems are assumed to have root in the brain (individual). Focus is on the child and child problems and not on the context in which the child is placed in (Tangaard, Rømer & Brinkmann, 2014: 95-96).

The new diagnostic social pedagogy will intend to camouflage social injustice, marginalization, stigmatization, etc. The sufferer and problems of the child can be seen as a result of mental illness, but not as a consequence of unpleasant life circumstances, social problems, marginalization and exclusion. When the child exhibits an adequate response to his chaotic life situation, the child is diagnosed and pathologized. This diagnostic thinking may be problematic and can be very strong in an opposition to the inclusive practice. It can be perceived more as controlling social pedagogical practice (Tangaard, Rømer & Brinkmann, 2014: 99).
Contributor 3
A new way of listening to kids in school

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Malmö University, in cooperation with a primary school in Malmö, has developed and implemented a two-step method for schools. The implementation work is part of a health promotion work "Understand Me, Then I'll Work" in a primary school in Malmö. The method includes CPS (Collaborative Proactive solutions), which is a structured model. The model is based on the facts that challenging behavior occurs when the expectations being placed on a kid exceed the kid’s capacity to respond adaptively, and that some kids are lacking the skills to handle certain demands and expectations. So the emphasis of the model isn’t about kids’ challenging behavior, which is – whether it’s whining, pouting, sulking, withdrawing, crying, screaming, swearing, hitting, spitting, biting, or worse. Those are the manner in which they are expressing the fact that there are expectations they’re having difficulty meeting. The model does not focus on psychiatric diagnoses, which are simply categories of challenging behaviors. The core of the model is based in the understanding of the kids experience. One needs to understand the other. (Greene 2016)

Emphasis in CPS is in finding out as much as possible about a student’s needs. Empathy training has therefore been a central part of the development work together with the teachers and school staff. Well what is empathy then, and how can one develop the understanding of it in the context of social pedagogy work in school? We have trained school staff in phenomenological empathy in order to develop the empathetic ability in the treatment of students, parents and employees.

In the theoretical discussion of empathy, one will find a “psychological mainstream” perspective that involves a "simulation" of the others experience. You “put yourself in the shoes of the other” as a way to achieve understanding of the other. I imagine what I had understood and felt in such a situation, what would your situation be like for me? The problem with this definition is that my understanding of the other is limited to my own, the listeners response to a hypothetically simulated situation. In other words, that I understand myself better in a hypothetical situation is not the same as understanding the other.

The understanding of the other begins before the simulation, in a direct social perception (Zahavi 2011). This is a phenomenological critique of the mainstream perspective of empathy. From this criticism, a phenomenological psychological empathy training (FPE) has been developed for the care professions and for university students in these fields, especially in education related to human-occupational professions, such as social work education (Englander 2014) and with this work also within the framework of social education in a primary school in Malmö.

"I have learned a new way to listen to people around me", (quote from course participants in a phenomenological interview).

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Contributor 4

Social pedagogical thinking – how does it show in work at schools

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In Finland social pedagogy as a field of practice has been developed on the basis of an idea of multi-professionalism. This means that we think that it is possible to work social pedagogically in many professions, and thus there is no profession called ‘social pedagogue’ in Finland. This idea of multi-professionalism is also applied in the school context. School is seen as a context that is essential for the personal and social development and growth of children and young people, and when working in such a context all professionals can have a social pedagogical orientation in their work: A teacher can have a social pedagogical mindset in his/her work when trying to build pedagogical relations with the pupils – inspired by the German classic of social pedagogy, Herman Nohl – or when following the thoughts of Paulo Freire, the Brazilian critical pedagogical thinker, who saw education as dialogue and praxis. A special education teacher can find social pedagogy as a valuable orientation basis when striving to work holistically with the pupils. A school social worker can take a social pedagogical stance when working with the social needs and problems of the pupils and the school community. A school youth worker finds easily social pedagogical concepts that can help to develop youth work at schools, like participation and the common third. Any adult working in the school context can build his/her working orientation on social pedagogical ideas that combine the social and pedagogical perspectives to the lives of the children and young people they meet in their work.

In my presentation I will look at two professions working at schools, namely school social workers and teachers. In Finland we have quite many school social workers in the field who have studied social pedagogy either at a university or at a university of applied sciences. Social pedagogy is thus somewhat visible in the discussions and practices of school social work. What comes to the other profession, the idea of a social pedagogical orientation in teachers’ work is much more vague and not shared by many. However, we have and have had in the Masters degree program of social pedagogy at the University of Eastern some students who work as teachers and are looking for new ideas for their work from social pedagogy. We have also developed social pedagogy as a minor subject for students in the degree programme in class teacher education and other teacher education programmes. Both experienced teachers and teacher students have shown enthusiasm towards social pedagogical thinking and its possibilities in teacher’s work.

In this presentation I will share some ideas from both school social workers and teachers (also teacher students) describing their understandings of the possibilities and preconditions for social pedagogical thinking at schools: What does it mean to think social pedagogically in the work as school social worker or teacher? How does this social pedagogical mindset affect their work in school context? How does it show? And are there some limitations to work social pedagogically at schools?
Challenges faced by national educational authorities when implementing school development - A qualitative case study about an attempt to create accessible teaching environments in a Swedish municipality’s pre-schools and schools

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1. Research topic/aim
National school authorities regularly introduce new concepts for school development to be implemented “at a grassroots level”. This paper addresses one such school development concept implemented in a Swedish municipality. Its goal was to increase children’s’ and students’ access to learning environments in schools and pre-schools. Implementation of this pedagogical concept was to proceed over a longer period of time and be linked to systematic quality work carried out in the municipality. The purpose of this paper is to describe and discuss how the implementation process was perceived by the school administration, teachers and other personal during the time the concept was introduced and thereafter.

2. Theoretical framework
The point of departure for this study is how the implementation process is related to what in Sweden is referred to as chain of governance. The chain of governance is the main principal for the organizational framework that creates structure for top-down management and as such is central to describing and understanding the implementation process within this framework. Implementing educational concepts is often considered relatively unproblematic by school authorities, however there are indications that there are a number of difficulties to overcome.

3. Methodological design
The study is based on a qualitative case study that is limited to one preschool, one school and the project’s steering group. The research design can be characterized as an ongoing evaluation project, a term that has been used more and more in recent years related to different types of development projects in order to achieve a number of advantages pertaining to evaluation, research and organizational development. A central idea of ongoing evaluation research is to increase the effectiveness of development work by providing ongoing feedback to project management, but also by contributing to systematic learning, generating new research-based knowledge as well as demonstrating alternative ways of solving problems.
Collecting data from several sources allowed for data triangulation. The compilation and analysis of data is based on a hermeneutic interpretation related to the theoretical basis of the study. The results are based on both the managements’ and the staffs’ perspectives both of which are compared and contrasted to each other. Interest is directed at the processes that were initiated and what took place in those processes.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
The study is expected to show how the project’s steering group acted to implement the evaluation tool, how they tried to transform the project concept into practical activities, how they informed and communicated with the staff concerned, how they organized the work and how they addressed the problems that arose along the way. This description is contrasted with how school management and staff describe what happened when the concept was applied in their organizations.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
There is a general interest in showing how centrally formulated concepts are implemented at the local level, because in many countries similar initiatives are being carried out, albeit in other areas. An increased understanding of this can contribute to increased general knowledge of implementation processes, but also in this specific case to problematize the concept of accessibility.
Preconditions for a sustainable change of practice

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Research topic/Aim:
The aim of the presented study is to investigate the preconditions for a sustainable change of practice when implementing policy driven change programs at schools. The studied program is called Läslyftet and was launched in Sweden 2015. Läslyftet is a large scale national professional learning program aiming to offer teachers new knowledge that will enhance the reading- and writing skills of their pupils.

Theoretical frameworks:
The theoretical framework mobilized in this study is based on the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Engeström, 1987). The framework consists of four dimensions of sustainable change: active and delegated ownership, needs-driven development, development towards a partly shared object of activity, and artifact mediated depth (Öhman Sandberg, 2014).

