

Editorial Nordidactica 2024:2

Martin Ubani & Anuleena Kimanen



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It is our pleasure to welcome you to the latest issue of Nordidactica 2:2024. As the journal home page (<https://journals.lub.lu.se/nordidactica/index>) describes: “*Nordidactica - Journal of Humanities and Social Science Education is a Nordic subject didactic journal with the aim to be a venue for research relevant to school, teacher education and to academy*”. For the past fourteen years the journal has served that purpose and continues to do so. The present issue focuses on different aspects of subject didactics, often from political and social awareness perspectives.

In the first article, “*Measuring the instrumental aspects of religious literacy of Estonian basic school graduates*”, Aleksandra Sooniste presents findings from a survey of 15–16-year-old students regarding key objectives of religious education. According to the study, competencies among Estonian students vary, with many lacking the skills to navigate complex cross-cultural situations requiring religious literacy and differing attitudes toward religion in general. She calls for a reform of Estonian public education to enable students to develop dispositions for effective communication across various religious backgrounds and diverse cultural contexts.

The second article, by Eva Kosberg, focuses on Norwegian 13–14-year-old students. In her article “*Sources of Internal Political Efficacy in the Social Studies Classroom. A Qualitative Investigation of Norwegian Lower Secondary Students’ Perceptions*”, Kosberg investigates the relationship between experiences in the social studies classroom and sense of internal political efficacy. The article identifies three obstacles to achieving a sense of internal political efficacy. Kosberg calls for critical analysis and multiple perspectives in education instead of over-emphasis on personal opinion.

The third article by Thomas Ringen Eide, “*Verdifulle ferdigheter. Ulike perspektiv på samfunnskunnskap*”, contributes to the discussion on subject-specific skills. In the article Eide focuses on social studies didactics. He analyses perspectives in the respective Nordic research literature and identifies three traditions: citizenship education, *Bildung*, and literacy.

The next contribution to this issue, “*Politisk handlingskompetanse for berekraftig utvikling*” by Kjetil Børhaug and Simon Neby, also has a Nordic focus, similarly to Eide. The article focuses on issues of sustainable education, specifically examining the extent to which different Nordic didactic contributions define an action competence that may facilitate and help students to engage politically for a sustainable future. The article suggests possible developments of sustainability didactics towards greater political relevance.

The fifth article, “*Knowledge of Life and Death! A Classroom Study of Gender Negotiations among Pupils and Teachers in Primary History Education*” by Emma Axinder and Pontus Larsen, examines how gendered subject positions during the

Middle Ages are discussed and dealt with in Swedish primary school History education. Axinder and Larsen identify several subject positions constructed in classroom instruction and learning and how these interact with the construction of gender.

In the final, sixth article of this issue, Helén Persson similarly focuses on history education, this time in the context of teachers in public schools and higher education. The background of her article “*The historical past och the practical past: Om ett utvecklat lärande i historia på gymnasie- och högskolenivå*” is the recent discussions in Sweden regarding uncertainty and feelings of inadequacy among higher education teachers and guardians regarding the knowledge requirements for the subject of History. In the article, Persson confirms her hypothesis that teachers in higher education tend to describe the relevance of the history subject in terms of the historical past, while teachers at upper secondary level tend to emphasise the relevance of the history subject in terms of the practical past. The article finishes with research initiatives to explore the topic further.

As can be seen from the articles, subject didactics is a field that links educational practices with broader societal issues. Education is thoroughly embedded in society. Schools are in societies, from societies, maintain societies, renew societies, represent societies and, hopefully, change societies. It is therefore only fitting that subject didactics acknowledges and reflects the policies, trends, thoughts, and issues prevalent domestically and globally.

Again, we wish to express our deep gratitude to the reviewers – Your commitment to the Journal is very much appreciated and valued.

Martin Ubani and Anuleena Kimanen
The Editors