

Symposium - Quality in Social Science Teaching (QUISST)

1. Introduktion til QUISST – nordisk forskergruppe der arbejder med QUISST

Torben Spanget Christensen, SDU (Odense)

QUISST er en nordisk gruppe af forskere i samfundsfagsdidaktik. Gruppen er del af et større NordForsk finansieret forskningscenter QUINT, som samler en lang række nordiske forskere i fagene modersmål, matematik og samfundsfag. I dette symposium introduceres der først generelt til forskergruppen (QUISST) og dens aktiviteter. Dernæst præsenterer forskellige QUISST-forskere eksempler på hvad de arbejder med.

2. Høyere ordens tenkning i samfunnsfag

Nora Hesby Mathe, UiO (Oslo) og Anders Stig Christensen, UCL (Odense)

Basert på analyser av klasseromsvideo fra Danmark og Norge, presenterer og diskuterer Christensen og Hesby Mathé et analytisk rammeverk for og empiriske analyser av eksempler på høyere ordens tenkning i samfunnsfag. Formålet med studien er å undersøke hvordan lærere legger til rette for høyere ordens tenkning hos elevene i samfunnsfag, og der argumenteres for for en todimensjonal operasjonalisering som ivaretar både kognitive prosesser og kunnskapsdimensjonen.

3. Responsibilities and possibilities: the presence of the Finns party in the school

Pia H Mikander, University of Helsinki

The description of the NOKSA 22 conference asks how conflicting perspectives can and should be addressed within social studies education, “for example when democratic governments challenge human rights, democratic institutions and processes”. This presentation shows how the question materializes in a classroom situation, a social studies lesson in a Finnish-Swedish classroom (grade 9), filmed as part of the QUINT-project CCN. In the lesson, political parties have been on the agenda, and after a presentation about the Finns party, the teacher announces that the party in question is about to come to visit the school premises together with the other four largest parties in Finland. One student raises their hand, showing frustration, asking the teacher why they would be coming. There is an increased noise level and the teacher never replies to the question directly. Departing from a theoretical point of democracy theory as well as social studies concepts such as the teaching of controversial issues, the question raised here is how social studies teachers could approach not only the question that the student poses – but also what didactical challenges the choice to give, as well as to limit, access to a rightwing populist party bring along.

When can a party’s core values be considered deviating too much from the school curricular core values not to be welcome in the school? From the point of inclusion and safety of all students, the frequent racist remarks made by representants of the party (Pettersen, 2020) would have to be considered. The need for democratic dissensus (Burman, 2021) and for agonistic thinking (Mouffe, 2013) are valuable contributions to the debate, as well as Eskelinen’s (2019) suggestion that democracy should include all possible ideas, except for the idea that

democracy itself should be diminished. Arnstad's (2018) view of democracy as a movement with a continued inclusion as a goal is a valuable contribution to the debate. There is also a need to consider the link between freedom of speech and democracy (Wikforss, 2021, Titley, 2020). From the point of view of social studies didactics, the concept of controversial issues (Cowen & Maitles, 2012; Ljunggren, Unemar Öst & Englund, 2015) in teaching is relevant here. Of particular interest is the positions that the teacher could possibly take in the discussion that emerges, what are his or her responsibilities and possibilities? The size and political power of a party necessarily play a role in how the teacher chooses to approach it. Here is where the concept of controversiality needs to be considered as connected to the context – can political power move the political content and rhetoric of a party out of the sphere of controversiality within education? The attempt of the presentation is to outline a space for action for a social studies teacher faced with the dilemma at hand in the empirical material.

4. How can video observations contribute to increasing quality in social sciences teaching?

Nadine Malich-Bohlig, UC SYD (Haderslev)

In Denmark, social sciences are understood as an interesting, but also as a complex and rather difficult subject to teach. Due to little and very new literature about subject didactics, teachers often use intuition or subject didactics from other subjects when planning (Malich 2008, Jørgensen 2020). A question to rise is what teacher candidates notice when individually working with video recordings from social science school classes: What indicates quality and what is important for further lesson planning? Preliminary findings indicate that the majority of the candidates evaluate the lesson's form and content as more important to observe than the lesson's goal (Christensen 2021); they evaluate a focus on movement to motivate the students' participation when planning their own teaching practice as very important for social sciences lessons (Seelen 2018); and they find a useful theory for social sciences in Olga Dysthes theory of dialogue to ensure classroom discourse (Dysthe 1997).

References:

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