Methodology/research design:
The presented work is based on a case study conducted at a K-9 Swedish elementary school. An interactive research approach (Aagard Nilsson & Svensson, 2006) has been used, ensuring that the whole school staff has taken active part in shaping the study alongside with the researchers. The project started in 2016 and will end in spring 2018. Data collection has included observations, semi structured thematic interviews with the school management, so called “coaches” and teachers at a school participating in Läslyftet for one year. The collected data have been used as mirror data analysis seminars, and has been analyzed by both researchers and school staff.

Expected conclusions/Findings:
The expected findings are that a sustainable change of practice occurs when the results of Läslyftet answers to needs at all levels at the school. An active delegated ownership at all levels and a partly shared object of activity are expected to be crucial preconditions for a sustainable change of practice.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:
School reforms and policy driven programs aiming for sustainable change of practice, are common in the educational system. However, it is uncertain if programs can fulfil the expectations of the funding organizations. Research shows that policy driven programs often fail to realize the intentions behind policies and, it thus remains unclear to what extent policy driven projects contribute to a sustainable change of practice. Subsequently, there is a need for more knowledge about the preconditions needed for a sustainable change of practice.

References:
Teachers’ and school leaders’ understandings of their mission to integrate practice-based research in school: challenges and opportunities

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Research topic/aim
Over time, states undertake various education policies reforms to govern the development of education. The issue of practice-based research in teacher and school practice in Sweden may be seen as such an example. The Swedish Education Act states that education should be based on research and proven experience. The change to a research-based way of working imposes great challenges on teachers, school leaders and on non-academic organisations like municipalities to handle.

The aim of this study is to create an understanding of teachers’ and school leaders’ understandings of the mission of integrating practice-based research into the school, their concrete work with the question, perceived challenges and opportunities as well as the support they need in order to fulfill their mission.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework is based on policy enactment and policy implementation, relating it to a school development perspective.

Methodological design
The study is performed at a municipality in Sweden, who enacted initiatives to promote the integration of practice-based research into schools. Participants of the study were teachers and school leaders from pre-school, compulsory and non-compulsory school. Surveys were used to grasp the participants’ understandings and work with the mission of integrating practice-based research into the school.

Expected conclusions/findings
The preliminary findings are that the participants experienced the mission to integrate practice-based research as a somewhat complex and ambiguous task that is difficult to master and enact in their practice. However, they also perceived that there are opportunities connected to the mission, which relate to school development. The participants also highlighted the importance of support in carrying out the mission. The support related to, for example, their need for developing their knowledge about practice-based research and also receiving supervision in their practical work as teachers or school leaders working with practice-based research.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
In the Nordic countries, there is an increasing interest for practice-based research in schools, which aims for developing schools through implementing research results and also producing practice-based research. Therefore, our study in Sweden represents an interesting example on different dilemmas and opportunities, based on teachers’ and school leaders’ experiences of integrating research in schools, that can inform other research and development projects in Nordic countries and internationally.

References
Health and learning – Building a common bridge together challenging educational science and school development

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Research topic
Education is one of the most important determinants for public health and health is closely linked to education. Good health aids the learning process and a good learning environment in school also promotes health. The Swedish National Agency for Education states that schoolchildren’s well-being and development should be a focus in schools, and health and lifestyle issues are to be addressed. In the recent guidelines for school health care staff in Sweden, the National Board of Health and Welfare highlights that staff are to contribute to health promoting school development and to eliminate obstacles for individual students’ learning. This speaks for multidisciplinary approaches to finding common denominators in the fields of health and education. The focus of this paper is the health dialogues held between students from age 6 to 18 and school nurses. A participatory approach was used to describe and understand the professionals’ and the students’ experiences of the health dialogue, and their thoughts on how to promote health literacy and contribute to health equality. The aim is to explore the possibilities for the concept of health literacy to bridge the multidisciplinary areas of health and learning contributing to educational science and school development.

Theoretical framework and research design
The starting point for the theoretical framework is the concept of health literacy as a synergy between health and learning. We use theories by Aaron Antonovsky (salutogenesis) and Paulo Freire (critical pedagogy) to aid the understanding of health and learning from an educational perspective in school development.

Expected findings /conclusions
The collaborative nature of work needed in schools today, due to the past years of reform in the Swedish educational system, is inviting interdisciplinary research into school development. We argue that the boundaries of educational science and practice can be transcended and redefined with the help of the concept health literacy.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
In our attempt to further our understanding of the multidisciplinary field of health and learning we found researchers in the Nordic countries are posing similar questions to us, thus finding it an interesting topic.

References
Samhandling (interaction) between school researchers and teachers in joint research and development projects

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Research topic/Aim: The Norwegian government promotes samhandling (interaction) between teacher education and the public schools as a means of developing and exchanging knowledge. Both the report “Regulations on Supervision of Higher Educational Quality” (Education Supervision Regulations) (NOKUT, 2017) and the whitepaper (2016-2017) “Culture for quality in higher education” (Ministry of Education, 2016-2017) emphasize that the teacher education institutions should develop processes of samhandling with the public schools. However, the term "samhandling" is neither nuanced nor clarified in these documents. Therefore, this paper aims at developing empirically based knowledge of samhandling regarding research and development projects of educational practice. Specifically, we examine how school researchers and teachers in joint school research and development projects understand samhandling.

Theoretical frameworks: Samhandling as a phenomenon is hardly theorized and scarcely articulated (Torgersen & Steiro, 2009). The consequence of this is that educational institutions concerning both teacher education and the public school may have different understandings and procedures for samhandling. Such conditions for samhandling may lead to tensions and detachments between parties (ibid.).

Methodology research design: The paper is part of a mixed method study, combining quantitative and qualitative data. It presents findings and discusses whether different understandings of samhandling among school researchers and teachers may have impact on samhandling processes in school research and development projects.

To gain a closer understanding, we examine two perspectives regarding samhandling between school researchers and teachers during school research and development projects. Teachers as researchers have the inside or participatory perspective on educational practice as they develop pedagogical knowledge based on their own and/ or colleagues' educational practice (Saeverot, 2017). School researchers have the outer perspective on educational practice as they examine educational practice from the outside, but at the same time through the knowledge teachers as researchers have developed from the inside of their own practice (ibid.).

When we ask both teachers and school researchers about how they understand samhandling in research and development projects, we gain knowledge from two perspectives, both from those on the inside of educational practice, the teachers, and those who are on the outside of educational practice, the school researchers. Together, the examination of these two perspectives may contribute to a more holistic understanding of how the research and practice field interact.

Expected conclusions/findings: A hypothesis in the study suggests that samhandling between school researchers and teachers during school research and development projects can be complex and that the outcomes may be influenced by, inter alia, power relations and different views of knowledge. More specifically, different views of knowledge may affect how samhandling parties perceive their own and the others’ interactional skills and capabilities, while differences in perceptions may lead to tension. It is also expected that samhandling situations that focus on inter-subjectivity may, to a relatively large degree, contribute to the exchange and development of knowledge.

Relevance to Nordic educational research:

The paper is relevant to Nordic educational research as it proposes a new perspective on the often discussed gap between theory and practice (Carr & Kemmis, 2003; Hiim, 2010; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Krüger, 2001; Kvernbekk, 2012).
Preschool teachers’ professional learning – innovation in scientific based practice

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Research Topic/Aim
This paper reports an ongoing practice based research project aimed to contribute to a deeper knowledge of preschool teachers’ Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Schulman, 1986) when science and technology are addressed. Previous research has identified lack of possibilities for science and technology learning in preschool environments but the research does not go far enough in investigating programs for developing preschool teachers’ science and technology pedagogical content knowledge. The main question in the project is: In what ways can collaboration between preschool teachers’ and researchers contribute to preschool teachers’ professional learning and the preschool development? The project is based on Schulman’s (1986) theoretical perspectives Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), in combination with Selander and Kress (2010) designoriented perspective and the idea of multimodality, Design for Learning (DFL). Those perspectives contributes to explore preschool teachers’ mutual engagement in procedures, tools, concepts, language and different ways of acting, in the perspective of children’s, development, play and learning.

Methodology
The research project is based on a qualitative approach with base in Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood & Maguire, 2003) and Content Representation (CoRe) design. There was a voluntary participation in one group of seven preschool teachers in collaboration with researchers. The specific content was decided by each participant. Data includes CoRe documentations and audio recorded interviews. Data were analysed by a thematic content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analyses explored several bodies of change: individuals, collective and organisation development.

