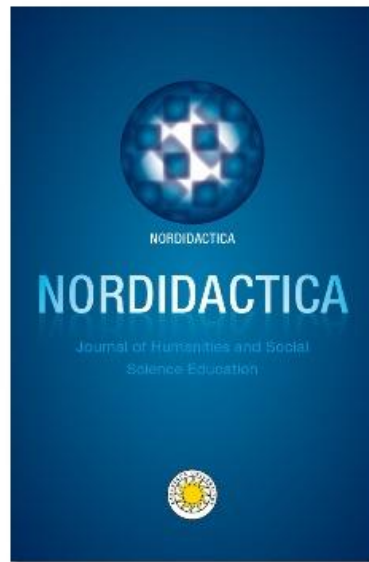


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The fourth issue of Nordidactica 2019 is a special issue focusing on core elements and Big Ideas. It contains six contributions: four scientific articles and two position papers. All the articles – with one Norwegian exemption - are written in English – hence this English version of the Editorial. This can be explained by the fact that the English texts are based on contributions presented during the NCRE (Nordic Conference of Religious Education) 2019 where the theme was "Core elements and big ideas for religious education ». The conference was organized by NTNU (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) 10-14. June 2019. The scientific articles are written by a total of six authors; four women and two men working at institutions in Denmark, England and Norway. The two position papers are written by a woman and a man, both of whom connected to institutions in England.

The fact that three of the articles and both position papers are connected to NCRE also means that there is an overweight of texts related to religious education in this issue. The contribution in Norwegian, that is not connected to the conference, concerns geography. While two of the scholarly articles (Sando and Andersen & Sigurdsson) thematize what is or ought to be included as core elements of religious education in different versions of teacher education, all the other contributions explicitly relate to thinking about Big Ideas inspired by Wiggins and McTighe (2005). Teaching based on Big ideas is most prominent in English-language contexts, although the related phenomena of "backward planning" (as found in the empirical data in Staurseth's article) or at least "assessment for learning" have become part of the educational vocabulary in all the Nordic countries.

As we expect the question of what criteria to apply when choosing the focus and selection of material for teaching to be relevant in 2020 and the years to come, we leave the invitation from the call open - in the sense that we welcome submissions thematizing Big Ideas and core elements for future open issues. And, as in this issue, the ideas and elements can be part of the study as empirical data, as (part of) an analytical perspective and/or constitute the starting point of a discussion.

Common to all the contributions in this issue is that they relate to core elements or Big Ideas in one way or another. We hope readers will find inspiration and encouragement for their own exploration of ideas and opportunities related to core elements and/or Big Ideas, and also that this issue provokes critical reflection on the presented ideas.

Rob Freathy & Helen John (University of Exeter) have written the article "Worldviews and Big Ideas: A Way Forward for Religious Education?". They take the report from the Commission on Religion Education (CoRE 2018) as a starting point and

draw attention to the proposal to change the name of the subject in England and Wales from Religious Education (RE) to Religion and Worldviews (RW). Based on this, they discuss the concept of 'worldview' and challenges related to the meaning of this term – a discussion that is not foreign to religious educators in the Scandinavian countries / Scandinavian-speaking religious didactics. Freathy and John also discuss the challenges associated with choosing criteria for the selection of worldviews to be thematized in curriculum and teaching. In the article, the authors also discuss the CoRE report's recommendations that the teaching of religion and worldviews should be more multidisciplinary, richer in methods and experience-driven. The authors believe this “requires partnership between students, teachers, teacher-educators and researchers”.

Hanne Egenæs Staurseth (University of Stavanger) has written the article «How do didactic dilemmas in the planning of teaching impact on literacy practice? - an example from a geography unit taught in social studies in secondary school». Here she examines dilemmas related to the planning and implementation of teaching by analyzing a teacher's plans, observations of the completed teaching and interviews covering the teacher's reflections on the completed teaching. The teacher has planned "backwards", by formulating the Big Idea that the students are meant to grasp through taking part in the teaching unit and derived the tasks to be assessed from that. Staurseth identifies and analyzes the dilemmas the teacher encounters and the solutions he chooses.

Svein Sando (Queen Maud University College) has written the article “Digital ethical Bildung as a proactive educational approach against cyberbullying, with Aristotle, Løgstrup and Barad as sources for a philosophical framework”. Ethics is one of the core elements of pre-school teacher education in Norway, and in this article, Sando deals with online bullying from an ethics perspective. He builds on the concept of phronesis from Aristotle, the ontological ethics of Løgstrup and Barad's agential realism and discusses the concept of digital ethical Bildung and opportunities to proactively handle online bullying.

Kirsten Margrethe Andersen & Lakshmi Sigurdsson have written the article "Qualifying didactic reflection in religious education through a model for religious competence". The article is based on an action research project involving four teachers of the Danish RE subject and four priests preparing youth for confirmation. They all want to contribute to the religious authoritativeness of the youth. A model is developed, and the authors discuss how it can be used in teacher education as support for theoretical and research-based reflection on planned or experienced practice to highlight whether the practice will or has promoted religious authority.

Denise Cush (emeritus Bath Spa University) has written the position paper “Barbara Wintersgill's Big Ideas for Religious Education and the National Entitlement to the Study of Religions and Worldviews in England. Some reflections on a Big Ideas approach to curriculum planning in an English context from a participant in both projects”. Here she presents the ideas behind the six Big Ideas for RE presented in Wintersgill 2017. Some of the ambitions of the project was to give advice on how to make RE “more coherent and more engaging for pupils”. Whether there is a need for Big Ideas about methodological approaches and epistemology for the subject is also

discussed, as well as the concept of in-depth learning. She warns against understanding the desire for depth in learning as a signal to narrow the scope of RE, claiming on the contrary that the subject might well make use of content from a wider range of traditions than before.

Robert Jackson (emeritus University of Warwick) has written the position paper "Human Rights: A Core Element or Big Idea for RE?". He presents an overview of central arguments for teaching about religions and beliefs as part of students' basic education and lists some initiatives he has been involved with to promote such teaching. The question in the title - whether human rights is a core element or a Big Idea for RE – is discussed. He concludes that human rights can be thematized in relation to several of the six Big Ideas presented by Wintersgill 2017, but also points out that human rights do not in themselves constitute one of these six Big Ideas. Further he underscores that they can both be regarded as one of several core elements, and that the preservation of human rights is a prerequisite for inclusive RE.

References

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