Expected conclusions/findings
The overall conclusion is that collaboration between preschool teachers and researchers has involved a process which is seen as a tool for preschool teachers’ professional learning, to deal with issues and challenges in science and technology content, children’s signs of learning, and implement improvements in a collaborative and reflective way. The results shows the importance of scientific based awareness in preschool teachers’ practice to meet issues and challenges in content such as science and technology, and implement innovative improvements.

Relevance for Nordic educational research
The study reports of preschool teachers improved Pedagogical Content Knowledge and dilemmas preschool teachers face according to scientific based practice. One issue that occurred is the importance preschool teacher express, to have the opportunity to participate in practice based research projects and the collaboration with researchers. Another question of importance is preschool teachers’ possibilities to get access to scientific databases. Those questions have relevance for preschool teachers’ professional learning and for preschool development not only in Sweden, but in all the Nordic countries.

Keywords: Content representation, Design for Learning, Participatory Action Research, Pedagogical Content Knowledge, preschool teacher, professional learning, science, technology

References
Multilingual Adolescents’ views on Linguistic Support in Finnish Basic Education

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The aim of this study is to give information concerning the needs in developing basic education in multilingual and multicultural school contexts. This study combines educational science (Vygotsky 1978, 1986; Bronfenbrenner 1979) and linguistic approach (Cummins 1991; van Lier 2004), suggesting using the term educational linguistics (van Lier 1994a).
During the recent years the number of immigrants has grown in Finland. At the same time, our education system is facing new challenges on responding to the needs of more heterogeneous groups of learners. According to PISA results from 2012 and 2015 (OECD 2017) immigrant pupils perform less well in Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Denmark, and Estonia than in other countries compared to native pupils. This study utilizes Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory in describing the Finnish basic education system. The recent changes in the micro and chrono levels have happened with such rapidity that on the levels in between, meso, exo and micro, the actors have not been able to react to the changes with adequate intensity.
The data for this presentation are based on five interviews with students who have arrived in Finland after the age of 12 between 2010 and 2013. After preparatory education, they have attended basic education with linguistic support that is not legislative nor offered everywhere in Finland. At the time of the interviews, they have completed their basic education, and are studying in upper secondary education. The interviews have been transcribed and analyzed by means of qualitative data analysis (Miles & Huberman 1994). The findings suggest that developing ways of supporting immigrant pupils with subject integrated language teaching is essential especially among students who have migrated to a new country in their early teens. Linguistic support not only helps the students to learn the language and the contents of the subjects but also to gain positive learning experiences. Without adequate support, the risk of falling behind grows, and that can be considered a threat for both individuals, and the whole society.

References:
Teacher agency in conversations about teaching practices when reading curriculum steering documents

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Teacher agency is an important aspect to consider when talking about teachers professional work. Expectations on teachers work have changed over time and resulted in increased demands, such as for example to manage self-control by interpreting steering documents for schools and making necessary changes in the pedagogical work to meet new requirements. The question is to what extent such an exercise can be used by teachers to draw from their pedagogical knowledge and experiences in an interpretation of the texts, or if it just becomes a question of following prescribed rules for pedagogical work. Teacher agency helps focusing on how teachers handle this acting space as professional educational actors when they are supposed to perform in line with the centrally and democratically decided aims for school.

Teacher agency according to Priestley and others (2015) is based on an ecological perspective, which means that people's actions are seen as reflexive and creative abilities, which are influenced by conditions and prerequisites in the situations where the dealings take place. Agency is characterized primarily by intentionality. This means that the acting is governed by a particular purpose and that there is capacity to formulate possible action options in this direction. But the agency is also influenced by contextual factors such as culture as well as social and material structures. In order to fully understand agency, the interaction between individual capacity and contextual factors must therefore be taken into account.

The study examines how conversations in teacher teams are conducted when teachers discuss their teaching practice based on reading a specific curriculum steering document. The steering document is about how to support pupils based on their specific needs to make it possible for everyone to reach the learning goals in the curriculum. Focus group conversations were used. The task for the teachers was to read the steering document in advance and to interpret the content collaboratively through the conversation. The purpose for the researchers was to listen to what the teachers themselves thought of as important aspects in this conversation and how they acted through the dialogue.

The study’s results show that language is a powerful asset in this work, which appears in the form of various ways of acting through language. The conversation is being guided by the guidelines in the document, but the teacher team is also questioning the content and constructing new knowledge using their own practical knowledge. The teachers’ reflexive abilities are used to consider different acting options. Different forms of agency (improving, constructive and practice agency) are visualized linked to those different language acts.

By identifying and describing different forms of agency in conversations, and what is underpinning it, the study contributes to visualizing how teachers act responsibly in situations where different expectations are supposed to be met. This can contribute to an input in the discussion about teacher professionalism in the Nordic educational research discussion.

References

A more motivating lower secondary school? Intensions and realities in a national strategy for school development

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Keywords: School development, policy intention, national strategy, development of lower secondary school, motivation and mastery, practical and varied education

Research topic
Based on the Norwegian National School Development Strategy "Lower Secondary School in Development" (lower secondary in focus) this article discusses the college- and university sector’s (CU-sector) experiences of involvement in educational policy reforms for school development. Using theoretical perspectives on coupling mechanisms, as well as observation data from regional CU-participant seminars, we discuss experiences from a political school development initiative that has been conducted under the leadership of two governments that represent different policy directions. Our main focus is on the CU-sector, and the opportunities and challenges the sector has seen in the work of the four-year commitment in the program. Various understandings and practices of the national policy intention have emerged when the CU-sector has been involved as an actor in this work.

Theoretical framework
Coburn (2004) identified five coupling mechanisms, namely: rejection, decoupling (symbolic responses with no effect), parallel structures (to balance different priorities), assimilation (make a fit with pre-existing understanding), and accommodation (substantial changes in the preexisting understanding). In this article, we use these five coupling mechanisms as analytical tools in combination with the distinction between external and internal accountability in examining how school leaders respond to new policy demands within a Norwegian context. Also, context, both national and local, is important in order to understand why policies are interpreted and translated differently in seemingly similar schools (Ball et al., 2012).

Methodology
The analyses in the study, are based on the authors involvement as participant as CU-actors in the nationally policy initiated school development program, including content analysis of reports, presentations and from sharing experiences in the cooperation with schools and the national and regional collaboration between the CU-sector and the Education Directorate.

Findings
The CU-sector’s experience from the initiative has shown that it is of the utmost importance that the involved actors are active participants in the process of negotiating and creating common understanding of the intentions for key initiatives introduced into the school. In the lower secondary school, the concepts and language have been linked to the intention at the national policy level. Lack of shared understanding and pre-involvement among different actors in the program, has contributed to overshadow the original intention of more practical and varied teaching that was presented as essential in order to create a more motivating experience of the education of the students in lower secondary school.

Relevance for Nordic educational research
This study contributes to new knowledge about how national policy intentions for school development is experienced by the CU-sector, and how aiming for school development needs to be negotiated and re-negotiated. However, we find a need for future research on how coherence
between political intentions and the school's perceived needs and reality is dealt with, processed and understood at different levels in the education system.

References


What is happening in teachers' collegial conversation practices? A study of how practice architectures enable and constrain change in local professional development practices and teaching practices

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The overall aim of the present study is to study the collegial conversation practices within the government financed professional development program "The Boost for Mathematics". The aim is also to study what enables and constrains change in teachers' local professional development practices and teaching practices.

The data is analysed based on the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008) in order to describe the relationships in the local and global context where the teachers and the professional development program are located. The theory of practice architectures is also used to draw conclusions about what constitutes, or enables and constrains, change in teachers' local professional development and teaching practices.

The study is conducted as a case study, where the case consists of an independent school company with four schools in four Swedish municipalities. The sample is strategically chosen and has been based on the category critical cases of the type "most likely cases", in line with the hypothesis that the selected school company should constitute a particularly favourable case in terms of the structure of the professional development program. All mathematics teachers at the four schools have participated in the Boost for Mathematics during two academic years. Data has been collected during three years and consists of sound recordings and observations of collegial conversations, documentation from collegial meetings, teachers' individual reflections and surveys with both mathematics teachers and all other teachers at the four schools.

In the first part of the dissertation, which is the content of this presentation, the result is presented in the form of a narrative created by a thematic analysis of three collegial discussions within the Boost for Mathematics where the facilitator was not present. In the analysis, data in the form of teachers' individual reflections as well as documentation from collegial meetings, have also been used.

The results show that the sayings, doings and relatings in the collegial conversation practices are shaped by different arrangements, or practice architectures. The analysis shows that the collegial conversation practice is held in place and formed by the practice architectures at both the local (the school company) and the national (the Agency of Education) level. Further analyzes show how these practice architectures together with the individual schools' practice architectures enable and constrain change in local professional development and teaching practices.

Collegial learning is a popular trend in teachers' professional development today, in Sweden as well as internationally. Collegial learning, however, is not a success factor per se. In order for change and development to come about, more is required than teachers sitting together in collegial forums (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). There is still a lack of research in how teachers learn in professional learning communities (Meirink, Meijer & Verloop, 2007) and in how these collaborative settings can improve teacher practice (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). There is also a need for understanding how teachers make sense of content and pedagogy from a teacher’s perspective (Chapman, 2014).
Small-Scale Projects on a Large Scale - A qualitative action research case study of a national school development initiative in Swedish schools

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1. Research topic/aim
The PISA test and school inspections have a strong impact on national school policy. Poor test results usually result in interventions at different levels in education systems, for example, training efforts for teachers and school principals as well as local school development projects. With these factors in mind, the Swedish School Agency has initiated Collaboration for Best School (CBS) (Samverkan för Bästa Skola). This initiative is directed at local school boards that, according to the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, have low-performing pupils or a high percentage of students who do not complete their studies. Further, the local school boards are judged to have or are presumed to have difficulties coping with such issues on their own. CBS involves actions that are supported by research and proven experiences, with a university institution acting as an external advisor. In this case, the authors have this role.

CBS was initiated top-down nationally and can be characterised as being both large in scale, as many local school boards are involved, as well as small in scale, as each project has relatively limited scope in time and space. This way of organising development in schools raises questions as to what the results are and what there is to learn: for example, what processes are initiated, what problems are identified and how these are solved. This case study is delimited to one of the local school boards involved with CBS. The purpose is to study how the work was conducted in the first one and a half years and how those involved described their actions and the processes they initiated, as well as what happened within these single processes and how they affected each other.

2. Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework is based on an implementation perspective of studying processes that occur at different hierarchical levels (chain of governance) in the school system, with focus on the local level.

3. Methodological design
The methodological design is a qualitative action research case study of an ongoing process. The researchers involved have, to some degree, an insider perspective as the data they are collecting are also used to influence the processes that they study. A central idea of action research is to increase the effectiveness of developmental work, providing continuous feedback while contributing to collegial learning, generating research-based knowledge and demonstrating alternative ways of solving problems. Data have been gathered by way of participatory observations, individual and group interviews, and documentation that is relevant to the purpose. Analysis of data took place through a hermeneutic interpretation related to the theoretical framework of the study.

4. Expected conclusions/findings
The study is expected to make processes that arose visible and to show how those involved at different organisational levels act, how they organise the work, how they address problems that arise along the way, and how processes at different organisational levels influence each other.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research
There is a public interest in making visible the way in which nationally top-down school development initiatives are expressed at the local level, as similar efforts are being made in many other countries that also contribute to an increase in general knowledge about implementation processes.
Teaching about fractions in mathematics. Professional learning about progression with an action research approach

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Topic, aim and framework
Progression in mathematics instruction can be seen as a quality in teaching that entails gradually increased demands on the student (Säfström, 2017). If there is a lack of progression in teaching or the demands increase too much, this can reduce students’ opportunities to learn. An assumption for this study was that progression in teaching between school stages was important. Furthermore, teachers should take joint responsibility for learning within their teams to develop the quality in teaching (cf. Wennergren, 2016).

The approach of the study was based on action research. Four teachers from preschool to 9th grade (age 1-16) were invited to a temporary team, a community of practice. The overall aim of the study was to develop knowledge about teaching fractions when teachers used students’ understandings as a point of departure for their actions plans. A second aim was to illuminate what influences progression in their teaching. In addition, I intend to highlight the importance of the team’s negotiation of teaching fractions. Wenger’s dimensions of social learning were used as an analytical tool: joint enterprise, mutual engagement and shared repertoire.

Methodology/research design
The team of teachers used the four phases of action research: plan, act, observe and reflect, during their learning processes. The teachers’ learning sessions were videotaped and transcribed and this provided the main data that formed the basis of the results.

Findings
Four themes that described teachers’ negotiation of qualities in mathematics instruction were identified.
Interpreting students’ understandings: By analysing students’ understandings through videotaped instruction, the teachers interpreted students’ understandings and observed which kind of instruction enabled learning.
Basing instruction on students’ understandings: The teachers reified mathematical instructions based on students’ understandings, which entailed an expanded content.
Visualizing fractions: There was not always an automatic correspondence between visualizing fractions with everyday materials or manipulative materials and the conventions regarding fractions within mathematics, which affected students’ learning opportunities.
Ensuring students’ understanding: Even if the students seemed to be united about fractions, the teachers were uncertain how to ensure students’ understanding. The teachers were uncertain whether every student had an understanding of the concept and whether they were able to use their knowledge in another context.

Conclusions
When teachers, regardless of what stage was involved, reified similar instructions, it did not benefit students’ learning opportunities. In order to improve progression in teaching fractions, it was important that teachers succeeded in identifying students’ understandings and that the team negotiated different qualities in their community of practice. The shared repertoire (the pre-tests and the video recordings) formed the core of negotiating progression based on students’ understandings.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
This study contributes knowledge about diverse qualities in analysing students’ understandings by means of pre-tests or video recordings. The study also contributes knowledge about professional learning when participants have diverse experience.

Key words: action research, analytical tools, communities of practice, fraction, negotiations, professional learning, progression, school stages
Symposium
CIE – Creativity, Innovation and entrepreneurship in the Nordic schools

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Research topic/Aim: The aim of this symposium is to discuss and explore how pedagogical entrepreneurship is implemented in the school system in the Nordic countries. As in the rest of Europe the Nordic countries face a number of challenges that can only be met if it has innovative, well-educated, and entrepreneurial citizens, who, whatever their walk of life, have the spirit of inquisitiveness to things in new ways, and the courage to meet and adapt to the challenges facing them. Moreover, dynamic economy, which is innovative and able to create the jobs that are needed, will require a greater number of young people who are willing and able to become entrepreneurs – young people who will launch and successfully develop their own commercial and social ventures, or who will become innovators in the wider organizations in which they work. Because education is one of the keys to shaping attitudes of young people, skills and culture, it is vital that entrepreneurial learning is addressed from an early age.

Theoretical frameworks: In the symposium we are interested in studies that compare and contrast different perspectives on pedagogical entrepreneurship. Pedagogical entrepreneurship can be understood as essential not only to shape the mindsets of young people but also to provide the skills and knowledge that are central to developing an entrepreneurial culture. The main question is: How does this affect the students’ learning and the role of the student in the classroom? The papers presented will represent different theoretical frameworks ranking from the theories of Basil Bernstein theory of pedagogic practice to the activity theories of Vygotsky, Dewey and Yrjö Engeström.

Methodology/research design: Different research will be presented. Some of the research use the method of inquiry and in-depth semi-structured interviews. Other participants present research based on surveys and a quantitative research design. Yet other research is based on review and text- and discourse analysis of policy papers. In whole, the papers represent different methodological perspectives to meet in joint discussions on pedagogical entrepreneurship in schools in the Nordic countries.

Expected conclusions/Findings: The symposium will explore how the pedagogical entrepreneurship is defined in the Nordic countries.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research: As the teacher education is mandatory for future teachers, the content of the education will likely have an impact on practices in tomorrow’s education system in the Nordic countries.
Pedagogic Entrepreneurship in Nordic Teacher Education; The Finnish Case

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Åbo Akademi University

Pedagogical entrepreneurship (PE), a policy driven phenomenon with its roots on the supranational level, has been on the educational agenda in Europe for the past few decades (Dal, Elo, Leffler, Svedberg & Westerberg, 2016). PE has spread to the national levels, transforming along the way, and can currently be found on most levels of education. As teacher education affects how educational agendas are transformed into practice in basic education, our aim is to explore if and how PE emerges within teacher education in the Nordic countries. This paper is a part of this comparative study, focusing specifically on the Finnish case.

PE covers both a narrow interpretation (entrepreneurship education) focusing mainly on promoting small business start-up, as well as a broad interpretation (enterprise education) focused on fostering a proactive and enterprising attitude amongst students (Dal et.al., 2016). Finland was an early adopter of PE as it entered the national core curriculum in 1994 (Utbildningsstyrelsen, 1994). Though present as a cross-curricular theme since 1994, research has showed that teachers are not well oriented in PE, and that it has not necessarily found its way into teacher education as envisioned (Elo, 2015; Undervisningsministeriet, 2009).

The study is executed in two stages. First, the study programme of each teacher education in Finland (9 in total) is analysed. The analysis focuses on the mandatory 60ects that form the core of teacher education. The second stage is conducting personal interviews with key persons within each teacher education, with the purpose of establishing if and how PE is present as optional courses, through the Open University, as modules in larger courses etc.

Preliminary results show that PE is present at the majority of teacher education programmes in Finland, all focusing on a broad interpretation of the phenomena. In some cases, individual optional courses are offered, in others PE emerges as a part of a course with a broader focus. Some faculties do not offer any studies in PE. A common feature for all the faculties offering it is that it is dependent on the efforts of one or a few dedicated teachers. This indicates that PE has not established itself as a core element in Finnish teacher education, despite the push from policy.

The study is relevant in a Nordic perspective as it focuses on comparing how the phenomenon of PE is handled within Nordic teacher education.

References:
Developing Entrepreneurial Education Collaboratively on-the-job: An exploratory study of a municipal in North Sweden

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Research topic/aim
Teachers learning together and principals leading teacher development has been identified as important aspects to build a more successful school in terms of student learning. Even though this is recognized, teachers tend to work alone with their teaching and principals spend a very limited time on pedagogical development directed towards their teachers. To battle both these areas (and some others), a development program was launched in the municipally of Boden. The idea was to form a common value base and based on this develop activities that could help reinforce the values (including entrepreneurial learning) and thus build a new school culture where collaboration between teachers and pedagogical leadership from principals should be central elements. One activity is a development program running from August 2017 to May 2018 involving some 25 teachers and five principals focusing on implementing entrepreneurial learning using developmental feedback as the mail tool. The inspiration for the developmental feedback came from Viviane Robinson’s Open-to-Learn (OTL) conversations. However, instead of letting only principals lead these developmental feedback sessions (as OTL conversations are designed), we wanted also teachers to learn to lead their colleagues through a developmental feedback conversation. Thus, this study is aimed at exploring the described development program in terms of its outcomes and effects on participants and the school culture.

Theoretical framework
We will draw on Robinson’s theory of OTL and link it to entrepreneurial learning. As we conceptualize the developmental feedback conversations to be both principal-teacher (hierarchical) and teacher-teacher (peer-to-peer), we need to find an overarching model. Still, the idea with OTL is to create a climate of learning that allows the actors to express their genuine views.

Methodological design
The empirical material is collected from participants in a course given by Luleå University of Technology and financed by the Swedish School Agency. The focus of the course is collective professional development in the area of entrepreneurial learning using developmental feedback. Participants are both teachers (N=25) and principals (N=5) from both primary school (N=8) and upper secondary school (N=22). Material is collected via observation during the course, interviews with the participants and interactions via Loopme - a social media learning platform.

Expected conclusions/findings
As the development programme still is in progress at the time of the conference, we expect only to be able to provide preliminary results about the effectiveness of the approach. Still, we are confident that we will have ample results to deliver and discuss by the time of the conference.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
Finding new ways to increase collaboration among teachers targeted to improve education is central in order to tap into the potential of teacher collectives. Likewise, finding novel ways for principals to engage teachers in pedagogical development can be key to sustainable development in schools. As the Nordic tradition of leadership is putting extra focus on participation, these collaborative and inclusive forms of teacher development might be extra interesting in a Nordic perspective.
Introduction:
Politicians and education researchers argue for implementation of pedagogical entrepreneurship (PE) in all school subjects due to its lifelong learning perspective (Rasmussen & Fritzner, 2016; Lackéus, 2016; Sagar, 2013); practice of entrepreneurial skills, gain understanding of the complex nature of authentic issues, influence the teaching practice and experience strong relevance of the learning goals.

The present study is made possible through a two-year ERASMUS+ project/grant in which the researchers provide professional development and support for Swedish, Danish and Norwegian compulsory school teachers while implementing PE in mathematics, science and mother-tongue.

Research topic/Aim:
Implementation of new teaching approaches often requires continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers. Implementation of PE has been shown to be associated with specific issues due to its economic connotations. The researchers’ collected experience from working on PE together with practicing teachers indicate subject specific concerns. Hence, the following research questions:
What general and subject specific teacher concerns may be identified in the process of implementing PE in mathematics, science and mother tongue?
What subject specific variations in the design of PE may be identified in relation to the difference in content knowledge in mathematics, science and mother tongue?

Theoretical frameworks:
Based on entrepreneurship theory (e.g. Sarasvathy, 2008) PE is focused on means and possibilities within school subjects, in opposition to transmissive, reproductive and goal-oriented learning. This calls for an epistemological transformation of subject specific content knowledge that allows interpretation in many ways. This project will provide some theoretical insights into the process of opening up for a ‘didactics of possibilities’.

Methodology/research design:
During the implementation and development part of the project, qualitative data will be collected through three kinds of forms which the teachers fill in and share with each other on a digital platform; 1) describing own PE activities and learning goals, 2) results from having tried a colleague’s PE activities and 3) reflections from observation of another teacher’s lesson including PE. The teachers’ own reflections on and experiences from the implementation of PE will be collected through teacher journals.

Expected conclusions/Findings:
We expect to identify group-level as well as individual teacher concerns in relation to the implementation of PE. We also expect to identify PE specific concerns as well as subject specific PE designs. We expect to contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms impacting the PE implementation processes in general and in relation to the subject specific content knowledge.

Relevance for Nordic Educational Research:
There is extensive attention given to PE in the Nordic countries (e.g. Nordic Council of Ministers, 2016).

References


Collegial learning – an opportunity for educational development of entrepreneurial learning?

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Research topic/aim
Entrepreneurship in a school setting, and what is called entrepreneurial learning, has been problematized over the last twenty years and also implemented in various ways and with varying success in both the Nordic and other European countries' school systems. In many ways, the introduction of the concept has been linked to school development and teachers' professional development (Sagar, 2013) and various forms of in-service training have contributed to this. Different kinds of mentoring processes to enhance teachers' collective learning and professional development have become more and more common as in-service training, for example Teacher Learning Communities. In this paper we use the concept collegial learning for those different methods aimed at teachers together and under supervision creating knowledge for development. However, and surprisingly, collegial learning does not seem to be discussed or studied as a method for developing teachers' knowledge about entrepreneurial learning in school. The purpose of this study is to investigate and discuss collegial learning as a strategy for teachers' in-service training and knowledge development and especially, as a strategy for understanding and developing entrepreneurial learning in schools.

Theoretical framework
The study is based on several theoretical approaches and research, especially theories of collegial learning (Langelotz 2017), leadership (Ruskovaara & Pihkala, 2015) and entrepreneurial learning (Jones & Iredale, 2010).

Methodology/research design
The study is based on two part-studies. In the first part-study, four questionnaires have been continuously sent out and answered by mentors who lead teacher groups in collegial learning. In the second part-study, observations of teaching and interviews with mentors at an elementary K-9 school have been conducted. Common to both sub-studies is that the educators receive training and guidance in managing these processes.

Expected conclusions/findings
Preliminary results of these studies show that supervisors face structural barriers and interpersonal challenges. Teachers' experience exchanges prove to lead to both adaptation and development of the tasks they have to solve together. An adaptive learning leads to more routine and reproductive action, while development-oriented learning involves discovering and testing new action options. In terms of educational development towards increased entrepreneurial learning, the preliminary results show that adaptive learning is counterproductive. In order to meet changes in the surrounding world and promote entrepreneurial learning and diversity, different ways of action and reasoning are needed, which according to research should benefit from a development-oriented approach.

References
NETWORK 25

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING
Practice mentors for teacher students mentoring and the potential impact the mentoring have on teacher student’s perception of moving towards becoming a professional teacher

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Høgskolen i Østfold

Research Questions
Which approaches to mentoring can be revealed when school mentors guide the teacher students and in which way do these approaches contribute to the students perception of moving towards becoming a professional teacher?

Theoretical framework
We are leaning to the works of Lauvås & Handal (2014, 2016) and Lejonberg (2016) who represent different approaches to what guiding might be. We are also paying attention to research that deals with the concept of the professional teacher (Grimen 2008, Heggen 2010).

Methodological framework
The research strategy is Participatory Action Research (Pålshaugen, 1994) with a phenomenological approach (Giorgi 1997). The methods applied are focus group interview (Gulliksen & Hjardemaal 2011) and the letter method (Berg 2000).

Preliminary findings
Utterances from the teacher students in the materiale suggest that the students are confronted with different mentoring profiles. Some of the profiles represent quite different professional approaches to mentoring. Nevertheless, the utterances from the students indicate that they more or less seem to appreciate this diversity of mentoring approaches.

A majority of the utterances from the students are characterized by a contextual, concrect and her and now attitude towards the very complex work of a teacher; they are mainly occupied by the planning and the completion of their teaching and how to behave in the classroom.

In the next phases of the project we intend investigate the students perception of the impact the mentoring offered to them might have towards becoming professional teachers.

Relevance
The project is important for educational research in the Nordic countries linked to the mentoring of student teachers because of the potential contribution to the discussion of which approaches to mentoring we should choose, if we ought to choose (Bjerkholt 2017).

References
Opportunities and challenges related to mentoring of NQT from the school leader’s perspective

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Research topic/aim

The evaluation of the guidance program for newly qualified teachers (NQT) in kindergartens and schools in Norway (Holm, Helle, Kavli, Råholt & Ødegård, 2015) points out possible effects of individual guidance for NQT. It appears that the individual guidance may have exogenous effects in terms of influencing circumstances beyond the actual guidance situation, help raise the level of reflection in the organization so that the school evolves as a learning organization. The guidance program may have added value by enabling NQT to be agents of development in the organization. Bjerkholt claims that the exogenous effect is poorly utilized (Bjerkholt, 2017). National guidelines for mentoring NQT will be introduced in Norway. It is therefore of interest to have a closer look into how principals in upper secondary education view the significance of mentoring NQT and its effects when it comes to developing a learning organization. How can schools provide systematic mentoring for NQT? Will national guidelines for mentoring NQT be of significance? What is needed for practice to be developed/changed and how can principals and school management contribute? Research on mentoring in a broader context is important, claims Langdon (Langdon, Alexander, Ryde & Baggetta, 2014). This paper focuses on the opportunities and challenges related to mentoring of NQT from the school leader’s perspective.

Theoretical framework

NQT’s need to be part of a learning organization where support from colleagues and school management contributes to a good learning environment (Helleve, 2010). Professional learning communities are characterized by the development of knowledge through shared experiences and critical reflection related to practice (Buysse, Sparkman & Wesley, 2003). Professional learning communities can change school culture through open practice that encourages sharing and collaboration (Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008). In these processes, it is necessary to facilitate sharing and development and the principals play an important role in this work.

Methodological design

The study includes interviews of five principals in five different schools in eastern Norway. We seek their views about how mentoring is organized and linked to development in their school and how national guidelines can influence on mentoring. The interviews will be conducted in January-February 2018.

Expected conclusions/findings

We expect findings in these areas: The principals consider and acknowledges NQT’s to be essential in their organization, they have a model that explains how, and that they experience lack of time and opportunities to implement mentoring to NQT. Further, we expect that future national guidelines will be considered as a necessary contribution for the guidance to NQT. We wonder in what ways they will describe their school as a learning organisation?

Relevance to Nordic educational research

This study illuminates the significance of mentoring for developing NQT and the school as an organization from the principals’ perspective (in upper secondary education in Norway). We claim that the study also has aspects that make it relevant for other Nordic countries.
Building a national framework on mentoring newly qualified teachers

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1Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge

In Norway, the interest for teachers’ transition from education to occupation began at the end of the 1970s (Flockenes & Mæhle 1981; Jordell 1982, 1986, Sandven 1980; Strømnes 1979). In 1982, the Ministry of Education financed a study on newly qualified teachers (Jordell 1982). Based on a questionnaire among new teachers, the report concluded with three recommendations related to responsibility and the teacher education role.

1. Responsibility of school leaders
2. The need for trying out different models on supporting and mentoring new teachers.
3. The need for collaboration across arenas as teacher education, politicians, teacher organizations, The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS), and different other stakeholders.

The focus on the situation of newly qualified teachers graduates in Norway became known in 1997, starting with White paper (St. meld.) 48 (1996-97) and the proposal for a candidate year – a proposal that was met with attempts projects focusing on mentoring for newly qualified teachers. This resulted in a national venture of funds channeled to colleges and universities to develop models for follow-up and mentoring of graduates in Norway from 2003 and onwards. In 2006, mentoring programs were offered to approx. 9% of the graduates, while in 2016, about 60% of teachers in kindergarten and primary education were given the same offer. This offer does however not reach newly qualified teachers in kindergartens and schools.

Throughout this period from 2003 to 2017, activities have been based on voluntary cooperation between national and local political authorities, employers’ organizations, teachers’ trade unions and the university and college sector. The work includes all teacher groups from kindergarten teachers to teachers in upper secondary education. The common overall goal has been clear: all graduates are to receive an offer for mentoring individually and/or in groups throughout the first year after completing initial education.

The Storting (The Norwegian parliament) has therefore decided to develop a national framework for mentoring of new teachers in kindergartens and schools in Norway. After nearly 20 years of collaboration, the parts are now in the process of drawing up status and guidelines for future mentoring schemes for newly educated teachers in Norway. What experiences have been made, and which key alternatives are considered as viable paths in the further work?

In order to answer these questions, a joint parliamentary committee was appointed in autumn 2017 where all major actors are represented. The letter from the Storting’s Church, Education and Research Committee states the following:

“The Storting asks the government, in collaboration with the stakeholders to design a national framework for a mentoring system for graduates which ensures that all newly qualified teachers are covered by the scheme, and at the same time allows for local adaptation.”

In this symposium, we want to highlight the following questions:

• What was the background for this decision?
• What experience has been gained through the special Norwegian partnership model and what can research say about the results achieved?
• Where are we in the process of developing national guidelines for mentoring newly educated teachers, and which future scenarios can be seen?
• What significance can a quality assured and binding mentoring system have for a comprehensive national strategy aimed at ensuring teachers in Norwegian kindergartens and schools with high academic and pedagogical competence?
Symposium

Research circles in three Nordic countries - Learning from each other in teacher education across borders

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The symposium is based on a Nordplus Horizontal research project on the mutual relationship between practice and theory in teacher education. The project aim is to establish an equal research partnership (research circles) in Finland, Norway and Sweden. The research circles constitutes a Nordic network. The symposium starts with a short presentation and overview of the projects Professionalization through Supervision/mentoring - ProV I (2014-2015) and ProV II (2015-2018). The themes in this symposium are practice oriented research (Andeberg 2016), concept research circles (Persson 2016; Renblad & Brodin 2016), and different approaches towards research circles. The project is organized as three research circles: one in Laholm (Sweden), one in Vasa (Finland) and one in Notodden (Norway). Each of these research circles have participants from higher education (teacher education institutions) and from schools (primary, secondary or high school). The three research circles have been investigating different research questions on supervision and mentoring. Each of the research circles constitute a “learning environment” (Lave & Wenger 1991, 2003) and in some extent even based on the concept “expanding learning” (Engeström 1987, 2015). The three research circles collaborate in the Nordic ProV-Network on professionalization of supervision/mentoring in teacher education and in schools. This network has arranged workshops three times each year (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017), where the participants from the research circles have been visiting each other’s schools, presented and discussed their research projects with each other, and participated in different approaches towards reflective group-mentoring models.

The symposium will consist of an introduction and three presentations, one from each of the three research circles. After each presentation, there will be time for questions, comments and short discussions.

At the end of the symposium, the discussant will comment on the presentation. This presentation will be an introduction to discussing the question: What can be learned from these three examples on working in research circles as an approach towards practice oriented research and learning environments?

References (only new references will be added after each abstract)
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Contributor 1
Professionalization through mentoring: focusing on the experiences of the Swedish Research Circle

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The participants in the Swedish research circle consist of 8 first-teachers and 2 leaders from Osbecksgymnasium, and 1-2 researchers from University College of Halmstad. The teachers and the leaders participated in the project ProV by working in the research circle, whilst at the same time conducting research based development work at their school. The locally based development projects were organized as Further education as they received 5 credits.

The general part of the Norwegian curriculum emphasizes a research approach to learning (Education Directorate 2016). Similarly, the Swedish Skollagen emphasizes that "The education should rest on scientific grounds and proven experience" (SFS 2010: 800). An important prerequisite for realizing this is that teachers themselves are aware of what these concepts mean.

Persson (2016) describes research circles as a meeting between two arenas; the academic arena and the school arena, a constructed meeting space where there is a need to create new knowledge about the teachers' work. The concepts "silent knowledge", "proven experience" and "scientific research" have been used as analytical tools in this research (Persson 2016).

The research design is multi-methodic and exploratory (Merriam 2009; Postholm 2010). The data consists of one sound-recorded focus-group interview within the research circle, as well as sound-recorded workshops, logs from some participants, and field notes from the data collections in the ProV network.

The research question is: What does participating in the Swedish research circle give the first-teachers and the leaders at Osbecksgymnasium, and how will it affect their roles within the organization?

Preliminary findings according to the teachers and leaders at Osbecksgymnasium show that participation in the research circle has contributed to insight in a research based approach towards developmental projects, increased research based teaching, and ensured progress in quality improvements at the school. The teachers, who in their capacity as first-teachers in the school were agents of change, felt that participating in the research circle and the ProV-network made them more secure in their roles and strengthened their identity as first-teachers. This, in turn, enabled a better implementation of the development projects in the school.

References
https://www.udir.no/laring-og-trivsel/lareplanverket/
The main aim of the Norwegian research circle was to identify discourses on theory and praxis in teacher education and in the teacher education training schools. Teacher education consists of two learning environments: 1) the University and the students studying at the university, and 2) teacher education training schools and workplace learning. Worldwide, student teachers point at workplace learning and the supervisors at the teacher education training schools as the most important learning environment in teacher education (Clarke et al., 2013; Nilsen 2007; Solstad 2013; Sundli 2001). At the same time, research on teacher education documents a need of bridging the gap between theory and praxis in teacher education (Heggen & Raen, 2014; Munthe & Haug, 2010; Ulvik & Smith, 2016; Østrem, 2008).

The ProV-project is built on the importance of establishing a common understanding across these two learning environments. Teacher education needs to be based on an equal partnership between the schools and the University/University College (Meld.St.21 (2016-2017). The project wanted the research circles to be a learning environment based on trust, recognition and ongoing discussions on believes, relevance of knowledge, skills and dilemmas in teacher education and in the profession (Bjerkholt 2017).

The research topic in this abstract is the Norwegian model on research circle (Bjerkholt & Stokke 2017), a model inspired by the original Swedish model on research circles (Persson 2016; Renblad & Brodin 2016) and Lennart Svensson’s (2016) perspective on practice-oriented research, a multi-methodological and expanding research approach. Teachers are co-researchers together with researchers at the universities in this approach. Researchers are not doing research on school praxis and the teachers, but together with the teachers and common interest on the research questions.

The participants in the Norwegian research circle were (4) teachers at the practice schools in Notodden and (2-3) researchers from the teacher education at the University College of Southeast-Norway, Notodden. The methodological approach in this research circle was studying empirical data: sound recorded and transcribed data from the teacher education training schools and from the research circle:
- Eight observations on the teachers’ supervisory praxis in the context of supervising student teachers in their practice periods at teacher training schools.
- Eight focus-group interviews with the teacher students immediately after the supervision session at the school.
- Two focus-group interviews with the teachers in the research circles
- Observations of discussions and activities in the research circle, partly transcribed.

The Norwegian research circle (2014-2017) identified a need for establishing a common professional language across workplace learning in schools, supervising student teachers, and the universities’ more theoretical lessons (Bjerkholt & Stokke 2017). The evaluation of the Norwegian research circle concerning the participants’ learning outcome (Notodden, 2.05.2017) showed that the research approach, identified problems, dilemmas and analyzed empirical data had been very educational for the participants in the research circle.

References


Contributor 3
Supervision during teacher education - Research circle in Vasa

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Workplace learning is considered an influential part of the teacher education program, according to research on teacher student reviews (Jyrhämä 2006, Ahonen et al 2015). The periods of workplace learning (practice-period) take place at the teacher education training schools, where a supervisor co-operates with the student. Considering teacher education as a deeply culturally embedded activity, and supervision as often a tacit part of it, to structure a perspective that enables research to discern and verbalize aspects that in general are hidden and perhaps even taken for given is a challenge.

Inspired by the Nordic ProV –project, a research circle was established in Vasa in 2015 with participants from the faculty (1-2) and from the training school (3-4) (Vasa övningsskola). The supervisors were teachers from the training school or lecturers from the faculty of education, usually working together. Compared with the traditional idea of a research circle (Persson 2016), the one in Vasa took a way of its own and turned into an expansive learning/learning community - facilitating group: thus engaging all the teachers at Vasa övningsskola in an enterprise of studying existing practice and elaborating with new models of supervision – an approach inspired by Engeström (2015).

Thus, we have ended up with slightly different implementations of the basic idea of a research circle. In the three cases, we also find different emphasis in a dimension of invention/action research. The same occurs when questioning a dimension of research circle as a community of knowledge rising and studying.

The research aim for this study is to explore supervision knowledge and experience through inductive reasoning. We are interested in the supervisors’ practice based knowledge (McGuirk & Methi 2015) and experience of supervision. The workshops in the project ProV offered a display of examples of supervision practices that raised discussions and reflections among the observing participants. The data consists of focus group interviews where participating members of the “research circle” have given feedback and been engaged in a discussion about the relevance and gain of the Nordic network ProV, in the perspective of their home organization and tasks in supervision.

Thus, we are studying reflections on categories of so-called productive disharmony (Methi 2015) among the participants in the “research circle”. In other words: themes, situations, insights, reflections, perspectives about supervision that the ProV project has raised – and are experienced as significant in relevance to the traditions and practice of supervision in our own environment. As supervision is an activity that is highly sensitive, multifaceted and multilayered (Kettunen & Tynjälä 2017), the possibilities of both sharing practices and of challenging by contrasting practices between the Nordic countries is a unique opportunity for research and for knowledge creation.

References
A question often addressed in Nordic teacher education nowadays is how the quality of supervised practicum training can be improved. The quality is claimed to be of decisive importance for the students' competence development. International research shows that most student teachers share the opinion that the practical knowledge gained through classroom experience and through interaction with supervisors and fellow students is of highest value in teacher education.

Practicum training still faces many challenges. For example, several research studies suggest that reflectivity is a difficult to achieve. Furthermore, the feedback students receive is of varying quality. The high hopes many have had for active collaboration between peer students who have practice together are not to be taken for granted, and practice groups may, in reality, be far from Wenger's well-known ideal, communities of practice (1998). Students can often act relatively passively to each other's learning and in the observation and guise process (Mathisen & Bjørndal 2016). A number of studies show that the challenges linking theory and practice are still demanding.

Limited Nordic research is being carried out on how to develop the quality of practicum supervision in teacher education. Even less attention is paid to the question of whether technology can help raise quality. Technology seems to be used to only a small extent in the actual supervision process, and research on the potential of technology in practical supervision work is virtually absent. One exception is the extensive international research within teacher training, and other professional training, documenting the value of digital videos.

One Norwegian study has documented the potential of using tablets in practicum supervision (Mathisen & Bjørndal 2016). However, the study also reported a need for a tailor-made software program for the practical training process. The University of Agder has thus developed such software: MOSO (Mentoring and Observation software). The software may be used across platforms (computers, phones and tablets), and imitates social media models to strengthen multimodal (text, pictures and video clips) feedback and interaction between supervisors, students and visiting university teachers through the supervision process (planning, observation and supervision).

A software prototype has been tested in a Nordic research project, including the Universities of Agder, Halmstad and Tromsø, and in a project at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (Mjelde & Ulvedal 2017). Furthermore, other projects at several teacher educations are either in the initial or planning phases. This symposium focuses on the possibilities and challenges in using and researching such interactive multimodal feedback-technology to increase quality in practical training.
Contributor 1
Interactive multimodal feedback practice in practicum: What is it?

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In the Nordic research project Supervision technology in teacher education, groups (supervisors and students) make use of software inspired by social media models during the practical training process in schools. This paper highlights what interactive multimodal feedback practice (1) is, contrasting it respectively to more traditional post-observation-feedback-practice without use of modern technology (2), and video-feedback-practice (3). Categorising feedback practice in three such broad categories obviously represents a simplification; in fact, many different types of practices will fall within these categories. However, it is important to compare some main features in order to be able to see what characterises a new form of feedback practice in practicum: Interactive multimodal feedback.

Traditionally, supervisors in schools have given their feedback without using recent modern technology. Research on communication in such supervision sessions has been limited, but there is good reason to assume that there has been a large degree of variation. In the past decades, research has documented a broad range of strategies which can be linked to very different theoretical approaches - for example, direct informational, collaborative, and self-directed approaches. Subsequent years of research have also shown that a number of problematic aspects of the supervision have been frequently repeated, especially when seen from the students’ point of view: The supervisor can be of little help, and is inflexible, too critical, or negative. Supervisors can also be insufficiently challenging, hasty, and superficial, and students may lack an understanding of the feedback received and how to use it.

Technology seems to be used to only a small extent in the actual supervision process, and research on the potential of technology in practical supervision work is virtually absent, one exception being the extensive international research carried out from within teacher training and other professional training situations in which the value of digital videos is documented. However, in most teacher education programmes in which video is used, it is done in so-called “microteaching” on campus, not in practicum supervision in schools. Video feedback practices have different characteristics. A main difference concerns approaches that focus respectively on the development of interactive professional skills, and those that focus on the development of deeper reflexive competence. Video is well documented as effective in the context of both approaches, and there are indications that video can also help to make the student more active in the supervision process, and even change the supervision relationship.

A very interesting question is how new technology in the future will affect feedback practices in teacher education practicum. In the aforementioned Nordic research project, a new piece of software is tested out (MOSO). MOSO encompasses the entire practical training process, from preparation, through the practical phase, observation, and supervision, and can be used across platforms (PCs/tablets/mobile phones). It is inspired by social media models, and supervisors and peers give multimodal feedback on plans and observed teaching (text, video-clips and pictures), which is immediately shared between members of a group on their devices. This feedback is not used instead of face-to-face feedback, but rather in addition to traditional practice, and as a basis for supervision sessions. This represents a far more complex and interactive feedback practice, bringing it closer to Wenger's ideal of “communities of practice”.
Contributor 2

Student teachers as legitimate participants in mentoring: An extended community of practice

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Topic, aim and framework
The practicum period for student teachers forms an important part of teacher education, as does the level of observations and feedback from practicum mentors. The relationship between the documentation of teaching and the performed practicum mentoring forms the premise for our study, together with successful experiences using video as a tool for observation (Mathisen & Bjørndal, 2016). In the present pilot study, mentors and student teachers in four partner schools have used a multimodal tool (MOSO) for documentation and mentoring. In accordance with the digital tools used, we define mentoring sessions as a sequence of: pre-mentoring with feedback on plans, teaching and multimodal observation, and post-mentoring. The aim of our study was to explore students’ participation in a collaborative community of practice (CoP). The social theory of Wenger was used as a framework for the study. According to Wenger, learning occurs as a function of legitimate participation during negotiations of content.

Methodology/research design
The qualitative design was based on a survey and focus group interviews with fourteen student teachers and their practicum mentors (seven). Two persons (one student teacher and one mentor) observed and documented the teaching of another student teacher. During the analysis, four themes constituting the legitimate participation in negotiations were identified in the data source: Participation by planning for observation, participation by interactive observations of teaching, participation by preparing for practicum mentoring and participation by reflections at different levels.

Findings
Short presentation of the four themes:
Participation by planning for observation: This phase becomes an important part for the rest of the mentoring sequence. Specific and concrete interaction in this phase affected the degree of specific observation and mentoring.
Participation by interactive observations of teaching: In this phase, and in order to document teaching, teacher students practiced their skills in formulating specific feedback to each other. At the same time, they also practised identifying qualities in teaching relevant to pupils’ learning.
Participation by preparing for practicum supervision: In this phase, conditions of preparation based on authentic documentation and feedback affected the students’ participation in mentoring sessions. Participation by reflections at different levels: Student participation in mentoring sessions changed from passive roles with a focus on listening and receiving feedback to active knowledge-producing roles.

Conclusions
We conclude that the digital tools offered new opportunities for sharing, mutual engagement, participation, and negotiations in the dialogue about teaching and learning in mentoring as an extended community of practice. We also conclude that the CoP is a useful theory for describing and explaining the level of participation and engagement in practicum mentoring sessions.

Relevance to Nordic educational research
The study contributes with general knowledge in the field of practicum mentoring for student teachers, and with specific knowledge in the field of multimodal tools for observations and mentoring.

Key words
Community of practice, digital observation, teacher students, negotiations, collaborative learning
Using interactive multimodal observation and feedback technology in teacher education practicum: Supervisors’ experiences

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The Nordic research project, Supervision Technology in Teacher Education, is being carried out at the Universities of Agder, Halmstad and Tromsø during 2017. The project builds on findings from an earlier project testing the use of tablets in practicum (Mathisen & Bjørndal 2016). The first project documented the potential of using such technology to strengthen the quality of supervised practical training in teacher education, but also pointed out a need for customised software. As a result, the University of Agder developed the software MOSO (Mentoring Observation Software), now used in the Nordic project.

This paper focuses on the supervisors’ experiences using interactive multimodal observation and feedback technology during teacher students’ practical training periods in schools. Issues highlighted in particular include: 1) How do the supervisors experience that use of the software, MOSO, influences the quality of the supervision and the students’ learning? 2) Which supervision strategies can be developed to make effective use of the technology to strengthen the quality of practical training?

Three core perspectives are recurrent in discussions of quality in practicum supervision, and each of them represents major challenges for the supervisor and the quality of the supervised practical training:

a) How to build strong communities of practice during practicum: A central element in student learning are the so-called communities of practice, which are informal cooperative learning groups that work together to develop competence. The most important community of practice, however, is the supervision group, which consists of one or more supervisors and often several students. The strength of such communities of course varies considerably, and students may often take on a rather passive role during observation and supervision in practicum.

b) How to facilitate student reflectivity: Nordic teacher education and practicum supervision has been strongly influenced by the ideal of reflectivity, and the same professional ideal is found in many Western countries. However, the supervisor’s task to facilitate reflection is very demanding. It has, for example, been pointed out that reflection can be superficial, subjective, instrumental, and may lack the integration of theoretical knowledge related to practice.

c) How to give the student high quality feedback: In more recent years, the importance of constructive feedback for learning has been extensively documented. But it has been shown that feedback quality cannot be taken for granted. For example, it can be vague and unclear, as well as confusing, inconsistent, contradictory and even dysfunctional.

The study encompasses a survey and 12 focus group interviews (transcribed) including supervisor(s) and students from 24 supervision groups. The supervisors’ experiences will be analysed during spring 2017. However, it is a clear preliminary impression that the supervisors perceive a great potential in using such software to raise the quality of supervised practicum, and to meet challenges related to the theoretical perspectives in question: Creating strong communities of practice, facilitating student reflectivity, and giving high quality feedback. At the same time, they point out certain challenges that need addressing. The findings are an important contribution to the efforts to raise the quality of teacher education practicum.